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# 2024 PARKS & RECREATION MASTER PLAN

City of Moab

December 2023





**Begin the day at a park, trail, natural area or recreation program.**

“Parks are so much more than collections of grassy lawns to lay on or benches from which to people-watch. Parks serve an irreplaceable role in developing and preserving our sense of community and pride in where we live. They bring...

# Acknowledgements

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...people together, inspire commerce, and spread an appreciation for the splendor of nature.”

~ Jerah Smith, Communications Fellow for American Planning Association's Great Places in America program

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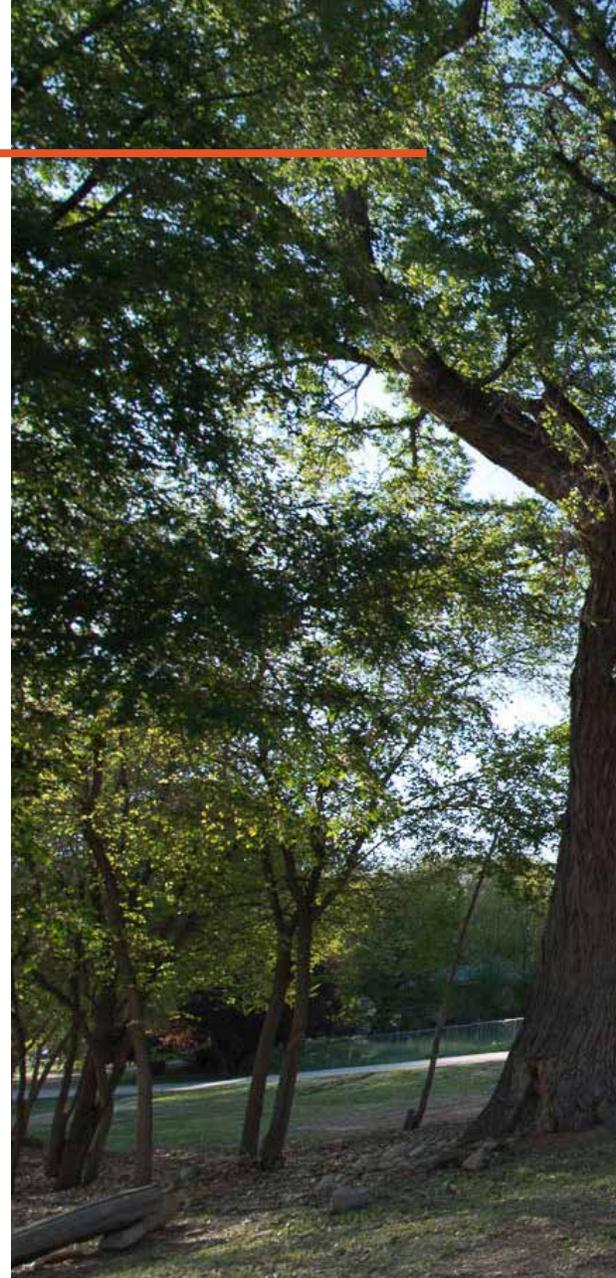
CHAPTER 1

# A Thriving MOAB



*Keep what we have in working  
condition and safe and open.”*

- Survey respondent



## PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

**T**he City of Moab began development of its first citywide parks master plan in early 2023 to provide a logical blueprint for the management and growth of the City’s park system and incorporates the feedback from an extensive community engagement process conducted in 2023. As a ten-year guide and strategic plan for enhancing park and recreation amenities for the community, the citywide Parks and Recreation Master Plan establishes a path forward for enabling



and enhancing high quality, community-driven parks, trails, open spaces and recreational opportunities.

This citywide Parks and Recreation Master Plan (PRMP) was developed with the input and direction of local residents and a project-specific Technical Advisory Committee. The process included public meetings, a community survey as baseline data as a foundation for plan recommendations. This Plan creates a vision for an innovative and

inclusive system of parks that promotes recreation, health, environmental conservation and fiscal responsibility as integral elements of a thriving, livable Moab.

The 2024 PRMP outlines recommendations for the improvement and growth of City recreation facilities, amenities and parks to address the specific needs of the community. The Plan provides updated system inventories, community profile, needs analyses and a comprehensive capital project list. The Plan

identifies parks and recreation goals and establishes a long-range plan for the Moab parks and recreation system, including action items and strategies for implementation over the next ten years. The recommendations in this Plan are based on community input, evaluations of the existing park system, operating conditions and fiscal considerations.

Local residents are proud of Moab for its sense of small town character and for what has been accomplished in the park system with modest

resources, but they also are interested in improvements. This Plan documents those desires and provides a framework for addressing capital development and funding in the near-term.

## PLANNING PROCESS

This PRMP represents the culmination of a year-long planning effort and reflects the community's interests and needs for parks, open space, trails and programming. The planning process, which included a variety of public outreach activities, encouraged public engagement to inform the development of the priorities and future direction of Moab's park and recreation system. Community members expressed their interests through surveys, public meetings, stakeholder discussions, online outreach, tabling events and Technical Advisory Committee meetings.

In addition to community engagement, the actions identified in this Plan are based on:

- An inventory and assessment of the City's existing park and recreation facilities to establish the system's current performance and to identify needed maintenance and capital repair and replacement projects, and
- Service level and walkability assessments to quantify the system's ability to serve current and future residents.

The Plan's capital facilities section and accompanying implementation and funding strategies are intended to sustain and enhance, preserve, and steward the City's critical parks and recreation infrastructure.

## DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

The Parks, Recreation and Trails Department serves as the community's key resource for providing parks, trails, recreation, aquatic facilities and programs, and community events and supports tourism and economic development, as well as providing an enhanced quality of life for its citizens. There are 13 city-owned park sites totaling 110 acres and more than 13 miles of city trails in the Moab park system. The City also owns the Moab Golf Course (266 acres), and it is operated and maintained by the Moab Country Club.

### Mission:

*The Department exists to promote health, wellness and an active and vibrant lifestyle for the citizens of Moab.*

The Parks, Recreation and Trails Department consists of 26.5 full-time employees in four divisions: Parks, Sports, Arts and the Moab Recreation and Aquatic Center.

- The Parks division focuses on long-range planning, development of park facilities and maintenance of City parks and grounds. Administration provides overall support for the Department in areas of budgeting, communications, customer service, contracts and capital projects administration, among others.
- The Sports and Recreation division offers community-wide leisure opportunities including youth and adult sports, open gym programs and community events. Youth programs include softball, baseball, soccer, indoor soccer, football, futsal and volleyball. Adult programs include a softball league, pickleball, volleyball, basketball and indoor soccer. A variety of special events occur throughout the year, including free movie nights, community fun runs and holiday events.
- The Arts division hosts arts programming at the Moab Arts Center and community art exhibits during the Art Walk. Programs and classes include painting, drawing, music and dance, in addition to a four-week summer camp offering art projects, games and field trips. Division staff also collaborate and coordinate with local artists and art organizations in support of public art and community events and festivals.
- The Moab Recreation and Aquatic Center division staffs the aquatic center, which offers fitness, recreational and learn-to-swim programs for individuals of all ages. Facility amenities include an indoor 6-lane competition pool with 1-meter and 3-meter diving boards, shallow-water area and 18-foot slide, an outdoor 3-lane lap pool with adjoining current channel and bubble pool, an outdoor leisure pool with zero-entry depth, play structure with slides, and a 2400-square-foot fitness center with free weights and cardio machines.

## CITYWIDE STRATEGIC PLANNING

During 2022, the City embarked on a community-wide visioning and planning process called, The 'Moab - Tomorrow Together', to create a future-oriented community vision and action plan. The future vision for Moab of a 'Locally Driven Future' reflects the community's desire to plan for a future that is equitable and inclusive of all Moab community members. Strategic pillars help organize future thinking into six important elements for Moab. These are intended to be the foundational building blocks that support and guide the community toward the future vision.

- Tourism Trajectory and Economic Diversification
- Affordability and Equity
- Leadership and Decision Making
- Environmental Stewardship
- Workforce and Housing
- Community Fabric and Well-being

Within this framework, the efforts of the Parks, Recreation and Trails Department will be

reflected through supporting the local recreation economy, enhancing the community fabric through programs and events, and improving equity through expanding access to parks, trails and programs.

City Council also prepared a strategic plan to outline key Council priorities for the 2022/2023 fiscal year. Park and recreation system improvements were featured within the three priority initiatives. These included recreation program and Art Center enhancements, upgrading the HVAC at the Center Street Gym and focusing on park infrastructure.

This strategic framework and these citywide values provided a foundation for the policies and recommendations within this Plan.



## CURRENT CHALLENGES & FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

As with any citywide strategic planning effort, current community challenges provide a context for developing and assessing strategies for the future. The following macro trends are anticipated to be important priorities over the next decade.

### Outdoor Recreation Tourism & Gateway Communities

National parks, monuments and historic sites, picturesque natural landscapes, unique cultures and countless public lands' opportunities near Moab are popular outdoor recreation and tourism destinations. Moab has been affected by increasing tourism that can strain its infrastructure and public services. As a popular gateway to significant tourist destinations, Moab benefits from the tourism economy by providing these national (and international) destinations with necessary support services including lodging, food services, vehicle and equipment rentals, guide services and the like.

Like Moab, many special gateway communities are isolated from larger urban centers, and their smaller, local populations may be outnumbered by the seasonal or year-round visitors. Destination economies may fluctuate throughout the year based on the seasons of available outdoor recreation activities. To help capitalize on the influx of visitors and the economy of tourism while still retaining the character and values of the local community and its environment, the Global Sustainable Tourism Council has developed recognized standards for sustainable tourism. Based on these internationally recognized criteria, sustainability standards have been developed for mountain communities facing similar pressures from overwhelming outdoor recreation tourism. One program, Mountain IDEAL, has developed a destination toolkit for resort, rural, recreation and gateway communities. The overall goal is to implement a stewardship framework that assures sustainable community development through responsible, regenerative and transformational tourism.

### Continued Investments in Park and Recreation System

From accessible playgrounds to splash pads to bike skill areas to bouldering, the range of play experiences offered by the City will need to change and diversify over time. Also, the diversity of the Moab community will influence the needs for different or expanded recreational experiences, such as extended family gatherings, community events and social activities, and cultural arts, among others. The demand for new amenities also must be balanced against preserving and maintaining existing parks and natural areas. The development of new amenities may require the use or re-use of existing parkland or more parkland may be required to support the community's evolving, future needs.





Research on recreation also provides information on how the distribution of parks, proximity to parks and trails, the condition of park facilities have an impact on people's desire to engage in physical activity. It will be valuable to re-evaluate current park designs and maintenance policies to ensure barrier-free, engaging park environments and operational efficiencies. The City will continue to play a major role in enabling healthy lifestyles for Moab citizens and should continue to adapt the park and trail system and recreation offerings.

## **Stewardship & Asset Management**

Established park systems require ongoing maintenance in order to safely and effectively serve the community. Public recreation providers across the country consider maintaining existing park facilities to be a key management issue. Poorly maintained assets – from benches to playgrounds to pools – can fail, either structurally or operationally, posing safety risks and reducing their recreational value. Aging infrastructure also may fail to meet community expectations or need capital upgrades to adapt to changing community interests. However, recreation providers often struggle to establish adequate funding mechanisms for routine and preventative maintenance and repair of facilities, as well as the major rehabilitation of existing outdoor recreation facilities at the end of their useful life.

This Plan includes a condition assessments of City parks to provide a baseline of current conditions to inform facility, maintenance and operations policies and improvements. Proper maintenance of recreation assets will prevent deterioration, thereby reducing long-term capital and operating costs, maintaining safety, improving public perception and facilitating extended community use.

## **Active Older Adults**

Older adults, ages 65 years plus, make up 22.1% of Moab's population, double the percentage of seniors in Utah. A broader category of older adults, ages 55 years plus, make up 29% of Moab's population. Nationwide, active seniors are often looking at retirement age differently, and many are transitioning to new careers, finding ways to engage with their community, and focusing on their health and fitness. The 2023 Outdoor Participation Trends Report highlighted that, in 2022, the senior population (ages 55+) had increased its participation in outdoor recreation to a record high of 35% and is rising. For example, pickleball, a favorite sports among active seniors, has nearly doubled in participation in 2022 continuing its rapid rise in popularity. To meet the needs of active older residents, Moab will need to consider how the City's park and recreation facilities, programming and partnerships can meet the needs of this growing group.

## Equity, Inclusivity & Accessibility

Maintaining and enhancing social equity across recreational opportunities and facilities should be a core function of municipal park and recreation systems. The City endeavored to make all voices welcome during the PRMP process, including through a dual language (English and Spanish) community survey. A focus on diversity, equity and inclusion also carries into adaptive recreation programs and ongoing accessibility upgrades of parks and amenities. The City must continue to find ways to provide safe and equitable access to parks, trails, facilities, recreation programs and other services.

## Fiscal Challenges

As a small community reliant on tourism, tremendous pressure exists on capital and operating funding sources for the maintenance and expansion of City services and amenities. This Plan is structured with these constraints in mind and considers listed capital projects for their potential to leverage other funding sources, affects to future maintenance and operations demands, and estimated development costs.

## GUIDING DOCUMENTS

This PRMP is one of several documents that comprise Moab's long-range planning and policy framework. Past community plans and other relevant documents were reviewed for policy direction and goals as they relate to parks, open space, trails, recreation and cultural opportunities across Moab.

### City of Moab General Plan

Adopted in 2017, the City's General Plan includes elements for Parks & Recreation and Arts & Culture and includes goals and policies for Moab's long-range land use planning. The General Plan recognizes the City's context of a small desert community with a tourism-driven economy. The need for infrastructure and services to meet the demands of a temporary population balanced with serving the permanent residents creates a challenge. The General Plan's vision for Moab's future centers on "evolving and

sustaining a complete community that values a diverse and stable resident population, a healthy environment, a resilient economy, and the arts and culture." Included among the goals for City planning are protecting open spaces and encouraging community-wide multi-modal connectivity. The Parks and Recreation Element has a goal to continue to provide parks, facilities and open space for year-round use. Two policies under this goal include maintaining a high quality standard and pursuit of expansion of the parks and open space system. The recreation goal is to provide high quality and affordable recreational services, programs and events including multi-generational recreation programming. The General Plan also includes an Arts and Culture Element with goals to provide and promote year-round diverse arts and cultural opportunities for all ages and abilities. The Plan's Transportation Element promotes the value of a multi-modal network with safe connections for pedestrians and bicycle riders. Municipal properties are to be purchased to continue the expansion of the Mill Creek Parkway and other areas for flood protection, recreation and connectivity.

### Grand County & City of Moab Unified Transportation Master Plan

The Unified Transportation Master Plan (UTMP) adopted by Grand County and the City of Moab in August 2022 identifies improvements to roads, streets, trails and connections with recommended projects for implementation to ensure a safe network of transportation facilities for all residents and visitors. The plan recognizes that with increased population, employment and tourism, traffic congestion will be at an unacceptable level for most of US 191 in the area by 2050. Among the recommendations for future roadway and complete street improvements, a downtown wayfinding signage plan, and key multi-modal nodes, the Plan recommends a formalized policy and code to guide future trail acquisitions in conjunction with new development or redevelopment reviews. The UTMP cited 19 projects focused on improved conditions for walking and bicycling. The highest priority in the active transportation projects was the shared use path connecting the pedestrian hybrid beacon on US 191 at City Market crossing Pack Creek to Kane Creek Boulevard and north to 300 South and to 100 West. The construction of a shared-

use path on Spanish Valley Drive from Mill Creek Drive to South County line also ranked as a priority among the active transportation project recommendations. Seven of the targeted 16 active transportation projects were for shared-use path projects. The UTMP determined that current short times and distances traveled by residents create the opportunity to transform driving trips into walking or bicycling trips.

## Grand County Non-motorized Trails Master Plan

As early as 2000, Grand County recognized the value of coordinating and collaborating with a diverse mix of trail providers and trail user groups to help guide the creation of an integrated and environmentally sound network of trails for non-motorized use. The County established the Grand County Trail Mix Committee (Trail Mix) comprised of volunteer trails advocates, a paid trail coordinator and paid trail specialists, and representatives from local government and land agencies. The Grand County Non-motorized Trails Master Plan was first adopted in 2005 and most recently updated in 2011. Through the adoption of the Master Plan, the mission of Trail Mix is “to preserve and develop the individual trails that are growing into a non-motorized, integrated trail network providing convenient, enjoyable recreation and transportation experiences for all trail users throughout Grand County.”

The Trails Master Plan includes both a “Trails Matrix” and “Trail Maps”. The Trails Matrix serves as an alphabetical list or index of all trails included in the plan. Trail maps divide Grand County into 13 regions for ease of use. Because of proximity, certain trails that extend into adjacent areas of San Juan County are included in the Trails Master Plan. The Trails Master Plan is based on an evaluation of existing trails and an estimation of future trail needs. Trail development was prioritized to include a variety of trails to satisfy all skill levels of trail users, and to establish connectivity within the City, Spanish Valley and the backcountry.

## CONTENTS OF THE PLAN

The remainder of this Parks and Recreation Master Plan is organized as follows:

- Chapter 2: Community Profile – provides an overview of the City of Moab and its demographics.
- Chapter 3: Community Engagement – highlights the methods used to engage the Moab community in the development of the Plan.
- Chapter 4: Classifications & Inventory – describes the inventory and classifications for existing park system.
- Chapters 5: Parks & Open Space – describes community feedback, trends, local needs and potential improvements for parks and open space.
- Chapter 6: Trails – describes community feedback, local interests and potential improvements for the recreational trail network.
- Chapter 7: Recreation, Arts & Culture – describes community feedback, trends, local needs and potential improvements for recreation services, facilities, arts and events.
- Chapter 8: Operations & Maintenance – describes current and projected operational demands related to the maintenance and care of parks and open space.
- Chapter 9: Goals & Objectives – provides a policy framework for the park and recreation system grouped by major program area.
- Chapter 10: Projects & Implementation Strategies – describes a range of strategies to consider in the implementation of the Plan and details a 10-year program for addressing park and facility enhancement or expansion projects.
- Appendices: Provides technical or supporting information to the planning effort and includes a summary of the community survey, stakeholder notes, funding options, among others.

”

*Replace playgrounds with more interactive/engaging ones, and get a more expanded and safer bike commute trail system in place.”*

- Survey respondent



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## CHAPTER 2

# Community PROFILE

Combining small-town hospitality with unparalleled natural beauty and the cool waters of the Colorado River, Moab has become one of the most sought-after destinations in the American Southwest. Thanks to its perfect climate, Moab attracts year-round outdoor events and festivals, while the downtown business district has responded with an array of restaurants, microbreweries, shops, and galleries.

Excerpted from [discovermoab.com](http://discovermoab.com)

Moab is a small city of just over 5,300 residents in southeastern Utah, located along Highway 191 just east of the Colorado River. The city's location is remote – about 30 miles south of Interstate 70, 190 miles south of Provo, UT, and 115 miles southwest of Grand Junction, CO. Moab is the largest city and county seat of Grand County and is a hub for local commerce. The City is bordered by Arches National Park and the Scott M. Matheson Wetlands Preserve to the north and northwest; the Bureau of Land Management's Sand Flats Recreation Area to the east; the community of Spanish Valley to the south; and by the Colorado River and adjacent sandstone cliffs to the west.

Moab's location, in a lush valley along the Colorado River, surrounded by red rock cliffs, mesas, and high desert, and near Arches and Canyonlands National Parks, has made the city a popular outdoor recreation destination. Tourism brings millions of visitors per year to Moab and drives the local economy. Residents enjoy the city's stunning scenery, remoteness, easy access to open space and outdoor recreation, and convenient access to goods and services. However, the City's dependence on tourism and recent influx of second-home buyers has resulted in limited housing options and a high cost of living for residents.



Photo: Jason Strother (JTS media)

The City’s Main Street corridor, along Highway 191 from the Colorado River Bridge to the southern city limits, makes up the community’s primary commercial area and is lined with shops, restaurants, hotels, and other businesses. The city’s downtown core is centered on Main Street from about 400 North Street to Uranium Avenue and is home to the multiple municipal buildings, the Moab Information Center, and many tourist-oriented local businesses.

The City’s residential zones are primarily made up of single-family neighborhoods, large lot and agricultural residential areas, as well as a few mobile home parks. The City has limited industrial pockets located primarily on the western side of

the city. Moab also is home to a satellite campus of Utah State University and the Moab Regional Hospital

## DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

Today, Moab is a growing community home to working adults, families with children, and retirees. The City’s residents are educated and have high rates of employment, though they have lower average incomes than other county residents. Over half of residents work in either the arts, recreation, and accommodation industry or in retail trade, reflecting the City’s tourism-based economy.

Figure 1. Population Characteristics: Camas, Clark County, and Washington

Demographics	Moab	Grand County	Utah
<b>Population Characteristics</b>			
Population (2021) <sup>1</sup>	<b>5,329</b>	9,360	3,231,370
Population (2010) <sup>2</sup>	<b>5,046</b>	9,225	2,763,885
Population (2000) <sup>3</sup>	<b>4,779</b>	8,485	2,233,169
Percent Change (2000-20)	<b>12.0%</b>	14.0%	47.0%
Persons with Disabilities (%) <sup>4</sup>	<b>16.3%</b>	13.2%	9.8%
<b>Household Characteristics <sup>4</sup></b>			
Households	<b>2,364</b>	4,271	1,033,651
Percent with children	<b>32.0%</b>	30.8%	39.7%
Median Household Income	<b>\$42,083</b>	\$51,433	\$79,133
Average Household Size	<b>2.23</b>	2.24	3.08
Average Family Size	<b>2.85</b>	2.79	3.58
Owner Occupancy Rate	<b>50.6%</b>	64.9%	70.5%
<b>Age Groups <sup>4</sup></b>			
Median Age	<b>39</b>	41.4	31.3
Population < 5 years of age	<b>7.0%</b>	4.9%	7.6%
Population < 18 years of age	<b>17.9%</b>	19.5%	29.3%
Population 18 - 64 years of age	<b>60.0%</b>	60.1%	59.6%
Population > 65 years of age	<b>22.1%</b>	20.4%	11.1%

Sources:

\*1: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 Decennial Census.

\*2: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Decennial Census.

\*3: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Decennial Census.

\*4: U.S. Census Bureau, 2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

## Population & Anticipated Growth

The area that is now the City of Moab has been home to native peoples, including Ancestral Puebloans, Ute, and Navajo, for thousands of years. Early white settlers to the area, arriving in the mid- to late-1800s, included ranchers and followers of the Church of Latter-Day Saints who farmed in the valley and began to develop housing, businesses, and infrastructure. The City of Moab was incorporated in 1902, with a population of approximately 400 residents. The city grew slowly, but steadily, through the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, reaching a population of 1,274 in 1950.

In the 1950s, a uranium deposit was discovered near Moab, leading to the development of mines and a uranium processing plant. Mining drew workers to the area and resulted in a nearly tripling of the city's population by 1960 (to 4,682 residents). Growth continued, though at a slower pace, through the 1960s and 1970s as the establishment of Arches National Park drew more visitors to the area. However, declines in demand for uranium caused the closure of mining related industries in the 1970s and 1980s, resulting in massive layoffs, cuts to government services, and an exodus of residents. By 1990, the city's population had declined by over 1,400 people to 3,971 residents. Moab's population has rebounded in the past three decades, due primarily to the rise in outdoor recreation-based tourism. As of 2021, the City had reached 5,329 residents, regaining the population lost in the 1980s.

Moab's population is projected to grow by approximately 1,300 residents over the next 20 years, a 24% increase, see Figure 2. According to the City's 2017 General Plan, approximately one-third of the city's 3,060 acres could be redeveloped based on current land use designations, though future growth may be constrained by access to drinking water as regional growth strains the area's aquifers. Increases in the City's residential population may also be dwarfed by shifts in tourist levels. Arches National Park is planning to institute a timed entry pilot in the summer of 2023 to better distribute visitors throughout the day and season, which may impact tourism in the area. Larger issues, like climate change and fuel prices, may also impact the frequency and distribution of visitors.

The size of a community and its anticipated growth over time are key indicators of whether existing park and recreation facilities will be sufficient to meet future needs. Population growth can also result in increased residential density and/or the development of currently vacant land within a city, potentially increasing the need for away-from-home recreation opportunities while simultaneously reducing potential locations for park and open space acquisition. Planning for parks and recreation facilities can help ensure residents can enjoy sufficient, conveniently located parks, open space, and recreation facilities while the community grows and evolves.

Figure 2. Population - Actual and Projected: 1970-2040



Source: 2030 and 2045 population forecasts from the Utah Governor's Office of Management and Budget, Municipal Population Projections 2010-2060, 2012 Baseline Projections

## Age Group Distribution

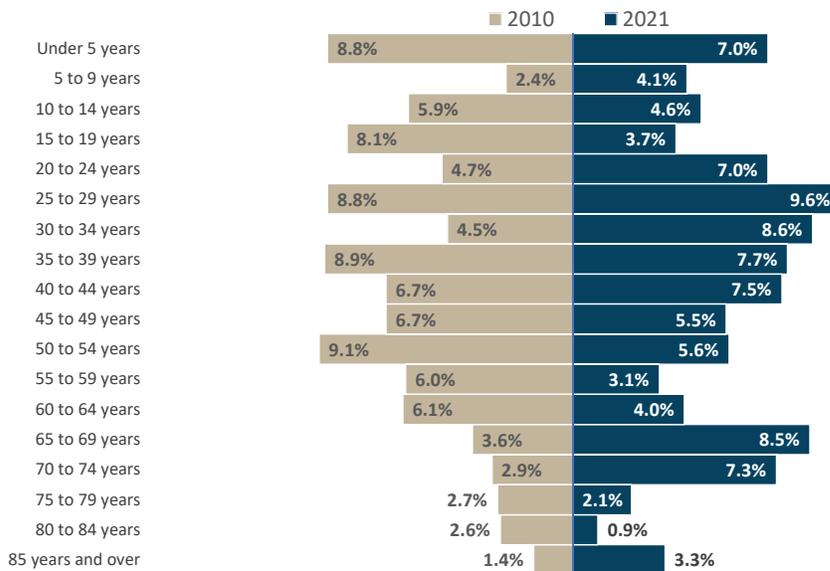
The City of Moab’s population has a median age of 39.0 (2021), younger than Grand County as a whole (41.4) but significantly higher than the statewide average (31.3). Adults between 25 and 44 years of age make up the City’s largest 20-year population group, comprising 34% of the overall population in 2021. This has important implications for park and recreation needs, see Figure 3.

- Approximately 7% of Moab’s population are youth under 5 years old. This group represents users of preschool and tot programs and facilities, and as trails and open space users, are often in strollers. These individuals are the future participants in youth activities.
- Children 5 to 14 years make up current youth program participants. Approximately 9% of the city’s population falls into this age range.
- Teens and young adults, age 15 to 24 years, are in transition from youth program to adult programs and participate in teen/young adult programs

where available. Members of this age group are often seasonal employment seekers. About 11% percent of the city’s residents are teens and young adults.

- Adults ages 25 to 34 years are users of adult programs. About 18% of residents are in this age category, see Figure 2. These residents may be entering long-term relationships and establishing families. About 32% of households in the city have children under 18.
- Adults between 35 and 54 years of age represent users of a wide range of adult programs and park facilities. Their characteristics extend from having children using preschool and youth programs to becoming empty nesters. This age group makes up 26% of Moab’s population.
- Older adults, ages 55 years plus, make up 29% of Moab’s population. This group represents users of adult and senior programs. These residents may be approaching retirement or already retired and may be spending time with grandchildren. This group also ranges from very healthy, active seniors to more physically inactive seniors.

Figure 3. Age Group Distributions: 2010 & 2021<sup>5</sup>



**The City’s population of residents 65 years and older grew by nine percentage points between 2010 and 2021 (13% to 22%, respectively)**

### Sources

- U.S. Census Bureau, 2021.
- U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 American Community Survey, 5-year estimates.
- Utah State University. “Moab Wellbeing Survey Findings”. Utah Wellbeing Project, May 2020. Available at: <https://www.usu.edu/utah-wellbeing-project/reports/moab-wellbeing-survey-findings-may-2020>. Accessed February 2023.
- Data on the health status of Grand County and Utah State residents taken from: University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute. “Utah Rankings Data”. County Health Rankings. Available at <https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/app/utah/2022/rankings/grand/county/outcomes/overall/snapshot>. Accessed January 2023.

## Race and Ethnicity

In 2021, the majority (86%) of Moab's residents identified as White, 5% as American Indian or Alaskan Native, 4% as two or more races, and 3% as some other race not listed on Census forms. Few to no residents identified as Asian, Black or African American, or Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander. About one in six residents identify as Hispanic or Latino of any race, with most identifying as Mexican. Moab's population has grown slightly more diverse over the past decade, see Figure 4.

Figure 4. Changes in Racial Composition - 2000 to 2021

Racial Identification	2010 <sup>6</sup>	2021 <sup>5</sup>
White	89.6%	86.4%
Some other race	1.8%	2.9%
Two or more races	1.1%	4.4%
Asian	0.5%	1.2%
American Indian and Alaska Native	6.6%	5.1%
Black or African American	0.3%	0.0%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Island	0.0%	0.0%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	13.1%	16.6%

According to the 2021 American Community Survey, about 88% of Moab's residents were born in the United States, with about 12% born abroad. Most foreign-born residents (64%) have lived in the U.S. for at least a decade. Approximately one in five (21%) of residents speak a language other than English at home, often Spanish, and 11% speak English less than very well. The City should consider providing recreational information in Spanish to ensure recreation is accessible to these residents.

In general, residents who speak languages other than English may face barriers in finding, accessing, and participating in park and recreation facilities and programs. As it plans for future park and recreational opportunities, the City should explore ways to best meet the recreational needs of all community members.

## Persons with Disabilities<sup>5</sup>

The 2021 American Community Survey reported 16% of Moab's population (857 persons) have a disability that interferes with life activities. This is higher than county (13%) and state averages (10%). Approximately 2% of youth under 18 years of age, 10% of adults 18 to 64, and 46% of residents over age 65 live with a disability, signaling a potential need to design inclusive parks, recreational facilities, and programs.

Planning, designing, and operating a park system that facilitates participation by residents of all abilities will help ensure compliance with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). In addition to ADA, there are other accommodations that people with disabilities may need to access parks and participate in recreation programs. Moab should consider community needs for inclusive and accessible parks, recreational facilities, programs, marketing and communications.

## Household Characteristics<sup>5</sup>

Moab's households tend to be much smaller than those across the state. In 2021, the average household in Moab was 2.23 people, on par with the county average, but much lower than the statewide average of 3.08. The average family is slightly larger, at 2.85 people. Of the 2,364 households in the city, 32% included children under 18, and 34% were individuals living alone.

Just over half of City households own their home (51%), much lower than percentage in Grand County (65%) and state (71%), while 49% rent. Housing costs in Moab are somewhat lower than those in Grand County and Utah as a whole. Median annual owner costs (with a mortgage) were \$16,080 in 2021, while median annual rental costs were \$10,440 including utilities. Costs rise to a median of \$16,404 annually for owners in Grand County (2% higher than in Moab) and \$11,112 for renters (6% higher).



The outdoor recreation economy in Utah grew 27.3% from 2020 to 2021, according to the BEA Outdoor Recreation Satellite Account.

# 51%

Percentage of residents who work in either the arts, recreation and accommodation industry or in retail trade, reflecting the City's tourism-based economy.

## Employment & Education <sup>5</sup>

The 2021 work force population (16 years and over) of Moab was 4,464 (84%). Of this population, 67% percent was employed, less than 2% was unemployed, and 32% was not in the labor force. Over a third of local residents (38%) work in the arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services industries which reflects the tourist-driven local economy. Another 13% work in retail trade and 10% work in education and health care. Several other industries – finance and real estate, professional and management services, and construction – each employ between 7 and 9 percent of workers and contribute significantly to the local economy. Moab's businesses also draw workers from the larger Spanish Valley south of the city.

The vast majority (91%) of Moab residents over 25 years of age have a high school degree or higher, slightly lower than the statewide average (93%). About 28% of city residents have a Bachelor's degree or higher, also lower than statewide rates (35%).

Higher levels of employment and educational attainment positively correlate with both the income and health status of a community – both of which have further impacts on the use and need for park and recreation facilities, as described in the next two sections.

**“Time and time again, the outdoor recreation industry has been a consistent economic and jobs driver for Utah, and our communities throughout the state are seeing the economic benefits from access to the outdoors.”**

- Tara McKee, Deputy Director, Utah Division of Outdoor Recreation  
<https://www.moabtimes.com/articles/outdoor-recreation-economy-surges-in-utah-according-u-s-bureau-of-economic-analysis/>

## Income & Poverty <sup>5</sup>

A community's level of household income can impact the types of recreational services prioritized by community members, as well as their ability to pay for recreational services. In 2021, the median household income in Moab was \$42,083. This income level was about \$9,350 (18%) lower than the median income for Grand County households.

Household incomes in Moab are also strained by local housing costs. In 2021, median housing costs for homeowners with a mortgage were 38% of median household income in the City, exceeding the cost-burdened threshold of 30%. Median costs for renters were 25% of median household income. Costs as a percentage of median income were higher for both owners and renters in Moab than the medians in Grand County (32% and 22%, respectively) and Utah (26% and 18%).



Higher income households typically have an increased capacity to pay for recreation and leisure services and often face fewer barriers to participation. Approximately 16% of Moab households have household incomes in the higher income brackets (\$100,000 and greater), lower than the county average (22%).

Lower-income residents may face barriers to physical activity, including reduced access to parks and recreational facilities, a lack of transportation options, a lack of time, and poor health. Low-income residents may also be less financially able to afford recreational service fees or to pay for services, such as childcare, that can make physical activity possible. In Moab, 35% of households earn less than \$25,000 annually and 16% of local families live below the poverty level (\$26,500 for a family of four), higher than county rates (9%). Poverty affects 31% of youth under 18 and 22% of adults.

## Health Status

The overall health of a community's residents can impact their ability to participate in recreation and other physical activity and may also reflect, in part, the locality's level of access to appropriate and convenient green spaces, recreation opportunities, and active transportation facilities.

Information on the health of Moab's residents is not readily available. However, in 2020, Utah State University surveyed residents of

communities across the state about their sense of personal and community wellbeing.<sup>7</sup> Moab's residents rated their sense of overall personal well-being lower than did residents of other small, rural cities in Utah. This low sense of well-being was due to low overall ratings of well-being in terms of living standards, income, education, and cultural opportunities. Conversely, residents generally gave high ratings to their sense of connection with nature, safety and security, physical and mental health, and social connections.

Additionally, according to the 2022 County Health Rankings, Grand County ranks in the lower-middle range compared to all Utah counties for health outcomes, including length and quality of life, and the lowest quartile for health factors like health behaviors, clinical care, social and economic factors, and the physical environment.<sup>8</sup>

Approximately 21% of Grand County adults aged 20 and older report getting no leisure-time physical activity – a rate higher than the statewide average of 19%. However, in Grand County, 95% of residents have access to adequate physical activity opportunities, which is higher than the average for all Utah residents (83%). This suggests that the County has a reasonable number of places where residents can participate in physical activity, including parks, trails, and public or private community centers, gyms, or other recreational facilities.





*Expand walking/bike trails Mill Creek Parkway to Mill Creek Canyon parking lot and south to Spanish Valley.”*

- Survey respondent

**Over 900 participants provided insights on current community preferences and priorities.**

Community engagement played an essential role in developing the 2023 Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Several outreach methods were used to connect with the community, seek their input and provide information about the Plan through convenient online and in-person activities. Public outreach methods were varied and extensive, including:

- Random-sample mail survey and online community-wide survey in English and Spanish
- Two in-person public meetings
- Tabling and outreach at multiple community events
- Stakeholder group discussions
- Meetings with a project-specific Technical Advisory Committee and City Council
- Engage Moab and City website with plan information and feedback opportunities
- Multiple social media postings, email notifications, and City newsletter articles

## COMMUNITY SURVEY

A community-wide, online survey was conducted to assess the recreational needs and priorities of Moab residents. The survey was available in English and Spanish, and the cover letter accompanying the printed mail survey was written in both languages and included unique QR codes to access each in-language survey online. The City mailed 2,000 surveys to randomly chosen households in Moab on March 27, 2023, of which 326 surveys were completed and returned (16.3% response rate, 5% margin of error). Online versions of the survey in English and Spanish were posted to the City’s website on March 26th. An additional 507 surveys were completed from the general, community-wide online surveys. In all, 833 surveys were collected, which includes four Spanish surveys.

Information about the survey was promoted through a number of channels, including on the

City’s website, in the City Spotlight newsletter, through multiple social media postings, and through direct outreach to partner organizations and recreation program participants. The survey was closed on April 30, 2023.

The survey measured current levels of satisfaction and which facilities were primarily being used by residents. Residents were asked about future improvements and the types of recreational amenities they would like to see considered for the park system. Survey respondents were asked about:

- Performance and quality of programs and parks
- Usage of city parks and recreation facilities
- Overall satisfaction with the value of services being delivered by the city
- Opinions about the need for various park, recreation, and trail improvements
- Priorities for future park and recreation services and facilities

Survey findings are highlighted below, and a more detailed discussion of results can be found in the needs assessment chapters covering parks and open space, trails, recreation, arts and culture (Chapters 5 - 7).



**WALKING & BIKING TRAILS**

62% Support as Top or Medium Priority

**AQUATIC AND RECREATION CENTER**

75% Rate condition as excellent or good



**GATHERING SPACES**

Community events, concerts, picnicking & family gatherings are top reasons for visiting parks

**Major Survey Findings:**

- **Livability:** Nearly all respondents (96%) feel that public parks and recreation opportunities are important or essential to the quality of life on Moab. A large majority of respondents (75%) are somewhat to very satisfied with the City of Moab parks and open space.
- **Usage:** Park visitation is strong, with 38% of respondents visiting parks or recreation facilities at least once a month. The top five sites with the most visitation include Swanny City Park, Mill Creek Parkway, Moab Recreation & Aquatic Center, Rotary Park and Old City Park. Respondents visit local parks and recreation facilities for a variety of reasons. The most popular the most popular reason is for community events and concerts (71%). Majorities of respondents visit parks for family gatherings or picnicking (57%), relaxation (56%), fitness (56%), walking or running (54%) and swimming (52%).
- **Park Amenity Priorities:** Respondents indicated that the highest unmet need is for walking and biking trails. The highest rated priorities include additional walking trails (39%), shade structures for playgrounds (38%), outdoor splash pad (31%) and renovated playgrounds (26%), with more than one in four respondents supporting these improvements. When asked to rank specific types of improvements, respondents ranked as their top three priorities: improving or upgrading to existing parks (1st), expanding trail opportunities (2nd), and adding new recreational options in existing parks (3rd).
- **Recreation Programming:** Respondents expressed the strongest interest for community events (51% very interested; 86% very or somewhat interested). Overall, respondents indicated the strongest interest in adult program options, such as fitness, wellness and arts (69%+), in addition to youth fitness, music, gymnastics or crafts (64%) and outdoor adventure camps (61%).

The complete survey summary is provided in Appendix A.

**OPEN HOUSE #1**

On April 19, 2023, the City hosted an in-person public meeting from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. at the Moab Arts Center. The project team prepared informational displays covering the major themes of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, which included displays providing a project overview and community survey highlights, as well as topic-oriented questions

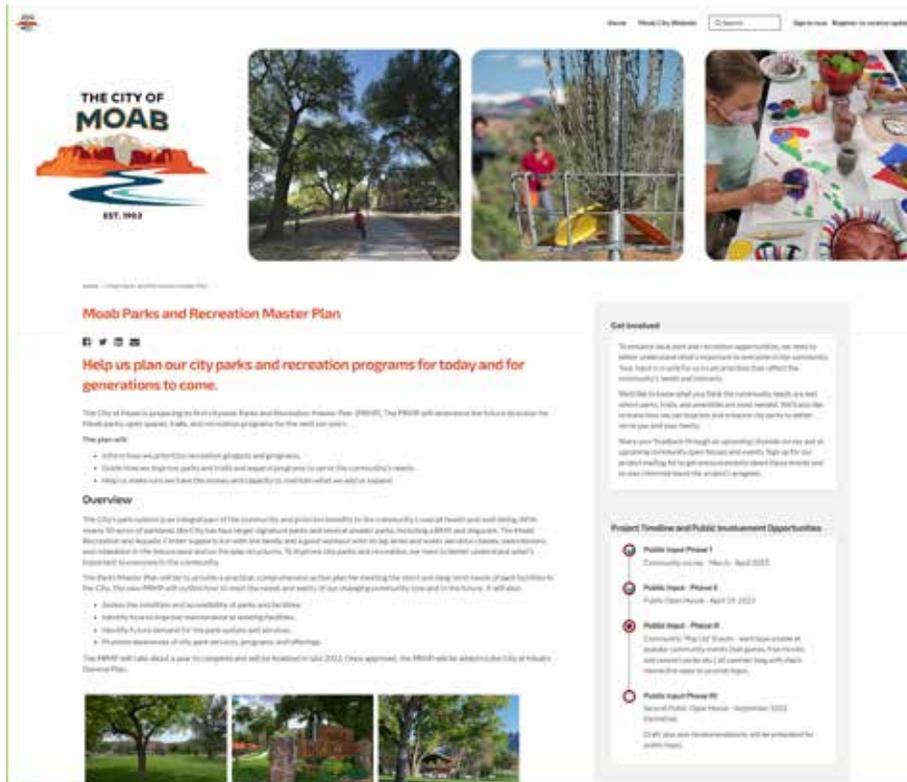


Figure 5. Engage Moab Project Webpage

and maps to elicit comments and feedback from attendees. City staff and project team staff engaged with participants to identify general needs and interests for park and recreation in Moab. Approximately 30 people attended the meeting to review materials and provide comment. A summary of comments for the first open house is provided in Appendix B.

## OPEN HOUSE #2

The City hosted a second in-person open house from September 13th from 4:30 pm to 6:00 pm at the Moab Arts Center. The open house was structured in a manner similar to the first online open house and included displays covering project information, outreach highlights and potential project recommendations for parks and trails. The online open house was promoted through social media posts, local newspapers, radio, and the City website and Engage Moab platform.

Attendees were encouraged to talk to project team members and record their comments on the displays. City staff and project team staff engaged with participants to identify project recommendations and ideas for park and recreation in Moab. Approximately 35 people

attended the meeting to review materials and provide comment. A summary of responses to the second open house is provided in Appendix C.

## ENGAGE MOAB ONLINE FORUM

The City of Moab implemented an integrated online engagement platform to the City website, called Engage Moab. This Parks and Recreation Master Plan effort was one of the initial highlighted projects on Engage Moab. The site included information about the plan and public process, periodic updates and interim project documents, such as presentation materials and summaries from community outreach. Engage Moab was also an additional forum for community members to offer direct feedback, comments and questions.

## STAKEHOLDER DISCUSSIONS

In-person and online group discussions with external and internal stakeholders were conducted to assess local needs and opportunities for enhancements and coordination. Stakeholders were selected based on their past or future interest and involvement in recreation,

park, sport or trail facilities. The group-based discussion sessions occurred between February and May 2023. The stakeholder groups sessions were organized by topic: environment & sustainability, general park interests, partner agencies, trails, and City policymakers. Summary meeting notes are provided in Appendix D.

## COMMUNITY EVENT TABLING

City staff members conducted a series of tabling activities at community events and festivals. Tabling occurred between June and September to build awareness of the Plan and solicit input on local interests and priorities for park and recreation system improvements. Tabling occurred at the Arts & Ag Moab Market and Movies in the Park.

## TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETINGS

A project-specific Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) provided feedback on the development of the PRMP during three meetings during 2023. The first session occurred on February 27, 2023, immediately after the planning project was initiated. The TAC was provided an overview of the planning process and provided their perspectives on specific challenges, opportunities and ideas about City parks, trails and recreation programs. The TAC spent significant effort reviewing and commenting on the public process and feedback, project priorities, and system-wide goals and improvement projects. Subsequent sessions occurred in June and October. The TAC also reviewed and commented on strategies and recommendations of the draft Plan.

## OTHER OUTREACH

In addition to the direct outreach opportunities described above, the Moab community was informed about the planning process through a variety of media platforms. The following methods were used to share information about the project and provide opportunities to participate and offer their comments:

- City website home page
- PROS Plan project page on Engage Moab
- Emails to the Parks and Recreation distribution list
- Social media: Instagram, X (Twitter) & Facebook
- Media releases
- Announcements at stakeholder group meetings

Figure 6. Screenshots of City Social Media & Website



# BENEFITS OF PARKS, RECREATION & OPEN SPACE

A number of organizations and non-profits have documented the overall health and wellness benefits provided by parks, open space and trails. The Trust for Public Land published a report called *The Benefits of Parks: Why America Needs More City Parks and Open Space*. This report makes the following observations about the health, economic, environmental, and social benefits of parks and open space:

- Physical activity makes people healthier.
- Physical activity increases with access to parks.
- Contact with the natural world improves physical and psychological health.
- Value is added to community and economic development sustainability.
- Benefits of tourism are enhanced.
- Trees are effective in improving air quality and assisting with stormwater control.
- Recreational opportunities for all ages are provided.



Photo: Jason Strother (JTS media)



Photo: Jason Strother (JTS media)

## Physical Activity Benefits

Residents in communities with increased access to parks, recreation, natural areas and trails have more opportunities for physical activity, both through recreation and active transportation. By participating in physical activity, residents can reduce their risk of being or becoming overweight or obese, decrease their likelihood of suffering from chronic diseases, such as heart disease and type-2 diabetes, and improve their levels of stress and anxiety. Nearby access to parks has been shown to increase levels of physical activity. According to studies cited in a report by the National Park and Recreation Association, the majority of people of all ages who visit parks are physically active during their visit. Also, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that greater access to parks leads to 25% more people exercising three or more days per week.

## Community Benefits

Park and recreation facilities provide opportunities to engage with family, friends, and neighbors, thereby increasing social capital and community cohesion, which can improve residents' mental health and overall well-being. People who feel that they are connected to their community and those who participate in recreational, community and other activities are more likely to have better mental and physical health and to live longer lives. Access to parks and recreational facilities has also been linked to reductions in crime, particularly juvenile delinquency.

## Economic Benefits

Parks and recreation facilities can bring positive economic impacts through increased property values, increased attractiveness for businesses and workers (quality of life), and through direct increases in employment opportunities.

In Utah in 2021, outdoor recreation generated \$6 billion in consumer spending and \$3.1 billion in wages and supported over 66,700 jobs. Preserving access to outdoor recreation protects the economy, the businesses, the communities and the people who depend on the ability to play outside. According to the Outdoor Recreation Economy Report published by the Outdoor Industry Association, outdoor recreation can grow jobs and drive the economy through management and investment in parks, waters and trails as an interconnected system designed to sustain economic dividends for residents.

## CHAPTER 4

# Classifications & INVENTORY



Photo: Moab Times-Independent

**T**he City of Moab manages over 110 acres of parks and open space lands, providing public open space, active recreational facilities for team and individual sports, an aquatic center, an arts center, playground equipment at six parks, and miles of walking paths and trails.

## PARKLAND CLASSIFICATIONS

Parkland is classified to assist in planning for the community's recreational needs. The classifications also reflect standards that inform development decisions during site planning, in addition to operations and maintenance expectations for the level of developed facilities or natural lands. The Moab park system

is composed of a hierarchy of various park types, each offering recreational opportunities and natural environmental functions. Collectively, the park system is intended to serve the full range of community needs.

Classifying parkland by function allows the City to evaluate its needs and to plan for an efficient, cost effective, and usable park system that minimizes conflicts between



park users and adjacent uses. Several factors are considered when classifying parks:

- Specific needs in neighborhood, service area, or community;
- Suitability of a site for a particular use;
- Cost and effort of development;
- Possibility for public-private partnerships; and
- Operating and maintenance costs.

Each park classification defines the site's function, expected amenities, and recreational uses. The classification characteristics serve as general guidelines addressing the size and use of each park type. The following five classifications are in effect in Moab and are defined as follows.

## COMMUNITY PARKS



### Size

- 5 to 40 acres

### Existing Facilities

- Center Street Ballpark
- Lions Park
- Old City Park
- Swanny City Park

Often the most-visited type of park in a city system, a community park can range from 5 to 40 acres in size and serves larger geographic areas, typically within a two- to five-mile travel distance from the park. Many visitors drive to these parks, and parking is provided. In areas without neighborhood parks, community parks also can serve as local neighborhood parks. Community parks offer programmed activities, as well as passive, unstructured recreation. Amenities may include athletic fields, skate parks, play courts, spray parks, swimming areas, children’s play areas, off-leash dog areas, individual and group picnic shelters, trails, natural areas and community gardens. Indoor recreation and/or aquatic facilities can be co-located within a community park. Athletic fields may be natural, synthetic turf, or a combination of surfaces, with or without field lighting. Because of the variety of recreation opportunities and the large number of people served, community parks require support facilities such as restrooms, parking lots and maintenance facilities.

### Typical Amenities

#### Passive Recreation

- Seating
- Casual Use Spaces
- Internal Walking Trails
- Beach / Water Access
- Community Gardens
- Unique Landscape Features
- Natural Spaces

#### Active Recreation

- Creative Play Attractions
- Playgrounds
- Biking Trails
- Outdoor Fitness / Exercise Facilities
- Rectangular Fields
- Diamond Fields
- Basketball Courts
- Tennis / Pickleball Courts
- Volleyball Courts
- Water Play

#### Facilities

- Individual Picnic / Sitting Areas
- Group Picnic Areas
- Park Shelters
- Skateparks / Bike Skills
- Splash Pads / Spray Parks
- Hand-Carry Watercraft Launch
- Outdoor Event Spaces
- Off-leash Areas
- Restrooms
- Parking

# NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS



## Size

- <1 acre and up to 5 acres

## Existing Facilities

- Circle Park
- Dixie Park
- Rotary Park

A neighborhood park is typically 0.5 to 5 acres in size, depending on a variety of factors including neighborhood need, physical location, and opportunity. Neighborhood parks are intended to serve residential areas within close proximity (up to ½-mile walking or biking distance) of the park and should be geographically distributed throughout the community. Topography and population density can influence the location of a neighborhood park. Access to neighborhood parks is mostly pedestrian, and park sites should be located such that people living within the service area can reach the park safely and conveniently. Connecting and frontage streets should include sidewalks or other safe pedestrian access. Neighborhood parks should be located along road frontages to improve visual access and community awareness of the sites. Additionally, street plans should encourage maximum connectivity and public access to park sites. These parks can offer both active and passive recreation on a limited scale, but they are used primarily for unstructured recreational activities. Amenities may include children’s playgrounds, open space, trails, picnic areas, small facilities for active recreation, open lawn areas, and gathering spaces. Support facilities may include restrooms and off-street parking.

## Typical Amenities

### Passive Recreation

- Seating
- Casual Use Spaces
- Internal Walking Trails
- Beach / Water Access
- Community Gardens
- Unique Landscape Features
- Natural Spaces

### Active Recreation

- Creative Play Attractions
- Playgrounds
- Biking Trails
- Outdoor Fitness / Exercise Facilities
- Rectangular Fields
- Diamond Fields
- Basketball Courts
- Tennis/Pickleball Courts
- Volleyball Courts
- Water Play

### Facilities

- Individual Picnic / Sitting Areas
- Group Picnic Areas
- Park Shelters
- Skateparks / Bike Skills
- Splash Pads / Spray Parks
- Hand-Carry Watercraft Launch
- Outdoor Event Spaces
- Off-leash Areas
- Restrooms
- Parking

## SPECIAL USE PARKS



### Size

- Unique to each site

### Existing Facilities

- Anonymous Park / BMX Park
- Bark Park (OLA)
- Center St. Gym
- Disc Golf Course
- Moab Arts Center
- Moab Aquatics & Recreation Center

Special use facilities include single-purpose recreational areas or stand-alone sites designed to support a specific, specialized use. This classification may include golf courses, disc golf courses, BMX tracks, sport field complexes, sites of historical or cultural significance, such as museums, historical landmarks and structures, off-leash dog parks and public plazas in or near commercial centers. Specialized facilities may also be provided within a park of another classification. No standards exist or are proposed concerning special facilities, since facility size is a function of the specific use.

## Typical Amenities

### Passive Recreation

- Seating
- Casual Use Spaces
- Internal Walking Trails
- Beach / Water Access
- Community Gardens
- Unique Landscape Features
- Natural Spaces

### Active Recreation

- Creative Play Attractions
- Playgrounds
- Biking Trails
- Outdoor Fitness / Exercise Facilities
- Rectangular Fields
- Diamond Fields
- Basketball Courts
- Tennis / Pickleball Courts
- Volleyball Courts
- Water Play

### Facilities

- Individual Picnic / Sitting Areas
- Group Picnic Areas
- Park Shelters
- Skateparks / Bike Skills
- Splash Pads / Spray Parks
- Hand-Carry Watercraft Launch
- Outdoor Event Spaces
- Off-leash Areas
- Restrooms
- Parking

# OPEN SPACE



## Size

- Unique to each site

## Existing Facilities

- Mill Creek Parkway

Open spaces are natural areas intended for riparian and habitat preservation, while allowing public access and limited passive use. Sites typically contain sensitive areas such as wetlands, streams and steep slopes, which also provide habitat for wildlife. These sites may serve as trail corridors. Low-impact or passive activities, such as walking and nature observation, may be allowed, where appropriate, along with limited support facilities such as parking and restrooms. When feasible, open space may support small pockets of park amenities that enhance outdoor recreational use, such as the Robin Groff bike track, picnic tables, benches and small play areas. Size varies with each open space property.

## Typical Amenities

### Passive Recreation

- Seating
- Casual Use Spaces
- Internal Walking Trails
- Beach / Water Access
- Community Gardens
- Unique Landscape Features
- Natural Spaces

### Active Recreation

- Creative Play Attractions
- Playgrounds
- Biking Trails
- Outdoor Fitness / Exercise Facilities
- Rectangular Fields
- Diamond Fields
- Basketball Courts
- Tennis/Pickleball Courts
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### Facilities

- Individual Picnic / Sitting Areas
- Group Picnic Areas
- Park Shelters
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- Splash Pads / Spray Parks
- Hand-Carry Watercraft Launch
- Outdoor Event Spaces
- Off-leash Areas
- Restrooms
- Parking

## Trails

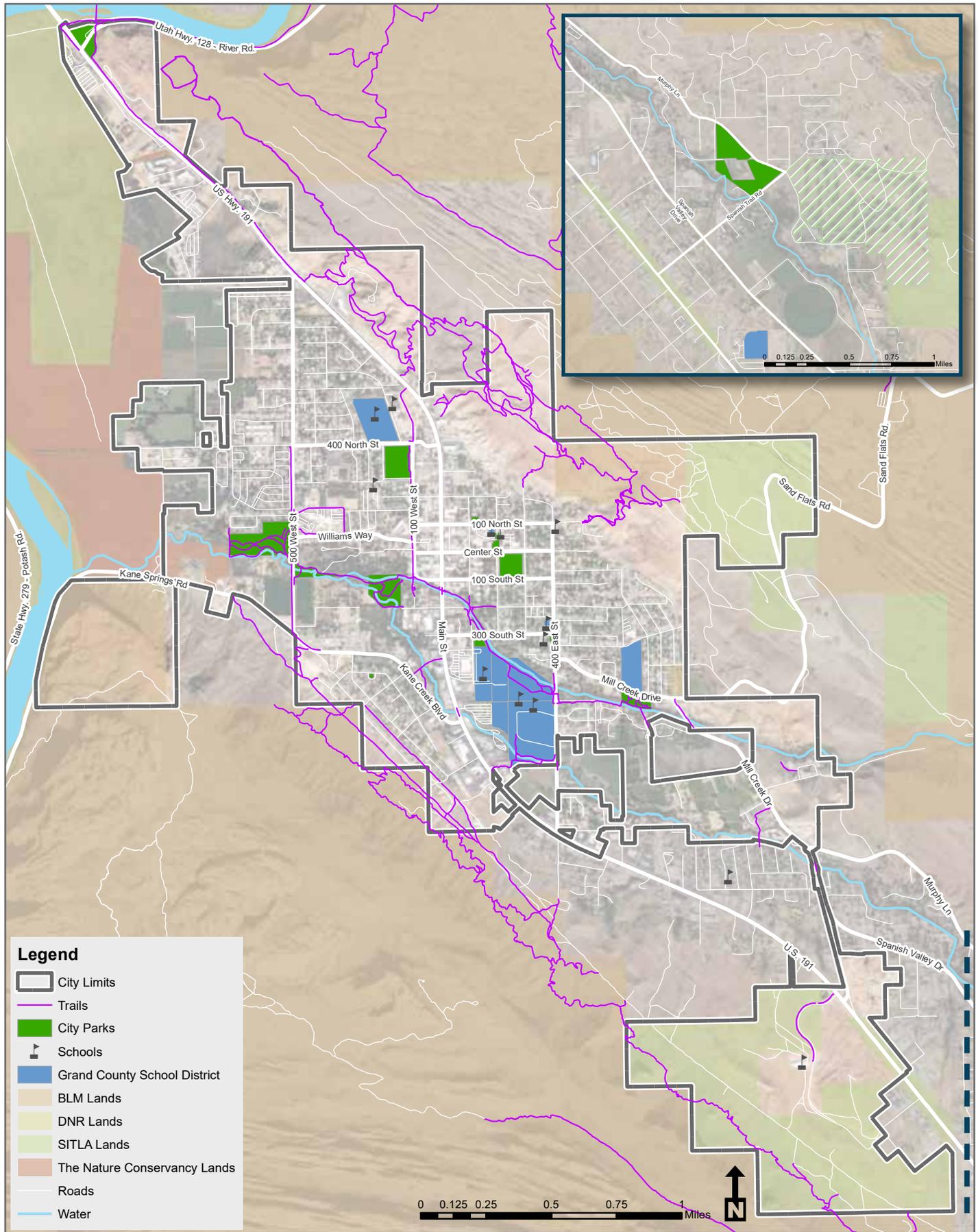
This Plan details recreational trails within the City for public access and multiple or shared use. Trail corridors that include sidewalks and bicycle lanes or those within the right-of-way are addressed separately in the Unified Transportation Master Plan. Chapter 6 provides more detail on the system for recreational trails in Moab..

## FACILITY INVENTORY

The City of Moab provides and maintains a growing system of parks that supports a range of active and passive experiences. The park and open space inventory identifies the recreational assets within the City. Moab’s park system has over 110 acres of parkland and open space. The Moab Golf Club is operated contractually on 266.7-acres of City-owned property and is not a part of this park planning process. The following table summarizes the current land inventory in Moab. The map on the following page shows the location of existing parks and open spaces within the City.

Figure 7. Existing Inventory of City Park & Open Space

Site Name	Acreage	Classification	Owner
Anonymous Park / BMX Park	15.92	Special Use Park	City
Bark Park	0.90	Special Use Park	GCSO
Center Street Ballpark	4.90	Community Park	City
Center Street Gym	0.86	Special Use Park	City
Circle Park	0.17	Neighborhood Park	City
Disc Golf Course	47.82	Special Use Park	City
Dixie Park	0.17	Neighborhood Park	City
Lions Park	4.91	Community Park	UDOT
Mill Creek Parkway	14.73	Open Space	City
Moab Arts Center	0.33	Special Use Park	City
Old City Park	8.53	Community Park	City
Rotary Park	3.44	Neighborhood Park	City
Swanny City Park & MRAC	7.70	Community Park	City
<b>Total Acreage</b>	<b>110.4</b>		



See inset

Map 1: Existing Parks, Open Space & Trails

## City Open Space

### Mill Creek Parkway

Mill Creek originates in the La Sal Mountains and winds through Moab to the Colorado River. A paved recreational pathway offers non-motorized travel for walkers, cyclists, and other muscle-powered users. The main pathway along the Mill Creek is approximately two miles long with connections to other trail segments, parks, schools, retail services and city sights.



## City Facilities

### Moab Recreation & Aquatic Center

Located at 374 North Park Avenue in the northwest corner of Swanny City Park, the aquatic center features both indoor and outdoor pools and offers a variety of swim lessons and classes. The fitness center provides a range of fitness options including workout equipment, fitness and wellness classes and personal training.

MRAC includes:

- Indoor 6-lane competition pool with 1-meter and 3-meter diving boards, shallow-water area and 18' slide
- Outdoor 3-lane lap pool with adjoining current channel and bubble pool
- Expansive outdoor leisure pool with zero-entry depth, play structure with slides and fountains
- Grass outdoor lounge areas
- 2,400 square foot fitness center with free weights and cardio machines
- Multi-purpose room available for rental for pool parties, events and social gatherings
- Men's and women's locker rooms
- Family change rooms
- ADA compliant facility
- Retail swim gear
- Public showers



### Center Street Gym

Located at 203 East Center Street, the Center Street Gym provides a place for the community to enjoy a variety of sports opportunities including pickleball, volleyball, basketball and indoor soccer. The gym also has a multi-purpose room available for rent. The Gym is adjacent to the Center Street Ballpark and Sun Court outdoor basketball courts and pocket park, all located on East Center Street. Gym staff help organize and coordinate sport and recreation programs including flag and tackle football, indoor and outdoor soccer, baseball, softball and basketball.





### Moab Arts Center

The Moab Arts Center (MAC) is the City's center for art classes, creative writing, community art exhibits, music and dance. Poetry reading, music instruction and other art and cultural programming is offered for all ages. An Arts and Recreation summer camp offers four weeks of programming for children ages 5 to 10 years and includes art projects, games, field trips and swimming at the City pool. Originally constructed as a Latter Day Saints chapel, this historic building is located at 111 East 100 North Street.

### Moab Golf Club

The Moab Golf Club is operated privately under agreement with the City. The course hosts a clubhouse with a pro shop and snack bar and grill and spans 6,819 yards for a par 72 experience. The Club's 266-acre course is nestled in the valley with views of red rock cliffs and distant mountains.

## OTHER RECREATIONAL LANDS

### School Grounds

Moab is served by the Grand County School District. The Moab Parks, Recreation and Trails Department and the Grand County School District participate in an in-kind agreement for shared use of recreational spaces, referred to as the 'Interlocal Agreement as to the Provision of County-Wide Recreation Services, By and Among the City of Moab, The Grand County Special Services Recreation District, and the Grand County School District,' which is reviewed and updated regularly. As such, this plan references some of the possible spaces and facilities that serve in this capacity. There are five school campuses within Moab city limits, which include the Grand Preschool, Helen M. Knight Elementary (grades K-6), Grand County Middle School (grades 7-8), Grand County High School (grades 9-12) and Arches Education Center (for adult learners and alternative education students) that is co-located with Utah State University-Moab. The Grand County High School and Hopkin Middle School are located on a contiguous campus that contains a football field and surrounding track, one baseball field, one softball field, two soccer fields, six tennis courts and the Youth Garden Project. The Helen Knight Elementary School campus contains multiple play areas with play equipment and painted-asphalt games, along with a basketball court, open grass areas and paved trails.



### County Parks

#### Old Spanish Trail Arena

Grand County owns and operates the Old Spanish Trail Arena that contains a climate-controlled indoor arena and an outdoor arena. Both facilities can be rented for equestrian or non-equestrian events. Located south of Moab on Highway 191, the complex also contains soccer fields, two ballfields, rodeo grounds, 162 covered stalls, a concession facility and parking.

## State Parks

### Dead Horse Point State Park

Within reach for a day's visit, Dead Horse State Park offers mountain biking and hiking trails, viewpoints and overlooks of the Colorado River canyons, camping, restrooms, picnic areas, historic sites and interpretation. This park is located on State Route 313, west of Moab, requiring a 40-minute drive from Moab city limits and is maintained and operated by the State of Utah. The view from 2,000' at the park overlook is one of the most photographed scenic vistas in the west. Millions of years of geologic activity created a panorama of sculpted pinnacles and buttes where the Colorado River runs through a series of dramatic meanders.

## National Parks & Public Lands

### Arches National Park

Within a 10-minute drive north of Moab, Arches National Park contains 76,518-acres of significant vistas and signature geologic features of red rock arches, supported by camping, hiking trails, picnic areas, parking, restrooms, and interpretive sites. Arches instituted a timed entry system in spring 2023 to manage visitor crowding and protect visitor experiences. With its concentration of natural sandstone arches, Arches National Park provides access to many key viewpoints along its paved drive, while hiking and backpacking trails allow more adventurous treks into the geologic formations. The visitor center includes interactive exhibits, educational displays, an auditorium and bookstore. The Devils Garden Campground is located 18 miles from the park entrance and is open year-round. Facilities include potable water, picnic tables, grills, as well as pit-style and flush toilets.

### Canyonlands National Park

Within reach for a day visit and 32 miles from Moab, Canyonlands National Park is Utah's largest national park at 337,598 acres of land and water. Rivers divide the park into three districts: Island in the Sky, The Needles and The Maze. Each district has its own visitor center. The Island in the Sky District is the closest to the

City of Moab. No roads cross the rivers within the park, requiring two to six hours to travel between districts. Hundreds of miles of trails are available for exploration.

### Bureau of Land Management

The BLM Moab Field Office manages 1.8 million acres of spectacular scenery, including a vast array of arches, spires, canyons, cliffs and mesas in the heart of the Colorado Plateau and carved by the Green and Colorado Rivers. This Canyon Country region of BLM contains several managed recreation areas containing trail systems, as well as numerous campgrounds within easy reach of Moab.

### Sand Flats Recreation Area

The 9,000-acre Sand Flats Recreation Area is managed through a unique partnership between Grand County and the Bureau of Land Management. A high plain of slickrock domes, bowls and fins, the Sand Flats Recreation Area rises in the east to meet the colorful mesas and nearly 13,000 foot peaks of the La Sal Mountains. Sand Flats' famous Slickrock and Porcupine Rim bike trails and nearly 40 miles of 4x4 trails are world-renowned for their combination of challenge and scenery. Sand Flats also is popular for camping. Over 200,000 visitors enjoy this recreation area annually.

### Manti-La Sal National Forest

The US Forest Service manages the La Sal Loop-Moab Front Recreation Area just outside of Moab. Over 19 mountain bike trails cover the Recreation Area, which also provides opportunities for scenic drives, motorized activities such as motorcycle riding, OHV riding, and hiking, road biking, rock climbing, camping, peak-bagging, backcountry skiing, hunting, fishing, and snowmobiling. Three campgrounds and one rental cabin are available within the recreation area.



Photo: roadtrippers.com

## Other Open Space

### Scott & Norma Matheson Wetlands Preserve

This 894-acre wetlands preserve is owned and managed by The Nature Conservancy, an international conservation organization. The site has been surveyed to document visitation by over 200 bird species. The Preserve is situated along the floodplain of Colorado River and includes the confluence of Mill Creek. Mill Creek flooding in 2022 damaged the footbridge accessing the Preserve from its main entry along Kane Creek Road. The property includes several miles of trail that connects to Lions Park with several access points at public road ends. Flooding in June 2023 closed the Preserve to visitors indefinitely.

### Trails on Public Recreation Lands

A vast array of trails exist in the greater Moab region offering mountain biking rides through canyons and mesa tops. The 9.6-mile Slickrock Bike Trail is a highly technical ride considered the ultimate mountain biking experience. Other easier trails offer varied terrain and stunning scenery. The Moab Brand Trail System offers multiple routes at different skill levels across public lands in the Moab Canyon. The Klono Trail

System also has multiple routes for different skill levels. Other mountain bike trail systems are well-established on BLM, County, State Park, National Forest and private recreational lands.

## Campgrounds

### Bureau of Land Management (BLM)

Numerous BLM campgrounds are located in extremely scenic locations and are very well-maintained. Many BLM campsites are suitable for RVs, but lack electric hook-ups. There are 26 BLM campgrounds on the public lands surrounding Moab. Offered on a first-come, first-serve basis, most campgrounds fill up daily during mid-March to May and September to October.

### Commercial Campgrounds & Cabins

Commercial (privately owned) campgrounds generally have many conveniences such as showers, running water, RV hook-ups, flush toilets, and more. They also generally accept reservations. There are approximately 15 private campground/cabin operators in the Moab region.



## ANONYMOUS PARK / BMX PARK

15.9 acres

Special Use Park

### Design Opportunities & Capital Improvements

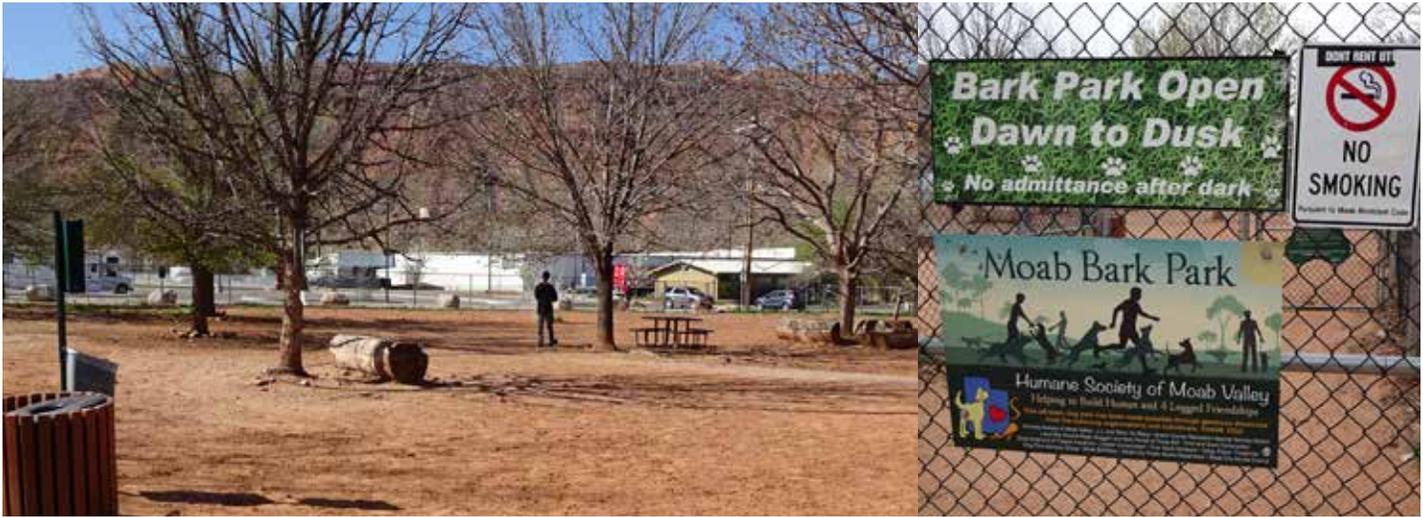
- Hiking trail leads directly down the “fall line” from the parking lot channeling stormwater runoff and eroding the trail tread. It would be better to align the trail at an angle that is less steep.
- As the Friends of Anonymous Bike Park (FOAB) continue to maintain the park and plan for improvements, the City should work to leverage their voluntary contribution and support any grant funding applications.

### Maintenance Considerations

- Flood damaged jumps in need of repair.
- Wayfinding signage could be used to clarify hiking trail alignment to keep foot traffic off BMX/mtn bike routes.

### Amenities

- BMX dirt track
- Hiking trail
- Drinking fountains (turned off seasonally)
- Gravel parking w/ one H/C paved parking stall
- Restrooms
- Park signage
- Trash & recycling receptacles



## BARK PARK

0.9 acres

Special Use Park

### Design Opportunities & Capital Improvements

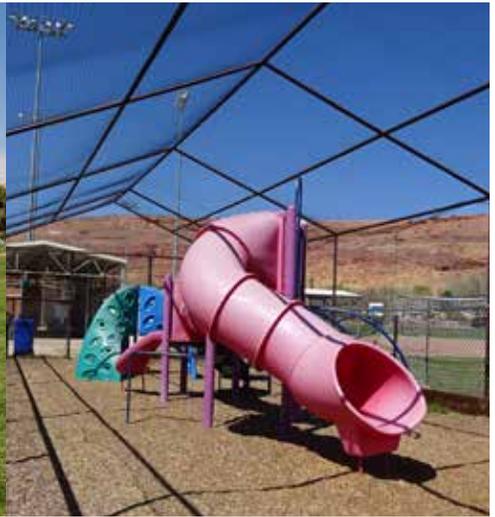
- Add paved pathway into both off-leash areas to provide ADA access.
- Consider adding dog agility features.

### Maintenance Considerations

- Heavy use due to the popularity of the dog park precludes the likely success of establishing and maintaining grass cover within the fenced area.

### Amenities

- 6' chain link fence
- Dog waste bag dispensers
- Double-gated entry
- Drinking fountains (2)
- Large and small dog areas
- Log benches
- On-street parking
- Picnic table
- Shade trees (with irrigation)
- Trash & recycling receptacles
- Park sign (non-city style)



## CENTER STREET BALLPARK

4.9 acres

Community Park

### Design Opportunities & Capital Improvements

- Playground area could benefit from shade cloth. Play area has room for additional equipment. Older existing equipment should be planned for replacement.
- The ballfields and their supporting infrastructure are aging and will need significant upgrades in the coming years. Planning for a new configuration of multi-purpose sports fields integrated with other potential park amenity upgrades or additions should take a holistic approach.

### Maintenance Considerations

- ADA barriers at both entries into playground should be rectified to allow universal access.
- Turfgrass was in poor condition at time of site assessment – post-winter.
- No safety railings on bleachers. Not in compliance with International Building Code that requires safety railings on all seating with 2 or more tiers.
- Surface gradient change at perimeter of infield creates awkward transition.
- Drinking fountain is not ADA accessible.

### Amenities

- Bike rack
- Covered bleachers and dugouts
- Drinking fountain
- On street parking
- Perimeter fencing
- Play area
- Restroom
- Scoring tower
- Soccer field use in outfields
- Softball fields (4)
- Trash & recycling receptacle



## CENTER STREET GYM & SUN COURT

0.86 acres

Special Use Park

### Design Opportunities & Capital Improvements

- Updates to Center Street Gym are cost prohibitive due to asbestos. Consider a holistic look at reuse of the building and space.

### Maintenance Considerations

- Resurface the sport court area of Sun Court to remove the concrete joints for smoother play.

### Amenities

- Basketball court
- Electric vehicle charging station
- Landscape Beds
- Public art
- Seating wall
- Shade trees



## CIRCLE PARK

0.17 acres

Neighborhood Park

### Design Opportunities & Capital Improvements

- Room exists for more amenities, if desired.

### Maintenance Considerations

- No universal / handicapped access.
- Replace wood chip/sand safety surfacing due to inadequate depth.

### Amenities

- Bench
- Open grass lawn
- Irrigation
- Spinner
- Swing set (1 tot & 1 strap)
- Two shade trees



## DIXIE PARK

0.17 acres

Neighborhood Park

### Design Opportunities & Capital Improvements

- Consider adding perimeter fencing to NW section and installing an ADA-compliant paved pathway to play area.
- Add park identification sign that's visible from street and sidewalk.
- Add seating and shade to capitalize on neighboring businesses and encourage community gathering space.

### Maintenance Considerations

- No ADA access to play area.
- Insufficient play safety surfacing. Add required depth of engineered wood chips.

### Amenities

- Climbing wall w/ mural
- Landscape plantings – raised beds
- Paved pathways
- Play area w/ spinners & eagle
- Retaining walls
- Seat walls
- Shade trees
- Trash receptacle



## LIONS PARK

4.9 acres

Community Park

### Design Opportunities & Capital Improvements

- Incorporate the river into future improvements to allow some degree of visibility (potential overlook or viewing platform) without necessarily creating direct access to water's edge. An assessment of river morphology and dynamic shoreline behavior should be conducted before any consideration of direct public access to the water's edge.
- Add bike storage boxes for personal river shuttle.

### Maintenance Considerations

- Handicapped spaces lack required signs. Picnic tables lack wheelchair provision.
- North end of Bridge has upheaved pavement = Non-ADA compliant
- Some newly planted trees have died and need replacement.

### Amenities

- BBQ grills
- Bike trail
- Bike racks
- Boulder park
- Connection to Bridge
- Dog waste bag dispensers
- Drinking fountains
- Dumpster enclosure
- Trail Highway Underpass
- Interpretive signs (history & environment)
- Irrigation
- Landscape beds
- Lighting in parking lots
- Natural area (along River)
- Open grass area
- Park identification signs
- Parking lots
- Paved pathways
- Pavilions
- Picnic tables on pads
- Restroom
- Shade trees (young)
- Transit stop
- Trash & recycling receptacles
- Water spigot
- Wayfinding signage



## MILL CREEK PARKWAY

14.7 acres

Open Space

### Design Opportunities & Capital Improvements

- Open space and natural areas along the Parkway offer opportunities to add some recreational or park amenities such as benches, small play areas, and more public art.
- Consideration should be given to any new additions to ensure flood tolerance and durability.

### Maintenance Considerations

- Sections of the paved trail were destroyed in the September 2022 flooding and still need to be repaired. Flood sediment deposits have created low spots on the trail that are not draining well after rain events. These areas need regrading to allow for adequate surface drainage off the pavement.

### Amenities

- Paved pathway
- Public art & murals
- Benches
- Bridges, underpasses & stairway connections
- Gold Medal Mile
- Dog waste bag dispensers
- Natural area along Mill Creek
- Kiosk with trail map (at Bark Park)
- Trash & recycling receptacles



## OLD CITY PARK

8.5 acres

Community Park

### Design Opportunities & Capital Improvements

- Park needs complete renovation/facelift to replace aging structures and address non-compliance with ADA access. None of the park amenities provide access or seating for wheelchairs
- Duck pond fencing is not attractive (or park-like) and pond could be re-designed to allow perimeter access to the water without the need for fencing.
- Entrance to 1st tee for Disc Golf Course is directly up the slope (follows the fall line). A more gradual and better defined entry should be coordinated with improved signage and park upgrades.

### Maintenance Considerations

- With a future playground upgrade, add more spacing to separate from horseshoe pits or re-locate horseshoe pits.
- Repair the railroad ties, pavilion and the fence around pond (if retained).

### Amenities

- Bee hive box
- BBQ grills
- Covered picnic tables
- Covered stage w/ electric service
- Disc golf course (18-hole)
- Drinking fountains (@ restrooms)
- Duck pond (fenced)
- Wood duck nesting box
- Fire pit with rock seating
- Horseshoe pits
- Interpretive sign
- Irrigation
- Lighting
- Natural spring with waterfall
- On-street parking
- Open grass lawn
- Parking lot (gravel –across the street)
- Picnic pavilion w/ fireplace chimney
- Playground w/ shade cloth
- Restrooms
- Trash & recycling receptacles
- Volleyball (net in grass)



## ROBIN GROFF MEMORIAL PARK

Acreage included in Mill Creek Parkway

Special Use Park

### Design Opportunities & Capital Improvements

- None noted.

### Maintenance Considerations

- None noted.

### Amenities

- Park identification sign
- Bench
- Bike training track elements
- Adjacent to Mill Creek Trail



## ROTARY PARK

3.4 acres

Neighborhood Park

### Design Opportunities & Capital Improvements

- Wayfinding signage along Mill Creek Parkway could include Rotary Park as a destination. And trail signage could provide directional information at each footbridge.
- Isolated picnic tables in the grass areas should be replaced with ADA-accessible picnic tables that include an accessible route.
- Musical park elements are not ADA accessible due to narrow pathways and brick edging. Remove barriers to allow better universal access.

### Maintenance Considerations

- Handicapped parking space at restrooms lacks required H/C sign.
- Portions of Mill Creek Parkway Trail still need repair from fall flood damage.
- Interpretive sign about creek restoration needs to be replaced.
- Repair or replace damaged or broken music instruments.

### Amenities

- Amphitheater seating (@ sports court)
- Basketball ½ court
- Bike racks
- BBQ grills
- Bee Inspired garden
- Footbridges across Creek
- Dog waste bag dispensers
- Drinking fountains
- Gold Medal Mile start point
- Interpretive sign @ restoration
- Interpretive signs in kiosk
- Mill Creek
- Mural on restrooms
- Musical ‘park’
- Open grass area
- Lighting
- Mill Creek Parkway Trail
- Parking (3 lots)
- Pavilion with tables
- Picnic shelter (w/ 1 table)
- Picnic tables
- Playgrounds (2)
- Restrooms
- Storage shed
- Volleyball in grass
- Waterway



## SWANNY CITY PARK

7.7 acres

Community Park

### Design Opportunities & Capital Improvements

- Consider a perimeter paved path that can unite park amenities to provide better ADA access throughout the park.
- Plant additional shade trees.
- Older & aging built structures should be evaluated for integrity.
- A master plan to upgrade the entire park could offer new amenities and bring existing functions into ADA compliance.

### Maintenance Considerations

- Park provides no ADA access to its amenities and features. Any upgrades or renovations should provide compliance with ADA and work to remove existing architectural barriers.
- Playground safety surfacing needs complete replacement to recreate adequate fall safety material depth. Current chip material has decayed and now supports grass and weeds.

### Amenities

- BBQ grills
- Bike rack
- Concrete swale
- Drinking Fountains (not working?)
- Irrigation
- Lighting
- Moab Rec & Aquatic Center
- On-street Parking
- Open grass area
- Paved pathways
- Pavilion
- Picnic Areas
- Picnic Shelters
- Picnic Tables
- Playground
- Restrooms
- Skate park
- Slackline
- Trash & recycling receptacles





## CHAPTER 5

# Parks & Open Space

The park system planning process assesses recreational needs and priorities for park facilities, active use areas, and trails in Moab. The park assessment includes a discussion of specific local needs with consideration given to the City's broader park system. Public input and information on park inventory conditions also were heavily relied upon in the planning process.

## PARK & RECREATION TRENDS

A review of several recognized park and recreation resources on national, state, and regional data provides an overview of current trends, market demands, and agency comparisons. These outdoor recreation trends, combined with community interests in parks, trails, and open space and an assessment of current conditions and levels of service, help identify and shape recommendations for park system improvements. Examining current recreation trends can help inform potential park and recreation improvements and opportunities that may enhance the community and create a more vibrant parks system as it moves into the future.

The following national and state data highlights some of the current park usage trends and may frame future considerations for Moab’s park system. Additional trend data and summaries are provided in Appendix E.

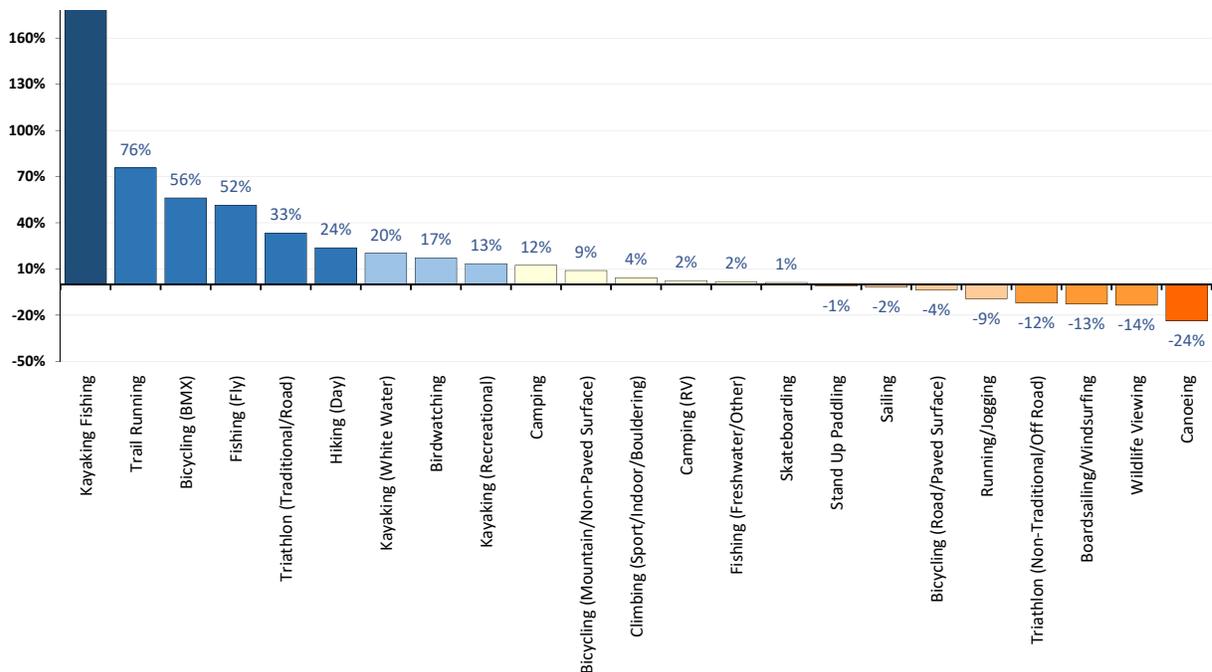
- 90% of U.S. adults believe that parks and recreation is an important service provided by their local governments. <sup>(1)</sup>
- 84% of U.S. adults seek high-quality parks and recreation when choosing a place to live. <sup>(1)</sup>
- Running, jogging, and trail running are the most popular outdoor activities across the nation, based on levels of participation, followed by hiking, fishing, biking, and camping. <sup>(2)</sup>
- The outdoor activity categories with the highest growth rates among kids included backpacking, snowshoeing, canoeing, climbing, and off-road triathlon. <sup>(2)</sup>
- A significantly higher percentage of seniors (ages 55+) are participating in outdoor recreation. In 2022, the senior participation rate hit a record high of 35% and is rising. <sup>(2)</sup>
- Participation nearly doubled for pickleball in 2022, increasing by 85.7% year-over-year. In

2022 for the first time in over seven years, every racquet sport increased its total participation number compared to the previous year. <sup>(3)</sup>

- Wildlife viewing and paddle sport participation increased statewide by 28% since 2017. <sup>(4)</sup>
- Nationally, outdoor recreation economic activity increased 19% from 2020 to 2022, while the overall U.S. economy only saw a 5.9% increase. <sup>(5)</sup>

According to the Sports and Fitness Industry Association, participation nearly doubled for pickleball in 2022, increasing by 85% year-over-year. In 2022 for the first time in over seven years, every racquet sport increased its total participation number compared to the previous year. In terms of team sports, the overall participation rate approached, but did not exceed, the 2019 rate. Basketball, outdoor soccer, and flag football all posted three-year increases of over 4.5%, with basketball leading the way with a 13% increase since 2019. Lifestyle activities generally remained very popular. Golf and tennis have grown more than 20% since 2019, and yoga grew more than 10% in that same time

Figure 8. 5-Year Change in Outdoor Sports Participation (2021, Outdoor Foundation)



Sources:

- (1) 2022 American Engagement with Parks Report, National Recreation and Park Association
- (2) 2023 Outdoor Participation Trends Report, Outdoor Foundation
- (3) 2023 Sports, Fitness, and Leisure Activities Topline Participation Report, Sports and Fitness Industry Association
- (4) 2022 Assessment of Resident Demand, Washington State 2023 Recreation & Conservation Plan (draft)
- (5) 2022 Outdoor Recreation Satellite Account data, U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis
- (6) The State of Utah’s Travel and Tourism Industry, 2017, Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute, University of Utah

# 96%

of survey respondents feel that local parks and recreation opportunities are important or essential to the quality of life in Moab.

Outdoor recreation is a primary driver for Utah's tourism industry (Governor's Council on Balanced Resources, 2013). In 2016, tourists spent approximately \$8.4 billion in Utah. This spending includes gasoline purchases, car rentals, transportation fares, parking, lodging, dining, groceries, and entertainment and recreation-related activities. Businesses associated with outdoor recreation contributed some \$1.23 billion in state and local sales tax revenue. <sup>(6)</sup>

period. Trail running and day hiking participation grew for the fifth straight year.

Utah's 2019-2023 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (UORP) was prepared by the Utah Department of Natural Resources and the Utah Division of Parks and Recreation to guide decisions on the expenditure of scarce outdoor recreation acquisition and development dollars in the state. The development of the UORP is influenced by the assessment of supply and demand of recreational areas and facilities through surveys and inventories to help address the most pressing outdoor recreation needs in the state. The Utah recreation industry is as diverse and dynamic as its natural resources. The state boasts a wide spectrum of natural and human-made attractions, recreational opportunities and cultural heritage sites. Nearly 75% of the state consists of land administered for public use by federal, state, and local governments and resource management agencies.

Recreation professionals from across the state representing federal, state, tribal, regional and local park and recreation-related agencies were surveyed about their priorities and general recreational needs.

- Playgrounds, restrooms, shade structures/pavilions, recreation centers, lighting and trails/walkways were identified as the most important facility renovations identified by the recreational professionals.

- Recreation professionals from across the state representing federal, state, tribal, regional and local park and recreation-related agencies were surveyed about their priorities and general recreational needs.

In 2018, a survey of Utah residents was conducted to determine what recreation activities are important, how often people participate in those activities, where they like to recreate, and what recreation facilities are needed most in their communities. Residents were asked what three most common outdoor recreation activities they have participated in over the past year. The top three outdoor recreational activities provided by survey respondents are hiking, camping and fishing, the same top three results from previous UORP surveys.

- Survey respondents were asked to assess their level of participation in 22 specific recreation activities listed by categories over the last year. Hiking, mountain biking, ATV/ORV riding and climbing ranked in the top tier high frequency activities.
- Survey respondents were also asked to assess their top two recreation needs for their area/community. The most important recreation needs identified by the respondents are trails/pathways (all forms), parks/open space, more public access, and camping areas/campgrounds/campsites.

## LOCAL INSIGHTS & FEEDBACK

Beyond the broader perspectives of national and state recreation trends, local needs were explored through a community survey, online comments, stakeholder interviews, tabling events, and public open house meetings to gather feedback on priorities, interests, and future needs for Moab’s park system.

### Community Survey Results

The community survey confirmed that Moab residents strongly value their local parks, recreation options and open space opportunities. Virtually all survey respondents (96%) feel that local parks and recreation opportunities are important or essential to the quality of life in Moab. Residents of all ages value parks and recreation similarly – there were no significant differences between age groups.

Residents visit their parks frequently. The top five sites with the most visitation include Swanny City Park, Mill Creek Parkway, Moab Recreation & Aquatic Center, Rotary Park and Old City Park. The Mill Creek Parkway receives the most frequent visitation, and on a weekly basis, at least one-quarter of respondents visit Mill Creek Parkway, the Moab Recreation & Aquatic Center and Swanny Park.

A large majority of respondents (75%) are somewhat to very satisfied with the City of Moab parks and open space. Respondents also rated the condition of a variety of park and recreation facilities. Overall, respondents were very measured in rating the condition of City parks and facilities; newer facilities were rated highly.

Surveyed residents participate in a range of activities and programs and visit local parks and recreation facilities for a variety of reasons. The most popular the most popular reason is for community events and concerts (71%). Majorities of respondents visit parks for family gatherings or picnicking (57%), relaxation (56%), fitness (56%), walking or running (54%) and swimming (52%).



*I think that a main focus for the City of Moab needs to be the Ballpark and Center Street Gym...*

- Survey respondent

Figure 9. Frequency of Visitation (Top 5 Most Visited Parks)



### IMPROVE & EXPAND TRAIL SYSTEM

Top priority

### PLAYGROUND SHADE

68% Support



### RENOVATED & UPGRADED PLAYGROUNDS

59% Support

### INSTALL SPLASH PAD / SPRAY PARK

54% Support



## TRENDS IN PLAYGROUNDS

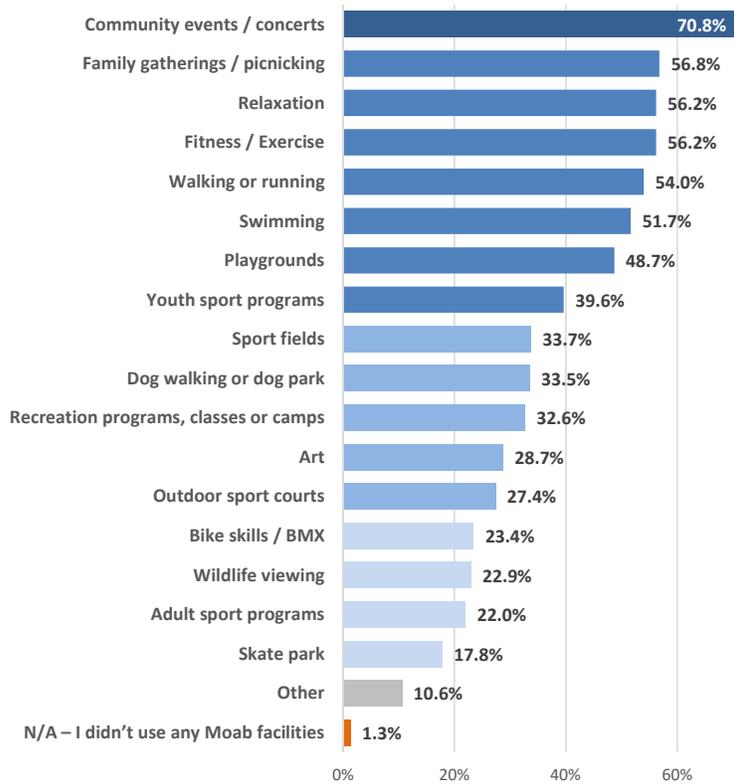
Moab residents strongly value their parks and recreation facilities, and park playgrounds are an important element in outdoor recreation. Reported in Landscape Architect magazine, the top five playground industry trends for 2021 were compiled from data and feedback from parks professionals, landscape architects and educators.

1. **Inclusive Playgrounds**, increasingly popular over the last few years, have been evolving beyond meeting basic ADA guidelines. Designers are seeking to expand accessible playground equipment, consider multi-generational play, and leverage inclusive play to help overcome societal barriers.
2. **Rope-based Playgrounds**, climbers and playground nets provide a technique for working around natural environments and unusual topography. Their flexibility in placement offers more options for connecting with the landscape rather than working around difficult topography.
3. **Outdoor Fitness** has increased importance during the COVID-19 pandemic as many gyms and indoor fitness centers closed and forced more people to seek outdoor options. Outdoor fitness spaces are being increasingly integrated into park and trail designs to encourage health and physical fitness for all ages.
4. **Outdoor Learning** has been implemented during the pandemic to replace or supplement indoor classrooms. Outdoor classrooms can encourage activity in children to counteract the reduction in recess time due to hybrid class schedules and remote learning. Seating, tables, shelters, hand sanitizer stations and other outdoor products are helping create outdoor classrooms.
5. **Human-powered Play** engages users to provide physical energy to “power-up” the activity, such as turning a handle, pressing foot pedals, rotating wheels. These products often relate to sensory experiences like lights and music, story-telling or social games.

Spurred on by the social distancing of the pandemic, these five trends in playground design and development point to more human-to-human interactions that reinforce the value of social connections, even in a physically distanced environment.



Figure 10. Main Reasons for Visiting Local Parks



While residents prioritize maintaining existing parks and facilities, they are generally supportive of improving the City’s park and recreation system as well. Respondents ranked as their top three priorities: improving or upgrading to existing parks (1<sup>st</sup>), expanding trail opportunities (2<sup>nd</sup>), and adding new recreational options in existing parks (3<sup>rd</sup>).

The highest rated priorities include additional walking trails (39%), shade structures for playgrounds (38%), outdoor splash pad (31%) and renovated playgrounds (26%), with more than one in four respondents supporting these improvements.

Figure 11. Sentiment Toward Condition of City Parks & Facilities

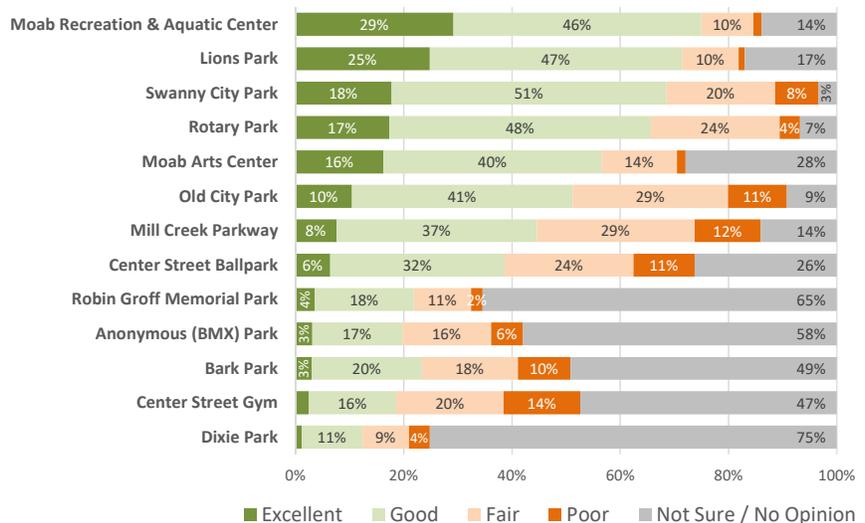
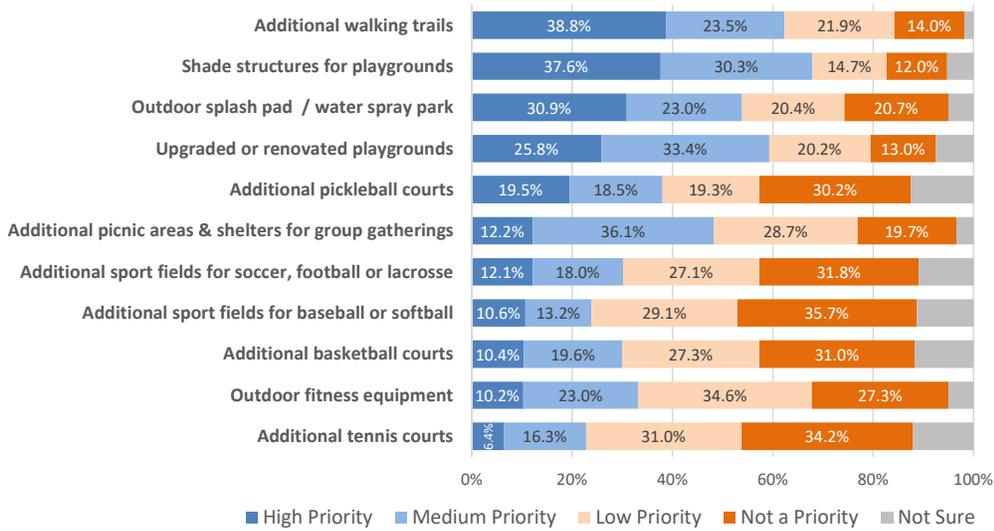


Figure 12. Relative Priorities for Various Amenities



Residents provided a substantial amount of write-in responses at the end of the survey when asked to describe the one thing they would like the City to do to improve parks, trails or natural areas. The highest frequency comments related to additional trails, Pickleball courts, playground upgrades, van lifer and tourist impacts, dogs in parks and ongoing maintenance.

### Stakeholder Discussion Sessions

A series of stakeholder groups for formed to discuss issues, opportunities and needs for city park and recreation amenities. The five different stakeholders groups were composed

of representatives from city leadership, City Council members, related agencies, environmental organizations, and general park users and advocates. Participants were queried about improvements that are needed in the park system to ensure the current provision of adequate park and recreation services and plan for enhanced infrastructure and services for the future. Suggestions varied from operational practices, programming elements, recreational amenities, and infrastructure improvements. In all stakeholders groups, representatives were asked to offer their top priority project for future investment in Moab’s park system. The list below summarizes these top priority project ideas.

Figure 13. Needed Improvements Suggested by Stakeholders

Top Project Priorities	
Adding green infrastructure	Public art in street ROWs
Benches along Mill Creek Greenway	Replace old play equipment
Better bike lanes	Sand volleyball court
Better trail connections	Shade for playgrounds
Control of invasive species	Soccer fields
Improve Center St Ballfield layout	Splash pad/spray park
Indoor pickleball	Upgrade skatepark
Lighting for sports fields	Wayfinding & branding signage
New multi-story Center St gym	Surface hydrology best management practices
Old City Park stage renovation	

## Public Meetings

The City of Moab hosted two, in-person public meetings to gather community feedback and identify gaps or deficiencies in the park system. Between the two meetings, participants identified connecting trails as a primary interest.

The meeting displays included a ‘dot’ exercise to explore top investment priorities using a list of eight potential project types. The highest rated amenities included sport courts (pickleball, tennis and multi-sport), additional in-city walking trails, outdoor splash pad/water spray park, and shade structures for playgrounds. Other ideas offered by the public included:

- Renovating the restrooms and pavilion at Old City Park, plus other safety improvements
- Create an additional grassy dog park area, so not using play area grass at Old City Park
- New indoor rec facility with new pool and indoor pickleball courts
- Safe routes to schools and parks
- Seating/shade needed near play areas
- Interpretive/wayfinding in parks that entice visitors to explore local/regional trails rather than creating additional trails in city parks

Participants at the second public meeting showed substantial interest in various renovation projects. The top five projects included:

- Repair damage to Mill Creek Parkway & Trail
- Expand trail connections to fill gaps
- Swanny Park playground upgrade
- Swanny Park skatepark renovation
- Upgrade park restrooms

Additionally, participants interest in the following:

- Upgrading all bike lane infrastructure, incorporating green infrastructure (trees to shade streets, etc.)
- More benches at parks with shade for parents with multiple children
- Designated slacklines
- More trails going south of town toward Ken’s Lake
- Solar covered shade/bench/pavilion with charger (on timer) for day-use bike charge



*Communications, promotions and marketing to reach more people who might be more positive about parks and rec opportunities in order to increase participation.”*

- Open House participant



*Multi-purpose indoor sports and events facility to bring winter tournaments and visitation to Moab.”*

- Open House participant



*Please please please build a better, safer skatepark. Despite how deeply flawed the design of the current park is and how poorly it was constructed, it nonetheless gets used constantly and often is far too small for the amount of users. Some of the features are almost unusable for an average skater and others are simply strange.”*

- Survey respondent



*Accessible/inclusive play areas.”*

- Open House participant



*More pickleball courts.”*

- Open House participant



*Bike skills park with progressions and stunts  
(improve existing BMX Park to have these)."*

- Open House participant

## PARK CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT

The overall condition of park infrastructure and amenities is one measure of park adequacy and assurance of public safety. Proper stewardship of park infrastructure requires developing a long-term maintenance and capital plan to ensure the safety of park users that aligns with community needs and allocates limited funding resources properly. General park infrastructure include walkways, parking lots, restrooms, drainage and irrigation, lighting systems and vegetation. Amenities include picnic shelters, play equipment, site furnishings, sports courts, sports fields and other recreational assets. Deferred maintenance over a long time period can result in unusable amenities when perceived as unsafe or undesirable by park patrons. Compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines also provide a measure of acceptable condition.

The current conditions of the Moab park system were assessed to identify existing site maintenance issues and opportunities for future capital improvements. The assessment included walkways, parking lots, park furniture, drainage and irrigation, vegetation, and other amenities. The following conditions assessment matrix (Figure 14) summarizes the results of these assessments. These inform developing project prioritization strategy for park improvements, identifying funding strategies, and updating the six-year Capital Improvements Plan.

The matrix on the following page indicates the types of amenities within each park facility, and park infrastructure and amenities are rated based on the following scale:

**1 – Good Condition:** Generally, amenities in ‘good’ condition offer full functionality and do not need repairs. Good facilities have playable sports surfaces and equipment, working fixtures, and fully intact safety features (railings, fences, etc.). Good facilities may have minor cosmetic defects and encourage area residents to use the park.

**2 – Fair:** In general, amenities in ‘fair’ condition are mainly functional, but need minor or moderate repairs. Fair facilities have play surfaces, equipment, fixtures, and safety features that are operational and allow play, but have deficiencies or periods where they are unusable. Fair facilities remain essential amenities for the community but may slightly discourage the use of the park by residents given the current condition.

**3 – Poor:** In general, amenities in ‘poor’ condition are largely or completely unusable. They need significant repairs to be functional. Some examples include athletic fields that are too uneven for ball games, irreparably broken features, buildings that need structural retrofitting, etc. Poor facilities discourage residents from using the park and may present safety issues if left open or operational.

Good conditions should be the goal for the management and stewardship of park facilities. Where infrastructure or amenities are rated as ‘fair,’ strategies should be developed for repair or restoration. Park features, structures, amenities, or landscapes rated as ‘poor’ should receive immediate attention and be prioritized for near-term maintenance, capital repairs, or a new capital project. Facilities in poor condition should also be evaluated and taken out of operation if they are deemed unsafe.

In general, the amenities in Moab parks are in good condition. Recent flooding created a temporary backlog of needed repairs to the trail and park facilities along Mill Creek. Also, system-wide, improvements in providing universal access, removing architectural barriers and ensuring compliance with ADA guidelines should be considered as upgrades and capital repairs are scheduled in older parks and facilities.

Figure 14. Park and Facility Condition Assessment Matrix

Site Name	Acreage	Classification	Park Site Average												ADA Compliance*											
			Playgrounds	Sports Courts/ Basketball	Skate Park	Volleyball	Soccer Fields	Baseball / Softball Fields	Pathways / Trails	Off-Leash Area	Bike Track	Other Rec Element	Site Furnishings	Lighting (Y/N)		Storage	Parking Areas	Public Art	Restrooms	Picnic Shelters	Amphitheater/Stage	Turf	Park Trees	Landscaped Beds	Natural Areas	
<b>PARKLAND &amp; FACILITY SITES</b>																										
Bark Park	0.9	Special	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	3
Anonymous Park / BMX Park	15.9	Special	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	2	-	3	
Center Street Ballpark	4.9	Community	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	3	
Sun Court at Center Street Gym	0.9	Special Use Park	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	2	
Circle Park	0.17	Neighborhood	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	-	-	3	
Disc Golf Course	22.2	Special Use Park	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	1	2	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	
Dixie Park	0.17	Neighborhood	3	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	2	
Golf Course	266.7	Special Use Park	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	1	-	-	1	1	1	-	1	
Lions Park	4.9	Community	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	-	-	1	1	1	1	1	
Mill Creek Parkway	14.7	Open Space	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	2	2	
Swanny City Park	7.7	Community	2	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	2	2	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	3	
Old City Park	16.0	Neighborhood	2	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	2	2	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	3	
Robin Groff Memorial Park	n/a	In Mill Creek Parkway	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	2	1	-	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
Rotary Park	3.4	Neighborhood	1	1	-	2	-	-	1	-	-	2	2	1	2	1	1	-	-	-	1	1	1	1	2	
Average:			1.5	2.0	2.0	2.0	1.0	2.0	1.6	1.0	1.5	1.6	1.5	1.4	1.0	1.7	1.5	2.0	2.0	1.3	1.1	1.1	1.3	1.3	2.4	

**RATING SCALE**

**Playgrounds:**

1	In good condition: no drainage issues; 0-10% material deterioration safety surfacing with a border at the site.
2	In fair condition: drainage issues; 10-25% material deterioration; some small compliance issues that could be spot fixed.
3	In poor condition: drainage issues; 25% or greater material deterioration; needs repair or replacement (but workable).

**Paved Courts:**

1	In good condition: no cracks in surfacing; fencing is functional, free of protrusions, and free of holes/passages; painting and striping are appropriately located, whole, and uniform in color.
2	In fair condition: hairline cracks to ¼", surfacing required; fencing has minor protrusions, or holes/passages that do not affect game play; painting and striping have flaking or color fading.
3	In poor condition: horizontal cracks more than ½" wide, surfacing required; fencing has large protrusions, holes/passages or defects; painting and striping are patchy and color has faded dramatically.

**Signage:**

1	In good condition: a signage system for the site, appropriate signs, no damaged signs.
2	In fair condition; multiple signage system within one site, a few damaged signs (0-10%), need maintenance.
3	In poor condition; multiple signage systems within one site, signs that are not legible from a reasonable distance, some damaged signs (10-25%), old logos, deteriorated materials, no signage.

**Public Art:**

1	In good condition: no vandalism; no signs of weathering.
2	In fair condition: minor signs of weathering or wear.
3	In poor condition: metal leaching/concrete efflorescence/paint peeling/wood chipped or carved into or warping; vandalized.

**Park Structures (Restrooms, Picnic Shelters, Etc.):**

1	In good condition: roof has no leaks; floor shows little sign of wear; finishes are fresh with no graffiti or vandalism; all elements are in working order.
2	In fair condition: roof shows signs of wear but is structurally sound; floor shows some wear; finishes show some wear with some marks or blemishes.
3	In poor condition: roof leaks or otherwise needs repair; floor show significant wear and is difficult to maintain; finishes are dull or discolored, have graffiti, or are not easily maintained; some elements not working or in need of repair (e.g., non-functioning sink).

**Park Trees:**

1	In good condition: trees overall have good form and spacing; no topping; free of disease or pest infestation; no vandalism; no hazard trees.
2	In fair condition; some crowding may exist but overall health is good; less than 5% of trees show signs of topping, disease or pest infestation; vandalism has not impacted tree health (graffiti, not girdling).
3	In poor condition; Form or spacing issues may exist; evidence of disease or pests; vandalism affecting tree health; some hazard trees or trees in danger of becoming hazard trees.

**ADA Compliance:**

1	Appears to comply with ADA standards.
2	Some items appear to not comply, but could be fixed by replacing with relative ease.
3	A number of park assets appear not to comply, including large-scale items like regrading.

**Sport Fields:**

1	In good condition: thick grass with few bare spots; few depressions; no noticeable drainage issues, proper slope and layout; fencing if present is functional, free of protrusions, and free of holes.
2	In fair condition: grass with bare turf areas in high-use locations, some drainage issues in overuse areas, slope is within one percent of proper field slope, infields have grading problems (bump) at transition to grass and have no additive, may not have proper layout and/or orientation, fencing if present has minor protrusions, or holes/passages that do not affect game play.
3	In poor condition: bare areas throughout the year, uneven playing surface that holds water in certain places, drainage issues, slopes not uniform and/or more than one percent from proper field slope, improper layout and/or orientation; fencing has large protrusions, holes/passages or defects.

**Pathways / Trails:**

1	In good condition: surface generally smooth and even; proper width and material for type of pathway; proper clearances; minimal drainage issues.
2	In fair condition: uneven surfaces in places; some drainage issues; some cracking; narrow widths in some places.
3	In poor condition: uneven surfaces; inadequate width; significant cracking or heaving; clearance issues.

**Turf:**

1	In good condition: lush and full, few weeds, no drainage problems.
2	In fair condition: some bare spots, some drainage problems.
3	In poor condition: irrigation problems, bare spots, weeds, soil compacted.

**Site Furnishings:**

1	In good condition; not damaged; free of peeling or chipped paint; consistent throughout park. Trash receptacles, drinking fountain, picnic tables, benches on paved surface.
2	In fair condition; 0-20% furnishings are damaged and require replacing parts; some peeling or chipped paint; furnishings are not consistent, but are operational.
3	In poor condition; 20% or more are damaged and require replacing parts; significant peeling or chipped paint; multiple styles within park site require different maintenance.

**Parking Areas:**

1	In good condition: paving and drainage do not need repair; pavement markings clear; pathway connection provided to facility; proper layout.
2	In fair condition: paving needs patching or has some drainage problems; has wheel stops and curbs.
3	In poor condition: surfaces (gravel, asphalt, or concrete) needs repair; uneven grading; limited signage; no delineation for vehicles.

**Natural Areas:**

1	In good condition: barely noticeable invasives, high species diversity, healthy plants.
2	In fair conditions: Noticeable invasives, fewer species but still healthy.
3	In poor condition: Invasives have taken over, low diversity, unhealthy plants.

**Amphitheater/Stage:**

1	In good condition: paving, stage and stair materials have little to no cracking or peeling; vegetation that is present is healthy; seating and other furnishings show modest signs of wear; views to stage from all seating vantage points.
2	In fair condition: paving, stage and stair materials have some cracking or peeling; vegetation that is present is healthy, but some soil compaction might be present; seating and other furnishings show signs of wear, but are still usable; stage orientation not be ideal for all viewers.
3	In poor condition: paving, stage and stair materials have significant cracking or peeling; vegetation is unhealthy (pests, disease, topped trees), compacted soil; seating and other furnishings need repair or replacement; redesign of space is needed for proper viewing and access.

**Landscaped Beds:**

1	In good condition: few weeds; no bare or worn areas; plants appear healthy with no signs of pest or disease infestation.
2	In fair condition: some weeds present; some bare or worn spots; plants are still generally healthy.
3	In poor condition: many weeds present; large bare or worn areas; plants show signs of pests or disease; compacted soils.

## PARK CONDITIONS SUMMARY

Beyond the individual park facilities, the following summaries offer highlights from park conditions observations as well as some suggestions for improvement and upgrade considerations.

### Infrastructure

#### Park Structures

Picnic shelters across the park system have a range of ages, designs and conditions. To better access the immediate and future needs for building replacements, it would be beneficial to track the installation dates for all the park structures along with primary building materials. Less permanent or short-lived materials will trigger the need for repairs or replacements. Charting the age of all the park system's structures can help predict the need for current and future replacements. The wooden structures (picnic table shelters) at Old City Park and Swanny Park appears to be reaching their expected lifespan. When replacements are budgeted, the new structures should be coordinated with any master planning efforts for those two parks.

#### Parking

Most of the park system's parking areas were paved. Those paved parking lots appeared in good condition. The BMX track at Anonymous Park off 500 West Street is unpaved gravel. While the parking area has a paved handicapped space and travel aisle to the restroom there are no other defined spaces to help guide vehicle use. Swanny and Old City Park have parking along the park perimeter that contributes to the lack of a clearly defined park entrance.

#### Pathways, Trails & Pavement

Old City Park lacked a unified paved trail system that could connect all the park's features and provide ADA access to most of the amenities. Swanny Park has a paved trail along its east perimeter but lacks a connective paved pathway for most of its amenities. Concrete paved pathways in other parks (Lions, Rotary, Dixie, and Center Street Ballpark) were generally in good condition.

Pavement along the Mill Creek Pathway and its side paths still has sections in need of repair or replacement since the September 2022 flood event.

#### Footbridges

The footbridges along most of the Mill Creek Parkway were in good condition and seemed to have withstood the forces of the September 2022 flooding. One small footbridge crossing Pack Creek is missing a few of its decking boards. The footbridge connects the trail behind the Sleep Inn & Suites on Main Street to the rear of the St Francis Episcopal Church on Kane Creek Boulevard.

#### Restrooms/Portable Toilets

Existing restrooms and portable toilets were generally in good condition. One the day of the site visit the toilet at the BMX park appeared backed up. The restroom at Center Street Ballpark lacked any identification sign to indicate public access.

#### Signage & Wayfinding

The Moab park system has a variety of park identification signs. From Bark Park to Swanny Park to Dixie Park to Rotary Park and beyond, the park system lacked a unifying look to the identity of its different parks. To clarify ownership and managing agency, Moab's city parks would benefit from the development of a sign system and set of standards to layout style, colors, materials, fonts, content, etc.

A signage and wayfinding plan using the park identification sign colors and styles can create a unified look and feel to the entire park system. Aging or damaged signs could be replaced with an intentional new standard that helps park and trail users know where they are and what to expect from their experience. A coordinated hierarchy of sign types that applies consistent graphics could be a benefit to the park system. The wayfinding sign system could help direct visitors along the Mill Creek Parkway to connect to different destinations via walking and biking.



## Amenities

### Site Furnishings

Benches, picnic tables, drinking fountains, bike racks, and trash & recycling receptacles are common site furnishings provided in public parks. In Moab's park system, there is a wide variety of styles, colors, ages and conditions of benches, tables and bike racks. Many of the older benches and picnic tables are not ADA-compliant nor are they located along accessible routes. In conjunction with a unified signage system, the City could develop a set of standards for its site furnishings such as benches, picnic tables and bike racks. Coordinated colors and styles can be linked to ADA-compliant designs and allow for simplified replacement processes as different amenities age or need repair. For future park improvements and prior to implementing new master plans for undeveloped parks, it would be beneficial to use the same standard design, style and color for benches, picnic tables, etc.

### Play Equipment

Play equipment in the parks has been installed over different years and some equipment parts are showing signs of wear. The need for replacements should be based on existing conditions as well as predicted by charting out past installation dates and planning for complete replacements when the assets have reached their expected lifespan. Play equipment that

has exposed metal understructure was noted in the individual site assessments. Those structures should be scheduled for replacement in the near future to avoid potential injury and manage play safety risk. Moab's parks have some very old play equipment that needs to be inspected to ensure safe continued use or planned future replacement.

Access to playground areas was not always barrier-free. Several play areas contained timbers or edging that created ADA barriers from park pathway pavement to the lower safety surfacing of the playground. The drop-off edges varied, exceeding the maximum ½-inch tolerance.

### Off-Leash Areas

Bark Park is an off-leashed area (OLA) for small and large dogs. The OLA is a popular park use and serves as a social space not only for the dogs but also for their owners. The doubled-gated entry to both small & large dog areas should be paved to provide universal access for dog owners with mobility challenges.

If warranted by amount of users, a small shelter located along the perimeter fence, near the entry or internally could enhance the user experience and serve as a meeting point for dog owners.



## Landscape/Environment

### Stream Corridors

Moab has two creeks that run through the City. Both Pack and Mill Creek have a long history of significant flood events. As the City grew and more development abutted the riparian corridors, the damage from flooding could more readily affect public and private infrastructure. The Mill Creek Parkway currently has several sections of trail that have been closed since last fall's flood. Awaiting pavement repairs and streambank stabilization work, the Parkway is not a contiguous pedestrian and bicycle system across town. The stream corridor's natural areas have deep sediment deposits from the flooding which may contribute to less flood water storage when the next flood event occurs.

Mill Creek hosts the bulk of the alignment of the Mill Creek Parkway, a paved trail running through conserved parkland. The greenway trail currently ends in Rotary Park. Planning, acquisition and restoration efforts should continue to protect and restore the stream habitat while accommodating the Parkway Trail for public walking and biking.

### Shade Trees

In the context of its high dry environment, Moab has done well to establish and maintain some shade trees in its parks. With an average of 10 inches or less of annual rainfall, supplemental irrigation is required to support deciduous canopy trees for providing shade and more comfortable park environments. Moab's parks have considerable number of older trees that are reaching their life expectancy. An aggressive and proactive tree planting program should be activated to maintain the park system's tree canopy coverage.

### Grass Lawn Areas

The hot and dry growing season in Moab creates a challenge for successfully managed natural turfgrass. Grass areas within parks are irrigated to maintain an adequate grass cover. The irrigation system requires constant monitoring to ensure adequate grass growth for the Center Street Ballpark and open grass areas within the larger parks. Center Street Ballpark has an uneven transition from its dirt infields to the irrigated outfields. This raised edge should be graded smoother to avoid tripping hazards and unpredictable baseball bounces.

## ADA Compliance

As with many older parks, some architectural barriers were present in the park system. Updating and providing ADA accessibility and compliance with federal guidelines should be part of a regular capital repair schedule to ensure the reasonable access on older pavements, parking, playgrounds, picnic amenities, restrooms and recreational elements.

The Moab park system has a few ADA compliance issues with park access at parking areas, missing signs for handicapped parking spaces, missing tactile warning strips, barriers to access into playground areas as well as many benches and picnic tables lacking accessible routes. Standards for park furnishing such as picnic tables, drinking fountains, bike racks, trash receptacles and other common amenities used throughout the park system can be instrumental in assuring consistent ADA compliance and streamlined maintenance and repairs. The City will want to develop an ADA Compliance Checklist to identify and prioritize these deficiencies and develop a methodology for bringing all their parks into compliance.



## Safety & CPTED Considerations

Much of the park layouts and landscapes seemed to meet the basic CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) principles of good visibility and overall positive perceptions of public safety. Park safety conditions were generally good throughout the park system with a few notable exceptions. At Center Street Ballpark, the bleachers did not have safety railings. The International Building Code (IBC) requires safety rails on any bleacher seating with two or more tiers. These bleachers should be retrofitted with IBC-compliant designs.

Playground fall safety surfaces were in a range of conditions. The wood chips at Swanny Park have deteriorated enough to support grass and other vegetative growth. To meet required safety specifications, engineered wood chips need to be a minimum of 15 inches in depth. This depth rarely can support plant growth since it dries very quickly. When weeds are growing beneath play

equipment, it is a good indication that the safety material is deteriorating. Circle Park and Dixie Park also appeared to need full replacement of the play safety fall surfacing material.

## Public Art Installations

A variety of diverse and interesting art installations add character and uniqueness to the City's public spaces and parks. Public art should continue to be incorporated into new and existing parks and trails to promote creative place-making, evoke historical events, foster local identity, and engage local interest.

## Master Planning, Site Development & Enhancements

Swanny City Park, Center Street Ballpark and Old City Park are in need of significant renovations and upgrades. The extent of these new investments warrant consideration to undergo a master planning process that will help guide improvements in the most efficient and coordinated manner.

## PARK DISTRIBUTION – GAP ANALYSIS

Understanding the known gaps in the park system and evaluating the City’s existing levels of service for parks will provide a foundation for strategic planning to ensure that tomorrow’s residents have equitable access to a balanced distribution of parks, trails, and recreation amenities to stay healthy and active.

To better understand the distribution of existing recreation amenities and where acquisition efforts should be considered, a gap analysis of the park system was conducted to examine and assess the community’s current access to various recreation opportunities across the City.

The gap analysis used travelsheds for each park classification and calculated travel distances along the road network starting from known and accessible access points at each park:

- For neighborhood parks, travelsheds were derived using a ¼-mile primary and ½-mile secondary service area with travel distances calculated along the road network starting from known and accessible access points at each park.
- For community parks, travelsheds were derived using ¼-mile, ½-mile, 1-mile and 2-mile travel distances to acknowledge that these park types (including athletic fields) serve a wider array of users and driving to such sites is typical.
- A composite map of these classifications and all City parks and open space illustrate the entirety of City parks to the ½-mile travelshed.

Maps 2 through 4 illustrate the application of the distribution criteria from existing parks. Areas in white do not have a public park within reasonable distance of their home (½-mile). The illustrated ‘travelshed’ for each existing Moab park highlights that certain areas within the City do not have the desired proximity to a local park. Gaps between these service areas constitute “unserved” neighborhoods.

Striving to provide a neighborhood park within a reasonable distance (e.g., ½-mile) may require acquiring new park properties in currently under-served locations or improving multi-modal transportation connections to allow local residents to safely and conveniently reach their local park.

The mapping of park distribution and ‘travelsheds’ helps to illustrate the underserved parts of Moab. Areas of north and southwest Moab have limited access to public parks or open space as indicated by white areas on Map 4. These areas of the City should be targeted for future acquisitions to help create more equitable access for all residents. While these generalized acquisition areas do not identify a specific parcel(s) for consideration, the area encompasses a broader region in which an acquisition would be ideally suited.

Gap analysis modeling also assessed the distribution of various recreation amenities, including playgrounds, sport fields, sport courts, and trails, among others. Maps 5 through 8 illustrate the geographic distribution of these amenities, and this information is helpful in future park planning to improve access to the variety of recreation options desired by the community.

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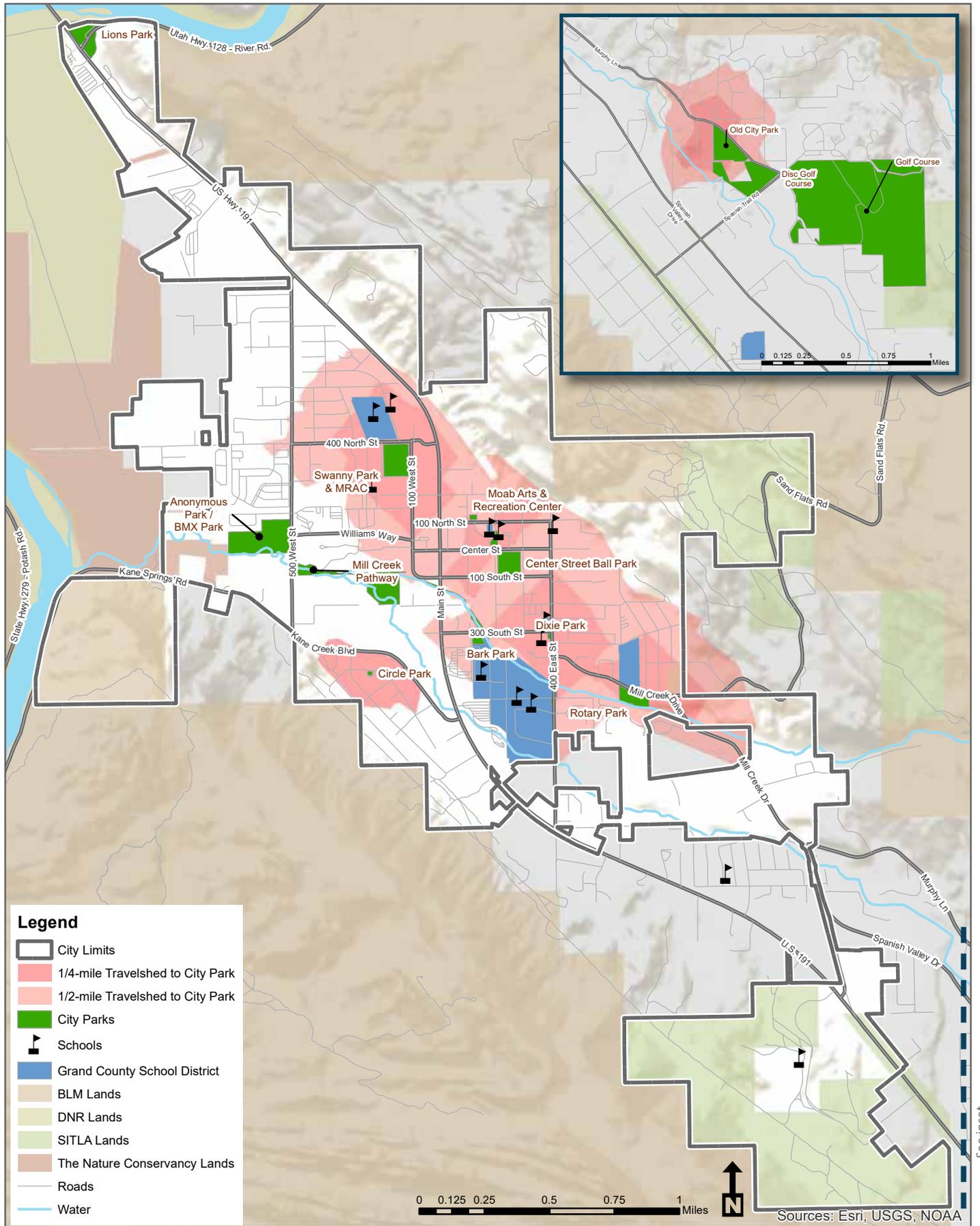
*More pocket parks for parts of the community not within walking distance of these mostly in-town parks.”*

**- Survey respondent**

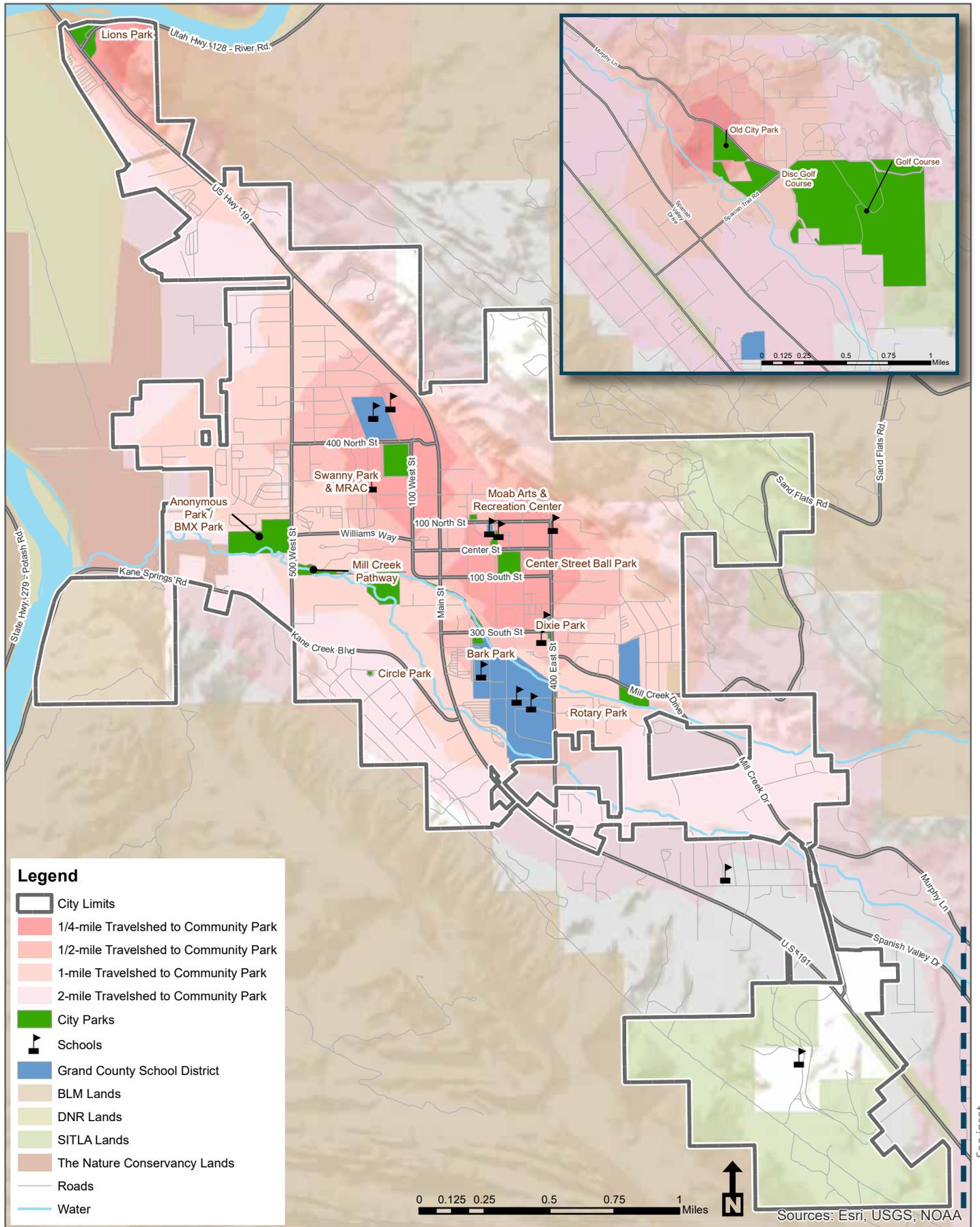
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*Acquiring open space - there are many areas of private property that are heavily used by the community and adjacent to town, but they could close at any time and are irreplaceable.”*

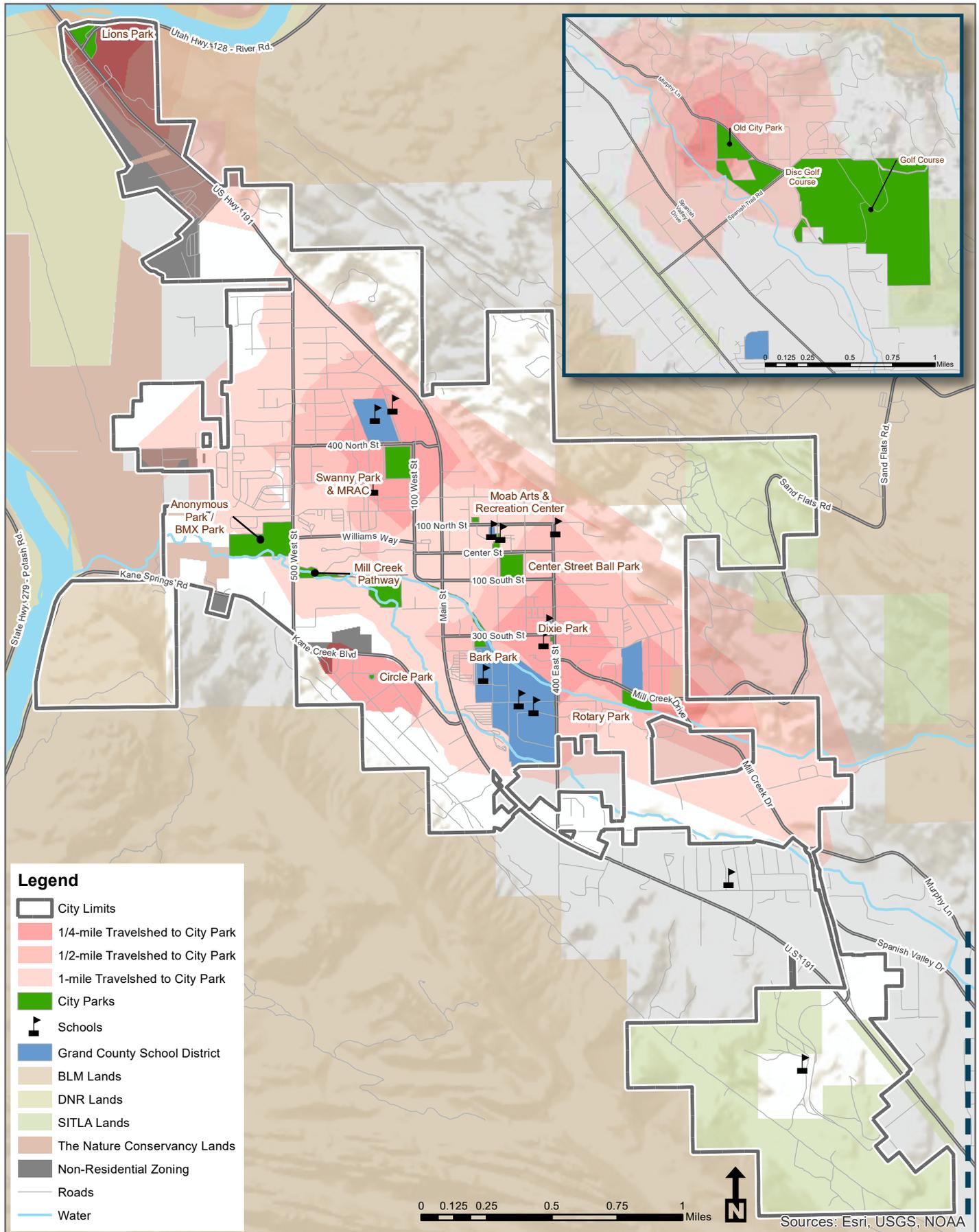
**- Survey respondent**



Map 2: Travelsheds for Neighborhood & Mini Parks (1/4- & 1/2-mile)

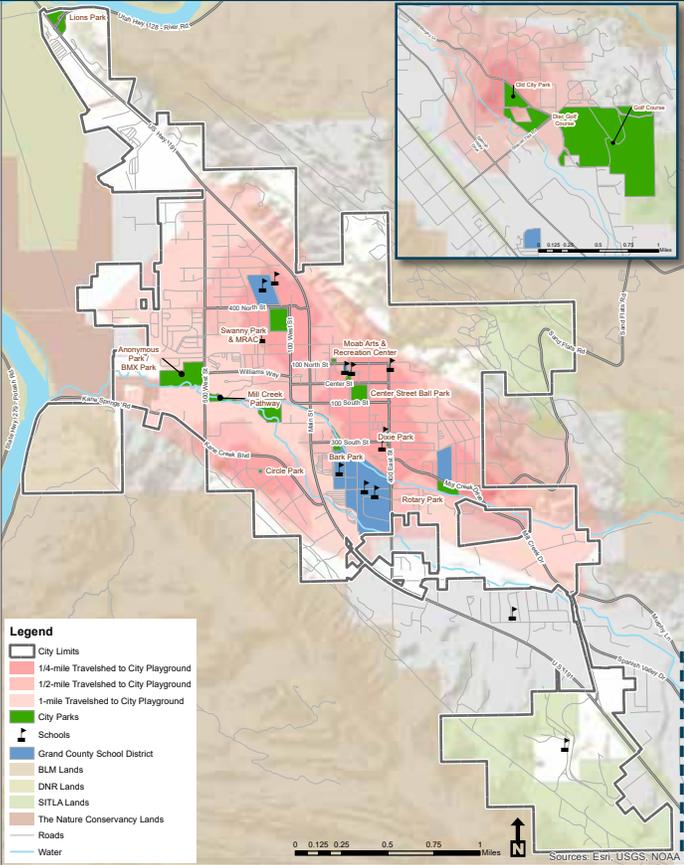


Map 3: Travelsheds for Community Parks (to 2 miles)

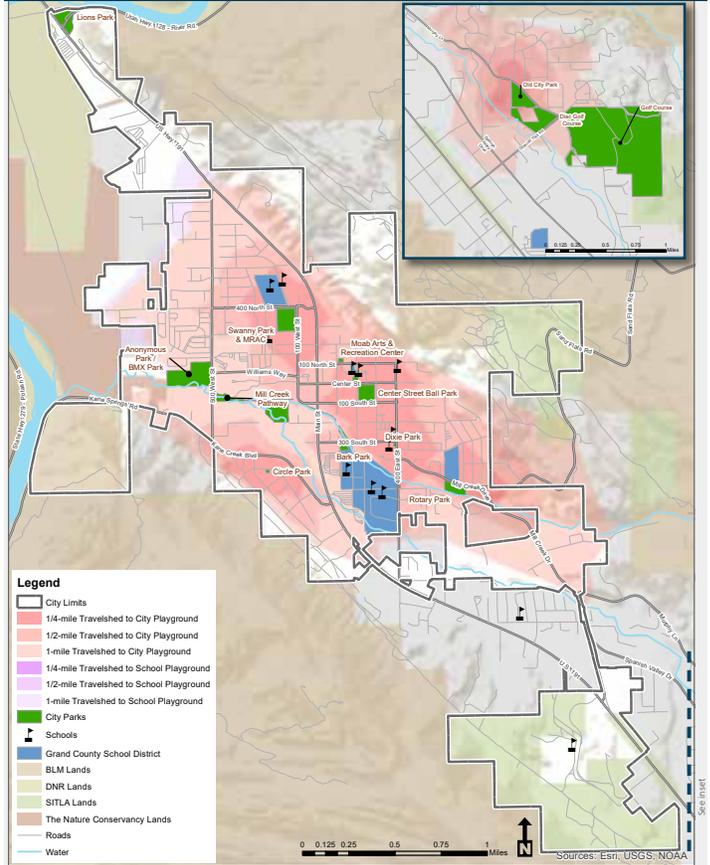


Map 4: Travelsheds for Community, Neighborhood & Mini Parks (1/4-, 1/2- & 1-mile)

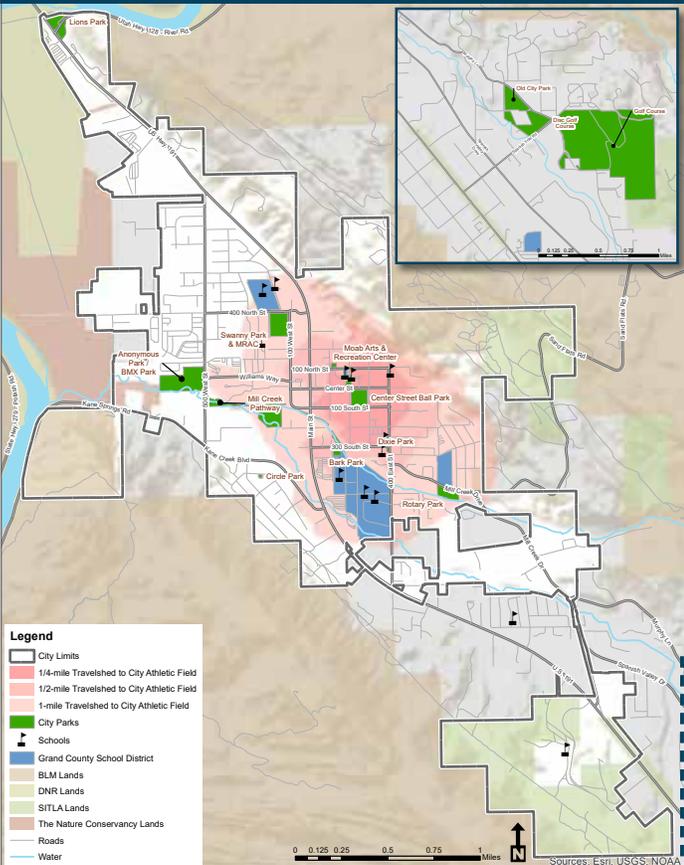
**MAP 5 – TRAVELSHEDS: PLAYGROUNDS (1-MILE)**



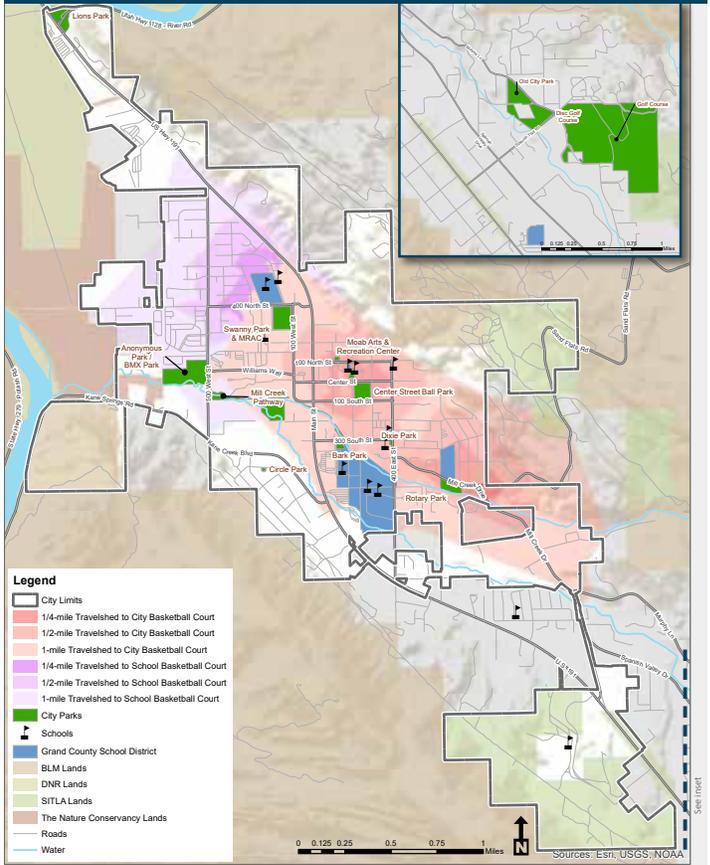
**MAP 6 – TRAVELSHEDS: PLAYGROUNDS WITH SCHOOLS (1-MILE)**



**MAP 7 – TRAVELSHEDS: ATHLETIC FIELDS (1-MILE)**



**MAP 8 – TRAVELSHEDS: BASKETBALL WITH SCHOOLS (1-MILE)**



## LEVELS OF SERVICE

Service standards offer a benchmark for measuring how well the City is meeting the expectations for the provisions of parks, open space, and outdoor recreation facilities for the community. As guidance for assessing current quantities and qualities of parklands and facilities, the level of service (LOS) in Moab can be compared other agencies across the country. The traditional measurement focused on acres of parkland for the population. While this standard should not be used exclusively, it can offer a starting point for examining a number of more customized and diverse approaches to evaluating the City’s current service levels through a variety of metrics.

### National Recreation & Parks Association Agency Performance Review

The 2023 National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) *Agency Performance Review* and accompanying Park Metrics provide comprehensive park and recreation-related data to inform park and recreation professionals and key stakeholders about the state of the industry. The 2023 NRPA Agency Performance Review presents data from more than 1,000 unique park and recreation agencies across the United States, as reported between 2020 and 2022. These data provide guidance to inform decisions and demonstrate the full breadth of service offerings and responsibilities of park and

recreation agencies across the United States. This comparison of nationwide data with the City of Moab can provide guiding insights rather than target benchmarks.

The NRPA data are used to compare different park and recreation providers in communities across the country; however, the Park Metrics database relies on self-reporting by municipalities. Some agencies only include developed, active parks, while others include natural lands with limited or no improvements, amenities, or access. The comparative standards in the table on the following page should be viewed with this variability in mind.

Figure 15 provides the nationwide comparison coupled with aggregate data of jurisdictions with a similar population size to the City of Moab. In most of the listed categories, the City’s provision of parks and recreation is well within the range of other agencies in terms of residents per park, parkland per 1,000 residents, annual operating expenses, and operating expenses per acres of parkland.

However, the number of full-time equivalent (FTEs) employees and the FTE ratio to population is much higher than comparable agencies, which affects the ratio of operating expense per FTE. In these metrics, the small population size of the City and the inclusion of lifeguards and vacant or seasonal employee positions cause much of data

Figure 15. 2023 NRPA Agency Performance Comparison

NRPA Metric	All Agencies	Jurisdictions Less than 20,000	Moab
Residents per Park (by jurisdiction size)	2,287	1,225	444
Acres of Parkland per 1,000 Residents	10.8	13	20.7
Miles of Trails	15	4	13.8
Park & Recreation Staffing (FTEs)	51.5	11.5	26.5
FTEs per 10,000 Residents	8.9	11.5	26.5
Annual Operating Expenses (Parks-only)	-	-	\$989,342
Annual Operating Expenses (Parks & MRAC)	\$5,500,000	\$1,200,000	\$3,379,843
Operating Expenses per Capita	\$94.77	\$120.79	\$191.28
Operating Expenses per Parkland Acre	\$7,388	\$7,495	\$8,963
Operating Expenses per Parks FTE	\$105,484	\$102,135	\$141,335
Five-year Capital Budget Spending	\$10,000,000	\$1,500,000	\$812,182

variability. Separately, the Agency Performance Report indicated recent trends in staffing and volunteers for park and recreation agencies showing that numbers of authorized full-time positions has steadily rebounded since 2011.

The lower capital budget spending for Moab reflects a more restrictive level of park investments in recent and current capital budget allocations.

### Acreege-based Approach

The NRPA Agency Performance Review provides a comparative of parkland acreage metrics across a range of jurisdiction population sizes. Parkland refers to both maintained parks and open space areas, such as green spaces and courtyards. The current population of Moab fits within the category of communities less than 20,000 people. For that population category, the median is 13 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents.

The current parkland acreage per 1,000 residents in Moab is 20.7 acres per 1,000 residents, which is higher than the median for comparably-sized communities, and is based on a parkland inventory of 110.4 acres and excludes the acreage of the golf course. Generally, small populations have more parkland per resident

than larger jurisdictions.

Approximately half of the City’s park system acreage can be classified as active-use park space. This includes developed community parks (e.g., Swanny Park), neighborhood parks (e.g., Dixie Park), plus the Sun Court at Center Street Gym and Anonymous Park. Figure 16 shows the acreage per capita for the whole park system and the developed, active use parks.

Another method for assessing park levels of service examines the investment in parks and facilities using population and budget allocations. The NRPA data provides a comparison of annual operating expenses with other agencies and jurisdictions with similar population sizes. Applying the City’s 2022-2023 budget data for the Park and Recreation Department (expenditures of \$1,019,342, which exclude line items for recreation programming, arts, and MAC), the operating expense per capita is \$191.28 per resident, which is higher than the \$94.77 median for all agencies and the \$120.79 median for park providers in cities with less than 20,000 residents, see Figure 17. With 110.4 acres of parkland (includes developed and undeveloped sites), Moab’s operating expenses per parkland acre equates to \$8,963, which also is higher than the median expenditures of all agencies in aggregate and those of other similarly-sized jurisdictions.

Figure 16. Current Levels of Service by Park Classification

LOS Metric	Measurement
Current Population (2023 Census)	5,329
<b>Parkland Acreage</b>	
Total Parkland Acreage	110.4
Developed Active* Parks Acreage	54.1
<b>Level of Service</b>	
Acres of Parkland per 1,000 Population	20.7
Acres of Developed Active* Parks per 1,000	10.1

\* Community & Neighborhood Parks, plus Sun Court & BMX Park

Looking at the provision of recreation amenities within the park system provides another perspective on the adequacy of park service delivery. From the NRPA Park Metrics data, ten amenities were compared with the median values from an aggregate of all agencies across the country, as well as from similarly-sized jurisdictions to that of Moab, see Figure 18. The comparisons indicate that Moab is not significantly deficient in playgrounds, baseball fields, dog parks, and skate parks. However, the City provides fewer soccer fields and sport courts for tennis and pickleball than the median of agencies reporting. Also, based on the mapping analysis provided earlier in this chapter, several areas of Moab do not have easy access to existing recreational amenities, and residents have to drive for access for various activities.

74%

Households within 2 miles of community park

Figure 17. NRPA & Moab Operating Expense Metrics

NRPA Metrics	All Agencies	Jurisdictions Less than 20,000	Moab
Annual Operating Expenses (Dept. total)	\$5,500,000	\$1,200,000	\$3,379,843
Operating Expenses per Capita (Dept. total)	\$94.77	\$120.79	\$191.28
Operating Expenses per Parkland Acre	\$7,388	\$7,495	\$8,963

Figure 18. NRPA & Moab Metrics by Amenity Type

Amenities	All Agencies	Less than 20,000	Moab
Amenities per 1,000			
Median Acres per 1,000	10.8	11.2	20.7
Median Trail Miles	15	4	13.8
Number of Residents per Amenity			
Playgrounds	3,759	2,014	969
Baseball (youth)	6,863	3,114	1,332
Soccer (youth)	7,228	3,600	N/A
Rectangular Field (multi-use)	7,228	3,600	5,329
Dog Parks	43,532	11,100	5,329
Skate Parks	53,144	10,726	5,329
Tennis Courts (outdoor)	5,860	2,805	N/A
Pickleball Courts (outdoor)	13,922	3,252	N/A
Multi-Use Courts (outdoor)	15,948	4,868	N/A
Basketball Courts (outdoor)	7,404	3,729	3,553



*I want a splash pad that's free to take my kids to on a hot summer day."*

- Survey respondent

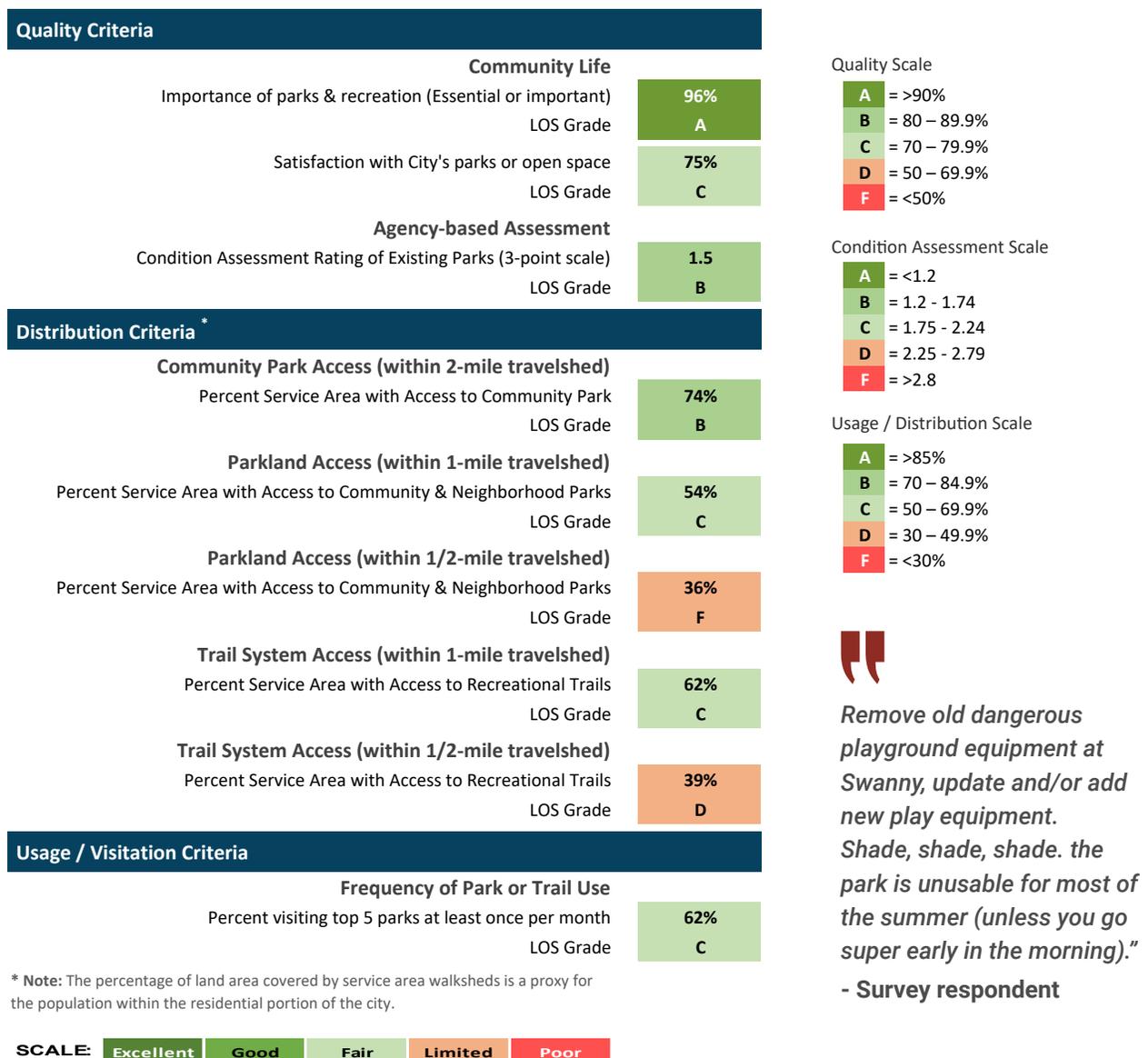
## Other Performance Metrics

In reviewing the park system as a whole, Figure 19 illustrates the current levels of service across different performance measurements. From the community survey results, the frequency of park and trail visitation ranked as the strongest indicator for the park system.

These level of service metrics include distribution criteria to reflect the percent of travelshed coverage for each type of park in the community. Based on the gap assessment mapping, the City's community parks within a 2-mile travelshed cover

approximately 74% of Moab. Areas outside these community park travelsheds are mostly located along the east and southwest perimeters of the City. Coverage measured as a ½-mile walking distance for either neighborhood or community park was considerably lower, providing access to existing parks for only 36% of the City. The gap analysis conducted for this Plan reinforces the need for new park locations to fill known gaps in parkland distribution.

Figure 19. Distribution & Sentiment Metrics



# Trails & Connections

**T**rails are critical links in Moab’s active transportation network – connecting people to parks, schools and other key destinations and creating opportunities for active lifestyles. Recreational trails are critical infrastructure for a healthy and livable community, promoting alternatives to vehicle use. Completing and expanding trail system connections was identified as one of the highest capital project priorities during the community engagement process, and walking was the top activity for Moab residents.

## TRAIL TRENDS

Walking and hiking continue to be the most popular recreational activities nationally and regionally. Furthermore, national recreation studies have consistently ranked walking and hiking as the most popular forms of outdoor recreation over the last ten years, and summaries of recreation trends are provided in Appendix E.

The COVID-19 pandemic significantly impacted outdoor recreation activities, including trail use. Local and regional park and recreation agencies that managed trail systems were pressed to adapt to heavy usage and crowded trailhead parking, as many people shifted their daily exercise routines to outdoor activities, such as walking and bicycling.

The 2023 Outdoor Participation Trends report from the Outdoor Foundation found that hiking is the most popular outdoor activity. There were 881,000 new hikers in 2022. Hiking is considered one of the “gateway activities” that serve to initiate participation on other outdoor recreation activities. Running has the highest average outings per runner (54 per year). The annual growth for biking (all





*Greatly enhance our in-town bike commuting network. There is so much low-hanging fruit that would be cheap to address and make a HUGE difference.*

*- Survey respondent*





## Trail opportunities and additional walking trails rated as highest priorities.

categories: road, BMX, mountain) was surveyed at 22.9% or 54.7 million cyclists. Notably, the 2022 version of this report shared that the number of seniors, ages 65 and older, participating in outdoor activities grew by 16.8% between 2019 and 2021. Trails are essential infrastructure for these and other outdoor recreation activities.

Utah's Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (UORP) 2019-2023 has adopted statewide priorities and goals to guide conservation and outdoor recreation development. Top priorities include providing meaningful access to outdoor recreation for a broad diversity of users and supporting healthy, adaptable and connected communities where outdoor recreation users are connected to recreation destinations with a safe, accessible spectrum of multi-modal transportation options. The UORP resident survey of recreation use revealed trails and pathways as the top recreation need across the state. The resident survey also reinforced the highest outdoor activity as walking.

In the Utah's Department of Natural Resources and Utah Division of Parks and Recreation 2018 Recreation Provider Survey, park and recreation agencies across the state reported that trails ranked in the top five most needed new facilities. Additionally, across the top six facility renovation targets, trails and walkways were a management priority.

Also, with the rapid increase in electric-assist mobility and the potential for user conflicts due to increased speeds, Moab will want to stay abreast of best management approaches for ensuring safety for all trail users and how best to promote trail etiquette on shared-use trails.

## COMMUNITY FEEDBACK & INSIGHTS

As noted in previous chapters, feedback from the community survey, event tabling, and public meetings provided a wealth of local insights on current usage and interests in various recreation amenities, including trails.

The community survey asked residents to prioritize a variety of potential improvements to the park system. Based on combined responses from the mail and online survey, expanding trail opportunities were identified as the second highest priority, following upgrades to existing parks. Respondents feel there are not enough walking and biking trails. In a forced ranking survey question listing 11 potential park amenities investments, the highest rated priorities include additional walking trails (39%).

Also, survey respondents were asked to describe one improvement for the park and recreation system. Over 500 specific comments were collected, and multiple write-in comments identified a need for interconnected trails that link neighborhoods and parks – making it safe and convenient for biking, running and walking. There is a desire to minimize traffic and increase accessibility through the expansion and improvement of trails, sidewalks, and multi-use paths.

Stakeholder interviews identified more trail connections as one of several needed park system improvements. Adding shade and benches along the Mill Creek Parkway were also suggested trail system improvements.

Community feedback from both public meetings echoed the responses from the community survey, and participants identified trails as a top priority, along with improving access to parks via sidewalks, trail connections, and other safe routes.

## TRAIL CLASSIFICATIONS

The recreational trail classification system within the City of Moab is based on a tiered network and includes four primary trail categories: Regional, Connector, Park/Local, and Water Trails. The differences between trail classifications are based on the purpose and intensity of use, which influences the trail width, material, and recommended support facilities.

### Regional (Shared-Use) Trails

Regional trails act as the spine of the trail network and provide major connections to adjacent communities and significant natural features, such as rivers and streams, public facilities, and areas of interest. These trails extend beyond city limits and serve as extended recreational corridors and may be identified as regional trails in the Grand County trail network. Regional trails are paved, multi-use routes that accommodate pedestrians, cyclists, and skaters and are typically separated from the public road right-of-way (ROW) for exclusive use. In cases where there is not sufficient ROW for a separated trail, sidewalks may be widened to function as segments of regional trails. Regional trails are typically between 10’ and 18’ wide, and these corridors should provide the highest level of trail amenities, including trailheads, parking, signage, and restrooms. Trail width may be reduced depending on specific site conditions, such as environmental constraints or slopes. The Mill Creek Parkway Trail is a regional trail.

### Connector Trails

Connector trails provide recreational benefits by linking regional trails, as well as important land uses and areas of interest, often within a

neighborhood and typically along a street right-of-way. They also create recreation loops to parks, natural areas, and other environmental destinations. These trails support regional trail corridors and serve smaller residential, commercial, and employment areas. Connector trails are typically between 8’ and 12’ wide and are often paved, multi-use corridors that can be located on- or off-street.

### Park / Local Trails

Park trails are interior loops or point-to-point routes within parks or preserves and include paved or unpaved walking paths, rustic hiking trails, or equestrian trails. Local trails are used as neighborhood linking trails. These multi-use trails can be paved or soft surface and located within a public easement or public right-of-way. Depending on use, location, and underlying conditions, the trail surface material may be concrete, asphalt, gravel or crushed rock, native soil, or wood chips.

### Water Trails

A water trail is a network of access points, resting places, and attractions for users of human-powered watercraft on lakes and rivers. Water trails enable people to personally explore the City’s natural and cultural heritage from a distinctly unique vantage point – one of “sitting on” the water – and bring the user into contact with the ecology of the trail corridor. The design of launch facilities should provide adequate parking and other support amenities, including pedestrian access, protected sand beach, and functional elements such as signing, seating, and waste receptacles.

Figure 20. Moab Trail Classifications

Classification	Function	Use Type	Users	Surfacing	Width
<b>Regional Trail</b>	Major connections through community and beyond	Multi-use	Pedestrians, cyclists, skaters. Equestrians (where feasible)	Asphalt, concrete, boardwalk.	10-18'
<b>Connector Trail</b>	Connects parks, trails, neighborhoods and other destinations	Multi-use	Pedestrians, cyclists, skaters.	Asphalt, concrete, boardwalk. Gravel, possible.	8-12'
<b>Park / Local Trail</b>	Interior loops or point-to-point routes in public spaces.	Multi- or single use	Pedestrians, cyclists, skaters.	Asphalt, concrete, boardwalk. Gravel, possible.	2-10'
<b>Water Trail</b>	Water-based recreation & travel	Watercraft	Boaters & paddlers	Water bodies	N/A

## TRAIL SYSTEM PLANNING & ASSESSMENT

### City & County Unified Transportation Planning

Expanding Moab’s network of trails will enhance access for all community members and support sustainability goals around reducing vehicle dependence. Citywide planning for the trail network relies on coordination between transportation engineering and park planning functions within the city organization. This Parks and Recreation Master Plan, the Unified Transportation Master Plan (UTMP), the “Moab – Tomorrow Together Vision and Strategic Action Plan”, and the City Comprehensive Plan work together to identify local needs and recommendations to expand and improve on-street and off-street trails, pathways and connections.

In 2022, the City joined with Grand County and adopted the UTMP to identify the transportation improvements to roads, streets, trails, and connections with recommended projects for implementation to ensure a safe network of transportation facilities for residents and visitors. The UTMP cited 19 projects focused on improved conditions for walking and bicycling. The highest priority in the active transportation projects was the shared

use path connecting the pedestrian hybrid beacon on US 191 at City Market crossing Pack Creek to Kane Creek Boulevard and north to 300 South, and to 100 West. The construction of a shared-use path on Spanish Valley Drive from Mill Creek Drive to South County line also ranked as a priority among the active transportation project recommendations. Seven of the targeted 16 active transportation projects were for shared-use path projects. The UTMP determined that current short times and distances traveled by residents create the opportunity to transform driving trips into walking or bicycling trips.

### Grand County Regional Trails

The Grand County Non-Motorized Trail Master Plan updated in 2011 was the result of coordinating and collaborating with a diverse mix of trail providers and trail user groups to help guide the creation of an integrated and environmentally sound network of trails for non-motorized use. The Trails Master Plan includes both a “Trails Matrix” and “Trail Maps.” The Trails Matrix serves as an alphabetical list or index of all trails included in the plan. The Trails Master Plan is based on an evaluation of existing trails and an estimation of future trail needs. Trail development was prioritized to include a variety of trails to satisfy all skill levels of trail users, and to establish connectivity within the City, Spanish Valley and the backcountry.



*Expand Mill Creek Parkway trail system (and maintain current trail) - e.g., clear debris under bridge.”*

- Survey respondent



*Connect Anon Park bike path to Kane Creek through wetlands, build footbridge over Colorado River at Portal to connect Potash Rd to bike path system.”*

- Survey respondent



*Finish the Mill Creek parkway to the Mill Creek trailhead.”*

- Survey respondent

## EXISTING TRAIL INVENTORY

The City of Moab, Grand County and neighboring communities have created a growing system of regional and connector trails with linkages to each other. Clear recognition by the City of Moab and the County that trails provide valuable infrastructure is demonstrated by the commitment to continue to connect communities and destinations with trails. A more fully-developed network of trails and pathways to connect important destinations will help create a more walkable Moab.

Within city limits, Moab has approximately 13.8 miles of paved recreational walking or biking trails dispersed across the community. The largest components of the trail network are the Mill Creek Parkway Trail and the shared-use trail along Highway 191 connecting to Lions Park. In addition to its own trails, Moab is surrounded by trails for walking, hiking, biking and off-road vehicle use.

### Mill Creek Parkway Trail

The Mill Creek Parkway Trail runs along the riparian corridor of Mill Creek. The trail recently suffered from severe flooding and is undergoing a number of improvement projects designed to repair and increase resilience at critical locations. The trail helps provide off-street connections through much of the City in a natural setting.

Figure 21. In-City Trail Inventory

Trail Segment	Length (mi)
Mill Creek Parkway Trail	3.01
Pack Creek Trail	0.40
Hwy 191 Trail	3.60
USU Entrance Pathway	0.46
Other Minor & ROW Connections	6.32
<b>In-City Total</b>	<b>13.78</b>

## TRAIL SYSTEM GAP ANALYSIS

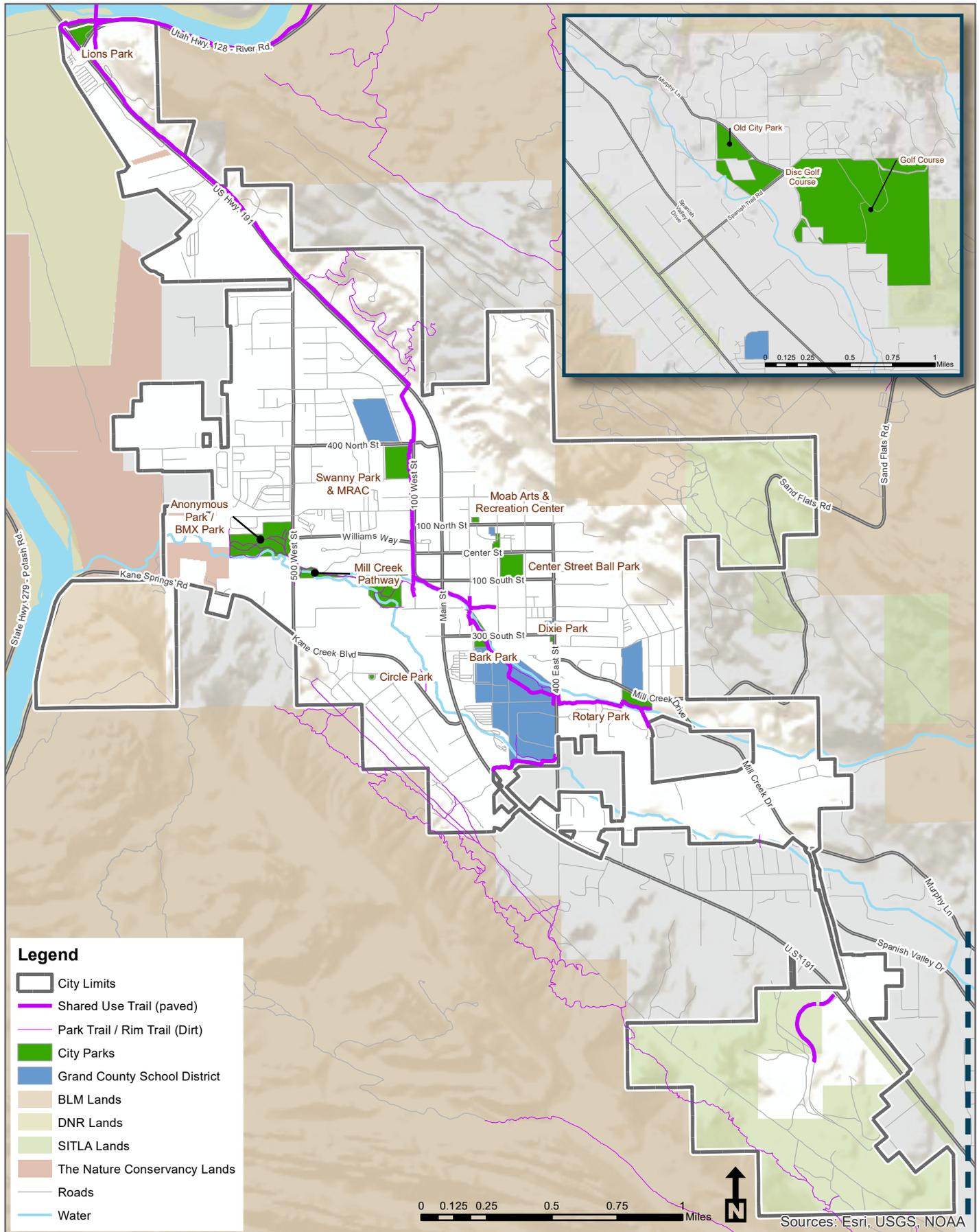
A gap analysis was conducted to examine and assess the accessibility of existing recreational trails. As with the parkland analysis, travel distances were calculated along the road network starting from each existing trail segment’s known access points. “Travelsheds” were calculated with ¼-mile, ½-mile and 1-mile distances for major trails (e.g., Mill Creek Parkway, Pack Creek Trail). Map 10 illustrates the citywide distribution of the major downtown recreational trails and the relative access to these corridors within reasonable travel walksheds. Approximately 62% of the City has access to regional and recreational trails within 1-mile of an access point and 39% within a ½-mile.

Similar to transportation planning, recreational trail planning should be geared toward connectivity as a system performance metric, rather than mileage. This Plan recommends a connectivity goal that re-states and reinforces the desire to improve overall connections across the City to enhance off-street linkages between parks, schools, and major destinations, as feasible, and in right-of-way connections to fill gaps in the interim. The use of policies and objectives is critical for the expansion of the trails network with a focus on connectivity. The Grand County Non-Motorized Trail Master Plan and UTMP may be further leveraged with a policy-based approach to trail connectivity.



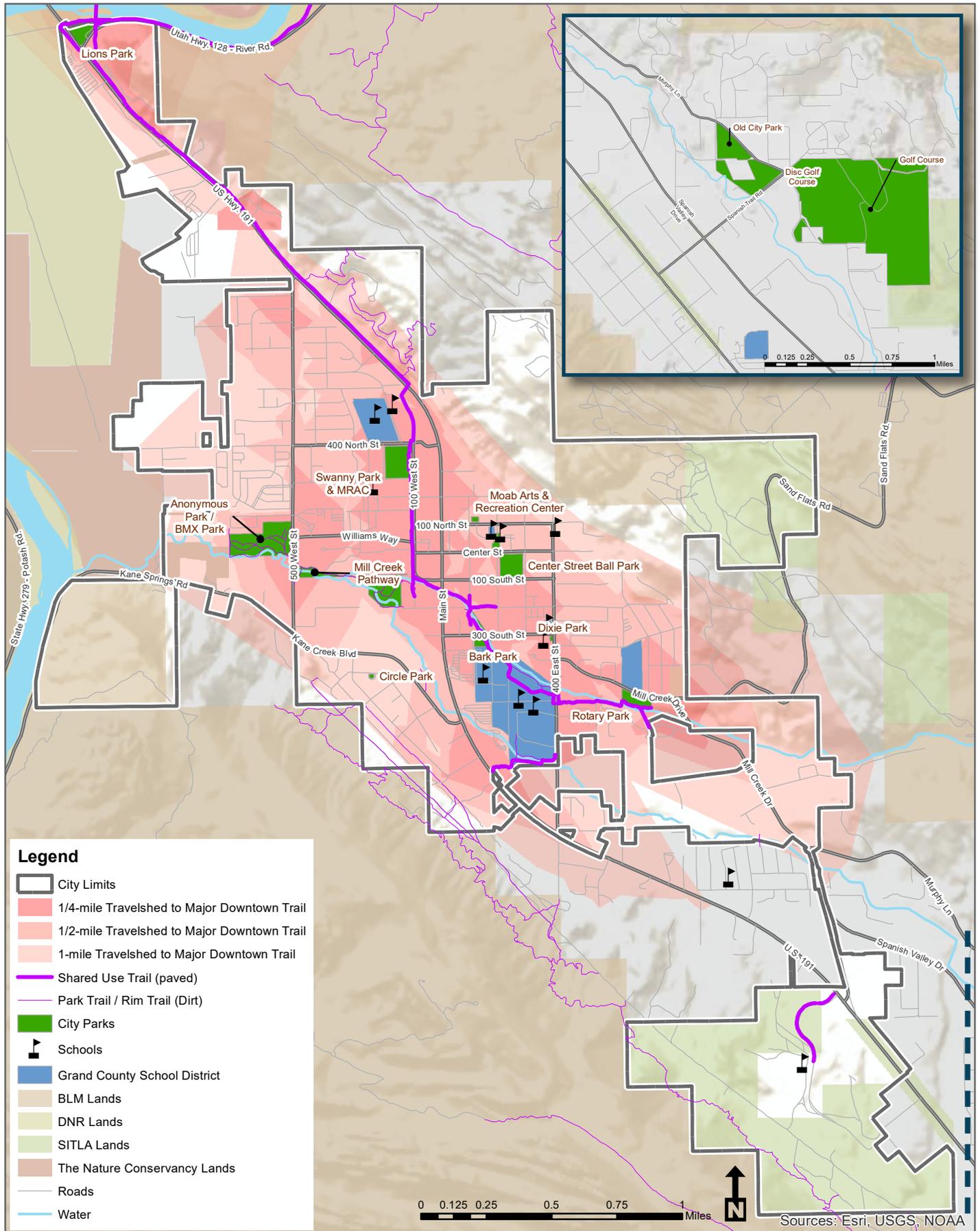
*Pedestrian connectivity needs to be improved. I’m sure many areas need improvements, but I have insight from trying to push strollers or ride bikes from my own neighborhood. The Mountain View neighborhood access to downtown is either too lengthy to be convenient (via 500 W) or unsafe (through parking lots and unfriendly pedestrian crossing on Main and 300 S)."*

- Survey respondent



# Map 9: Existing Recreational Trails near Downtown

Moab Parks & Recreation Master Plan 2024



Map 10: Travelsheds for Downtown Trails (to 1 mile)

## TRAIL SYSTEM DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

Establishing and reinforcing a recreational trail classification enables a framework for trail design and facilitates the prioritization of proposed trail enhancements and development.

### Access & Alignments

The future growth of the trail network will need to balance between alignments that are optimal from trail user, trail experience, and connectivity perspectives and those that are practical from cost, regulatory, and availability perspectives. Future consideration should be given toward finding alignment options that can accommodate different trail use types (i.e., commuter vs. recreational/destination oriented), as well as potentially interim solutions that rely on wider sidewalks to serve trail users or routes that utilizes existing or planned sewer, stormwater, or utility corridors. Accommodating alignments for local, neighborhood trails as connections to regional, shared-used trails is important for providing access and reducing the sole reliance on trailheads for providing access to the trail network. The Conceptual Recreational Trail System map (Map 11) indicates potential alignments that can vary depending upon landowner willingness, along with environmental constraints and design considerations.

### Access & Trailheads

Safe, convenient entryways to the trail network expand access for users and are a necessary component of a strong, successful system. A trailhead typically includes parking, kiosks, and signage and may include site furnishings such as trash receptacles, benches, restrooms, drinking fountains, bike repair stations, and bike racks. Nationally, more recent trailhead installations have added electric bike charging stations to support expanding alternative modes of transportation. Trailheads may be within public parks and open space or provided via interagency agreements with partner organizations (e.g., county, school district, BLM, etc.) to increase use and reduce unnecessary duplication of support facilities. Specific trailhead designs and layouts should be created as part of planning and design development for individual projects and take into account the intended user groups and unique site conditions.

### Areas of Respite

Beyond trailheads that can provide access to the trail with support amenities, rest areas along trail segments can enhance the trail user's experience to enjoy the natural settings and/or urban dynamics of the trail's environment. Areas of respite are usually available within developed parks connected to the trail system, but longer sections of trails between trailheads and parks could offer places to rest, stop and chat, enjoy wildlife viewing, or meet-up with fellow trail users. Differentiated from trailheads, these 'rest stops' can simply offer pull-offs with benches or picnic tables,



*A bike trail that connects to the northern part of Murphy Lane. Additional bike paths not street adjacent for locals to commute safely. Add an over pass or under pass to USU campus."*

- Survey respondent



*Maps/brochures showing trails, with suggestions for showing how to do, for example, 3-mile walking loops in town, using both trails and, say, low-traffic streets."*

- Survey respondent



*More trails and more and safer cycling on roads."*

- Survey respondent



## TRAILS FOR WALKABLE COMMUNITIES

Parks are known to contribute to a healthier community by providing accessible outdoor recreation particularly through the walking trail within each park. Getting to the park by foot or bike can also offer a healthier choice integrated with the park destination and its amenities. In the NRPA publication *Safe Routes to Parks*, the elements of walkable, healthy community design are outlined as convenience, comfort, access & design, safety, and the park itself. Sidewalks, bikeways and trails should provide an integrated alternative transportation system for residents to access parks and other destinations within their community. As further emphasis for the importance of a walkable community to promote public health, the Surgeon General has issued a *Call to Action* to “step it up” and promote more walking and build a more walkable world. A more connected network of trails, sidewalks, and bike lanes with links to public transit also provides economic values.



## TRAILS FOR AGING POPULATIONS

Today’s active seniors are looking at retirement age differently, as many are retooling for a new career, finding ways to engage with their community and focusing on their health and fitness. It will be critical for Moab’s park and recreation system to take a comprehensive approach to the city’s aging population needs. Accessibility and barrier-free parking and paths, walkability and connectivity will be paramount to future planning. Providing programming for today’s older adults includes not only active and passive recreation, but also the type of equipment needed to engage in certain activities. Trails provide the infrastructure for the most popular and frequent outdoor recreation activity of older adults: walking.



## TRAILS FOR ECONOMIC HEALTH

The National Association of Realtors reports in their *On Common Ground* publication with numerous articles citing the preference of walkable, mixed-use neighborhoods and the role of walkability in creating healthier communities. These preferences translate into higher housing values. Even the National Association of Homebuilders have recognized that walkability is desired by consumers, creates lower development costs and allows flexibility in design. In the 2009 report, *Walking the Walk: How Walkability Raises Housing Values in US Cities* by Joe Cortright for CEOs for Cities, research cited the connection between home value and walkability. Higher WalkScore measurements, where more typical consumer destinations were within walking distance, were directly associated with higher home values. Homes located in more walkable neighborhoods command a price premium over otherwise similar homes in less walkable areas. As part of the system of walkability and bike-ability, recreational trails are real estate assets that enhance community connections and contribute to economic health.

observation or viewing platforms, or interpretive signs. These sites also should be included in the emergency response system with an identifying code to provide locator information.

## Trail Development Limitations

One underlying tenet of the recreational trail system is to enable the placement of trails within or close to natural features to provide access to the City's unique landscapes, as well as accommodate outdoor recreational access to creeks and hillsides. The future planning and design of trail routes through natural areas should be based on sensitive and low-impact design solutions that offer controlled access that protects the natural resource, while providing for a positive experience for trail users. The determination of future trail alignments should place high priority on natural resource and natural hazards planning and protections, in part to meet local land use policies, Grand County planning as well as Utah State requirements.

## Trail System Design

The primary purpose of recreation trails is to provide a recreational experience that allows for movement across the community as an additional objective. Whenever feasible, recreational trails should be located off-street; however, streets should be used in order to complete connections wherever necessary. The following are sound tenets of recreational trail system design.

- Develop a high-quality system of multi-use trails that connect significant local landscapes, public facilities, neighborhoods, and the Main Street corridor.
- Create a network of single- and multi-use trails for walking, running, and cycling to promote connectivity between parks, neighborhoods, and public amenities or destinations.
- Provide a comprehensive trail system that will interconnect the recreational trail systems and non-motorized transportation systems, including sidewalks and bike lanes.
- Increase connectivity between parks and trails and prioritize the creation or completion of loops that provide a range of recreation options and experiences.
- Integrate the siting of proposed trail segments into the land development review process.
- Require development projects along designated trail routes to be designed to incorporate the trail

as part of the project. Sensitive area buffers within proposed subdivisions and short-subdivisions shall be widened to accommodate additional open space and a public easement for future trails.

- Require the installation of safe, convenient, and dedicated pedestrian paths by new development where minimizing travel distance has the potential for increasing pedestrian use.
- When possible, trails should be constructed prior to or concurrent with development or with the improvement of public facilities.
- Enhance trail user safety through the installation of additional signalized crossings of Highway 191 (in coordination with UDOT), in addition to enhanced bike route signage, striping, and pavement treatments such as colored bike boxes.
- Work with state, county and local agencies, utilities and private landholders to secure trail corridors and access to complete the recreational trail system through methods including land dedication, purchase, use of vacated rights-of-way, land donations, public easements, or use agreements.

## Trail Signs & Wayfinding

Enhanced signage and consistency in brand identification could increase awareness for residents and visitors of nearby recreational opportunities, and a coordinated signage plays a crucial role in facilitating a successful trail system. A comprehensive and consistent signage system is necessary to inform, orient, and educate users about the trail system itself, as well as appropriate trail etiquette. Such a system of signs should include trail identification information, orientation markers, safety and regulatory messages, and a unifying design identity or element for branding. The following signage types should be consistently implemented throughout the network:

- Directional and regulatory signs
- Trail user etiquette and hierarchy signs
- Continuous route signage for route identification and wayfinding
- Mileage markers or periodic information regarding distance to areas of interest
- Warning signs to caution users of upcoming trail transitions or potential conflicts with motor vehicles
- Interpretive information regarding ecological, historical, and cultural features found along and in proximity to the trail
- QR codes to provide links to additional information

Also, the installation of kiosks at trailheads is a best practice that should continue and provides important trail information, while reinforcing the visual brand of the Moab trail experience.

### Ongoing Maintenance

Following trail construction, ongoing trail monitoring and maintenance will keep the trails functioning as designed, while working to protect capital investments throughout the trail network. Future trail renovation projects should be included in the Capital Improvement Plan as a means to identify and secure appropriate resources for needed enhancement. Since the likelihood of flooding damage will create regular intervals, the City should plan for needed repair and restoration. Additionally, the City should maintain and expand their connection to and communications with the robust network of local volunteers to provide support, as appropriate.



## ACQUISITIONS & DEVELOPMENT FOR TRAIL CONNECTIONS

Additional trail connections are needed, as well as sidewalk and bike lanes improvements, to help link destinations across the community to offer more walkability and promote healthier outdoor lifestyles. Acquisitions of easements, corridors and parcels will be needed to create the comprehensive linkages for Moab's future recreational trail system. The City will need to collaborate between parks and transportation funding sources for project planning to ensure the most appropriate links that improve the park and trail system. The City also should implement proposed amendments to its development policies and codes to require future development to provide bike and pedestrian access across proposed developments to contribute to a city-wide network of non-motorized transportation options.

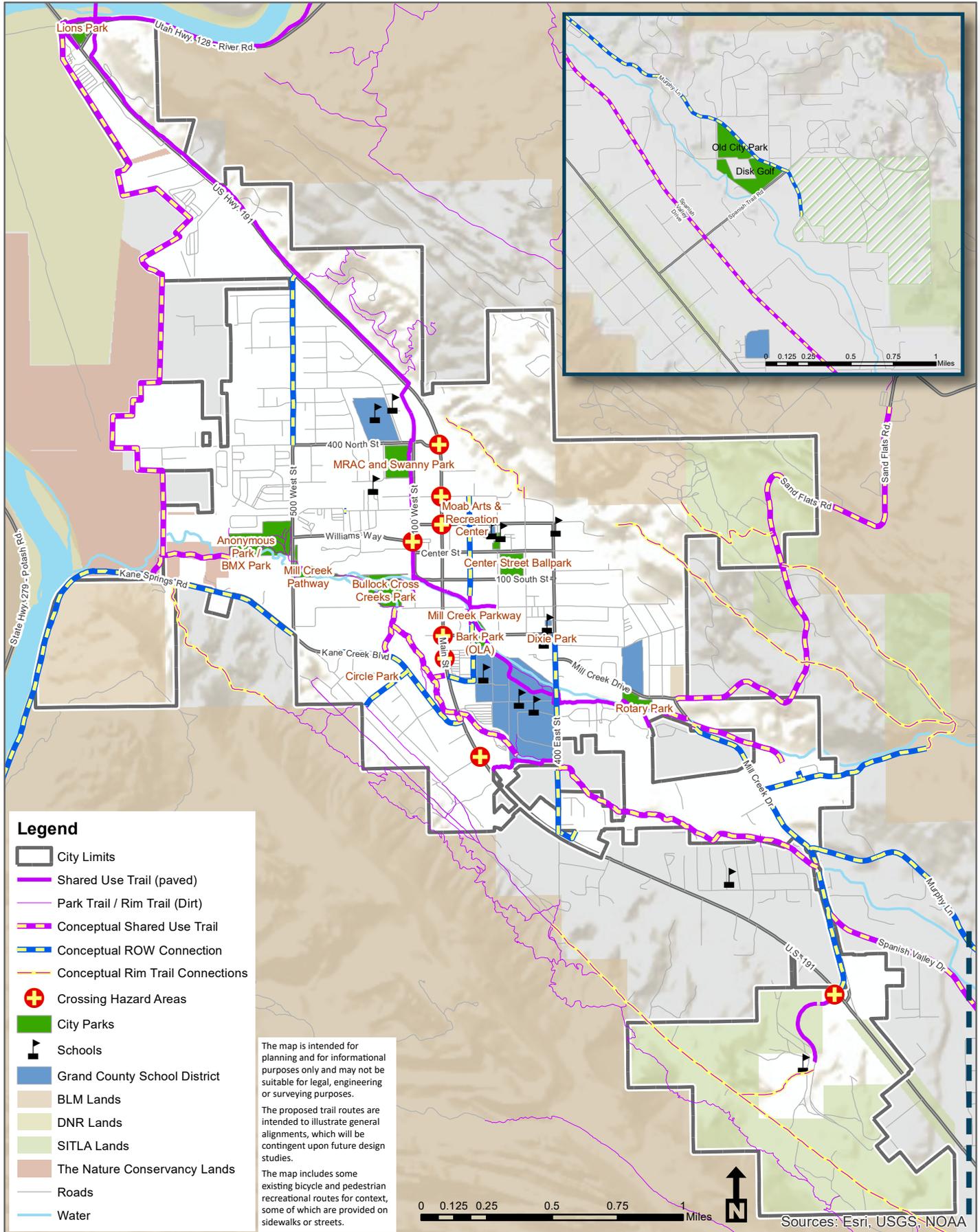
Local trails that provide access through parks should connect smoothly with sidewalks and include information on how to connect to additional trail segments that may be located nearby. The online open house survey revealed support for acquiring more open space that also could offer trail development and walking opportunities. The park system gap analysis identified generalized areas where access to local parks was missing or insufficient, and future acquisitions should target those gap areas to also accommodate bike and pedestrian options.

### Integrating Design Elements

The Monon Trail, a rail trail heading north almost 17 miles from downtown Indianapolis, illustrates some tools for helping visitors find the trail and find their way along the trail. The combination of a signature color, unified logos and icons, matching site furnishing, and signage styles help identify the location and direction of the trail and its support facilities, as part of a unified navigation system.

At crossroads and trailheads, the bright red colors used consistently in signs and furnishings mark the trail's presence. Kiosks and information signs help orient the trail user. Rule signs alert the user to trail behavior expectations and reinforce trail identity. The signage system helps identify place, provide information about trail distances and amenities, locate connections and interpret history and culture.





Map 11: Existing & Conceptual Recreational Trail Corridors

## TRAIL SYSTEM RECOMMENDATIONS

This Plan recommends a connectivity goal that re-states and reinforces the desire to improve overall connections across the City and enhance off-street linkages between parks and major destinations, as feasible.

- Implement the recommended trail projects in the UTMP capital improvement program.
- Coordinate with Grand County on an update to the Non-Motorized Trails Master Plan.
- Build flood resilience into the Mill Creek Parkway Trail. Repairs can help armor vulnerable locations. Future trail extensions and connections should be designed to limit potential flood damage without reducing flood plain function.
- Consider how each park within the City can offer a potential loop walking circuit or paved pathway to help connect the park's amenities and link to adjoining neighborhoods to ensure universal access (and ADA compliance).
- Implement detailed trail signage standards, route and wayfinding signage for trails and associated facilities and informational maps and materials identifying existing and planned trail facilities.
- Enhance trail users experience with additional site furnishings like benches, picnic tables, and bike racks along the route where feasible.
- Add native canopy trees where feasible to cool off exposed sections of the Parkway and trail segments.
- Ensure that all shared-use trail facilities strive for universal access and inclusive design to provide equity for all users in the community.
- Actively engage and coordinate with the trail volunteers to collaborate with trail enhancements, maintenance and communication regarding the wide variety of regional trail programming.



*Improve flood protection for bike path under Main Street and by the BMX park; Extend bike path along river road; also mountain biking trails right out of town."*

- Survey respondent



Photo: Jason Strother (JTS media)

## CHAPTER 7

# Recreation, Arts & EVENTS

**T**he recreation facilities, programs, and events available within Moab are a major community asset and support the physical, mental and social health of community members.

The City of Moab owns or operates three major community facilities. The Moab Recreation & Aquatics Center, the Center Street Gym, and the Moab Arts Center are all heavily used for drop-in use, classes, camps, and programs. Conversations with community members that took place in 2023 during the development of this Plan suggest a strong interest in expanding or having access to additional program offerings, especially for youth and teens, and to renovated facilities.

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## RECREATION & ART TRENDS

The following national and state data highlights some of the current trends in recreation and may frame future considerations in Moab's recreation offerings, events and partnerships. Additional trend data are provided in Appendix E.

- Nationwide, 82% of U.S. adults believe that parks and recreation are essential. <sup>(1)</sup>
- Seventy-seven percent of survey respondents indicate that having a high-quality park, playground, public open space or recreation center nearby is an important factor in deciding where they want to live. <sup>(1)</sup>
- Nearly all (93%) park and recreation agencies provide recreation programs and services. The top five most commonly offered programs include holiday or other special events (65%), educational programs (59%), group exercise (59%), fitness programs (58%), and day or summer camps (57%). <sup>(2)</sup>
- More than eight in ten agencies provide themed special events (90% of agencies), team sports (87%), social recreation events (88%), youth summer camps (83%), fitness enhancement classes (82%), and health and wellness education (80%). <sup>(3)</sup>
- America's children are spending more time outdoors over the past decade, and the COVID pandemic accelerated that trend. Overall, the percentage of America's kids participating in outdoor recreation was high in 2021, at just over 70%. <sup>(4)</sup>
- Over the past two years, participation rates are up across the board for America's youth, with strong growth in participation by girls (4.9% higher for girls ages 6 to 12, and 5.3% higher for girls 13 to 17). <sup>(4)</sup>
- Yoga continued to have one of the largest gains in fitness activities. <sup>(5)</sup>
- Activities with the highest 5-year increase in participation include indoor climbing (13%) and pickleball (12%). <sup>(5)</sup>
- Nearly all park and recreation providers in the U.S. experienced a decline in revenue in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As early as May 2020, most providers had to close facilities temporarily in accordance with health and safety directives. Nearly half had also furloughed or laid off staff due to the funding and facility impacts of the pandemic. <sup>(6)</sup>

- Research from the US Bureau of Economic Analysis shows that arts and culture drive 4.4% of the US gross domestic product (GDP), generating \$1.02 trillion in 2021. In Utah State, this sector tracks slightly below the national GDP, providing 3.6% of the State's GDP, and the nominal value added in arts and cultural industries increased in every state. <sup>(7)</sup>
- People who say their neighborhood has easy access to quality arts and cultural activities tend to be more satisfied, identify more with local lifestyle and culture, and invest more time and resources in their communities. <sup>(8)</sup>
- Nonprofit arts organizations and their audiences today generate \$135 billion of economic activity that supports 4.1 million arts and non-arts jobs throughout their communities. <sup>(9)</sup>
- 53% of Local Arts Agencies (LAAs) said the general public's perceived value of the arts has increased since the onset of the pandemic. <sup>(10)</sup>
- Arts activities increase residents' interest in getting involved in local issues and projects. 86% of civic engagement participants want to be involved in future projects. After their involvement, people living where projects occurred were more than twice as likely to be civically engaged as those whose blocks did not have projects. <sup>(11)</sup>

### Sources:

- (1) American Engagement with Parks Survey
- (2) 2020 NRPA Agency Performance Review
- (3) 2022 NRPA Agency Performance Review
- (4) 2022 Outdoor Participation Report
- (5) 2022 Sport & Fitness Industry Association Sports, Fitness, and Leisure Activities Topline Participation Report
- (6) 2020 State of the Industry Report
- (7) US Bureau of Economic Analysis, 2022
- (8) Knight Foundation Community Ties survey Community-Ties-Final-pg.pdf (knightfoundation.org). Builds off Soul of Community Longitudinal Study (2008-2010) conducted by the Knight Foundation found key drivers of community attachment to be social offerings, openness, and aesthetics. <https://knightfoundation.org/sotc/overall-findings/>
- (9) <https://www.americansforthearts.org/by-program/reports-and-data/research-studies-publications/arts-economic-prosperity-6>
- (10) AFTA 2020 LAA Profile [http://surveys.americansforthearts.org/r/391676\\_60549cd4741a42.54488835](http://surveys.americansforthearts.org/r/391676_60549cd4741a42.54488835)
- (11) Nicodemus, A., Engh, R., & Mascaro, C. (2016). Adding it Up: 52 Projects by 30+ Artists in 4 Neighborhoods. Metris Arts

Recreation Management magazine’s 2022 Report on the State of the Managed Recreation Industry summarizes information provided by a wide range of professionals working in the recreation, sports, and fitness industry. Regarding program options, respondents from community centers, park departments, and health clubs reported that they plan to add programs over the next few years. The ten most commonly planned program additions were:

- Mind-body balance programs
- Fitness programs
- Group exercise programs
- Educational programs
- Arts and crafts programs
- Teen programs
- Functional fitness programs
- Performing arts programs
- Environmental education
- Holidays and other special events

According to the 2022 Outdoor Participation Report, published by the Outdoor Foundation, just over half (54%) of Americans ages 6 and older participated in outdoor recreation at least once in 2021. The outdoor participant base has increased 6.9% since the COVID pandemic began in early 2020.

Addressing the COVID-19 pandemic required many respondents to either put programs or services on hold (82%) or cut programs or services entirely (34%). Additionally, many respondents have had to rethink their programming portfolios. Two-thirds of respondents (67%) had added online fitness and wellness programming as of May 2020, 39% were involved in programs

to address food insecurity, and one in four was involved in programs to provide educational support to out-of-school children.

## LOCAL INSIGHTS & FEEDBACK

Local recreation demands and needs were explored through a variety of public engagement to gather feedback on strengths and limitations of existing recreation programs and resources available to the Moab community. Public outreach included a community survey and two public meetings to explore priorities and opportunities to enhance recreation programming.

### Community Survey

The community-wide surveys (mailed and online) conducted from late March to late April, 2023 included several questions related to recreation facilities, programs, and activities. Respondents expressed the strongest interest for community events (51% very interested; 86% very or somewhat interested). Overall, respondents indicated the strongest interest in adult program options, such as fitness, wellness and arts (69%+), in addition to youth fitness, music, gymnastics, or crafts (64%) and outdoor adventure camps (61%).

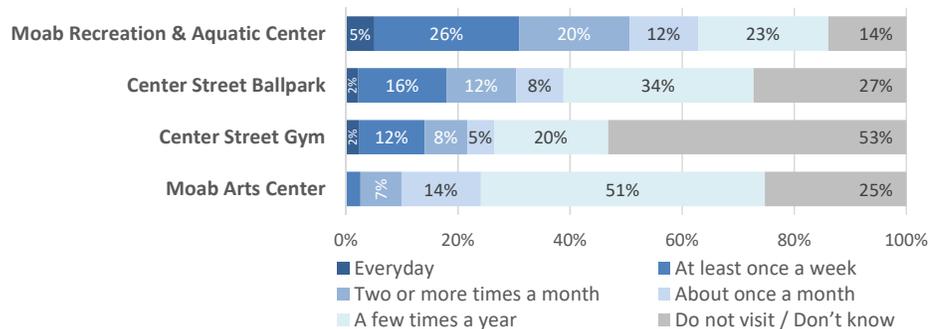
Respondents were asked how often they visited a City of Moab park or recreation facility. Overall and in aggregating data from all sites, 38% of respondents said they visit parks, facilities and open space at least monthly. The Moab Recreation & Aquatic Center was among the top five sites with the most visitation, with 63%

Figure 22. Frequency of Recreation Facility Visitation



*Have more classes at the MAC.”*

- Survey respondent



of respondents visiting at least monthly. Minor variations in visitation exist between mail and online survey respondents by age groups. In the online survey, respondents between 55 and 64 years of age indicated higher usage of the Aquatic Center than other age groups and mail survey respondents. From the mail survey, respondents between 35 and 44 visited Center Street Ballpark more often. Those between 35 and 54 visited Center Street Gym more often.

Overall, respondents were very measured in rating the condition of City parks and facilities, with an average rating of 'excellent' at 11% across all sites in aggregate. At least one-quarter of respondents noted the Moab Recreation & Aquatic Center as in excellent condition, and a strong majority (75%) feel the condition of the Aquatic Center as either excellent or good. Center Street Gym had the highest percentage of 'poor' condition ratings by respondents (14%). Respondents to the mail survey and the online-only survey provided generally consistent responses on the condition of park and recreation facility types; however, mail survey

respondents indicated slightly more favorable rating for the condition of several compared to online-only respondents. The Moab Recreation & Aquatic Center was with higher 'excellent' ratings (+7%) by mail survey respondents.

Respondents visit local parks and recreation facilities for a variety of reasons, but the most popular reason is for community events and concerts (71%). Online respondents were more inclined to visit city parks for family or youth oriented activities, including family gatherings/picnics, playgrounds, sport fields, recreation programs and youth programs. Also, online survey respondents between 20 and 44 years of age indicated a slightly higher usage of park and recreation facilities for playgrounds, family gatherings, youth sport programs and sport fields. Respondents between 55 and 64 years of age indicated slightly higher usage for sport fields.

Regarding local interest in recreational programs and activities, respondents expressed the strongest interest for community events. Overall,

Figure 23. Sentiment of Recreation Facility Conditions

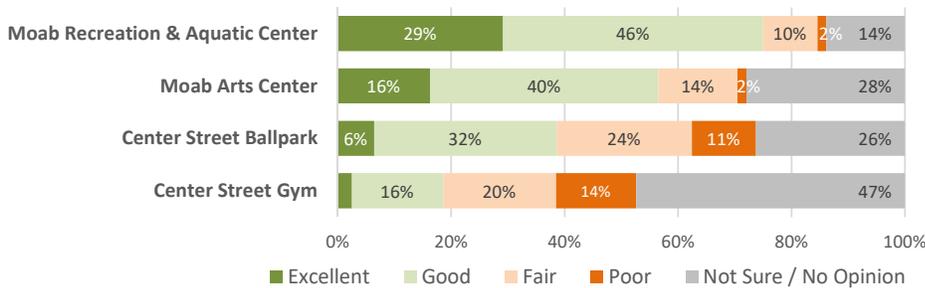
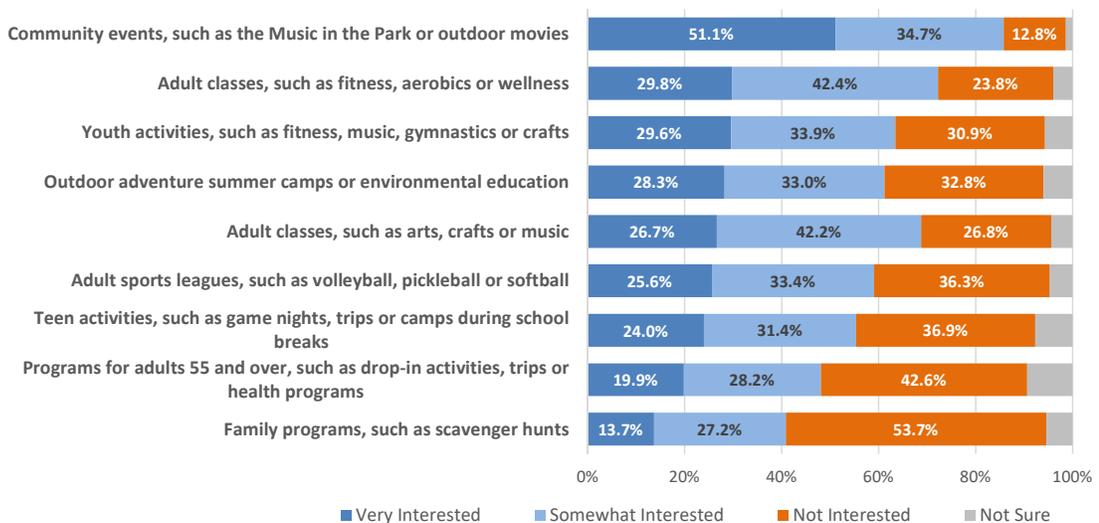


Figure 24. Interest in Recreation Program Options



majorities of respondents were either very or somewhat interested in nearly all program options listed, with the strongest interest in adult program options, such as fitness, wellness and arts (69%+), in addition to youth fitness, music, gymnastics or crafts (64%) and outdoor adventure camps (61%). In aggregate, family activities such as scavenger hunts had the least interest by respondents (54%). Overall, mail and online respondents indicated similar levels of interest about the various program options listed; however, online-only respondents showed more interest for family programs such as scavenger hunts (+12%) and youth activities such as fitness, music, gymnastics or crafts (+15%) compared to mail survey respondents.

Given a choice between raising taxes to develop an amenity in Moab versus not having such a facility in the city, slight majorities supported more taxes for two of five amenities tested: improving and expanding trails (60%) and revitalizing Center Street Ballpark (51%).

Through a review of over 600 write-in comments from the survey, addition feedback related to recreation facilities and programs included the following:

- Respondents expressed interest in, and enthusiasm for, a variety of improvements listed elsewhere in the survey, including playground renovations, installation of a splash pad, skatepark renovation, additional hours at the Aquatic Center and options for kayak classes at the pool.
- Several respondents offered interest in focusing on youth and teen activities and amenities, including more youth swim lessons and places for teens to hang-out.



*We need gym space. 1 small gym with no seating is ridiculous for this size of town. Our volleyball and basketball programs have so many kids we can't even hold practices because there is not enough space for everyone. We might get 1 practice in when games begin. Then adults try and take it. Or indoor soccer which isn't even there season. We Need gym space."*

- Survey respondent

## Public Meetings

Community members provided additional feedback during two public meetings. Although many comments gathered at the April and September events were directed toward trail or park improvements, the following represent some of the input received relating to recreation programs and facilities:

- Desperately need indoor sports facility. The Center St Gym is in disrepair and is not large enough to accommodate all activities. Pickleball courts should be included in creation of this facility
- Multi-purpose indoor sports and events facility to bring winter tournaments and visitation to Moab
- Youth – add indoor courts; open gym; upgrade current courts and ballfields
- Multi-purpose indoor sports and events facility. Private funding/donations are available with vision/planning. A facility like this would bring substantial off-season visitation/revenue at a time when local businesses desperately need it.
- Communications, promotions and marketing to reach more people who might be more positive about parks and rec opportunities in order to increase participation
- Soccer fields for open use by adults, kids, families
- Re-design Center Street Ballpark - mixed sentiment about renovations; some interested in broader mix of amenities and others are adamant about retaining the four field configuration
- Upgrade showers at pool
- More community events, including cultural celebrations



*Focus on our youth - Expand the Center St Gym - more courts, update the fields."*

- Survey respondent



*Improve Center Street Gym and baseball fields and bathrooms."*

- Survey respondent



*More art classes for all ages!"*

- Survey respondent



*Maintain what you already have. Stop chasing after new programs and new parks before fixing and maintaining the ones we already have."*

- Survey respondent

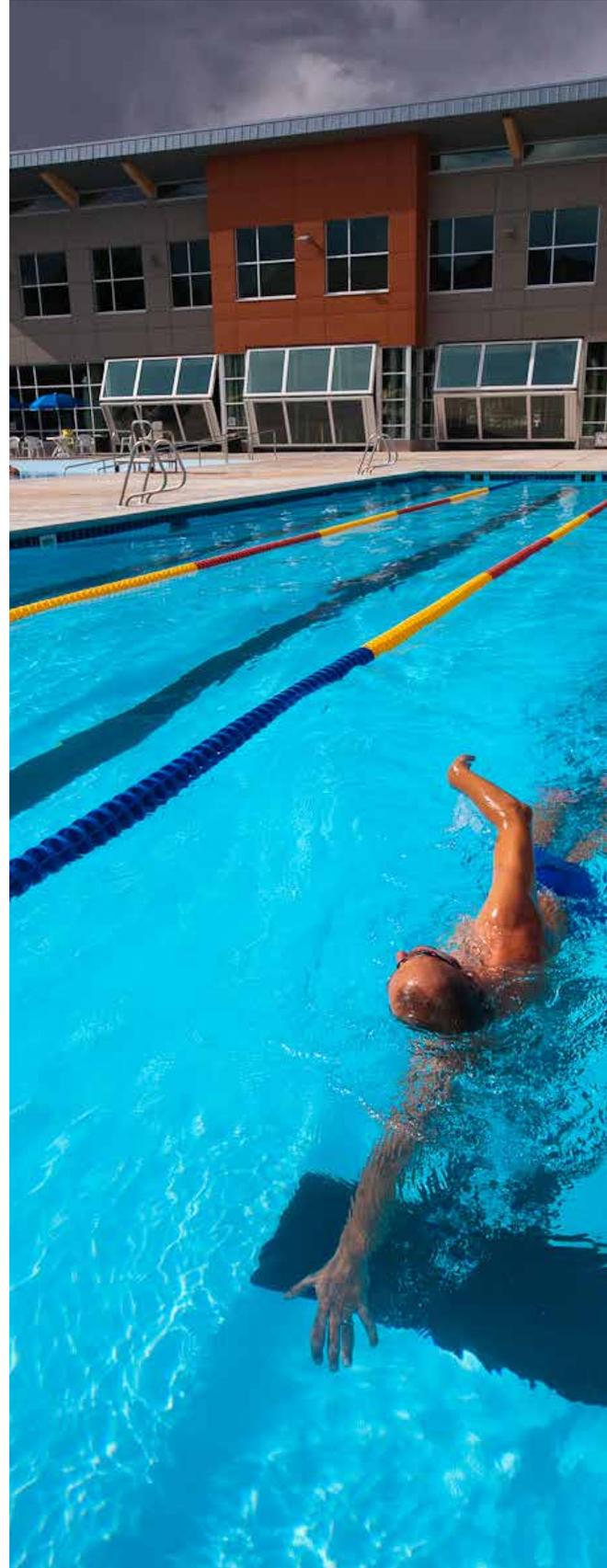
## RECREATION FACILITIES

The City of Moab hosts recreation and arts and culture programs in its parks and in several municipal buildings. The day-to-day management, ongoing maintenance, and long-term reinvestment in City facilities are crucial to the success of Moab's recreation programs. Additionally, efficient scheduling and use of the facilities ensures that cost recovery, inclusion, program vitality and other goals are met.

### Moab Recreation & Aquatics Center

The Moab Aquatic and Fitness Center's mission is to enhance the community by providing a facility that promotes health and wellness and accommodates the needs of a broad range of users for many generations to come. Located at 374 North Park Avenue in Swanny City Park, the Center features indoor and outdoor pools and provides a variety of swim lessons and classes. Facility amenities include an indoor 6-lane competition pool with 1-meter and 3-meter diving boards, shallow-water area and 18-foot slide, an outdoor 3-lane lap pool with adjoining current channel and bubble pool, an outdoor leisure pool with zero-entry depth, play structure with slides, and a 2,400-square-foot fitness center with free weights and cardio machines.

Opened in 2011, the Aquatic Center recently had a water filter and pump replacement, which closed the pool for several weeks. Although the facility is not very old, it is showing signs of age, and staff noted that mechanical and structural issues are surfacing.



## Center Street Gym

Located at 203 East Center Street, the Center Street Gym provides a place for the community to enjoy a variety of indoor sport opportunities including pickleball, volleyball, basketball and soccer. The gym also has a multi-purpose room available for rent. The Gym is part of the Center Street recreational complex that includes the Center Street Ballpark and the Sun Court outdoor basketball court and pocket park, all of which are located on East Center Street.

The Center Street Gym has a unique split-level design that has created accessibility challenges. The gymnasium sits a half story above street level, requiring visitors to navigate a set of stairs upon entering the building. The City installed ramps and an elevator to enhance the building's accessibility. Also, the gymnasium is under-sized, and capacity is limited for programming. Spectator seating is not available, which creates challenges during tournaments, events, or performances.

## Moab Arts Center

Originally built in 1925 as a Latter Day Saints (LDS) chapel, the facility was used for worship, meetings, and church recreation until 1959, when a new LDS church serving two wards was constructed on Locust Lane. The site was purchased by the City in 1987 and was transformed as the Moab Arts Center in 1996. The MAC has become the center for art classes, dances, and New Year's celebrations. This facility hosts arts programming and community art exhibits during the Art Walk. Programs and classes include ballet, tai chi, yoga, and other movement arts, in addition to a four-week summer camp offering art projects, games and field trips. In the late 1990s, the Center was renovated to improve accessibility. Although the facility is small for the range of functions provided and has limited, dedicated studio or classroom space, the facility functions well and provides a home for locally-oriented art programs and activities.



*Promote kayak lessons/pool time instead of discouraging it with limited sessions and unnecessarily high rates. With Colorado River nearby, the river community could really thrive if people were allowed to continue practicing in the winter."*

- Survey respondent

# RECREATION PROGRAMS

## Program Area Categories

The categories below represent the major areas of focus for current Moab recreation programs. Program lists are based on a review of program offerings for 2022-2023 that were provided by the Department.

Figure 25. Existing City Programs by Classification

Area	Focus	Programs
Sports	Youth	Jr. Jazz basketball, Indoor Soccer (Futsal), Volleyball, Soccer, Baseball, Softball, Tee Ball, Tackle Football, Flag Football, Volleyball
	Teen+	Adult Indoor soccer season & tournament, Adult co-ed Volleyball, Ultimate Frisbee tournament, Pickleball
Fitness	Preschool	Toddler Gym
	Youth+	Cycling, Yoga, Dance Fitness, Karate, Turkey Trot 5K
Cultural Arts	Youth	Summer Camp, Art & Craft Classes
	All ages or Teen+	Red Rock Arts Festival, Holiday Craft Fair, ArtWalk, artists displays and receptions, Re-Use Residency, Figure Drawing, Art & Craft Classes
Aquatics	Youth	Swim Lessons, Swim Club, Parent and tot swimming
	Teen+	Lap Swim, Water Aerobics
Education	Youth	
Specialty / General Interest	Adult	Kayak night
Adaptive / Special Needs		
Special Events		Free Movie Nights (Swanny, Pool, and MARC), 4th of July Community Celebration, Markets, Easter Egg Hunt, Turkey Trot 5K
Outdoor Education		
Self-Directed	Teen+	Open Gym Drop-in, Fitness Room
Senior / Human Services	Adult	Senior-specific programs provided by Grand County

### Program Area Definitions (generalized):

- Sports – Team and individual sports including camps, clinics, and tournaments. Also includes adventure/non-traditional sports.
- Fitness – Group fitness classes, personal training, education, and nutrition.
- Cultural Arts – Performing arts classes, visual arts classes, literary arts, music/video production and arts events.
- Aquatics – Swim lessons, aqua exercise classes, swim team, and other programs.
- Education – Language programs, tutoring, science (STEM) classes, computer, and financial planning. Also included is CPR/AED/First Aid.
- Specialty / General Interest – Personal development classes and activities.
- Adaptive / Special Needs – Inclusive and adaptive programs for the physically and mentally impaired.
- Special Events – City wide special events that are conducted throughout the year.
- Outdoor Education – Environmental education, hiking, camping, kayaking, farm activities, and other activities.
- Individual / Self-Directed – This includes the opportunities for individuals to recreate on their own. This can include activities such as drop-ins, open gym, use of weight/cardio space, and lap/recreational swimming. Although not an organized program, time and space must be allocated for this purpose.
- Senior / Human Services – This can include senior nutrition and meal programs, social service support, job training, life skills training, childcare, and other activities such as health screenings.

### Programs Available by Age Groups

Below is listed the basic program categories that are available for different age groups.

Figure 26. Segmentation of City Programs by Age Group

Program Category	Preschool	Youth	Teen	Adult
Sports		●	●	●
Fitness	●	●	●	●
Cultural Arts	●	●	●	●
Aquatics	●	●	●	●
Education				
Specialty / General Interest				●
Adaptive / Special Needs				
Special Events	●	●	●	●
Outdoor Education				
Self-Directed			●	●
Senior / Human Services				



*Have better hours at the aquatic center, if members had access to the gym after pool hours that would be phenomenal, and would likely get utilized more by members like myself."*

- Survey respondent

### Program Classifications

The following are the projected programming classifications for the City. It is important to realize that while certain program areas may be a focus for growth in programs and services, the Department’s role in providing the actual service may be different as indicated below.

#### Classification Definitions

- Core Programs are those programs that are a primary responsibility of the Parks and Recreation Department to provide as City-based activities.
- Secondary Programs are those programs that are a lower priority to be provided directly by

the Department, but may be offered by other organizations through contract with the City.

- Support Programs are programs that are not a priority for the Department to be providing directly to the community, but where the City may provide support through facilities, program coordination, and promotion of activities for other organizations.

The following chart identifies and summarizes recommended future core programs, secondary programs and support program areas for the Department.

Figure 27. Future Program Types by Focus Area

Core Programs	Secondary Programs	Support Programs
Aquatics	General Interest	Senior / Human Services
Youth Sports	Education	Adaptive / Special Needs
Adult Sports	Outdoor Education	
Special Events		
Cultural Arts		
Fitness		
Self-Directed		

## PROGRAM & FACILITY CONSIDERATIONS

Several challenges exist for the City to improve and increase service delivery of recreation programs. With limited operational and capital funding available, it could be challenging to increase the level of recreation programming available or make significant improvements to facilities that facilitate expanded programming.

Renovations to existing facilities are necessary for proper maintenance and to extend service life. The mechanical systems at the Aquatic Center, such as the water heater and HVAC, decking and outdoor tiles, components like the slide should be evaluated to prioritize future needs. Additionally, several survey respondents commented on the need to repair the showers.

The Center Street Gym should be replaced by a new, accessible facility that has a large gym, spectator seating, multi-use space, and space to support youth services. Consideration should be given to how to rebuild on the same site or pursue potential synergies with co-located facilities adjoining the Aquatic Center. A facility feasibility study should explore these options, plus the operational impacts for staffing and programming.

Additional, expanded or new program options may be limited by indoor facility capacity, staffing, available instructors, and cost. In an effort to not compete with private enterprise or other providers, the City should continue to foster relationships and collaborate for expanded programs to meet the needs of local residents and potentially those of visiting tourists. Through this lens, the City can explore program or short duration workshop options that build on the unique local outdoor experiences available around Moab to further develop outdoor skills. Programs could focus on climbing, bouldering, slacklining, kayaking, mountain biking, and backcountry skills, as examples. Also, promoting these options as adventure sport classes or workshops can be a benefit to the tourism economy.



*As our high school sports teams are diminishing in numbers. I'd love to see City Rec up their game and get the young kids excited to play all through school and into high school."*

- Survey respondent

Similarly, the Aquatics division should explore options to expand water safety classes, to include expanded lifeguard training, CPR/ First Aid, and kayaking water safety and skills. The installation of a deck mounted rock wall in the deep end of the pool also can add variety and support local climbing enthusiasts. The City should also continue to evaluate its pool times for different users or program types and utilize estimates of swimmer participation and market penetration figures.

Determining the level of financial commitment that the City is willing to make will be critical to assess how the City will provide on-going or additional recreation services.

### Program Evaluation

The Department has demonstrated its commitment to excellence and continuous improvement. Staff should periodically review data from the following sources to determine community needs for programs and services:

- Historical registration trends/success of current programs and services
- Surveys and questionnaires
- Utah Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan
- Suggestions provided by current or prospective instructors and current employees

Staff should continue to evaluate program

performance and prioritize future programs based on a mix of criteria that include:

- Community interest or deficiencies
- Potential for increased participation
- Fill rates for programs (registrants compared to program capacity)
- Rate of program cancellations
- Financial performance of individual programs (operating expenses vs. revenues)
- Program lifecycle assessment to balance the suite of new, mature, and declining programs
- Revenue potential, affordability, and accessibility
- Cost of service policy metrics

## SPECIAL EVENTS

The Parks, Recreation and Trails Department is responsible for the overall coordination of community and special events. These public events provide gathering opportunities, celebrations and activation of the downtown and City parks. While not every event is hosted or run by the City, these special events draw the community together, attract tourists and visitors from greater Grand County and are popular with residents. A selection of recent community events include the following:

- Free movie nights at Swanny Park, the Aquatic Center, and the MAC
- 4th of July Community Celebration,
- Holiday Craft Fair
- Art Walk
- Arts & Ag Market
- Easter Egg Hunt
- Turkey Trot 5K

Opportunities to connect are clearly crucial to Moab’s residents. Survey and public meeting responses showed strong interest for additional community events, especially events that cater to the local community. Additionally, the City could explore ideas for events that draw from the diversity of the community, such as festivals or activities celebrating Latin American or Native American traditions. City parks and facilities also could be promoted for quinceañeras and other family celebrations.

Community gathering and special events should continue to be an area of emphasis; however, the

overall number and breadth of City-sponsored special events should be carefully managed to align with the availability of resources and impacts to general park and facility use. This will ensure the City can adequately invest in its overall recreational offerings and maintain high-quality special events. Other community groups should be encouraged to be the primary funders and organizers of as many community-wide events as possible. A structured approach will help the City manage the growth of these popular offerings; ensure high-quality, adequately resourced events; and enlist community sponsorships, partnerships, and support.



## ARTS & CULTURE PROGRAMMING

Moab's unique landscape attracts a variety of artists, and the City has capitalized on the coalescence of local talent to create a vibrant arts community. The City of Moab provides public art, educational opportunities, arts programming, and events and supports local artists and cultural arts organizations to continue building a community that is inspired by and connected through arts and culture. The vibrant, local arts culture brings residents together through events, festivals, exhibits and programs, while enriching lives and adding economic value to the community.

The Parks, Recreation and Trails Department provides arts and cultural programming through the Arts division, which hosts arts programming at the Moab Arts Center and community art exhibits during the Art Walk. Arts programming is interwoven into the City's special events, as well as through partnerships with local arts, culture, and historical organizations. A variety of art classes are offered and include visual arts, music lessons, dance classes, and movement arts in addition to a four-week summer camp offering art projects, games and field trips.

The City also supports several major, annual

community events that are intended to connect and inspire people, activate downtown, and catalyze local businesses.

- The Red Rock Arts Festival is a four-day multimedia, participatory arts festival occurring each fall. The festival brings together music, visual arts, poetry, and film with workshops, displays and community activities such as a chalk art competition.
- The Moab Art Walk occurs on the second Saturday of the month between May and November, except July and August. Visitors can stroll a number of locations around Moab to interact with artists and explore local art exhibits and displays.
- The Arts & Ag Market at Swanny City Park occurs monthly on the third Friday from May through August.
- The annual Holiday Craft Fair is a free event at the Moab Arts Center on the first Friday and Saturday of December. The fair features local and regional artisans, bakers, and crafters displaying photography, paintings, ceramics, textiles, sculpture, jewelry, glass work, woodwork, metalwork, candles, soaps, salves, baked goods, and more.

In addition to maintaining the various event, exhibit, and program offerings, the City should continue to coordinate with local artists, galleries, and art organizations to periodically refresh the major events and explore other options to engage the community with the arts and attract visitors. Small-scale projects can take the form of electrical box coverings or building murals, and larger scale endeavors can include drone shows or expanded studio or maker-space.

An asset management program and art conservation fund should be considered for the growing public art collection. Each permanent art installation project should be accompanied with an allowance or calculation of future maintenance and costs. Artists should provide technical specifications about best management practices for the materials integrated in the art work, as well as a forecast of likely timing for the necessary cleaning and upkeep of the piece of work. The asset management practice for the public art collection should help track and manage the entire life cycle of each asset, as well as the network of their distribution across Moab. In such a system, the life cycle costs of each asset can be better predicted and managed to help engage appropriate maintenance tasks for each art work.



Photo: Moab Sun News

## CHAPTER 8



*Replace playgrounds with more interactive/engaging ones, and get a more expanded and safer bike commute trail system in place.”*

- Survey respondent

# Operations & MAINTENANCE

Moab is well known for its proximity to several national parks and state parks that draw visitors from across the country and beyond. The City serves as a gateway to Arches and Canyonlands National Parks, Dead Horse Point State Park, and thousands of acres of other public lands and trails that support outdoor recreation. Many of these recreational visitors use Moab as a “base camp” for exploring the region’s landmarks, and in doing so, their activities also increase the use of Moab’s park and trail system, adding to the needs for regular maintenance tasks.



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This chapter examines how the City of Moab compares to other park and recreation agencies across the country in jurisdictions of similar sizes. The significance of tourism visitation, however, can skew these comparisons, since Moab's resident year-round population is much smaller than the total population that actually uses the park system.

## BACKGROUND

Parks Operations function out of the Parks and Recreation Department, while coordinating with Public Works. Staff relationships allow cooperation across Parks and Public Works labor forces when needs arise. Volunteer groups, such as Trail Mix, also help with some types of trail maintenance and park projects.

The Parks and Recreation Department is responsible for the maintenance of all city parks and trails. This includes irrigation maintenance, turf care, weeding, bathroom maintenance, and waste and recycling disposal. Off-season work has been developed for the crew, such as the hanging and removal of seasonal holiday lights. During the irrigating and growing season, an allocation of a seasonal staff assists the full-time staffing for Operations.

## AGENCY COMPARISONS

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) 2020 Agency Performance Review provides some park metrics that offer perspectives on the Moab park system and its Operations division. Selected findings from their benchmarking tool can help reveal any disparities with park acreage, population size and park operations staffing levels.

An overview of NRPA agency performance metrics can reveal how Moab compares as a park system to other park and recreation providers across the nation. The level of service for Moab was calculated using a 2021 population estimate of 5,329 residents and 110.9 acres of parkland (excluding the golf course). Moab's level of service of 20 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents exceeds the LOS reached by the typical agency in jurisdictions with less than 20,000 residents. However, the context of the park system in a small city with significant tourism activity triggers the need for a higher level of service to include the transient population.



Figure 28. NRPA 2023 Agency Performance Metrics:  
Acres of Parkland per 1,000 Residents

	All Agencies	Less than 20,000	20,000 to 49,999	50,000 to 99,999	100,000 to 250,000	More than 250,000
Median	10.8	13.0	11.3	11.2	8.9	10.1
Lower Quartile	5.3	6.0	5.9	5.0	4.5	5.2
Upper Quartile	18.4	21.1	17.9	17.3	17.1	17.7

Looking across the spectrum of park and recreation providers with different population sizes, Moab’s Operations staffing of six full-time employees (FTEs) and one seasonal employee fit within the median for jurisdictions with less than 20,000 residents.

Figure 29. NRPA 2023 Metrics: Operating Expenditures Dedicated to Parks vs. Recreation

NRPA Metric	All Agencies	Jurisdictions Less than 20,000	Moab
Residents per Park (by jurisdiction size)	2,287	1,225	444
Acres of Parkland per 1,000 Residents	10.8	13	20.7
Miles of Trails	15	4	13.8
Park & Recreation Staffing (FTEs)	51.5	11.5	26.5
FTEs per 10,000 Residents	8.9	11.5	26.5
Annual Operating Expenses (Parks-only)	-	-	\$989,342
Annual Operating Expenses (Parks & MRAC)	\$5,500,000	\$1,200,000	\$3,379,843
Operating Expenses per Capita	\$94.77	\$120.79	\$191.28
Operating Expenses per Parkland Acre	\$7,388	\$7,495	\$8,963
Operating Expenses per Parks FTE	\$105,484	\$102,135	\$141,335
Five-year Capital Budget Spending	\$10,000,000	\$1,500,000	\$812,182

The variability of park systems and operational differences can diverge on a number of aspects related to the provision of park and recreation services. Some park systems do not provide any measurable recreation programming, while others invest highly in recreation centers, aquatic facilities, community-sponsored events, and activities. While the NRPA agency performance metrics suggest that Moab is providing an adequate labor force for its current park system, new projects and expanded activities will likely trigger needs for additional FTE. Additionally, unpredictable events, like the flooding of the Mill Creek Parkway, can overwhelm staff as massive repairs and recovery operations impact regular maintenance services.

An additional comparison examines similarly-sized cities in the Southwest that provide park and recreation services. A selection of cities were compared with Moab’s park and recreation performance measures to consider where benchmarks provide relevant information. Moab’s park and recreation spending is considerably higher than the other small cities. In the context of a gateway city, Moab utilizes its park and recreation services as a contributing factor to driving the tourism economy. Other small cities without huge tourism influxes have greatly reduced demands on their park and recreation systems. Providing an aquatic center, community recreation gym, and arts center are services that are typically beyond the reach of smaller cities.

In terms of a growing tourism economy, Park City provides a number of park and recreation services that help drive its economic engine, including an indoor aquatic and recreation center. As a larger and growing city constantly improving its infrastructure, Park City also spends much more on park capital projects than Moab.



Considering the budget for strictly park operations (\$989,342 in 2023 budget), Moab measures more closely to other small cities' annual operating expenses. Spending per capita using only the park operations budget would measure at \$191, which is not too much higher than Kanab's \$160 spending per resident.

Figure 30. Park and Recreation Services of Similar Cities

Performance Measure	Moab	Midway	Park City	Kanab	South Weber	Cortez, CO
Population (2022 Census)	5,321	6,217	8,374	5,131	8,124	8,999
Population Density/ square mile	1,119	1,082	411	324	1,697	1407
Land Area (sq.mi.)	4.8	5.55	20.4	14.59	4.64	6.23
P&R total spending (2022)	\$3,384,763	\$383,433	-	\$825,785	\$489,025	\$1,786,798
Spending/resident (2022)	\$191.28	\$61.67	-	\$160.94	\$60.20	\$204
Annual Capital Spending (2022)	\$25,000	\$2,631,096	\$1,420,000	\$10,000	\$1,282,000	\$0
Capital Spending/Resident	\$4.70	\$423.21	\$169.57	\$1.95	\$157.80	\$0
Park & Rec FTE	26.5	-	67	-	4.9	-
Park/Rec FTE/1,000 Pop.	5.0	-	8.0	-	0.6	-

Beyond the context of being a gateway city, according to the 2021 US Census Bureau, Moab has a lower median household income (\$42,083) compared to the other selected smaller cities. Also, the percentage of persons in poverty is higher in Moab. These economic disparities influence the capacity of the City to provide park and recreation services and make direct comparisons less valuable.

Figure 31. Economic Variable for Comparative Cities

	Moab	Midway	Park City	Kanab	South Weber	Cortez, CO
Median household income (2021 \$)	\$42,083	\$108,672	\$121,701	\$65,473	\$120,365	\$51,924
Persons in poverty (%)	23.5%	2.5%	7.4%	11.4%	1.60%	15.80%

## ASSET MANAGEMENT & LIFE CYCLE PLANNING

The management of physical assets requires proactive planning to capture cost efficiencies. Tracking repairs, maintenance tasks, routine operations, and seasonal work can help predict needs for future labor resources as the system grows. This Plan recommends developing a detailed list of assets at each park site and evaluating asset conditions annually. This task creates a framework for long-term management of the Moab park system. Detailed inventories with conditions tracking will help inform replacement cycle needs, monitor safe use, and assist in assigning maintenance frequency.

Most built park amenities have limited lifespans. Buildings, play equipment, pavement, etc. can be tracked from installation dates. As repairs are needed, those assets can have predictable replacement dates that are added to the capital facilities program. Life-cycle planning can help avoid extra time spent repairing outdated amenities and foster more cost effective labor resource use.

Beyond managing park assets to ensure a safe and enjoyable experience, the asset management system can be utilized to track more accurately the labor hours required to perform the many tasks involved in caring for park facilities. Active tracking can much better predict the ability to reach targeted levels of service for keeping parks clean, safe, and in good condition.

For future consideration, Park Operations could institute performance measures by tracking tasks to determine how much labor is aligned to which park maintenance tasks. Other park providers track categories of park tasks such as mowing, litter control, mowing, vandalism clean-up, restroom cleaning, and other repetitive activities. A sample of the labor distribution tracked across ten years from a Pacific Northwest park agency offers data on the labor commitment required for certain maintenance tasks. Restroom janitorial cleaning services are typically the highest labor activity (based on number of facilities provided), with turf mowing also a major labor investment.

Figure 32. Sample Parks Labor Distribution

Parks Labor Distribution	2010	2019
Restrooms - janitorial	25%	17%
Turf Mowing	25%	23%
Tree maintenance	22%	26%
Debris removal	18%	13%
Litter Collection	9%	21%
Vandalism/Repairs	1%	1%
	100%	100%

The following tables offer samples of the type of tracking used to measure how park operations are spread across different facilities. Having this data available can be critical for budgeting and labor assignments, FTE allocations, and planning for future facilities that require additional staffing.

Figure 33. Park Operations Task Tracking List

Parks System Performance Measures	Totals
Green Spaces Labor Hours Per Acre	
Green Spaces Cost Per Acre	
Neighborhood Parks Labor Hours Per Acre	
Neighborhood Parks Cost Per Acre	
Community Parks Labor Hours Per Acre	
Community Parks Cost Per Acre	
Regional Parks Labor Hours Per Acre	
Regional Parks Cost Per Acre	
Aggregate Operating Cost Per Acre Parkland	
Trail Maintenance: Cost/Mile	

Figure 34. Park System Performance Measures Tracking List

Park Task Performance Measures	Totals
Total Labor Hours	
<i>Total FTE Labor Hours</i>	
<i>Total Seasonal/Temp Labor Hours</i>	
<i>Total Offender Labor Hours</i>	
<i>Total Volunteer Labor Hours - Core/City Parks</i>	
<i>Total Volunteer Labor Hours - Special Facilities</i>	
Turf Mowing (Acres)	
Debris Removal (Cubic Yards)	
Litter Collection (Cubic Yards)	
Janitorial Restrooms & Shelters (Each)	
Vandalism Cleanup - Labor Hours	
Vandalism Cleanup - Occurrences	
Median Maintenance (Acres)	



## PLANNING FOR FUTURE STAFFING NEEDS

This Plan recommends the extension of the trail system, developing more improvements in existing parks, significant renovations for older park facilities, and pursuing parkland in areas that are currently underserved. All of these facility improvements will have an impact on the need for a steady labor force.

Operations staff cooperate across City departments to assist with labor needs and coordinate with volunteer groups that provide supplemental support on special projects. One challenge facing Operations is the rate of turnover for labor staffing. In a small city, far from other larger populations, it can be difficult to pull available manpower to keep FTE allocations filled and new recruits fully trained. Capital repair projects have a backlog of needed implementation, and reduced or inexperienced staffing can exacerbate the challenge for effective operations. Retaining Operations staffing is crucial to help continue the move toward more efficiency in daily, seasonal and annual tasks.

Pulling from data gathered from other park and recreation providers, a generalized predictive labor need upon acquiring new parks offers

perspective for staffing as Moab's park system grows.

Figure 35. Additional Operations Staffing for Future Parks

Project Type	Estimated FTEs
Neighborhood parks	0.25
Community parks	1
Special facilities (variable)	1 - 4

However, the best predictive model for future labor needs should come from the tracking of current tasks, hours, and activities that occur within the Moab Park Operations division. Tracking hours per task, summarizing hours per park, categorizing types of tasks, and their demands on labor will provide a more accurate model on what the distinct and unique character of the Moab park system needs to maintain a desired level of service in a community that places a high demand on its park system.

# Goals & OBJECTIVES



*Investing in the youth of our town should be the city's highest priority! A bigger/better city rec center with programs targeted at youth/teens is sorely lacking in Moab."*

- Survey respondent



The goals and objectives described in this chapter define the park and recreation services that the City of Moab aims to provide. These goals and objectives were derived from input received throughout the planning process, from city staff and officials, Technical Advisory Committee and community members.

The City of Moab is the largest city in Grand County, and providing recreational space is an important element in adopted planning

recommendations for both the City and the County. The goals described below are intended to complement, reinforce and focus the City's vision for parks, recreation, arts, open space and trails that has been established in other planning efforts, including the City of Moab General Plan.

The goals also were influenced in part by the National Recreation and Parks Association's (NRPA) Three Pillars, which are foundational concepts adopted by the national organization in 2012.

These core values (conservation, health & wellness, social equity) are crucial to improving the quality of life for all Americans by inspiring the protection of natural resources, increasing opportunities for physical activity and healthy eating and empowering citizens to improve the livability of their communities.

- **Conservation** – Public parks are critical to preserving our communities' natural resources and wildlife habitats, which offer significant social and economic benefits.



Photo: Jason Strother (JTS media)

- **Health and Wellness** – Park and recreation departments lead the nation in improving the overall health and wellness of citizens, and fighting obesity.
- **Social Equity** –Universal access to public parks and recreation is fundamental to all, not just a privilege for a few.

The goal statements from past City plans and the values represented in the Three Pillars guided the development of the goals and policies for this Plan.

Additionally, goals are stated within functional areas related

to the planning, development and administration of the Moab park and recreation system. A goal is a general statement that describes the overarching direction for the park and recreation system. Objectives are listed under each goal and are more specific and describe an outcome or a means to achieve the stated goals. Near-term recommendations are specific and measurable actions or projects intended to implement and achieve the goals and are contained within the needs assessment and capital planning chapters of the Plan.

The goals and objectives that follow are organized by topic and are not provided in a particular hierarchy or order of significance.



## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & COMMUNICATIONS

### Goal 1: Encourage and support public involvement in park and recreation issues.

#### Objectives

- 1.1 Involve residents and stakeholders in park and recreation facility planning, design, and recreation program development to solicit community input, facilitate project understanding and build public support.
- 1.2 Identify, encourage, and promote volunteer park beautification and improvement projects from a variety of individuals, service clubs, churches and businesses, as appropriate.
- 1.3 Have intentional engagement with diverse community groups to create and partner on new diverse events and community celebrations.
- 1.4 Pursue the formation of a City Council appointed Parks and Recreation Board as a forum for public discussion of ongoing park and recreation issues and policies.
- 1.5 Continue to use a variety of methods and media channels to publicize and increase resident awareness about parks and recreational opportunities available in the city.
- 1.6 Regularly update the City website and mobile interface to provide easy access to information about parks, trail routes, programs, events, maps, and registration along with ensuring the website follows best practices for accessibility and inclusion.
- 1.7 Prepare, publish and promote a park and trail facilities map and coordinate with local tourism organizations to distribute online and print materials.
- 1.8 Develop a coordinated sign program which provides a user friendly guide to the location of parks, trails and park amenities.
- 1.9 Actively coordinate with Moab Chamber of Commerce, Moab Happenings and other media on communications about park news, recreation programming, festivals and events.
- 1.10 Implement periodic surveys to gauge user satisfaction, program initiatives and statistical use of parks, facilities and programs, including trail counts.



## DESIGN & MAINTENANCE

### Goal 2: Design and develop high-quality parks, trails, and recreation facilities throughout Moab.

#### Objectives

- 2.1 Maintain all parks and facilities in a manner that keeps them in safe and attractive condition; repair or remove damaged components immediately upon identification.
- 2.2 Maintain an inventory of assets and their condition; update the inventory as assets are added, updated or removed from the system and periodically assess the condition of park and recreation facilities and infrastructure.
- 2.3 Design and maintain parks and facilities to offer universal accessibility for residents of all physical capabilities, skill levels, and ages as appropriate and in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Standards for Accessible Design. Seek opportunities to eliminate barriers at existing facilities and prepare a city-wide ADA Transition Plan for park and recreation assets.
- 2.4 Continue to engage, coordinate, and partner with user groups of specialized facilities, such as sport fields, off-leash areas, disc golf course, skatepark, BMX/bike skills areas, etc.
- 2.5 Standardize the use of graphics and signage to establish a consistent identity at all parks and facilities.
- 2.6 Standardize park furnishings and amenities (trash cans, tables, benches, fencing) to reduce inventory and replacement costs and improve appearance of, and maintenance consistency within the park system.
- 2.7 Develop city-owned or maintained park sites based on site-specific master plans or other adopted strategies to ensure parks reflect local needs, community input, recreational and conservation goals, and available financial resources.
- 2.8 Incorporate sustainable development and low impact design practices into the design, planning, and rehabilitation of new and existing facilities.
- 2.9 Utilize, as appropriate, native vegetation for landscaping in parks to minimize maintenance requirements.



## PARKS & OPEN SPACE

**Goal 3: Provide a diversity of parks, recreation facilities and open space and a balance of opportunities for both passive and active recreation that meet the needs of different age groups, abilities, and interests.**

### Objectives

- 3.1 Identify and prioritize lands for inclusion in the park and open space system based on factors such as contribution to level of service, connectivity, preservation and scenic or recreational opportunities for residents.
- 3.2 Prioritize facility development based on demonstrated demand, population served, local user appeal, fiscal opportunity and revenue-generating potential.
- 3.3 Plan for a range of play types, universal access, and a phasing plan when replacing or upgrading playground equipment.
- 3.4 Develop a wider variety of recreation opportunities and plan for sport fields, courts and specialized recreational facilities (e.g., pump track, splash pad, etc.) with consideration of local needs, partner support/capacity, recreational trends, and availability of similar facilities within the city and region.
- 3.5 Redesign and redevelop Center Street Ballpark to improve sport field amenities and lighting and a year-round park with more varied recreation options.
- 3.6 Consider incorporating alternative sport opportunities for youth and adults in the park system such as disc golf, futsal, parkour, and other non-team physical activities.
- 3.7 Integrate public art and park design from the onset of facility planning to create compelling, engaging, and captivating public places. Prioritize experiences that are interactive and allow for dynamic sensory exploration.
- 3.8 Actively work to maintain and improve the condition of City-owned open space to enhance or maintain native plant species, habitat function, and other ecological values and functions. Remove and control non-native or invasive plants as appropriate.
- 3.9 Provide environmental education opportunities in open space areas with creative and interactive interpretation strategies, such as hands-on displays, self-guided walks, and other engaging experiences.
- 3.10 Anticipate global climate change and foster climate-resilient landscapes in parks and open space areas.
- 3.11 Improve tree management policies and practices and promote tree retention and succession.



## TRAILS & CONNECTIVITY

**Goal 4: Expand and develop a network of shared-use trails and bicycle and pedestrian corridors to enable connectivity between parks, neighborhoods, and public amenities.**

### Objectives

- 4.1 Support the implementation of the Unified Transportation Master Plan for pedestrian and bicycle connections and improvements that safely link parks to other city parks, downtown, and other nearby destinations.
- 4.2 Coordinate with Grand County to provide coordinated trail alignments that enable continuous walking and biking along Spanish Valley and access between major local parks and other key destinations.
- 4.3 Prioritize trail projects that address gaps between existing paths, create longer, more usable connections, and improve safety.
- 4.4 Integrate the siting of proposed trail segments into the development review process; require development projects along designated trail routes to be designed to incorporate trail segments as part of the project.
- 4.5 Coordinate construction of trail projects with other capital improvement projects including utility and transportation projects.
- 4.6 Work with regional agencies, utilities and private landholders to secure trail rights-of-way and easements and access to open space for trail connections.
- 4.7 Furnish trail systems with appropriate supporting trailhead improvements that may include interpretive and directory signage systems, rest stops, drinking fountains, restrooms, parking and loading areas, water, and other services.
- 4.8 Where appropriate, locate trailheads at or in conjunction with park sites, schools, and other community facilities to increase local area access to the trail system and reduce duplication of supporting improvements.
- 4.9 Develop and implement a system of signs (e.g., trailhead, etiquette, directional, mile markers, emergency location markers, etc.) to mark trails and non-motorized routes that coordinates with the City's streetscape and furniture standards in accordance with best practices.
- 4.10 Develop a comprehensive trail map that identifies opportunities for recreational trail uses separated from vehicle traffic and that illustrates connections to trails and trailheads surrounding Moab.



## RECREATION, ART & EVENTS

**Goal 5: Provide a varied and inclusive suite of recreation opportunities and experiences to promote health and wellness, year-round activity, and social engagement.**

### Objectives

- 5.1 Promote and expand special events and recreational programming to enhance community identity, community activity and environmental education; Incorporate the diversity of community festivals, events, movies in parks, community gardens, historical interpretation and other cultural activities into the Moab brand of park and recreation services.
- 5.2 Enhance the diversity of recreation programs offered, considering programs that are in high demand, serve a wide range of users and utilize the city's unique indoor and outdoor assets.
- 5.3 Continue to foster and expand partnerships with the Grand County School District, private non-profit agencies, private recreation oriented clubs and local businesses to deliver recreation services and secure access to existing facilities for community recreation.
- 5.4 Strategically expand recreation programs that complement services of other providers as facilities, staffing levels and partner opportunities allow.
- 5.5 Periodically evaluate recreation program offerings in terms of attendance, current trends, customer satisfaction, cost-to-subsidy, and availability of similar programs through other providers and make adjustments as necessary.
- 5.6 Maintain and enhance program scholarships and other mechanisms to support recreation access for low-income residents.
- 5.7 Monitor local and regional recreation trends to ensure community needs and interests are addressed by available programming.
- 5.8 Foster the City's role as a convener of artists, arts organizations, and community groups to facilitate collaboration and efficiently serve the community through arts and culture programs and experiences.
- 5.9 Partner with the community and local organizations to foster a variety of cultural events and support community cultural celebrations.
- 5.10 Identify and implement opportunities for integrating arts and culture into parks and open space, including, where feasible and appropriate, through permanent and temporary public art installations, arts performance and events, interpretive strategies, and other dynamic expressions.
- 5.11 Encourage the collaboration of arts and culture marketing and communication efforts through shared event calendars, social media management, and other cohesive strategies.



## ADMINISTRATION & MANAGEMENT

**Goal 6: Provide clear leadership through exceptional management, partnerships, collaborations, and agreements that supports and promotes park, recreation, and open space system.**

### Objectives

- 6.1 Pursue sufficient financial resources to ensure a vibrant and well-maintained parks and recreation system.
- 6.2 Allocate adequate funding for maintenance, staffing and asset preservation.
- 6.3 Identify and implement partnerships with other public, private, non-profit, and community organizations to support capital projects, community events, programs, and other special initiatives.
- 6.4 Review parks and recreation fee schedules periodically and update as necessary based on program demand and local market comparisons.
- 6.5 Pursue alternative funding options and dedicated revenues, such as private donations, sponsorships, partnerships, and grants, along with support through partnerships with service organizations, volunteer groups, businesses and other agencies.
- 6.6 Stay abreast of best practices in technology and implement systems and tools to improve customer service and support efficient operations.
- 6.7 Promote professional development opportunities that strengthen the core skills and promote greater commitment from staff and key volunteers, to include trainings, materials and/or affiliation with professional organizations, such as the National Recreation & Park Association, Utah Recreation & Parks Association, American Society of Landscape Architects, Society for Outdoor Recreation Professionals, and/or the International Society of Arboriculture.
- 6.8 Periodically update the capital improvements plan to address facility improvement needs.
- 6.9 Update the Parks and Recreation Master Plan periodically and approximately every ten years to ensure facilities and services meet current and future community needs and maintain eligibility for State grants.

”

*Improve connectivity of trail systems for folks to safely access resources like grocery stores on foot from anywhere in the valley. This would be an added benefit of trail-based recreation.”*

- Survey respondent



# Capital Planning & Implementation

## KEY PROJECT RECOMMENDATIONS

The following is a summary of key project recommendations which will require commitment from the City and its residents for the continued support of a healthy park and recreation system that preserves and enhances the safety, livability, and character of the community.

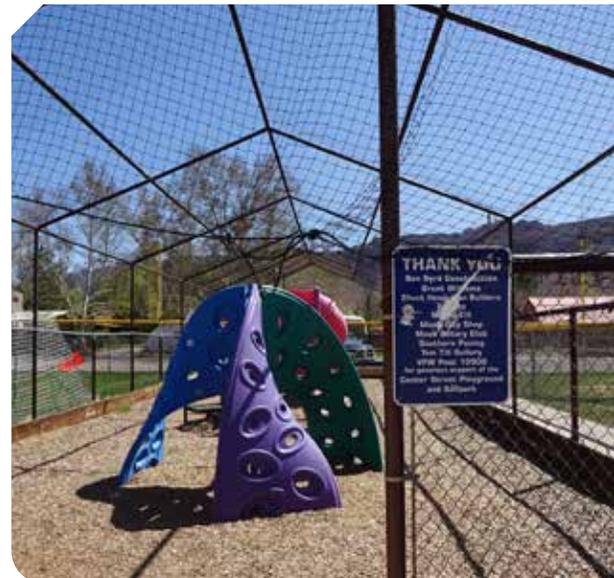
### Park Development & Enhancements

In the immediate near-term, the City should focus on park site master planning for Swanny Park, Old City Park and Center Street Ballpark to determine updated layouts that will offer residents a more diverse range of recreational experiences, while creating destinations that attract and engage park users. Considering local needs for types of park facilities and national trends, new park designs should include some of the following amenities, in addition to always supporting walking trails:

- Inclusive, all-abilities, or creative playgrounds, including shade structures
- Splash pad/water play
- Picnic areas for small group gatherings
- Multiple-use sport fields accommodating flexible configurations
- Sport courts, including pickleball

Additionally, the skate park at Swanny Park should be re-designed and rebuilt to create a facility that offers a wider range of elements for different skill levels and enhanced user safety.

A number of parks have aging infrastructure that warrants upgrades. As older benches and tables are replaced, they should be re-installed with ADA-compliant versions that also include accessible routes to at least half of the furnishings per park. An opportunity exists to renovate the playground at Swanny Park or Center Street Ballpark with an all-inclusive, ADA-compliant



playground suitable for all abilities. The play area at Dixie Park has insufficient play safety surfacing and should be amended. Also, the sport court at the Sun Court should be resurfaced to remove the concrete joints for smoother play.

Other development projects may include adding amenities to existing parks, such as additional bouldering or slackline options, picnic shelters for small gatherings, and play area shade structures. Shade trees and additional plantings were identified as a desirable improvement at Swanny Park and along Mill Creek Parkway. A general consideration for the public is to create a park system that provided year-round facilities for all ages and all abilities to gather and recreate in diverse range of safe, clean and well-maintained park facilities that also balance fiscal stability.

### Trail Connections

Trail connections, including sidewalk and bike lanes improvements, are needed to help link destinations across Moab. Acquiring additional lands, easements, and/or rights-of-way for the expansion of the trail network are necessary and should be coordinated with the City’s Public Works Department and Grand County. The development of recreational trail corridors should be coordinated with the planned alignments illustrated in the Non-Motorized Trail Master Plan and subsequent updates. Priority trail segments should include a linkages that extend existing routes or create looped routes, such as a shared use path that connects the pedestrian beacon on US 191 at City Market crossing Pack Creek to Kane Creek Boulevard and extending the Mill Creek Parkway Trail from Rotary Park to the Mill Creek Canyon trailhead on Powerhouse Lane. The City also should review, comment and coordinate with the Community Development Department on local land development applications to facilitate the inclusion of pedestrian and bicycle routes that connect to the conceptual trail network.

### Recreation Facilities

Renovations to existing facilities are necessary for proper maintenance, to extend service life and to improve accessibility and usage. For the Moab Recreation and Aquatic Center, a facility assessment needs to be completed to determine and prioritize near-term renovations, which should include a review of mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems, decking, and facade tiles. Additionally, the City should consider how to rebuild the Center Street Gym on the same site or pursue potential synergies with co-located facilities adjoining the Aquatic Center. A facility feasibility study should explore these options, plus the operational impacts for staffing and programming.





## Acquisitions to Fill Park System Gaps

The acquisition of two additional neighborhood parks are necessary to address existing gaps in park services in Moab. As growth and land development continue, opportunities to acquire large park sites will be more difficult and require Moab to follow an intentional acquisition program, as well as think creatively and foster partnerships to provide desired public parkland with sufficient room for park amenities. This could include limited term or long duration lease agreements (e.g., with Grand County School District for land near Rotary Park) for interim property use to accommodate near term recreational needs. To implement a successful acquisition program, the City may need to actively search out potential locations and property owners to secure future park sites, ahead of or concurrent with anticipated new development. Additionally, the City should continue to coordinate with local residential developers to include public parks in new subdivisions and utilize tools, such as park impact fee credits if implemented, to facilitate the process.

## ADA & Other Accessibility Enhancements

Minor improvements to access, such as providing ramped entrances to playgrounds or stable surface access to site furnishings, are necessary to conform to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and ensure universal accessibility. The site assessment summaries and the capital project list identified and includes upgrades to remove barriers and improve universal access. In general, the City should make improvements to existing parks as needed to ensure proper maintenance, usability, accessibility, and quality of park features and grounds.

## Wayfinding & Signage

Parks, trails, and other public open spaces are the primary targets for unifying the urban environment into a cohesive, accessible, and connected community through an identifiable wayfinding program. The City currently uses a variety of park identification signs, which lack a unifying identity. To clarify ownership and the managing agency, the City should install additional, graphically-unified signs to help users navigate the outdoor recreation experiences offered by the City. Signage should be installed at key trail nodes and all City parks (primary and secondary entry points) to include directional and mileage information, site and system maps, unique features, and user etiquette information.



## IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS

A number of strategies exist to enhance and expand park and recreation service delivery for the City of Moab; however, clear decisions must be made in an environment of competing interests and limited resources. A strong community will is necessary to bring many of the projects listed in this Plan to life, and the Moab City Council has demonstrated its willingness in the past to support parks and recreation and a high quality of life for local residents.

The recommendations for park and recreation services noted in this Plan may trigger the need for funding beyond current allocations and for additional staffing, operations and maintenance responsibilities. Given that the operating and capital budget of the Parks and Recreation Department is finite, additional resources may be needed to leverage, supplement, and support the implementation of proposed objectives, programs, and projects. While grants and other efficiencies may help, these alone will not be enough to realize many ideas and projects noted in this Plan. The following recommendations and strategies are presented to offer near-term direction to realize these projects and as a means to continue dialogue between City leadership, local residents, and partners. The tools presented only capture development of the capital improvements and not the long-term operations of the new assets.

Additionally, a review of potential implementation tools is included as Appendix F, which addresses local financing, federal and state grant and conservation programs, acquisition methods and others.

### Enhanced Local Funding

According to the City budget, Moab maintains reserve debt capacity for local bonds and voter approved debt. The potential to bundle several projects from the Capital Improvements Plan or take advantage of unforeseen opportunities, such as acquisitions, may warrant a review of debt implications and operating costs for the City, along with the need to conduct polling of voter support for such projects.

## Recreation, Arts & Parks (RAP) Tax

Moab voters approved the RAP Tax in November 2020, which went into effect on April 1, 2021. This funding has been a crucial addition to the capital program for parks, arts and recreation and has provided resources for local non-profit projects as well. Given the annual revenue from the RAP Tax, the City should consider establishing a sinking fund or reserve account to save and accumulate funds to support larger scale capital projects.

### Park Impact Fees

Park Impact Fees (PIF) are imposed on new development to meet the increased demand for parks resulting from the new growth. PIF can be used for park and trail acquisition, planning and/or development. They cannot be used for operations and maintenance of parks and facilities. The City of Moab currently does not assess impact fees for parks; however, the City does assess impact fees for water and sewer. If the City anticipates a surge in land development, it should review its policy to determine whether it would be advantageous to implement a park impact fee to help finance improvements to the park system related to development-related population growth. If enacted, the City should prioritize the usage of PIF to secure new park properties and finance park or trail development consistent with the priorities within this Plan.

### Parkland Donations & Dedications

Land donations from development projects, individuals, or conservation organizations could occur to complement the acquisition of park and open space lands across Moab. Gift deeds or bequests from philanthropic-minded landowners could allow for lands to come into City ownership upon the death of the owner or as a tax-deductible charitable donation. The Department should vet any potential dedications to ensure that such land is located in an area of need and can be developed with site amenities appropriate for the projected use of the property.

## Grants & Appropriations

Several state and federal grant programs are available on a competitive basis, such as the Land and Water Conservation Fund, Utah Outdoor Recreation Grant and UDOT programs. Pursuing grants is not a panacea for park system funding. Grants are both competitive and often require a significant percentage of local funds to match the request to the granting agency. This can be as much as 50% of the total project budget, depending on the grant program. Moab should continue to leverage its local resources to the greatest extent by pursuing grants independently and cooperating with other local partners.

Appropriations from state or federal sources, though rare, can supplement projects with partial funding. State and federal funding allocations are particularly relevant on regional transportation projects, and the likelihood for appropriations could be increased if multiple partners are collaborating on projects.

## Internal Project Coordination & Collaboration

Internal coordination with the Public Works and Community Development Departments can increase the potential of discrete actions toward the implementation of the proposed trail and path network, which relies heavily on street right-of-way enhancements, and in the review of development applications with consideration toward potential property acquisition areas, planned path corridors, and the need for easement or set-aside requests. However, to expand the extent of the park system and recreation programs, additional partnerships and collaborations should be considered.

## Partnerships

Public-private partnerships are increasingly necessary for local agencies to leverage their limited resources in providing park and recreation services to the community. Corporate sponsorships, health organization grants, stewardship programs and non-profit organizations are just a few examples of partnerships where collaboration provides value to both partners. The City has existing partners and should continue to explore additional and

expanded partnerships, where feasible, to help implement these Plan recommendations.

Coordination with Grand County, Grand County School District, Utah State University and private recreation providers should be ongoing to assess the range and type of recreation programs offered in the City and to maximize use of community facilities, such as fields, sport courts, gymnasiums, and other indoor spaces. The interlocal agreement with the school district and the Grand County Special Services Recreation District should be updated periodically to address changing needs, responsibilities, or expectations. The City may need to find and coordinate with other recreation program vendors for new programs and services to meet the interests of the community and address current gaps in program coverage.

## Promoting Health Benefits

Moab also should explore partnership opportunities with regional health care providers and services, such as Moab Regional Hospital, Spanish Valley Clinic and the Southeast Utah Health Department, to further promote wellness activities, healthy living, and communications about the benefits of parks and recreation. For example, this group could more directly cross-market services and help expand communications about local wellness options, and they could sponsor a series of organized trail walks around the greater Moab area as a means to expand public awareness of local trail opportunities and encourage residents to stay fit. For example, other communities have been successful with funding requests to regional hospitals for the development and printing of community walking guides that highlight the health benefits of walking and include trail system maps and descriptions.

## Volunteer & Community-based Action

Volunteers and community groups already contribute to the improvement of park and recreation services in Moab. Volunteer efforts include youth sport support, storm damage clean-up, and event support, among others. Moab should maintain and update a revolving list of potential small works or volunteer-appropriate projects for the website, while also reaching out

to civic groups, USU, and the school district to encourage student projects.

While supporting organized groups and community-minded individuals adds value to the Moab parks and recreation system, volunteer coordination requires a substantial amount of staff time. Additional resources may be necessary to enable a volunteer coordinator to more fully utilize the community’s willingness to support park and recreation efforts.

### Other Implementation Tools

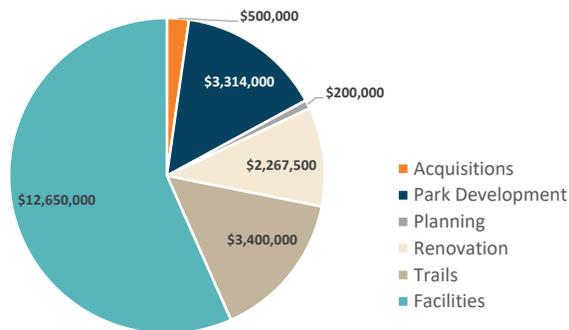
Appendix F identifies other implementation tools, such as voter-approved funding, grants and acquisition tactics, that the City could utilize to further the implementation of the projects noted in the Capital Improvements Plan projects List.

## CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PLAN

The following Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) identifies the park, trail, and facility projects considered for the next ten years, along with brief project descriptions. The majority of these projects entail the maintenance, acquisition, and development of parks, recreational amenities, and trails. Based on survey results and other feedback, Moab residents have indicated an interest in park facility upgrades and enhanced trail connections as priorities, and the Capital Improvements Plan is reflective of that desire.

The following table summarizes the aggregate capital estimates by park types for the next ten years.

Figure 36. 10-Year Capital Project Expenditures



The following Capital Improvements Plan provides brief project descriptions and sequencing to assist staff in preparing future capital budget requests.

Overall, the current costs for projects identified in the CIP total over \$22 million. The proposed project list focuses primarily on improving existing facilities through timely repairs, replacements, and upgrades to ensure an ongoing, healthy, and safe recreation system for Moab.

# Moab Parks & Recreation Capital Improvements Program (CIP)

**DRAFT**

Project Site	Project Description	High Priority from Public	Activity	Cost Opinion (2023)	Project Phasing		
					Stage 1	Stage 2	Future Years
Bark Park	ADA entry upgrade		R	\$2,500			
	Dog agility features (if desired)		D	\$5,000			X
Center Street Ballfields	Master plan & CDs for park redesign/upgrade	*	P*	\$120,000	X		
	Playground upgrade, additional amenities & shade		D	TBD		X	
	Sports field improvements		R	TBD		X	
Circle Park	Shade tree plantings; coordinate with UFC Grant		D	\$5,000	X		
Mill Creek Parkway	Shade tree plantings	*	D	\$15,000	X		
	Signage & wayfinding system for MCP	*	D	\$20,000	X		
	Add benches (3) & picnic tables (3)		D	\$24,000	X		
	Public art installations		D	\$60,000		X	
Splash Pad / Spraypark	location TBD	*	D	\$350,000		X	
Pickleball Courts	multiple courts; location TBD	*	D	\$2,000,000		X	
Old City Park	Master plan for park redesign/upgrade		P*	\$35,000	X		
	Playground improvements	*	R	\$250,000		X	
	Stage Improvements	*	R	\$100,000		X	
	Tree Succession Plan - coordinate with UCF Grant		R	\$25,000	X		
	ADA upgrades: paths, benches, tables		D	\$120,000	X	X	
	New restroom		R	\$150,000		X	
	Disc golf course entry improvement		R	\$25,000		X	
Duck pond restoration/redesign		R	\$45,000		X		
Dixie Park	Benches & shade structure		R	\$10,000		X	
Rotary Park	ADA upgrades: paths, benches, tables		D	\$50,000	X		
Swanny City Park	Master plan for park redesign/upgrade		P*	\$45,000	X		
	ADA upgrades: paths, benches, tables		R	\$60,000		X	
	Small shelters renovation/replacement	*	R	\$100,000		X	
	Playground expansion	*	D	\$200,000		X	
	Skate park expansion/replacement (consider new location)	*	D	\$300,000		X	
	Add large shelter (reservable)	*	D	\$120,000		X	
	Shade tree plantings		D	\$25,000	X		
Moab Aquatic & Recreation Center	Facility Maintenance Master Plan		R	\$50,000	X		
	Set aside for needed maintenance		R	\$500,000	X		
	Replacement of Rock Feature in Leisure Pool	*	R	\$100,000		X	
	Structural & aesthetic improvements		R	TBD		X	
	Mechanical system renovations		R	TBD		X	
Center Street Gym	Facility replacement (consider as an annex to the MRAC)		D	\$12,000,000			X
Trail Connections	Rotary Park to Mill Creek Canyon Trailhead	*	A/D	\$1,500,000		X	
	Pack Creek to Kane Creek Boulevard to 300 South	*	D	\$1,200,000		X	
	Mill Creek Parkway to Pipe Dream (via Pack Creek & Aspen Ave)		D	\$400,000		X	
	Anonymous Park to Kane Creek Blvd (easement/boardwalk)	*	A/D	\$800,000			X
Park Acquisitions	If any become available, particularly in the 1/2 mile walkshed areas		A	TBD			X
System-wide Enhancements	Signage & wayfinding system for City parks		D	\$20,000	X		
	ADA Improvements		R	\$1,000,000	X	X	
	Minor capital repairs / replacements		R	\$500,000	X	X	X
<b>Totals</b>				<b>\$22,331,500</b>			

Acquisition	A	RAP Tax revenue estimate (annual)	\$400,000
Planning/Permitting	P	RAP Tax - less granted dollars (~\$100K)	\$300,000
Renovation/Repair	R	RAP Tax reserve account	\$100,000
Development/Expansion	D	<b>RAP Tax balance for annual projects</b>	<b>\$200,000</b>

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# Appendix A

## Survey Summary

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**To:** Annie McVay, Parks, Recreation, Arts & Trails Director  
**From:** Steve Duh, Conservation Technix, Inc.  
**Date:** May 15, 2023  
**Re:** **City of Moab Parks and Recreation Plan**  
Community Survey Summary Results

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Conservation Technix is pleased to present the results of a survey of the general population of the City of Moab that assesses residents' recreational needs and priorities.

## KEY FINDINGS

### Moab residents strongly value their parks and recreation facilities.

Nearly all respondents (96%) think parks and recreation are important or essential to quality of life in Moab. Very few, about 4%, feel they are useful, but not necessary, or not important at all.

### Residents visit frequently and are somewhat satisfied with existing parks and trails.

The top five sites with the most visitation include Swanny City Park, Mill Creek Parkway, Moab Recreation & Aquatic Center, Rotary Park and Old City Park. The Mill Creek Parkway receives the most frequent visitation, and on a weekly basis, at least one-quarter of respondents visit Mill Creek Parkway, the Moab Recreation & Aquatic Center and Swanny Park. The least visited sites include Dixie Park, Robin Groff Memorial Park, Bark Park and Anonymous (BMX) Park.

A large majority of respondents (75%) are somewhat to very satisfied with the City of Moab parks and open space. Respondents also rated the condition of a variety of park and recreation facilities. Overall, respondents were very measured in rating the condition of City parks and facilities, with an average rating of 'excellent' at 11% across all sites in aggregate. At least one-quarter of respondents noted the Moab Recreation & Aquatic Center and Lions Park as in excellent condition. A strong majority of respondents (>60%) feel the condition of the Aquatic Center, Lions Park, Swanny Park and Rotary Park as either excellent or good.

### Residents participate in a range of activities and programs

Respondents visit local parks and recreation facilities for a variety of reasons. The most popular the most popular reason is for community events and concerts (71%). Majorities of respondents visit parks for family gatherings or picnicking (57%), relaxation (56%), fitness (56%), walking or running (54%) and swimming (52%).

While residents prioritize maintaining existing parks and facilities, they are generally supportive of improving the City's park and recreation system as well.

Respondents ranked as their top three priorities: improving or upgrading to existing parks (1<sup>st</sup>), expanding trail opportunities (2<sup>nd</sup>), and adding new recreational options in existing parks (3<sup>rd</sup>).

Using a list of 11 amenities, majorities of respondents generally feel that the City provides enough, or more than enough, of nearly all of the amenities listed. A plurality of respondents feel there are not enough walking and biking trails (47%), access to picnic areas (44%), community events (43%) and sport courts (43%).

The highest rated priorities include additional walking trails (39%), shade structures for playgrounds (38%), outdoor splash pad (31%) and renovated playgrounds (26%), with more than one in four respondents supporting these improvements.

Regarding recreational programs and activities, respondents expressed the strongest interest for community events (51% very interested; 86% very or somewhat interested). Overall, respondents indicated the strongest interest in adult program options, such as fitness, wellness and arts (69%+), in addition to youth fitness, music, gymnastics or crafts (64%) and outdoor adventure camps (61%).

#### Residents provided a substantial amount of write-in responses

Respondents were asked to describe one thing that they would like to see the City of Moab do to improve parks, trails, or natural areas. While residents left hundreds of specific comments and ideas, a few themes emerged:

- The highest frequency comments related to additional trails, pickleball courts, playground upgrades, van lifer and tourist impacts, dogs in parks and ongoing maintenance.
- Respondents expressed interest in a variety of improvements, including playground renovations, installation of a splash pad, skatepark renovation and additional hours at the Aquatic Center.
- Respondents would like to see continued investment in the expansion and maintenance of the trail system. Several respondents asked for investments in pedestrian and bicyclist access and safety improvements, and they offered ideas to extend trail connections to UCU, extending Mill Creek Parkway and linking to the Matheson Wetlands Preserve.
- Numerous respondents expressed a desire for continued site management and safety, including concerns about general maintenance, campers and van lifer usage, dog waste, lawn and tree care, and repairing Mill Creek Parkway.

**SURVEY METHODOLOGY**

In close collaboration with City of Moab staff, Conservation Technix developed the 14-question survey that was estimated to take less than ten minutes to complete.

The survey was mailed to a random sample of 2,000 households within the city limits of Moab on March 27, 2023, and reminder postcards were mailed to the 2,000 households on April 6<sup>th</sup>. An online version of the survey was posted to the city’s website on March 26<sup>th</sup>. Residents who did not receive a mail survey were able to complete the survey online. The survey was closed on April 30, 2023, and the full dataset was compiled and reviewed.

The survey is available in English and Spanish, and the cover letter accompanying the printed mail survey was written in both languages and included unique QR codes to access each in-language survey online. Overall, 326 surveys from the random sample mailing have been completed and returned (16.3% response rate, 5% margin of error). An additional 507 surveys were completed from the general, community-wide online surveys. In all, 833 surveys were collected, which includes four Spanish surveys.

Information about the survey was promoted through a number of channels, including on the City’s website, in the City Spotlight newsletter, through multiple social media postings, and through direct outreach to partner organizations and recreation program participants.

Although households were randomly chosen to receive the mail survey, respondents were not necessarily representative of all city residents. However, age group segmentation shows general alignment with current Census data. See the table below for age demographics for the mail and online surveys below, as well as comparative percentages for Moab’s population. See pages 17 for other demographic subgroup data comparisons.

Figure 1. Age demographics of survey respondents

Age group	Survey Respondents			City of Moab	
	Mail	Online-only	Combined	All	Over 20
Under 20	<1%	6.3%	3.8%	19.4%	--
20 to 34	12.3%	18.3%	16.0%	25.2%	31.2%
35 to 44	23.6%	32.9%	28.2%	15.2%	18.9%
45 to 54	17.3%	15.4%	16.1%	11.1%	13.7%
55 to 64	15.9%	12.7%	14.0%	7.1%	8.8%
65 to 74	22.6%	12.3%	16.5%	15.8%	19.6%
75 and older	9.9%	2.1%	5.4%	6.3%	7.8%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

This report includes findings of community opinions based on the combined responses from the mail survey and online. Each section also notes key differences between different demographic groups and among responses to the online-only survey, where applicable. Percentages in the report may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

## DETAILED FINDINGS

### Usage and satisfaction of parks and recreation facilities

#### How much do residents value parks and recreation?

Virtually all respondents (96%) feel that local parks, recreation opportunities are important or essential to the quality of life in Moab. Nearly four in five respondents feel that they are essential; while an additional 17% believe that they are important to quality of life, but not essential. Only about 4% of respondents believe parks are useful, but not important, or not important. While the sum of responses for ‘essential’ and ‘important’ were nearly the same for the mail and online survey respondents, online respondents were slightly willing to identify parks and recreation opportunities as ‘essential’ for Moab’s quality of life. Though residents of all ages value parks and recreation, respondents between 35 and 44 years of age were more likely than other respondents to deem them essential to quality of life. Online survey respondents with one child at home had a slightly lower response about parks and recreation opportunities as essential.

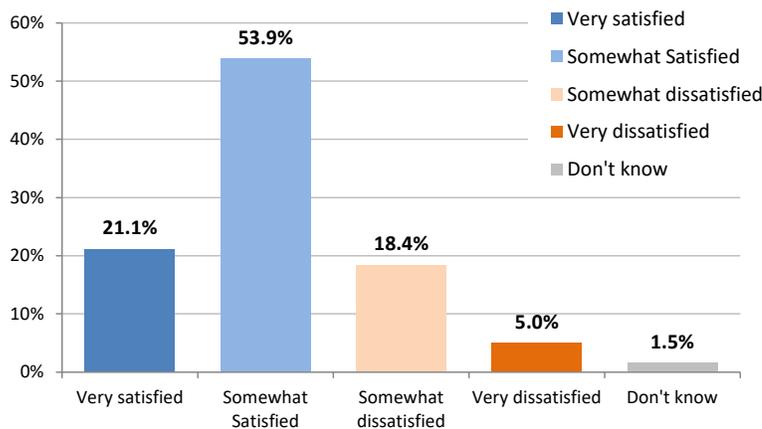
**Figure 2.** When you think about what contributes to the quality of life in Moab, would you say that city parks and recreation opportunities are...

Response options	Mail	Online-only		
Essential to the quality of life here	83.5%	97%	77.5%	96%
Important, but not really necessary	13.5%		18.4%	
Useful, but not important	2.6%	3%		
Not important or don't know	<1%	1.2%		

#### Are residents satisfied with city parks and open space?

A large majority of respondents (75%) are somewhat to very satisfied with the City of Moab parks and open space. However, nearly a quarter of respondents (23.5%) are either somewhat or very dissatisfied.

**Figure 3.** Rate your household’s satisfaction with the City of Moab’s parks or open space.



Overall, mail survey respondents indicated higher satisfaction for the city's parks and open space by 14 percentage points compared to the online-only survey respondents (84% to 70%, respectively). Online survey respondents between 20 and 64 years of age indicated lower levels of being very satisfied and higher rates of being somewhat dissatisfied with Moab's parks or open space compared to other age groups and responses from the mail survey. Online respondents with children in the household were more dissatisfied with the city's parks and open space compared to mail survey respondents.

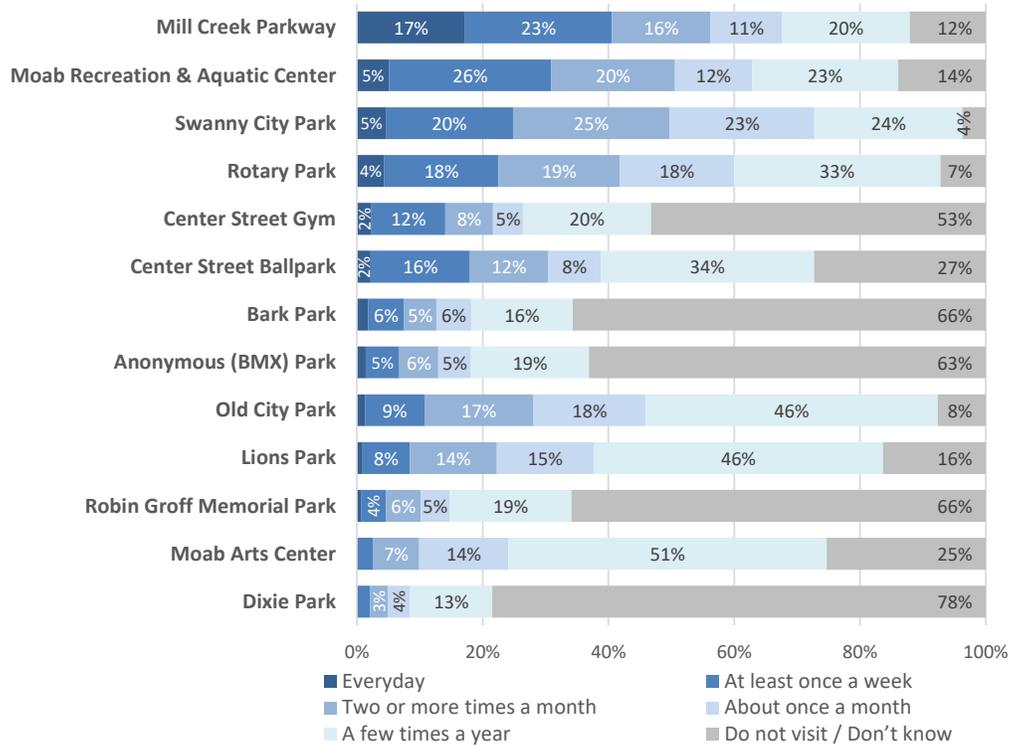
#### How often do residents use various parks and recreation facilities?

Respondents were asked how often they visited a City of Moab park, recreation facility or open space from a list of existing sites. Overall and in aggregating data from all sites, 38% of respondents said they visit parks, facilities and open space at least monthly. The top five sites with the most visitation include Swanny City Park, Mill Creek Parkway, Moab Recreation & Aquatic Center, Rotary Park and Old City Park. The Mill Creek Parkway receives the most frequent visitation, and on a weekly basis, at least one-quarter of respondents visit Mill Creek Parkway, the Moab Recreation & Aquatic Center and Swanny Park. Mail survey respondents indicated more frequent daily visitation of Mill Creek Parkway by 12 percentage points compared to online-only respondents. No other significant differences were noted between mail and online respondents.

The least visited sites include Dixie Park, Robin Groff Memorial Park, Bark Park and Anonymous (BMX) Park. In a review of the written comments from mail surveys, the former two sites are less known by respondents, with numerous responses including comments about not knowing where these two sites are. Visitation of the Bark Park and Anonymous (BMX) Park may be a result of the specialized use for each of these sites.

Minor variations in visitation exist between mail and online survey respondents by age groups. In the online survey, respondents between 55 and 64 years of age indicated higher usage of the Aquatic Center than other age groups and mail survey respondents. From the mail survey, respondents between 35 and 44 visited Center Street Ballpark more often. Those between 35 and 54 visited Center Street Gym more often, and those between 20 and 64 visited Mill Creek Parkway more often than online respondents. Mail survey respondents with or without children indicated slightly greater frequency of visitation of the Mill Creek Parkway than online respondents.

**Figure 4.** In a typical year, how often do you visit or use each of the following City of Moab parks, recreation facilities or open space? (Check one box in each row)



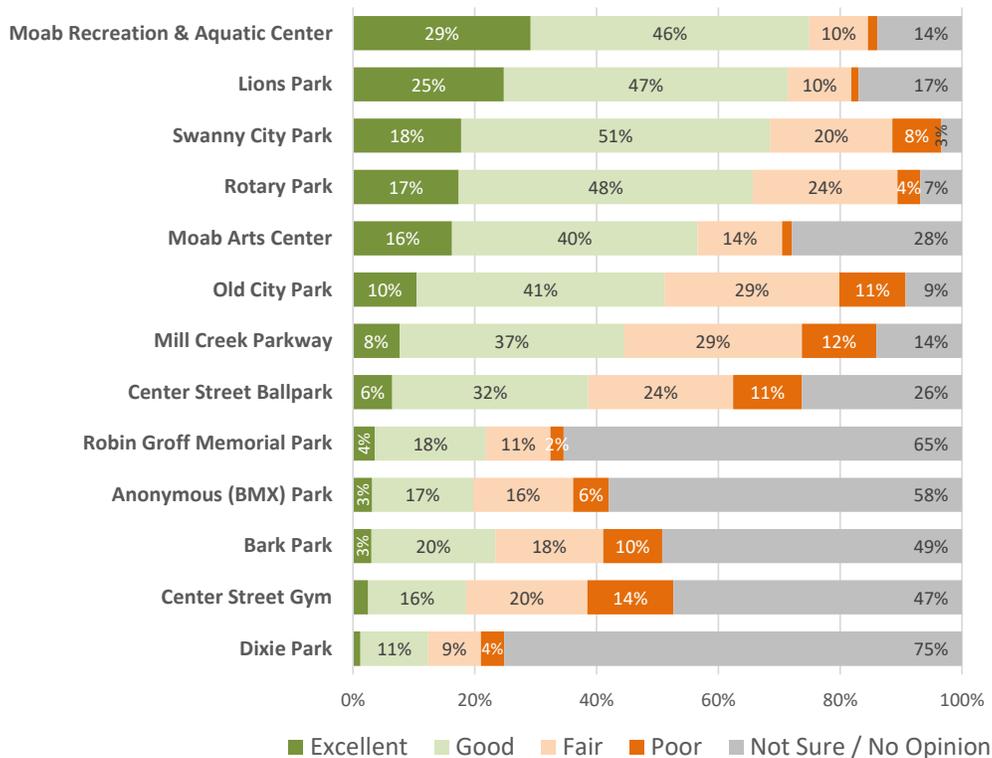
**How do residents rate the condition of Moab’s parks and recreation facilities?**

Using the same list of site as above, respondents also were asked to rate the condition of each of the parks, facilities and open space. Overall, respondents were very measured in rating the condition of City parks and facilities, with an average rating of ‘excellent’ at 11% across all sites in aggregate. At least one-quarter of respondents noted the Moab Recreation & Aquatic Center and Lions Park as in excellent condition. A strong majority of respondents (>60%) feel the condition of the Aquatic Center, Lions Park, Swanny Park and Rotary Park as either excellent or good. Center Street Gym had the highest percentage of ‘poor’ condition ratings by respondents (14%). A majority of respondents indicated a response of ‘not sure’ or ‘no opinion’ about the condition of Dixie Park, Robin Groff Memorial Park and Anonymous (BMX) Park.

Respondents to the mail survey and the online-only survey provided generally consistent responses on the condition of park and recreation facility types; however, mail survey respondents indicated slightly more favorable rating for the condition of several compared to online-only respondents. The sites with higher ‘excellent’ ratings by mail survey respondents include Lions Park (+13%), Moab Recreation & Aquatic Center (+7%), Swanny City Park (+7%) and Rotary Park (+6%). No other significant differences were noted between mail and online respondents.

Respondents between 45 and 64 rated the condition of Lions Park more favorably than other age groups. Also, Mail survey respondents between 20 and 34, as well as between 55 and 64, rated the condition of the Aquatic Center more favorably than other age groups. No significant differences were noted in rating the condition of parks by households with or without children.

Figure 5. Rate the condition of each of the following parks or recreation facilities. (Check one box in each row).



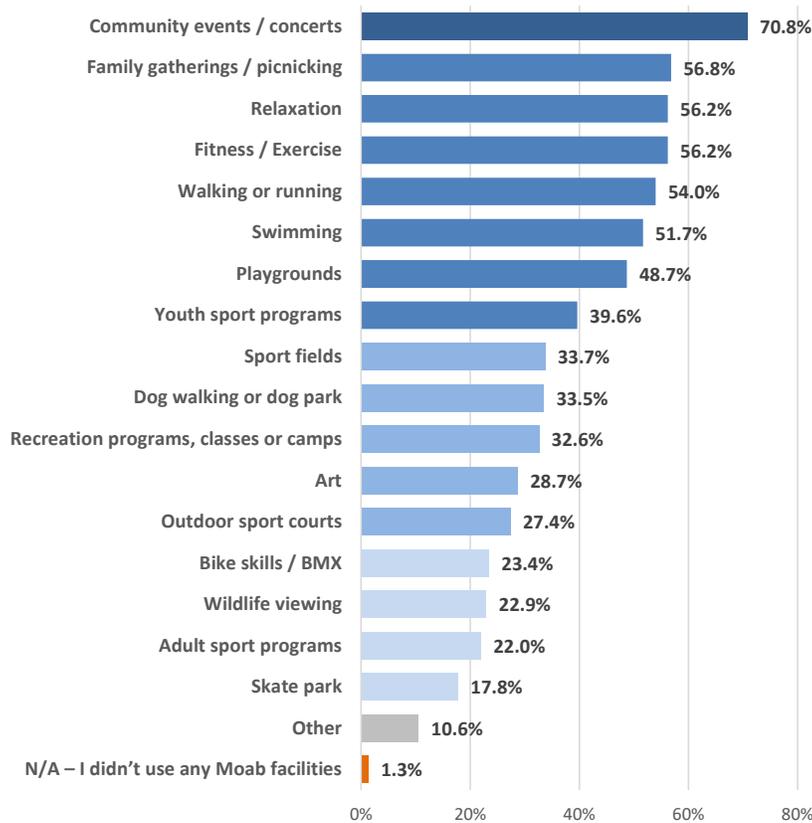
### Why do residents visit Moab’s parks and recreation facilities?

Respondents visit local parks and recreation facilities for a variety of reasons, but the most popular reason is for community events and concerts (71%). Majorities of respondents visit parks for family gatherings or picnicking (57%), relaxation (56%), fitness (56%), walking or running (54%) and swimming (52%).

The reasons for visiting city parks and recreation facilities varied slightly between mail and online respondents, with part of the difference attributable to the age group composition between the two. Online respondents were more inclined to visit city parks for family or youth oriented activities, including family gatherings/picnics, playgrounds, sport fields, recreation programs and youth programs. Mail respondents were more included to visit for more individual activities including walking/running, dog walking and wildlife viewing.

Online survey respondents between 20 and 44 years of age indicated a slightly higher usage of park and recreation facilities for playgrounds, family gatherings, youth sport programs and sport fields. Respondents between 55 and 64 years of age indicated slightly higher usage for sport fields. Mail survey respondents without children in the household identified walking and running and dog walking as more common reasons for visiting city parks. Mail survey respondents with two or more children identified sport fields and adult sport programs as more common reasons for visiting city parks.

**Figure 6.** What would you say are the main reasons your household visits Moab parks or recreation facilities? ( Check all that apply )



Approximately one in ten respondents identified an 'other' reason for visiting parks, which include the following:

- Pickleball
- Commuting along bike path/trails
- Disc golf

### Why don't residents visit more often?

When asked why they do not visit Moab's parks or recreation facilities more often, many respondents responded that they do visit (38%), see Figure 7. However, more than one in six respondents noted that they do not visit more often because of a lack of restrooms (19%), sites being too crowded (21%) or maintenance concerns (17%). Additionally, some respondents expressed concerns about not enough parking (15%) or they are too busy to go to parks and facilities (15%).

Small percentages of respondents noted not knowing what is available (9%), not having the right equipment (9%), and safety concerns (7%), or they face age or physical limitations (7%) that prevent them from using local parks.

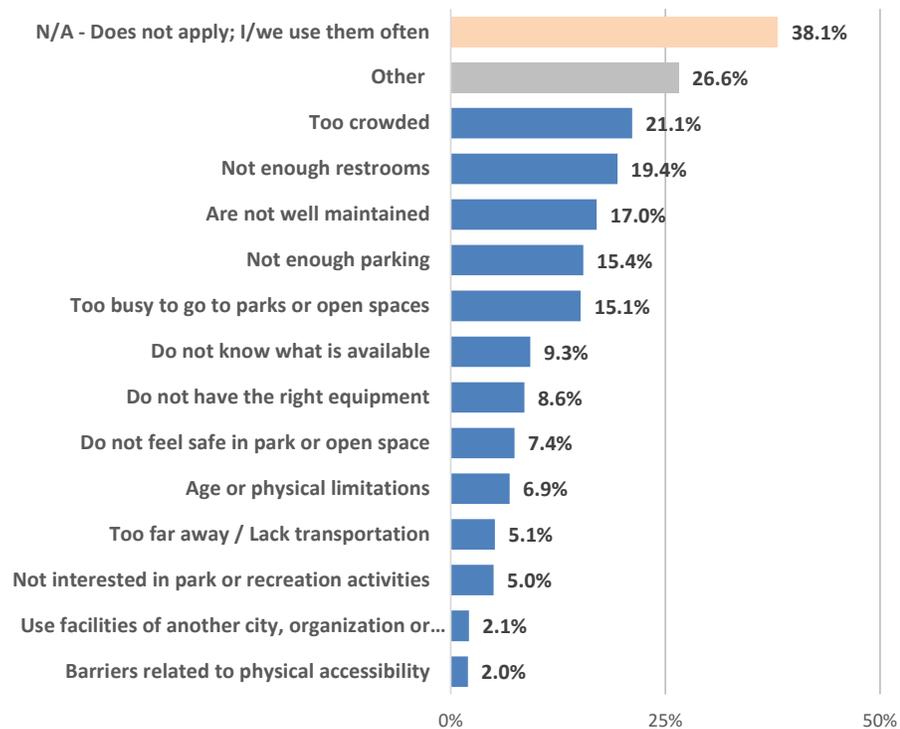
Approximately one-quarter of respondents wrote-in responses as 'other', which included the following:

- Tourist and van lifer impacts
- Too many dogs, dog waste and leash laws not enforced
- Can't take dog; dogs not allowed to be in parks even on leash
- Use BLM and USFS lands outside city
- No shade structures at playgrounds

As with the reasons for visiting parks, responses also varied slightly between mail and online respondents for reasons about not visiting parks more often, also partly attributable to the age group composition. Mail respondents more frequently noted age or physical limitations as a reason for not visiting more often. Online respondents more frequently noted the quality of maintenance, not enough restrooms or parking, or not feeling safe as reasons for not visiting more often. Online responses also varied slightly by age groups. Respondents between 20 and 54 years of age more frequently noted maintenance and not enough restrooms as reasons for not visiting more often. Also respondents between 35 and 54 years of age noted safety as a reason slightly more than mail survey respondents.

Online respondents with three or more children were more likely to identify that not enough restroom, not enough parking and not feeling safe as reasons for not visiting more often. Online respondents with or with children more strongly identified concerns about maintenance as a reason of not visiting, as compared to mail survey respondents.

**Figure 7.** Check ALL the reasons why your household does not use Moab’s recreation facilities, parks or open spaces more often. (Check all that apply)

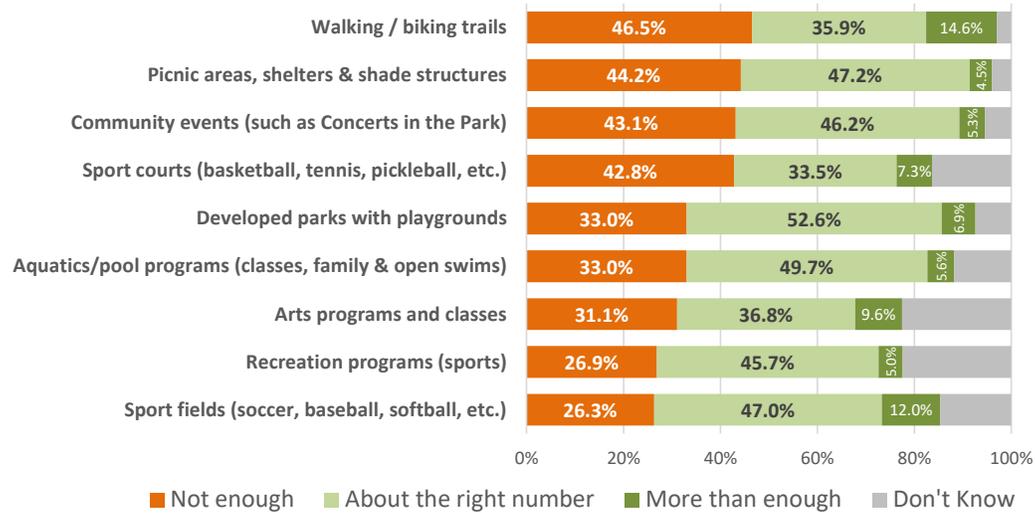


[Does the number of existing park and recreation amenities meet residents’ needs?](#)

Majorities of respondents generally feel that the City provides enough, or more than enough, of nearly all of the amenities listed. Sport courts and art programs and classes were the only two listed amenities where fewer than a majority of respondents noted these as either enough or more than enough, in part due to higher percentages of ‘don’t know’ responses.

Of the listed amenities where respondents feel there are not enough provided, 47% feel there are not enough walking and biking trails. Also approximately four in ten respondents believe that there is not enough access to picnic areas (44%), community events (43%) and sport courts (43%).

**Figure 8.** When it comes to meeting the needs for park and recreation facilities, how would you rate the availability of each of the following? (Check only one box in each row)



Online respondents indicated a greater need compared to mail survey respondents for several park and recreation facilities. These include sport courts (+18%), sport fields (+15%), aquatics/pool programs (+14%), picnic areas, shelters and shade structures (+13%), recreation programs (+13%). With the exception of walking and biking trails, online respondents indicated a greater need for all of the recreation facility types listed.

In general, younger respondents (those between 20 and 54 years of age) were more likely than respondents over 55 to feel there are not enough of each of the park and recreation options listed, with the exception of walking/biking trails and sport courts. Online respondents younger than 55 years of age noted a greater need for developed parks with playgrounds, picnic areas, sport fields, sport courts, aquatics programs and recreation programs compared to mail survey respondents.

Online survey respondents with two or more children were more likely to feel the City does not have enough developed parks with playgrounds and sport fields.

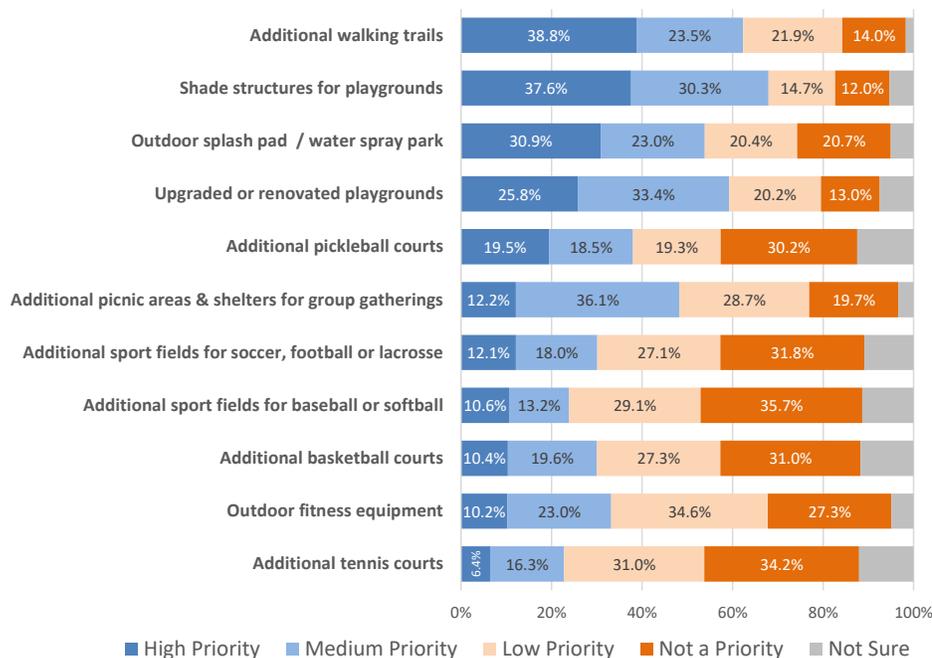
What recreation and park investments would residents prioritize?

In two different questions, respondents were asked to identify their priorities for the future of Moab’s park and recreation system. The first question asked respondents to rate their priority of 11 different, potential amenities that could be considered for the local park system. The highest rated priorities include additional walking trails (39%), shade structures for playgrounds (38%), outdoor splash pad (31%) and renovated playgrounds (26%), with more than one in four respondents supporting these improvements. The remaining amenities listed represent more specialized activities and uses, such as sport fields, sport courts and fitness equipment.

Mail survey respondents placed a slightly higher priority on additional walking trails (+10%) compared to online-only respondents. The online respondents placed a higher priority on the following: outdoor splash pad or water spray park (+20%), shade structures for playgrounds (+18%) and upgraded or renovated playgrounds (+15%).

Online respondents younger than 45 years of age rated several amenities as higher priority than those from other age groups and compared to the mail survey respondents. These amenities include upgraded or renovated playgrounds, shade structures for playgrounds and an outdoor splash pad or water spray park. Respondents older than 55 years of age rated pickleball courts as a higher priority than those from other age groups and compared to the online-only survey respondents. Online survey respondents with children rated as a higher priority than other groups the following: upgraded or renovated playgrounds, outdoor splash pad or water spray park and sport fields. Online respondents without children placed a higher priority on pickleball courts than other household types.

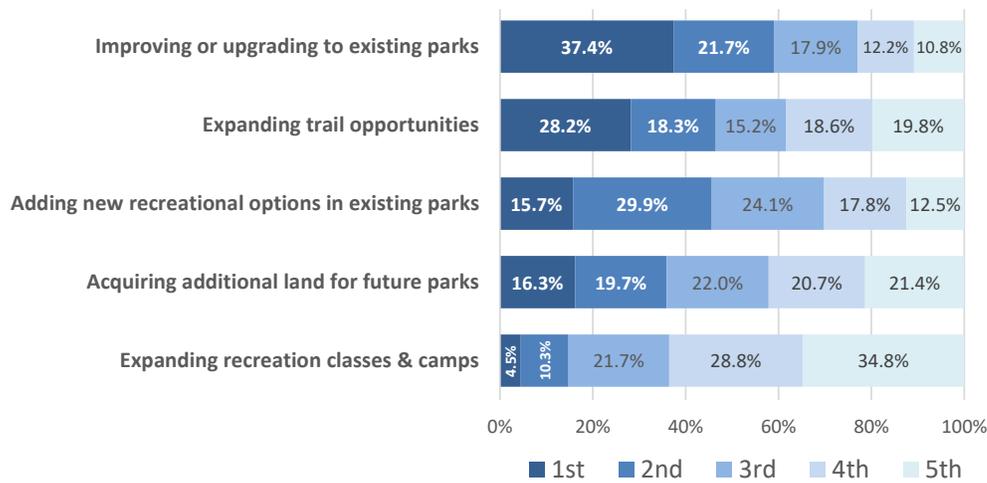
Figure 9. The City of Moab must prioritize limited funding to address citywide park system needs. For each of the following, please indicate whether you think it is a High Priority, Medium Priority, Low Priority, or Not a Priority for your household.



In a second question, respondents were asked to rank, in order (forced ranking), a list of potential recreation, park and open space investment priorities. In aggregated survey data, respondents identified improving or upgrading existing parks as the first priority. Respondents to the mail and online surveys differed in their selection of ranked priorities, with mail survey respondents more strongly supportive of expanding trail opportunities as the top priority by 20 percentage points. The chart below shows the different ranking priorities between the mail and online survey respondents.

There were no significant difference noted by age groups or by households with or without children.

Figure 10A/B. For the following list, indicate how you would rank the priority for each (1st priority is highest and 5th priority is lowest). Reorder the list by dragging each line into your preferred order of preference.



	Mail	Online
Highest	Expanding trail opportunities	Improving or upgrading to existing parks
	Improving or upgrading to existing parks	Adding new recreational options in existing parks
	Acquiring additional land for future parks	Expanding trail opportunities
	Adding new recreational options in existing parks	Acquiring additional land for future parks
Lowest	Expanding recreation classes & camps	Expanding recreation classes & camps

## Recreation programs

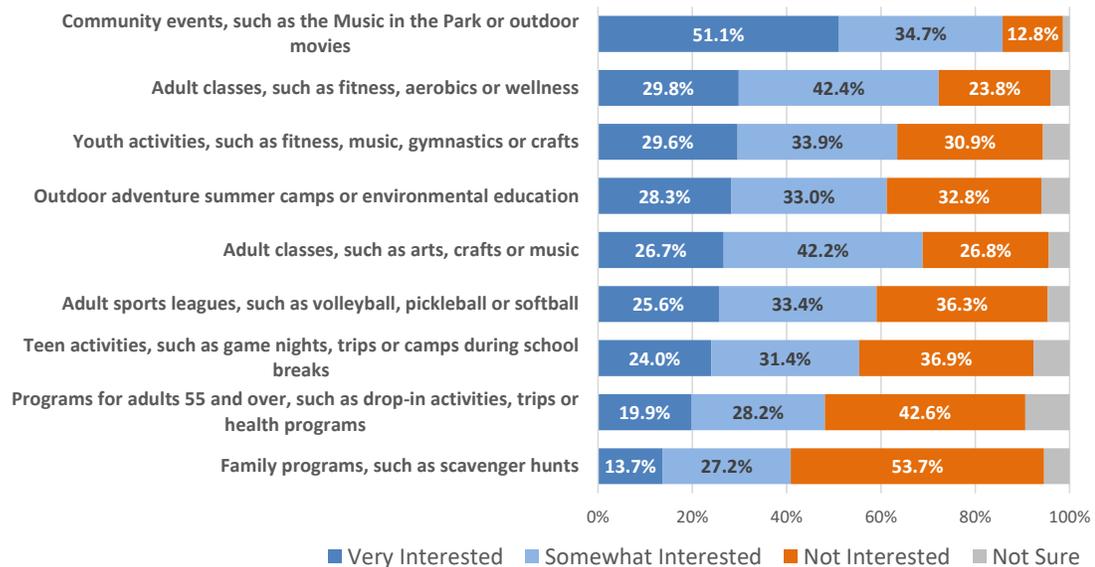
### What recreation options do residents have interest in?

When it comes to recreational programs and activities, respondents expressed the strongest interest for community events (51% very interested; 86% very or somewhat interested). Overall, majorities of respondents were either very or somewhat interested in nearly all program options listed, with the strongest interest in adult program options, such as fitness, wellness and arts (69%+), in addition to youth fitness, music, gymnastics or crafts (64%) and outdoor adventure camps (61%). In aggregate, family activities such as scavenger hunts had the least interest by respondents (54%).

Overall, mail and online respondents indicated similar levels of interest about the various program options listed; however, online-only respondents showed more interest for family programs such as scavenger hunts (+12%) and youth activities such as fitness, music, gymnastics or crafts (+15%) compared to mail survey respondents.

Online survey respondents younger than 45 years of age indicated more interest for family programs, youth activities and teen activities than other age groups and mail survey respondents. Programs for adults 55 and over carried more interest by those between 65 and 74 from the online survey, and adult sports leagues carried more interest by those younger than 35 and those between 65 and 74 from the online survey. Online survey respondents without children indicated more interest for programs for adults 55 and over, and online respondents with children indicated more interest for family programs compared to mail survey respondents.

**Figure 11.** Currently, the City of Moab offers aquatics programs, sports, events, and summer camps. Program offerings may need to change over time to reflect community interests. For each of the following, please indicate the level of interest your household has for the programs or activities below.



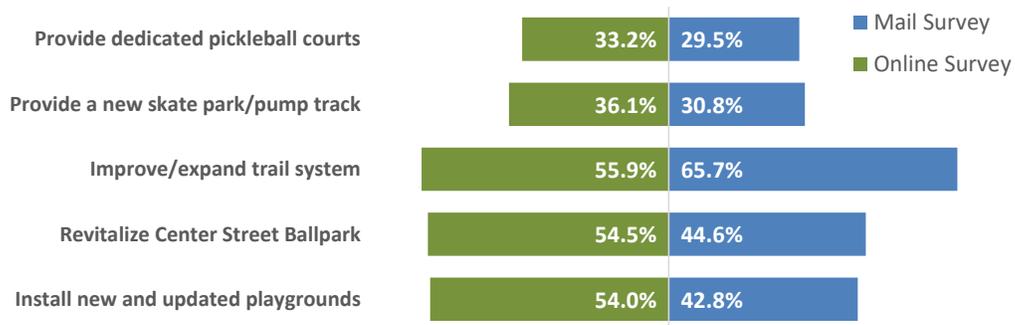
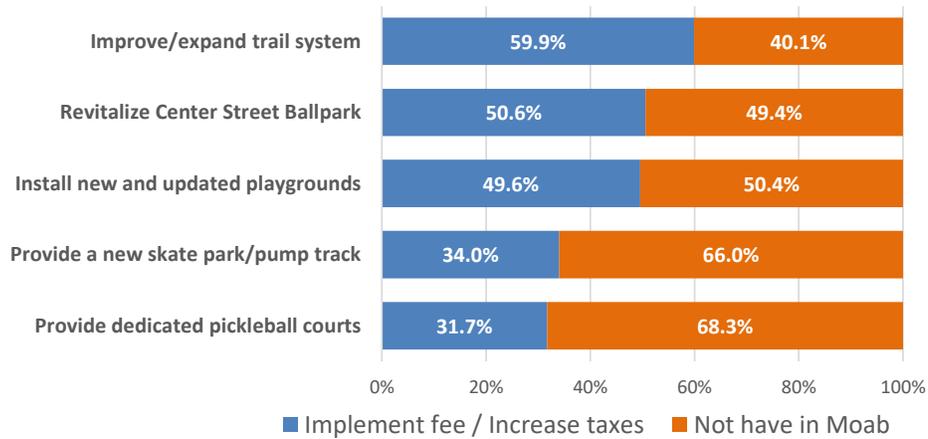
### Future Investments

Are residents willing to support increased fees or taxes to fund new amenities and experiences?

Given a choice between raising taxes to develop an amenity in Moab versus not having such a facility in the city, slight majorities supported more taxes for two of five amenities tested: improving and expanding trails (60%) and revitalizing Center Street Ballfields (53%). Strong majorities were not in favor of increasing fees or taxes to support providing dedicated pickleball courts or building a new skate park or bike pump track.

Online survey respondents with two or more children at home were more likely to support installing new and updated playgrounds.

**Figure 12A/B.** There may be some park and recreation experiences that are limited or not available in Moab. If it came down to a choice between implementing a fee or increasing taxes to develop that facility in Moab versus not having that in Moab, which would you choose?.



[Do residents have specific improvements they would like to see?](#)

Respondents were asked to describe one thing that they would like to see the City of Moab do to improve parks, trails, aquatics, and/or recreation programs. While respondents provided nearly 600 specific comments and ideas, a few themes emerged:

- The highest frequency comments related to additional trails, pickleball courts, playground upgrades, van lifer and tourist impacts, dogs in parks and ongoing maintenance.
- Respondents expressed interest in, and enthusiasm for, a variety of improvements listed elsewhere in the survey, including playground renovations, installation of a splash pad, skatepark renovation, additional hours at the Aquatic Center and options for kayak classes at the pool.
- Comments related to dogs spanned both ends of the spectrum regarding dogs in parks. More of the comments related to dogs referred to dog waste and the need for the City to enforce 'no dogs in parks' rules. Other comments suggested the need for at least one 'dog-friendly' park where dogs can be on-leash with owners.
- Respondents would like to see continued investment in the expansion and maintenance of the trail system. Several respondents asked for investments in pedestrian and bicyclist access and safety improvements (sidewalks, crossings, bike lanes, etc.). Respondents also offered ideas to extend trail connections to UCU, extending Mill Creek Parkway and linking to the Matheson Wetlands Preserve.
- Numerous respondents expressed a desire for continued site management and safety, including concerns about general maintenance, campers and van lifer usage, dog waste, lawn and tree care, and repairing Mill Creek Parkway. Some respondents voiced interest in the prudent use of local funds and avoiding additional taxes.
- Several comments were made in favor of additional user conveniences, such as shade structures, water stations, vending options and more entertainment during the year.
- Several respondents offered interest in focusing on youth and teen activities and amenities, including more youth swim lessons and places for teens to hang-out..

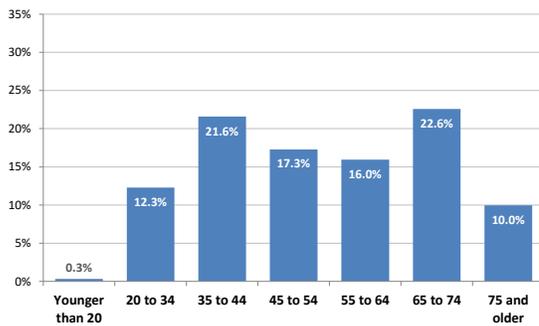
A compilation of write-in comments is on file with the Moab Parks and Recreation Department.

## Demographics

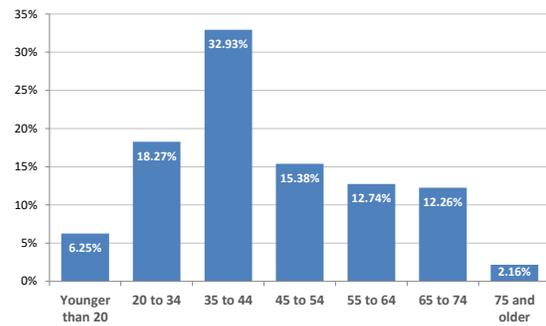
### Age groups

Overall, approximately half of respondents were above 45 years of age (52%). Online-only survey respondents tended to be younger than those who responded to the mail survey with a larger percentage of middle-age respondents – 48% were between 35 and 55 years and only 14% were over 65.

Mail survey responses



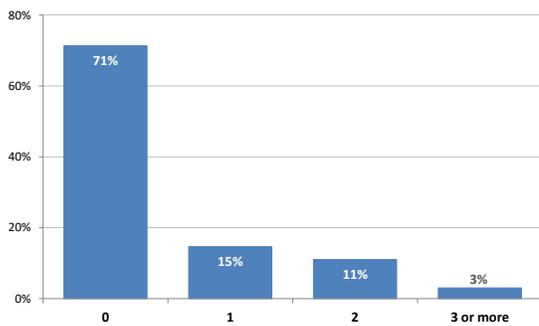
Online-only survey responses



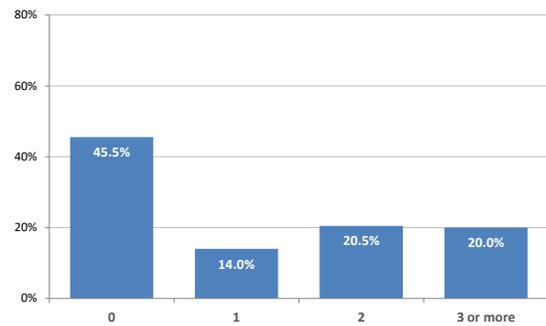
### Number of children in household

The majority (71%) of respondents to the mail survey live in households with no children under 18, while about forty percent live in a household with either one (15%), two (11%), or three or more (3%) children. Online-only survey respondents were significantly more likely to live in households with children than respondents to the mail survey – just over half (54%) had children in the home.

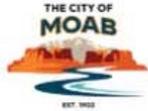
Mail survey responses



Online-only survey responses



## ATTACHMENT 1. SURVEY INSTRUMENT



### Community Survey on City Parks and Recreation

**Dear Moab Resident:**

The City of Moab has started a community-led process to prepare its first citywide Parks & Recreation Master (PRMP) Plan. We need your help to determine how to prioritize projects and what we should focus on to keep our local parks and programs thriving for the next ten years. As an initial step, the City is conducting this short survey to assess the community’s recreation needs. We ask that you consider your needs for the future as you evaluate recreation amenities. Your opinions are important to the City.

The survey has 14 questions and will only take a few minutes to complete. Use the QR code to take this survey online at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/3KYTPM9>



English



Español

Solo son 14 preguntas y requiere unos cuantos minutos de su tiempo. Utilice el código QR para realizarla en línea: <https://es.surveymonkey.com/r/TYV2NF8>

**1. When you think about what contributes to the quality of life in Moab, would you say that city parks and recreation opportunities are...**

- Essential to the quality of life here
- Important, but not really essential
- Useful, but not necessary
- Not Important
- Don't know

**2. What would you say are the main reasons your household visits Moab parks or recreation facilities? ( CHECK ALL THAT APPLY )**

- Fitness / Exercise
- Skate park
- Playgrounds
- Sport fields
- Walking or running
- Outdoor sport courts
- Bike skills / BMX
- Wildlife viewing
- Dog walking or dog park
- Swimming
- Family gatherings / picnicking
- Relaxation
- Community events / concerts
- Art
- Recreation programs, classes or camps
- N/A –I didn't use any Moab facilities
- Youth sport programs
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- Adult sport programs

**3. When it comes to meeting the needs for park and recreation facilities, how would you rate the availability of each of the following? (Check only one box in each row)**

	More than Enough	About the Right Amount	Not Enough	Don't Know
Developed parks with playgrounds	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Walking / biking trails	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Picnic areas, shelters & shade structures	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sport fields (soccer, baseball, softball, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sport courts (basketball, tennis, pickleball, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Aquatics/pool programs (classes, family & open swims)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recreation programs (sports)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Arts programs and classes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community events (such as Concerts in the Park)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Save a stamp! Use the QR code and take this survey online:**  
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/3KYTPM9>  
 Or send it back in the enclosed Return-Reply envelope provided. **Thanks for participating!**




English      Español

**4. Rate your household's satisfaction with the City of Moab's parks or open space.**

- Very Satisfied                       Somewhat Dissatisfied                       Don't Know  
 Somewhat Satisfied                       Very Dissatisfied

**5. In a typical year, how often do you visit or use each of the following City of Moab parks, recreation facilities or open space? ( Check one box in each row )**

	Everyday	At least once a week	Two or more times a month	About once a month	A few times a year	Do not visit / Don't know
Moab Recreation & Aquatic Center	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Moab Arts Center	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Center Street Gym	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Anonymous (BMX) Park	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bark Park	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Center Street Ballpark	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dixie Park	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lions Park	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mill Creek Parkway	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Old City Park	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Robin Groff Memorial Park	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rotary Park	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Swanny City Park	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**6. Rate the condition of each of the following parks or recreation facilities. ( Check one box in each row )**

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Not Sure / No Opinion
Moab Recreation & Aquatic Center	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Moab Arts Center	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Center Street Gym	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Anonymous (BMX) Park	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Bark Park	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Center Street Ballpark	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Dixie Park	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Lions Park	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Mill Creek Parkway	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Old City Park	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Robin Groff Memorial Park	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Rotary Park	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Swanny City Park	<input type="checkbox"/>				



Community Survey on City Park & Recreation

**7. Check ALL the reasons why your household does not use Moab's recreation facilities, parks or open spaces more often. ( CHECK ALL THAT APPLY )**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> N/A - Does not apply; I/we use them often  | <input type="checkbox"/> Not enough parking   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Age or physical limitations                | <input type="checkbox"/> Not enough restrooms   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Are not well maintained                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Too busy to go to parks or open spaces                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Barriers related to physical accessibility | <input type="checkbox"/> Too crowded  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Too far away / Lack transportation         | <input type="checkbox"/> Not interested in park or recreation activities              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Do not know what is available              | <input type="checkbox"/> Use facilities of another city, organization or private club |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Do not have the right equipment            | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Do not feel safe in park or open space     |   |

**8. The City of Moab must prioritize limited funding to address citywide park system needs. For each of the following, please indicate whether you think it is a High Priority, Medium Priority, Low Priority, or Not a Priority for your household.**

	High Priority	Medium Priority	Low Priority	Not a Priority	Not Sure
Additional picnic areas & shelters for group gatherings	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Upgraded or renovated playgrounds	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Shade structures for playgrounds	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Additional walking trails	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Outdoor fitness equipment	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Outdoor splash pad / water spray park	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Additional sport fields for soccer, football or lacrosse	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Additional sport fields for baseball or softball	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Additional basketball courts	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Additional tennis courts	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Additional pickleball courts	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Other: (write-in)	<input type="checkbox"/>				

**9. For the following list, indicate how you would rank the priority for each (1<sup>st</sup> priority is highest and 5<sup>th</sup> priority is lowest). Mark each ranking number only once.**

	Select each priority ONLY ONCE.					Don't know / No opinion
	Highest priority	→			Lowest priority	
	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>	
Adding new recreational options in existing parks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Acquiring additional land for future parks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Expanding trail opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Expanding recreation classes & camps	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Improving or upgrading to existing parks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

10. There may be some park and recreation experiences that are limited or not available in Moab. If it came down to a choice between implementing a fee or increasing taxes to develop that facility in Moab versus not having that in Moab, which would you choose?

	Implement fee / Increase taxes	Not have in Moab
Install new and updated playgrounds	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Revitalize Center Street Ballpark	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Improve/expand trail system	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provide a new skate park/pump track	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provide dedicated pickleball courts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

11. Currently, the City of Moab offers aquatics programs, sports, events, and summer camps. Program offerings may need to change over time to reflect community interests. For each of the following, please indicate the level of interest your household has for the programs or activities below.

	Very Interested	Somewhat Interested	Not Interested	Not Sure
Community events, such as the Music in the Park or outdoor movies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Family programs, such as scavenger hunts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Youth activities, such as fitness, music, gymnastics or crafts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teen activities, such as game nights, trips or camps during school breaks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Outdoor adventure summer camps or environmental education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Adult classes, such as arts, crafts or music	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Adult classes, such as fitness, aerobics or wellness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Adult sports leagues, such as volleyball, pickleball or softball	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Programs for adults 55 and over, such as drop-in activities, trips or health programs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

12. If you wanted the City of Moab to do just one thing to improve parks, trails, aquatics, and/or recreation programs, what would it be?

The following questions help us understand whether we have gathered responses from a broad segment of the community. It's important that you provide a response to each question.

13. How many children under age 18 live in your household?

- 0
- 1
- 2
- 3 or more

14. What is your age?

- Younger than 20
- 20 to 34
- 35 to 44
- 45 to 54
- 55 to 64
- 65 and 74
- 75 and older

**Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey!**

Your input will help guide the development of Moab's first citywide Parks & Recreation Master Plan.

Save a stamp! Take this survey online with the QR code or at:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/3KYTPM9>

Learn more about Moab parks, trails and programs and stay informed about the Parks & Recreation Plan at [moabcity.org](http://moabcity.org)

The City of Moab is using the services of a consultant team who specializes in park and recreation planning.

Please return your completed survey in the enclosed Return-Reply Envelope addressed to:

Conservation Technix Inc., P.O. Box 885, Orinda, CA 94563



English



Español



# Appendix B

## Open House #1 Summary



## MEETING NOTES

PROJECT NUMBER: #22-149PLN      ISSUE DATE: April 20, 2023  
 PROJECT NAME: Moab Parks & Recreation Master Plan

RECORDED BY: Steve Duh  
 TO: FILE  
 PRESENT: Members of the public  
 City staff  
 Project team members from Conservation Technix

**SUBJECT: Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Open House #1 Meeting Notes (April 19<sup>th</sup>)**

Community members were invited to an open house for citywide Moab Parks and Recreation Master Plan on Wednesday, April 19, 2023 from 4:00 - 6:00 p.m. at the Moab Arts Center. The project team prepared informational displays covering the major themes of the Parks Master Plan. These displays included Project Overview, Survey Highlights, Parks & Outdoor Recreation, and Investing in the Future.

Attendees were encouraged to talk to project team members, record their comments and complete a written comment card. City staff and project team staff engaged with participants to identify general needs and interests for park and recreation in Moab. Approximately 30 people attended the meeting to review materials and provide comment.

### PUBLIC COMMENTS

The following represents a summary of the comments received during the evening meeting.

#### Recreation Program Area Ideas

- Youth: Sport camps, art camps, ski bus; youth pickleball instruction
- Adult: adult pickleball leagues
- Other: open gym

#### Priorities / Anything missing?

- Communications, promotions and marketing to reach more people who might be more positive about parks and rec opportunities in order to increase participation
- Leverage social media to reach more youth and inspire them to participate. Perhaps partner with USU students to photograph and capture videos of youth sports – weekly highlights video?
- Interpretive/wayfinding in parks that entice visitors to explore local/regional trails rather than creating additional trails in city parks
- Create an additional grassy dogpark area, so not using play area grass at Old City Park
- New indoor rec facility with new pool and indoor pickleball courts
- Multi-sport gym for all sports including pickleball

**Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Open House #1 Meeting Notes (April 19th)**

Moab Parks & Recreation Master Plan

Project Number #22-149PLN

Page 2

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- Outside pickleball courts
- Multi-purpose indoor sports and events facility to bring winter tournaments and visitation to Moab
- Non-paved walking trails
- Need much more access to e-bikes. There is no legitimate, cogent reason to preclude. For decades, it was beaten into dirt bike riders that less sound = more ground. Prove it. Make it happen.
- Bike path on 100 West dangerous and confusing
- Desperately need indoor sports facility. The Center St Gym is in disrepair and is not large enough to accommodate all activities. Pickleball courts should be included in creation of this facility
- City property – old sewer plant for indoor/outdoor rec facility

**Exploring Investment Priorities - Walking & Biking Trails**

- Provide bike path all the way up Spanish Valley Drive
- 100 West bike path confusing/dangerous traffic and pedestrians
- Signs at Arches for traffic to slow down at bike crossing
- Better connection separation for business-only accessed from highway

**Exploring Investment Priorities – Dot Exercise**

- 21 - Sport courts - total ( 13 – Pickleball; 4- Tennis; 4 - Multi-sport courts)
- 12 - Additional in-city walking trails
- 8 - Outdoor splash pad/water spray park
- 5 - Shade structures for playgrounds
- 4 - Outdoor fitness equipment
- 4 - Additional sport fields
- 4 - Additional art in parks
- 0 - Picnic shelters/pavilions

Write-in comments: communications, digital marketing, social media promotion, e-bikes

**Other Comments**

- Pickleball courts
- Pickleball courts at the arena (Too Loud!) (It's not)
- Maintain what you have
- Safe routes to schools and parks
- More pickleball courts. Senior sports
- Make it easier for people to help keep parks and trails clean – more trash receptacles along trails
- Seating/shade needed near play areas
- Old City Park

## **Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Open House #1 Meeting Notes (April 19th)**

Moab Parks & Recreation Master Plan

Project Number #22-149PLN

Page 3

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- Fix pavilion
- Separate horse shoe pits from play area; potential hazard
- Replace railroad ties – splinter hazard
- New or extensive renovation to restrooms
- Accessible/inclusive play areas
- Improved ADA/accessibility
- Youth – add indoor courts; open gym; upgrade current courts and ballfields
- Any and all strategies to reach more community members and encourage participation
- Local newspaper for me, but so many don't read them. Facebook? Radio?
- Multi-purpose indoor sports and events facility. Private funding/donations are available with vision/planning. A facility like this would bring substantial off-season visitation/revenue at a time when local businesses desperately need it.

### **Comment Cards**

- Very much love tranquility and open grass areas (especially Old City Park). Need more shade/sitting areas around parks for infants/parents; Center St/OCP need repairs; Building a better variety of handicap accessible playground equipment; Adult size swings; Support Patrick and Rec Dept with expanding /growing sports. Love the splash pad/waterpark ideas; The horseshoe throwing area at OCP is dangerous next to a young kids playground; Have a pay/quarter dispenser for duck food to get money and encourage proper duck feeding feed.

Every effort has been made to accurately record this meeting. If any errors or omissions are noted, please provide written response within five days of receipt.

-- End of Notes --

cc: Annie McVay, Parks & Recreation Director  
File



# Appendix C

## Open House #2 Summary



## MEETING NOTES

PROJECT NUMBER: #22-149PLN      ISSUE DATE: September 15, 2023  
 PROJECT NAME: Moab Parks & Recreation Master Plan

RECORDED BY: Steve Duh  
 TO: FILE  
 PRESENT: Members of the public  
 City staff  
 Project team members from Conservation Technix

**SUBJECT: Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Open House #2 Meeting Notes (Sept 13<sup>th</sup>)**

Community members were invited to an open house for citywide Moab Parks and Recreation Master Plan on Wednesday, September 13, 2023 from 4:30 - 6:00 p.m. at the Moab Arts & Recreation Center. The project team prepared informational displays covering the major themes of the Parks Master Plan. These displays included Project Overview, Survey Highlights, Potential Project Recommendations, and the Conceptual Recreation Trail System.

Attendees were encouraged to talk to project team members and record their comments on the displays. City staff and project team staff engaged with participants to identify project recommendations and ideas for park and recreation in Moab. Approximately 35 people attended the meeting to review materials and provide comment.

### PUBLIC COMMENTS

The following represents a summary of the comments received during the evening meeting.

#### Potential Project Recommendations (Core Actions)

- Write-in comments:
- Soccer fields for open use by adults, kids, families
- Pickleball courts
- Expand bike paths
- More large picnic shelters
- Re-design Center Street Ballfields, but keep all four fields for softball/baseball!
- Add electrical outlets at Swanny Park for events
- Old City park:
  - New roof on building
  - Animal/fish food vending machine
  - Add swings
  - Separate horseshoe pits from playground
  - Fix railroad ties (hazard)
  - Repair pavilion
  - Repair fence around pond
  - Screen for bird watching

**Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Open House #2 Meeting Notes (Sept 13th)**

Moab Parks & Recreation Master Plan

Project Number #22-149PLN

Page 2

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- Upgrade showers at pool
- Wider bridges at Bike Park
- Are dogs allowed in Old City Park or not? Unclear
- Maintain open area at Swanny Park for sports (ultimate frisbee)
- Tile repair at pool. Crumbling walk in circular current area
- Replace floor mats in weight room at MRAC
- Mirrors on Mill Creek Parkway underpass

**Potential Project Recommendations (Other Investments)**

- +1 starred for: wayfinding signage, land acquisitions, partnering for pickleball

Write-in comments:

- Paved pumptrack
- Lighting & SOS button (like at college campuses)
- Progressive skills bike park

**Potential Project Recommendations (dot exercise)**

- 24 - Repair damage to Mill Creek Parkway & Trail
- 23 - Expand trail connections to fill gaps
- 9 - Swanny Park playground upgrade
- 9 - Swanny Park skatepark renovation
- 7 - Upgrade park restrooms – locations TBD
- 3 - Center Street Ballpark renovation (1 more only IF 4 fields )
- 9 - Others
  - 5 - Old City Park improvements/maintenance
  - 2 - Dog park
  - 2 - Swanny Park other improvements (ADA, electrical)

Other write-in comments:

- Restrooms – water, utilities, fans
- Mill Creek Parkway – let volunteer groups weed/clear

**Conceptual Recreation Trail System**

Write-in comments:

- Save open spaces from development and have trails (northeastern hillside)
- Have a designated recreational trail employee
- Lights and SOS button
- Mill Creek single track Mtb trails (+1)

**Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Open House #2 Meeting Notes (Sept 13th)**  
Moab Parks & Recreation Master Plan  
Project Number #22-149PLN  
Page 3

- Bike/ped only bridge from Potash to Kane Creek. Connect of portal to town (+3)
- Add trail from Kane Creek Blvd to Lions Park along city boundary (+1)

### **Other Comments**

- Ensure all current infrastructure is at optimal performance
- More trails going south of town toward Ken's Lake (+1)
- Paved pumptrack
- Single track in town
- Mt bike single track in town
- More bike jumps (from Kai, age 6)
- Beach/river access at Lions Park
- Beach at Lions Park
- Shade structure that are also solar arrays
- Complete bike trail to Mill Creek trailhead
- Roller skate path around Swanny Park
- Have more maintenance at Anonymous Park

### **Other Ideas? What Else Should the City Consider?**

- Plant trees in medians on out (inexplicitly wide) streets
- Upgrading all bike lane infrastructure, incorporating green infrastructure (trees to shade streets, etc.)
- Grass dog park
- More benches at parks with shade for parents with multiple children (babies)
- Designated slack lines (Old City Park?)
- More trees
- Dog park improvements and features and shade
- Shade at Swanny Park playground and fix broken equipment there
- More community events, including cultural celebrations
- Grass field that bikes have access to – bike polo
- Play wave at bridge / Lions Park or Big Bend (+1)
- Splash pads (+1) / slip & slide
- Paved pumptrack
- Ziplines
- Bike skills park with progressions and stunts (improve existing BMX Park to have these)
- Solar covered shade/bench/pavilion with charger (on timer) for day-use bike charge
- Parking lot for Mill Creek by Potato Salad Hill
- Bike parking with two points of contact
- More events
- Curb cuts and swales for stormwater collection
- Urban trail connections for commuting / running errands
- Legal parking for locally employed van dwellers
- Employee living park / open space living with washroom facility

**Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Open House #2 Meeting Notes (Sept 13th)**

Moab Parks & Recreation Master Plan

Project Number #22-149PLN

**Page 5**

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Every effort has been made to accurately document this meeting. If any errors or omissions are noted, please provide written response within five days of receipt.

-- *End of Notes* --

cc: File



# Appendix D

## Stakeholder Summaries



## STAKEHOLDER DISCUSSION SUMMARY

<b>Project Name:</b>	Moab Parks & Recreation Master Plan	<b>Project No.:</b>	Proj-# 22-149PLN
<b>Location:</b>	Zoom On-line	<b>Interview Date:</b>	April 12, 2023
<b>Notes by:</b>	Jean Akers	<b>Time:</b>	3 pm
<b>Participants:</b>	Barbara Hicks, parks advocate	Annie McVay, Parks & Recreation Director	
	Brittany Melton, sports advocate	Jean Akers, Conservation Technix	
	Kya Marienfeld, Chair, City Planning Commission		
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Parks &amp; Recreation Master Plan: General Parks Stakeholder Discussion</b>		

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### PURPOSE

To discuss current issues, opportunities and needs for city park and recreation amenities. The discussion occurred on April 12, 2023, via Zoom on-line with additional notes from Kya Marienfeld sent by email on April 13<sup>th</sup>.

### DISCUSSION

The discussion began with brief introductions and an overview of the city's Park & Recreation Master Plan process. A set of questions were used to initiate the discussion and explore ideas about system planning and local recreation needs.

#### What do you value about Moab Parks & Recreation?

- Use the parks, trails & rec facilities often but it is not enough.
- The variety of accessible community outdoor and indoor spaces throughout the Moab Valley.
- It is easy to use or rent a space such as Old City Park, the MARC, and Star Hall for an event.
- Community members enjoy gathering at the ballfields, parks, etc. and use the facilities without much fuss.

#### How would you rate the parks, trails & rec facilities? What needs improvement?

- Maintenance work needs to show pride in their work. Better quality control needed.
- Overall, things are in good shape, but throughout the year there are grounds keeping issues at several places. The goatheads at the Center St ballfields this last year were unacceptable, honestly. The children's play spaces, batting cages, and several outfielders were absolutely covered with massive mats of goatheads and this was all preventable earlier but it felt like it wasn't prioritized at all by parks staff. Private citizens (myself included) attempted to go and pull and collect these pervasive invasive species ourselves but there was no way we could stay on top of it.
- Youth programs need improvement.
- Management of scheduling is not good.
- Restrooms are disgusting.

## Stakeholder Notes (continued)

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- There are bugs in the restrooms!
- City recreation programming is poorly managed.
- The gym is not easily ADA accessible.
- Center Street ballfields need lighting (again) so folks can play in the evening when it's cooler.
- Park, recreation and arts spaces and programming should be open, available, and attractive to all of our community, especially since these are a community benefit which is likely to be free or very inexpensive.
- Issues with people needing wheelchair access to the Center St. Gym has been a problem in the past and we should make this a top priority!

### What else is needed for parks & recreation?

- Soccer is emerging as a popular sport and needs accommodations.
- Indoor recreation space is in short supply. More is needed.
- Pickleball courts.
- Indoor recreation spaces that can support tournaments.
- Rec programming should align with the seasonal character of different sports to avoid conflicts and allow more participation.
- Communication improvements for rec facility availability.
- Smoother management of recreation programming and facility use.
- Better coordination of Center Street Ballfield uses, including some supervision of playground during heavy field uses.
- More public access to uses of HS & MS gyms.
- More input and insight from our Latino and Hispanic community members. Perhaps partnering with the Multicultural Center to engage with these residents about what kinds of improvements, facilities, and priorities they may have for parks, recreation, and arts, would be fantastic.
- Proactively seeking out our busier, lower-income community members is critical.
- Asking the kids who are a part of the Multicultural Center's "Amigo y Amiguitos" friendship and mentoring program might be a fun and informative way to engage these members of the community. Same with other existing programs like Beacon afterschool program, Youth Garden Project, etc.
- Absolutely make City facilities more accessible to people with disabilities.
- 

### Priority Project &/or Investment Ideas for Next 6+ Years

- New multi-story Center Street gym.
- Improvements at Old City Park would be great (like shoring up the stage/ bandshell), but I would like to keep the overall character- I like the big trees, open spaces, and water features. It is peaceful and open, and this feeling is great. The bathrooms are pretty rough too, but definitely still functional so not the biggest priority, perhaps.
- Benches along the Mill Creek Greenway
- Splash pad/spray park
- Shade structures for playgrounds
- Lighting for sports fields
- Pickleball courts

## Stakeholder Notes (continued)

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- Soccer fields
- A permanent sand volleyball court or two somewhere in town. Lots of people enjoy pickup volleyball but it is pretty brutal on grass or dirt.
- More adult-focused recreation programs. Whether it is rec league volleyball, softball, kickball, or basketball in the winter, etc. The summer softball rec league is very popular and fun and I'd love something to be formalized for other sports and rec activities as well. It brings the community together across social groups and is a great way to have fun and find connection.
- The stage area needs to be improved at Old City Park. It is in really rough shape.

-- End of Notes --



## STAKEHOLDER DISCUSSION SUMMARY

**Project Name:** Moab Parks & Recreation Master Plan **Project No.:** Proj-# 22-149PLN  
**Location:** Zoom On-line **Interview Date:** April 11, 2023 **Time:** 4 pm  
**Notes by:** Jean Akers  
**Participants:** Emily Roberson, Youth Garden Project Director Cory Farnsworth, USU Extension (via email)  
Annie McVay, Parks & Recreation Director  
Alexi Lamm, City Sustainability Director Jean Akers, Conservation Technix  
Roslynn McCann, USU Extension

**Subject:** **Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Environment & Sustainability Stakeholder Discussion**

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### PURPOSE

To discuss current issues, opportunities and needs for city park and recreation amenities. The discussion occurred on April 11, 2023, via Zoom on-line. One stakeholder added his comments via April 12<sup>th</sup> email following the same guiding questions.

### DISCUSSION

The discussion began with brief introductions and an overview of the city's Park & Recreation Master Plan process. A set of questions were used to initiate the discussion and explore ideas about system planning and local recreation needs.

#### The City of Moab's Role in Managing its Park System for Environmental Values

- Managing water usage and stormwater runoff.
- Reducing needs for irrigating grass (reducing unnecessary turf lawns)
- Planting more native shade trees
- Turf is a valuable asset to a park depending on what activities are planned to take place. Native grasses help increase infiltration of irrigation and precipitation and do the best to hold soil and stop erosion of any other plants.
- Native plant species policy
- Reducing energy consumption – LED lighting & non-idling practices
- More shade at playgrounds to keep equipment out of the sun.
- More shade in parks and on trails
- The city should be wise in water usage but that doesn't mean to eliminate turf.
- It may be beneficial to have engaged learning at the parks. Information about the history of Moab, problem weeds, native flora/fauna, etc. A possible stake holder is the Moab Museum in providing a back

## **Stakeholder Notes (continued)**

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drop to history of Moab. Something similar to the native plant center and native fish of the Colorado in St George could be implemented here as well.

### The Most Important Issues

- Water conservation.
- Reducing heat islands.
- Becoming carbon-neutral.
- Fostering native plant communities (more pollinator & wildlife-friendly landscapes)
- Public sentiment toward differing ideas and land uses.

### Opportunities for more Coordination and Collaboration in Stewardship, Conservation and Restoration

- Informational – interpretive signage in parks and along trails to share messaging about environmental issues.
- Bee-Inspired Gardens in more public spaces
- Informed “weed” management (see Katrina Blair’s work with City of Durango)
- Tree Utah grants for more tree planting
- USU Extension can provide resources and in some cases research to find the best management practices for a situation as well as provide outreach through workshops and clinics.
- USU Extension can also provide educational resources and connection to specialists in order to help make decisions on what to plant, how to irrigate, or providing material for informational plaques, etc.

### Priority Project &/or Investment Ideas for Next 6+ Years

- Better bike lanes.
- Ensure street-cleaning includes bike lanes.
- Add green infrastructure.
- Reconnect landscapes to surface hydrology – reduce/disconnect paved surfaces.
- Public art as a method of traffic calming (pavement murals), intersection painting, etc.).
- Provide more opportunities for families to be outside.
- Create more welcoming environments.
- The Old City Park is a good example of a place that provides wildlife a place to enjoy with ducks and geese and currently the DNR plans to raise Colorado Humpback chub in the pond. Feral cats, skunks, raccoons, crows/ravens and Utah Rock squirrels all prey on native ground nesting birds and more could be done to help bird populations along the Colorado Plateau. Often Noxious and other weeds are not an issue in parks where turf and other landscaping is present because the weeds can be out competed or mowed. Information on current conservation efforts could be made more available to the public.
- Removal of tamarisk and Russian olive, bank stability near creeks, management of aforementioned wildlife and feral mammals, keep/enhance what the parks already provide (i.e. turf, open spaces).
- There is room for some indoor pickleball/racquetball facilities since the argument seemed to be that they were too loud for the peaceful parks, having them indoors would eliminate noise pollution.

*-- End of Notes --*



## STAKEHOLDER DISCUSSION SUMMARY

**Project Name:** Moab Parks & Recreation Master Plan  
**Project No.:** Proj-# 22-149PLN  
**Location:** Zoom On-line  
**Interview Date:** April 11, 2023  
**Time:** 3pm  
**Notes by:** Jean Akers  
**Participants:** Carrie Valdes, Moab Library Director  
Taryn Kay, Grand School District Superintendent  
Angie Book, Old Spanish Trail Arena Director  
Zaida Agreda, Moab Valley Multicultural Center Program Director  
Annie McVay, Parks & Recreation Director  
Jean Akers, Conservation Technix

**Subject:** Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Related Agency Stakeholder Discussion

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### PURPOSE

To discuss current issues, opportunities and needs for city park and recreation amenities. The discussion occurred on April 11, 2023, via Zoom on-line.

### DISCUSSION

The discussion began with brief introductions and an overview of the city's Park & Recreation Master Plan process. A set of questions were used to initiate the discussion and explore ideas about system planning and local recreation needs.

#### General Comments & Values about Moab's City Park System

- Interlocal agreement between School District and City Parks is working well. Sharing between pool and gym spaces.
- Library currently uses Center Street Ballfield frequently as open space for kids to get outside during programs.
- Teen Center being planned to help provide indoor spaces for teens.
- Related Agencies view their roles as raising the community's kid together. Collaboration is relatively smooth. Agency leaders value each other's services and are receptive to further coordination. Strong partnerships across the organizations.
- Parks, trails and open spaces are important to their programs' viability.
- New Moab transit may improve access across the City.
- Open "green" spaces are important and more should be protected for the future.

#### What's Missing or Needs to be Improved?

## **Stakeholder Notes (continued)**

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- Between schools, parks & rec and leagues, pre-teen and teenagers do not have many options for active recreation programs.
- Playgrounds are limited and focus on the pre-school and early elementary ages.
- Natural play environments are lacking.
- More spaces needed for teens.
- Old Spanish Trail Arena (OSTA) has challenging insurance indemnity process that limits its flexibility for providing access to facilities.
- Restrooms should be cleaned more often and additions facilities added to gaps in the park system.

### Opportunities for more Coordination and Collaboration

- Public transit to connect the Old Spanish Trail Arena to downtown for more accessibility. Connection is auto-dependent.
- OSTA applying for a grant to add 8 Pickleball courts to its facility.
- Old USU land ownership behind the future Teen Center should be protected as open space. Can it also become a park?
- Library and City could develop an interlocal agreement to formalize regular use of Center Street ballfields.

### Priority Project Ideas for Next 5 Years

- Center Street Ballfields could be master planned to provide more diverse outdoor recreation opportunities and amenities to non-sports park activities.
- The School District has been approached for adding Pickleball courts.
- Ensure future protection of Center Street ballfields as public parkland (with or without sports fields).
- More open “green” spaces protected for the future.
- Better access across City and County outdoor recreation opportunities.
- Improved and additional playgrounds.
- Inclusive and ADA-compliant playground.
- Opportunities for pre-teen and teenagers to have outdoor recreation options.
- OLA dog park with grass.
- Interconnected parks and trails. Possible shuttle bus services.
- Diverse outdoor recreation for all ages.
- Adult recreation programming.

-- End of Notes --



## STAKEHOLDER DISCUSSION SUMMARY

**Project Name:** Moab Parks & Recreation Master Plan **Project No.:** Proj-# 22-149PLN  
**Location:** Moab City Hall **Interview Date:** February 28, 2023 **Time:** 9am  
**Notes by:** Steve Duh  
**Participants:** Kalen Jones, City Council member Annie McVay, Parks & Recreation Director  
Jason Taylor, City Council member Steve Duh, Conservation Technix

**Subject:** **Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Stakeholder Discussion**

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### PURPOSE

To discuss current issues, opportunities and needs for city park and recreation amenities. The discussion occurred on February 28, 2023, in-person at Moab City Hall.

### DISCUSSION

The discussion began with a brief introduction and an overview of the city's Park & Recreation Master Plan process. A set of questions were used to initiate the discussion and explore ideas about system planning and local recreation needs.

#### General Comments & Values about Moab's City Park System

- Gathering places to get together
- Center Ballpark in the summer months is the meeting site for the whole community – where locals hang out with locals.
- Swanny Park – there are BBQs every night in every corner of the park
- Aquatic center
- Trail network valued by multiple groups; there is a lot of use; expand to Pipe Dream and rim side. There is potential to build out more of a trail system
- Look at the Grand County Active Transportation survey (pre-COVID) – support for bike path on Spanish Valley Drive.
- Fill the gap between Spanish Valley and Mill Creek – need to actively pursue easements and coordination from developers
- Need more picnic table capacity – reservable and open/non-reservable.
- Shade – trees need constant care and succession planting
- Arts – classes, public art

## Interview Notes (continued)

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### What's Missing or Needs to be Improved?

- Park infrastructure is antiquated; bring the system and amenities up-to-date
- Skatepark needs a different layout; there was momentum in the past by a users group to revamp the skatepark
- Pickleball – add courts to keep up with the times
- Tree replacement
- Look at the role of the City – it is a provider or supporter
- Design spaces for flexibility – multiple uses
- Offer perspectives of what other communities are doing/offering.
- Programs – need space for parents to watch activities, esp. in Center St Gym.
- Outdoor adventures: climbing clinics, rafting/boat skills – utilize Lions Park
- Climbing wall over the pool
- Climbing gym – need entry-level options. Private ventures tried
- Park assessments to lay foundation for future improvement needs
- Need to prepare for higher density – need more parks to serve more residents
- Use trails to experience the outdoors that exist out of town; have hierarchy system to indicate difficulty levels of trails (see Branson MO)
- Getting in the water in summer; outdoor splash pad maybe near aquatic center
- Coordinate to improve summer water flows so Mill Creek and Colorado River are year-round
- Tap into what is around us
- Consider how to manage lighting for usage at night

### Priority Project Ideas for Next 5 Years

- Center Ballpark – change the layout for multi-use and added uses
- 5-10 years out: could explore what happens in tailings pile (UMTRA) (see <https://www.grandcountyutah.net/257/Moab-UMTRA-Project> )
- First project to do following Plan approval should be dedicated to the community and something that doesn't cater to tourists

### Community Engagement / Issues to Explore

- What does the community want; spectrum of uses
- Local feedback tends to focus around conflicts (i.e., impose requirements on special events to limit impacts to immediate neighbors)
- Hot topics: noise (pickleball); Center Ballpark
- Better place for arts – Is the Art Center best use of that space / is current use of MAC fulfilling the needs the best the city can?
- Gym and MAC are old and inefficient buildings

-- End of Notes --



## STAKEHOLDER DISCUSSION SUMMARY

**Project Name:** Moab Parks & Recreation Master Plan **Project No.:** Proj-# 22-149PLN  
**Location:** Moab City Hall **Interview Date:** February 27, 2023 **Time:** 3pm  
**Notes by:** Steve Duh  
**Participants:** Joette Langianese, Mayor Annie McVay, Parks & Recreation Director  
Carly Castle, City Manager Steve Duh, Conservation Technix

**Subject:** **Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Stakeholder Discussion**

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### PURPOSE

To discuss current issues, opportunities and needs for city park and recreation amenities. The discussion occurred on February 27, 2023, in-person at Moab City Hall.

### DISCUSSION

The discussion began with a brief introduction and an overview of the city's Park & Recreation Master Plan process. A set of questions were used to initiate the discussion and explore ideas about system planning and local recreation needs.

#### General Comments & Values about Moab's City Park System

- Important to have space within the community – not just National Parks or other wildlands
- Programs are awesome; swimming at MRAC
- Variety of different programs and exercise. Programming and parks more important than events.
- Value events – exciting, well-located, local-friendly: Folk Festival Red Rock Arts Fest
- Great for residents – place to go, picnic, sit on lawn
- Open space; local spaces for people (Swanny, Anonymous, Parkway)
- Center St Ballfield – 'locals' park
- Swanny and Center Ballfields in in neighborhoods and create impacts of use at night (light, noise, etc.)
- Mill Creek greenway connects the city together and accommodates a lot of use

#### What's Missing or Needs to be Improved?

- Pickleball
- Senior activities (maybe), like cards, quilting and social activities
- Splash pad
- Upgrade Center St Ballpark
- Replace play equipment – folks are conditions to existing 'poor' quality of amenities

## Interview Notes (continued)

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- BBQ areas, pavilions, shade
- Need better system of trails and paths; How to connect people to Pipe Dream Mtn Biking Trail (see <https://www.utahmountainbiking.com/trails/pipedream.htm> ). Bike lanes feel they are for commuting rather than recreation. Sidewalks of 500 W are good.
- Locals vs tourists – Swanny Park: RVs using park as parking lot, trash problems, dogs, picnic tables used for dinner, van life culture
- Not all locals have backyards; they need public space to be outside
- No beginner-level activity spaces (climbing, boating, etc.). Slacklines set up in Swanny sometimes
- Partners – bring NPS staff to city to teach and share experience about surrounding national parks. Not all residents get to experience national parks due to cost, lack of time off, etc.

### Operations & Budget Concerns

- Moab has low property taxes and low revenues overall, which translates to not being able to do much for infrastructure improvements. Parks tends to be discretionary.
- Look outside the General Fund for resources. RAP Tax has helped. Pursue more grants with grant writer (CDBG, outdoor rec grants)
- Need more outreach to really low income households in Moab. The city is now doing reduced fee programs.

### Priority Project Ideas for Next 5 Years

- Upgrade play equipment
- Reconfigure Center Ballpark
- Connectivity & signage/branding – complete streets – connect to Kane Creek Blvd
- Look at the senior development adjacent to Hospital to link to Swanny Park
- Formalize existing ‘social’ trails
- More/better parking at trailheads (i.e. Pipe Dream); better amenities at trailheads

-- End of Notes --



# Appendix E

## Recreation Trends

The following summaries from recognized park and recreation resources provide background on national, state and local park and recreation trends. Examining current recreation trends may inform potential park and recreation improvements and opportunities to enhance programs and services.

## 2023 NRPA AGENCY PERFORMANCE REVIEW

In the 2023 National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) Agency Performance Review and its accompanying Park Metrics share comprehensive park and recreation-related data collected and analyzed to inform park and recreation professionals and key stakeholders about the state of the industry. The 2023 NRPA Agency Performance Review presents data from more than 1,000 unique park and recreation agencies across the United States as reported between 2020 and 2022. These resources provide guidance to inform decisions and demonstrate the full breadth of service offerings and responsibilities of park and recreation agencies throughout the United States. This data can offer a perspective for Moab Parks and Recreation to compare their service provision to other agencies across the country. However, every park & rec agency has its own unique characteristics, combination of responsibilities and community composition. This comparison of nationwide data with the City of Moab can provide guiding insights rather than target benchmarks. The agency performance report indicated recent trends in staffing and volunteers for park and recreation agencies show that numbers of authorized full-time positions has steadily rebounded since 2011.

### Key Findings & Characteristics

Park facilities and operations vary greatly across the nation. The typical agency participating in the NRPA park metric survey serves a jurisdiction of approximately 45,000 people, but population size varies widely across all responding jurisdictions. The typical park and recreation agency has jurisdiction over 22 parks comprising over 571 acres. When including non-park sites (such as city halls and roadway medians), the median management scale for park agencies increases to 30 sites encompassing 676 acres. Park facilities also have a range of service levels in terms of acres of parkland per population and residents per park. These metrics are categorized by the agency's population size.

#### Park Facilities

The typical park and recreation agency has:

- One park for every 2,287 residents
- One playground for every 3,759 residents
- 10.8 acres of park land for every 1,000 residents in its jurisdiction
- 15 miles of trails for walking, hiking, running and/or biking
- 8.9 full-time equivalent employees per 10,000 residents

Figure E1. Median Residents per Park Based On Population Size

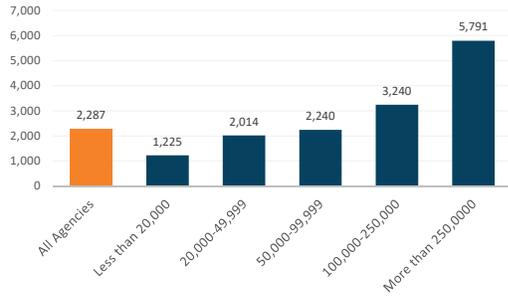
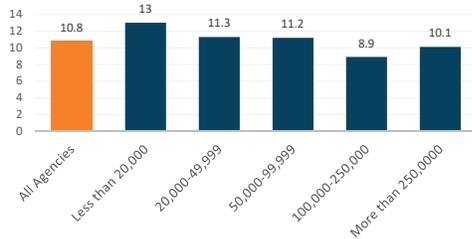


Figure E2. Acres of Parkland per 1,000 Residents based on Population Size



A large majority of park and recreation agencies provide playgrounds (95%) and basketball courts (86%) in their portfolio of outdoor assets. Most agencies (three in five) offer community and/or recreation centers. Recreation centers (63%) are provided more often than community centers (59%). Senior centers (41%), performance amphitheaters (37%) and nature centers (33%) are also common.

The typical park and recreation agency that manages or maintains trails for walking, hiking, running and/or biking has 15 miles of trails. Agencies serving more than 250,000 residents have a median of 89 miles of trails under their care.

Park and recreation agencies often take on responsibilities beyond their core functions of operating parks and providing recreational programs. Other responsibilities may include tourist attractions, golf courses, outdoor amphitheaters, indoor swim facilities, farmer’s markets, indoor sports complexes, campgrounds, performing arts centers, stadiums/arenas/racetracks, fairgrounds and/or marinas.

### Programming

At least seven in ten agencies provide themed special events (89% of agencies), team sports (86%), social recreation events (88%), youth summer camps (82%), fitness enhancement classes (81%), and health and wellness education (80%).

### Staffing

Park and recreation employees are responsible for operations and maintenance, programming and administration. The typical park and recreation agency has:

- 51.5 full-time equivalent staff (FTEs) on payroll
- 8.9 FTEs on staff for every 10,000 residents in its jurisdiction

Median FTE counts also positively correlate with the number of acres maintained, the number of parks

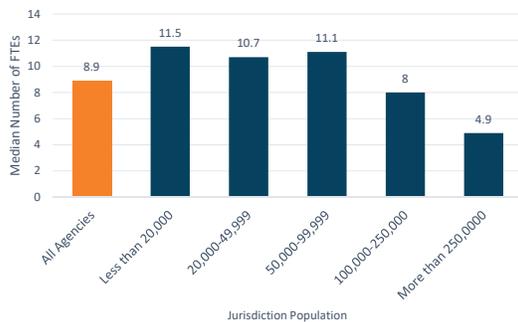
maintained, operating expenditures, and the population served. For example, agencies that serve populations between 20,000 and 49,999 residents employ an average of 32.3 FTE, while agencies that serve 50,000 to 99,000 people employ an average of 75.8 FTE.

Figure E3. Park and Recreation Agency Staffing: Full-Time Equivalents (By Jurisdiction Population)



Another way of comparing agency staffing across different park and recreation agencies examines number of staff per 10,000 residents. These comparative numbers hold fairly steady across population sizes with the median for all agencies at 8.9 FTEs.

Figure E4. Park and Recreation Agency FTEs Per 10,000 Residents



### Capital and Operating Expenses

For capital expenses, the typical park agency:

- Dedicates about 56% to renovation projects and 30% to new development projects.
- Plans to spend about \$8 million on capital expenditures over the next five years.

For operations, the typical park agency spends:

- \$5.5 million per year on total operating expenses
- \$7,823 on annual operating expenses per acre of park and non-park sites managed by the agency
- \$94.77 on annual operating expenses per capita
- \$105,484 in annual operating expenditures per employee
- 55% of the annual operating budget on personnel costs, 38% on operating expenses, and 5% on capital expenses not included in the agency’s capital improvement plan (CIP)
- 46% of its operating budget on park management and maintenance, 41% on recreation, and 13% on other activities

## Agency Funding

The typical park and recreation agency:

- Derives 61% of their operating expenditures from general fund tax support, 22% from generated revenues, 8% from dedicated taxes or levies, 3% from other dedicated taxes and 6% from grants, sponsorships and other sources
- Generates \$21.71 in revenue annually for each resident in the jurisdiction

## 2022 STATE OF THE INDUSTRY REPORT

Recreation Management magazine's 2022 Report on the State of the Managed Recreation Industry summarizes the opinions and information provided by a wide range of professionals (with an average 21.9 years of experience) working in the recreation, sports, and fitness industry.

### Partnerships

The 2022 report indicated that most (82.3%) recreation, sports, and fitness facility owners form partnerships with other organizations as a means of expanding their reach, offering additional programming opportunities or as a way to share resources and increase funding. Local schools are shown as the most common partner (59.6%) for all facility types. Youth-serving organizations (Ys, JCC, Boys & Girls Clubs) and park and recreation organizations were the most likely to report that they had partnered with outside organizations, at 98% and 94% respectively.

### Revenue Outlook

The year 2020 represented a dramatic departure from the norm, with nearly two-thirds (64.9%) of respondents indicating that their revenues for the year were lower than the previous year. By 2021, the number reporting a drop in revenue fell to 26.7%—still a dramatically different result from most survey years, but an obvious improvement over 2020. At the same time, while only 13.4% of respondents saw their revenues increase in 2020, by 2021, more than half (51.7%) were reporting revenues on the rise again. Respondents were much more optimistic about 2022 and 2023, with 60% indicating they expect to see higher revenues in both years. At the same time, 9.8% still expect revenues to fall in 2022.

### Facilities & Improvements

A majority of park respondents (43%) reported plans to add features at their facilities and were also the most likely to be planning to construct new facilities in the next few years (39%).

The top 10 planned features for all facility types include:

1. Splash play areas (21.4% of respondents with plans to add features are planning to add splash play)
2. Synthetic turf sports fields (19.5%)
3. Playgrounds (17.7%)
4. Fitness centers (15.5%)
5. Park shelters (14.1%)
6. Dog parks (13.6%)
7. Park restroom structures (12.7%)
8. Fitness trails and outdoor fitness equipment (12.3%)
9. Exercise studio rooms (11.8%)
10. Disc golf courses (11.8%)
11. Concession areas (11.8%)

## Programming

Nearly all respondents (96.4%) offer programming of some kind. The top 10 most commonly offered programs include: holiday events and other special events (provided by 57% of respondents); day camps and summer camps (54%); group exercise programs (53%); fitness programs (53%); educational programs (51%); youth sports teams (50%); mind-body balance programs such as yoga and tai chi (43%); arts and crafts programs (41%); adult sports teams (38%); and programs for active older adults (38%).

Respondents from community centers, parks and health clubs were the most likely to report that they had plans to add programs at their facilities over the next few years. The ten most commonly planned program additions were:

1. Mind-body balance programs (29.9%, up from 23.4% in 2021)
2. Fitness programs (27.9%, up from 25.5%)
3. Group exercise programs (27.9%, up from 25.7%)
4. Educational programs (25.9%, up from 20.8%)
5. Arts and crafts programs (21.9%, up from 17.4%)
6. Teen programs (21.9%, down from 23.7%)
7. Functional fitness programs (21.4%, up from 17.8%)
8. Performing arts programs (21.4%, up from 17.4%)
9. Environmental education (20.9%, up from 20%)
10. Holidays and other special events (20.4%, down from 21%)

## General Challenges

Facility managers were asked about the challenges they anticipated impacting their facilities in the future. Generally, overall budgets are the top concern for most respondents including staffing (63%) and their ability to support equipment and facility maintenance needs (50%).

With COVID-19's impact on the wane, we asked respondents to tell us about their top goals for their facilities in the coming year. The most common responses centered around increasing participation and membership, as well as building and renovating facilities. Recruiting and training staff, as well as just "getting back to normal" also made up a large number of the responses.

## 2023 OUTDOOR PARTICIPATION REPORT

According to 2023 Outdoor Participation Trends Report, published by the Outdoor Foundation in Boulder, Colorado, the outdoor recreation participant base grew 2.3% in 2022 to a record 168.1 million Americans (55%) ages 6 and older. The number of outdoor participants has grown over the last eight years, however, the number of outings per participant declined in 2022 for the first time since the pandemic began in 2020. Key Insights include the following:

### Diversity

The recreational participant base is much more diverse than ever before. New and young outdoor participants are significantly more diverse than the current outdoor base and are accelerating quickly. The participation rate for Hispanic people has increased from 34% in 2015 to 56% in 2022.

## Seniors

A significantly higher percentage of seniors (ages 55+) are participating in outdoor recreation. In 2022, the senior participation rate hit a record high of 35% and rising. This equates to 1 in every 5 outdoor participants and a total of 1 million new participants in 2022.

## Gateway Activities & Growth Trends

Gateway activities, one of the first outdoor recreation activities people participate in at any age, serve as magnets to outdoor activity and commonly lead to more activity in niche categories like backpacking and adventure racing. Gateway activities continue to drive new entrant outings and frequency of participation. Hiking is the most popular activity. Running, bicycling, fishing and camping round out the top five. Running has the highest average outings per runner at 154 per year. Camping has the highest growth rate over the past three years at 29.1% per year.

The outdoor activity categories with the highest growth rates among kids included backpacking, snowshoeing, canoeing, climbing, and off-road triathlon.

## Participation Rate Decline

The frequency of participation is declining across outdoor recreation. In 2013, the average number of outings per participant was 84.6. Over the last ten years, average number of outings has dropped to 71.8 per participant.

Demographics are changing quickly in the U.S. population, and the outdoor recreation market has lagged behind. Park and recreation agencies are recognizing the need for increased diversity in the participant base of park and recreation users. The new and young outdoor participant bases are significantly more diverse than the total participant base, a formula for long-term growth in diversity for outdoor recreation. Monitoring progress on diversity is key to understanding if outreach is being effective.

# 2022 SPORTS, FITNESS & LEISURE ACTIVITIES TOPLINE PARTICIPATION REPORT

Prepared by a partnership of the Sports and Fitness Industry Association (SFIA) and the Physical Activity Council (PAC), this February 2023 participation report summarizes levels of activity and identifies key trends in sports, fitness, and recreation in the US. The report is based on over 18,000 online interviews of a nationwide sample that provides a high degree of statistical accuracy using strict quotas for gender, age, income, region, and ethnicity. The study looked at more than 124 different team and individual sports and outdoor activities, including a section dedicated to the impact of COVID-19 on participation results.

Compared to 2017, activity increased by 9.2% in total participation rates. Activity in the U.S. continues to increase for the fifth consecutive year. In 2022, 77.6% of all Americans, or 236.9 million people participated in at least one activity during the 2022 calendar year.

There were more things to do as outdoor activities thrived, fitness at home became more popular, and team sports started back up after the COVID-19 hiatus. Participation nearly doubled for pickleball in 2022, increasing by 85.7% year-over-year. In 2022 for the first time in over seven years, every racquet sport increased its total participation number compared to the previous year.

In terms of team sports, the overall participation rate approached, but did not exceed, the 2019 rate. Basketball, outdoor soccer, and flag football all posted three-year increases of over 4.5%, with basketball leading the way with a 13% increase since 2019.

Lifestyle activities generally remained very popular. Golf and tennis have grown more than 20% since 2019, and yoga grew more than 10% in that same time period. Trail running and day hiking participation grew for the fifth straight year. However, facility-based fitness activities like elliptical, group stationary cycling, and weight resistance machines, which suffered as clubs were shuttered during COVID, have struggled to return to pre-pandemic levels.

Figure E5. 2021 Total Participation Rate by Activity Category (U.S. population, ages 6+)

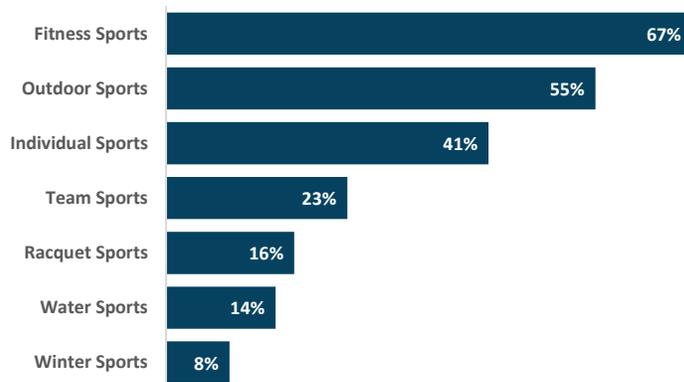
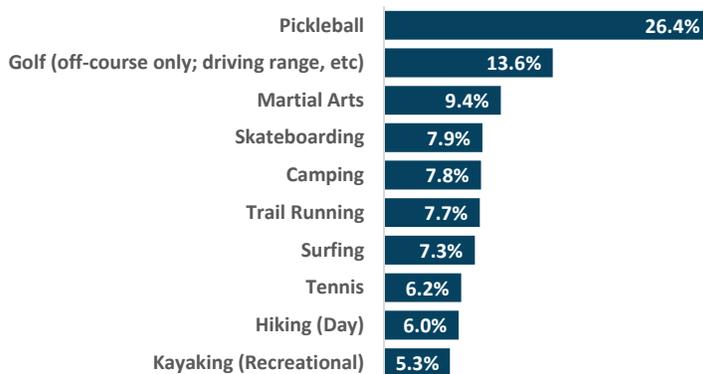


Figure E6. Activities with the Highest 5-year Increase in Participation (average annual growth, 2018-2022)



## UTAH’S OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN

Utah’s Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (UORP) 2019-2023 was prepared by the Utah Department of Natural Resources and the Utah Division of Parks and Recreation to guide decisions on the expenditure of scarce outdoor recreation acquisition and development dollars in the state. The UORP ensures the eligibility of Utah’s share of the Land and Water Fund apportionment. The development of the UORP is influenced by the assessment of supply and demand of recreational areas and facilities through surveys and inventories to help address the most pressing outdoor recreation needs in the state. The Utah recreation industry is as diverse and dynamic as its natural resources. The state boasts a wide spectrum of natural and human-made attractions, recreational opportunities and cultural heritage sites. Nearly 75 percent of the state consists of land administered for public use by federal, state, and local governments and resource management agencies.

Outdoor recreation is a primary driver for Utah’s tourism industry (Governor’s Council on Balanced Resources 2013). In 2016, tourists spent approximately \$8.4 billion in Utah. This spending includes gasoline purchases, car rentals, transportation fares, parking, lodging, dining, groceries, and entertainment and recreation-related activities. Businesses associated with outdoor recreation contributed some \$1.23 billion in state and local sales tax revenue (Gardner 2017).

## Recreation Professionals’ Perspectives

To assess the recreational needs within the state from the land managers and recreational planners several surveys were conducted in 2017 and 2018. Recreation professionals representing federal, state, tribal, regional and local park and recreation-related agencies were questioned about their priorities and general recreational needs. Many park and recreation facilities in the state are over 30 years old and in need of renovation/improvement. Survey respondents were asked to rank their general recreation needs to prioritize their funding targets.

Figure E7. Top Five Recreational Priorities of Recreation Professionals

Top Five General Recreation Priorities
ADA Improvements at Existing Facilities
New Park Land Acquisition
Improved Access to Existing Facilities
Renovation of Existing Facilities
New Facilities

To ascertain the most needed new facilities, survey respondents were asked to list their top three priorities for new facilities. Recreational professionals identified recreation centers, sports and playfields, trails and walkways, and parks as the most needed new facilities throughout the state for their organizations.

Figure E8. Most Needed New Facilities by Recreation Professionals

Top Five Most Needed New Facilities
Recreation Center
Sports and Play Fields
Trails and Walkways
Parks
Ball Fields

Playgrounds, restrooms, shade structures/pavilions, recreation centers, lighting and trails/walkways were identified as the most important facility renovations identified by the recreational professionals.

Figure E9. Highest Priorities for Facility Renovation by Recreation Professionals

Top Six Facility Renovation Targets
Playgrounds
Restrooms
Pavilions / Shade Structures
Recreation Center
Lighting
Trails & Walkways

## Residents’ Outdoor Recreation Perspectives

In 2018, a survey of Utah residents was conducted to determine what recreation activities are important, how often people participate in those activities, where they like to recreate, and what recreation facilities are needed most in their communities. Residents were asked what three most common outdoor recreation activities they have participated in over the past year. The top three outdoor recreational activities provided by survey respondents are hiking, camping and fishing, the same top three results from previous SCORP surveys.

Figure E10. Utah Residents’ Most Common Recreation Activities

Most Common Recreation Activities		
Hiking	Walking	30%
Camping	Wildlife/Bird watching	20%
Fishing	Running	17%
Mountain Biking		
Hunting		
ATV/OHV		
Skiing		
Horseback riding		
Climbing		

Survey respondents were asked to assess their level of participation in 22 specific recreation activities listed by categories over the last year. Categories covered active outdoor recreation activities, water-related activities, organized sporting activities and general outdoor activities.

Figure E11. General Outdoor Activities: Percent Participation by Utah Residents

Participation in Outdoor Activities	
Walking	30%
Wildlife/Bird watching	20%
Picnicking	17%
Running	17%
Biking	16%

Survey respondents were then asked to assess their top two recreation needs for their area/community. The most important recreation needs identified by the respondents are trails/pathways (all forms), parks/open space, more public access, and camping areas/campgrounds/campsites.

Figure E12. Most Important Recreation Needs Identified by Utah Residents

Top Recreation Needs
Trails/pathways
More parks / open space
More public access
Camping areas/campgrounds/camp sites

The state resident survey also sought to assess where recreation was occurring and to what extent. Survey respondents reported their frequency of visitation to the various types of recreational lands available to the public. The reported frequency of visitation was fairly even with neighborhood parks narrowly ranking the park/recreation areas most frequently visited by the respondents.

Figure E13. Percent Visitation to Types of Public Recreation Lands

Visitation to Recreation Areas/Parks	
Neighborhood Parks	18%
US Forest Service Lands	17%
State Parks	16%
National Parks/Monuments	14%
BLM Lands	14%
Regional Parks/Rec Areas	11%
Wildlife Sites	10%

## AMERICANS ENGAGEMENT WITH PARKS SURVEY

This annual study from the National Park and Recreation Association (NRPA) probes Americans’ usage of parks, the key reasons that drive their use, and the greatest challenges preventing greater usage. Each year, the study examines the importance of public parks in Americans’ lives, including how parks compare to other services and offerings of local governments. The survey of 1,000 American adults looks at frequency and drivers of parks/recreation facilities visits and the barriers to that prevent greater enjoyment. Survey respondents also indicate the importance of park and recreation plays in their decisions at the voting booth and their level of support for greater funding. Key findings include:

- Eighty-four percent of U.S. adults seek high-quality parks and recreation when choosing a place to live.
- Nearly 3 in 4 U.S. residents have at least one local park, playground, open space or recreation center within walking distance of their homes.
- Nine in ten people agree that parks and recreation is an important service provided by the local government.
- Nearly 3 in 4 adults agree that equity should be an extremely or very important goal for their local park and recreation agency.

People who live near parks and recreation facilities are more likely to be park and recreation users. Individuals living near at least one park are much more likely to arrive at that park by an “active” means (e.g., walking, biking, running), with walking being the most common method of transport. Conversely, 80 percent of U.S. adults who do not live within a walkable distance to parks or recreation opportunities travel to those amenities by car. The typical adult in the United States visits their local parks or recreation facilities every other month. Four main reasons for visiting local parks and recreation facilities stand out: being with family and friends, exercising and being physically fit, taking a break from day-to-day stresses, and being closer to nature. Park and recreation agencies can customize their offerings to the specific needs, wants and desires of their community members by knowing their motivation for visiting parks.

Figure E14. NRPA Park Engagement: Key Reasons for Park Visits

Key Reasons Why We Go to Parks	% of Survey Respondents
To have someone care for my children while I am at work	5%
To learn a skill or craft	13%
to connect with members of my community	22%
To experience excitement/adventure	30%
To be closer to nature	50%
To have a break from day-to-day stresses	52%
To exercise or be physically fit	53%
To be with family or friends	54%

According to the Americans Engagement with Parks report,

“Parks and recreation’s success results from its vast offerings of parks, trail networks and other recreation facilities that deliver critical programs for every segment of a community. Each person’s relationship with parks and recreation is unique. Some people flock to their local park to stay physically fit, meet with friends and family, or reconnect with nature. Others depend on their local park and recreation agency for indispensable services that improve their lives.

But there remains much work to do. One-hundred million people do not live within a walkable distance of at least one park or recreation facility. Further, many survey respondents indicate they have felt unwelcome at a park or recreation facility or say the infrastructure and programming are not inclusive. Parks and recreation is for everyone — regardless of age, income, race, ethnicity, ability, gender identity or sexual orientation. Professionals, advocates and political leaders have the opportunity to narrow any accessibility or inclusivity gaps through greater community engagement and addressing inequitable funding and infrastructure investments that have deprived millions of people of access to parks and recreation.”

## OUTDOOR RECREATION ECONOMY

In November 2022, the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) released its annual report on the economic impact of the outdoor recreation industry at national and state levels. The gross economic output for the outdoor recreation economy was \$862 billion in 2021, accounting for 1.9% of the gross domestic product that year. Outdoor recreation economic activity showed an 18.95% increase from 2020 while the overall U.S. economy only saw a 5.9% increase. People finding employment in the outdoor recreation industry increased by 13.1% from 2020 to a total of 4.5 million people.

The research group Headwaters Economics, in collaboration with the State Outdoor Recreation Business Alliance, published a report in 2021 on the state of the outdoor recreation economy nationally. The outdoor recreation industry employed nearly 5.2 million people in the U.S. in 2019 and contributed \$459.8 billion to the economy. The report emphasizes that investments in outdoor recreation directly result in visitor spending that supports jobs, businesses, and industries across the country.

## INCLUSION & UNIVERSAL ACCESS

Across the country, local municipalities and park and recreation providers with older public infrastructure have been upgrading their facilities to comply with the outdoor recreation guidelines for universal access and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The removal of existing architectural barriers in park facilities has been ongoing and should continue until renovations, upgrades and newer construction provide barrier-free access to all users. Access and inclusion in public parks extends beyond the physical amenities and incorporates considerations of language, technology, wayfinding, program equity and equitable geographic distribution of facilities.

Park and recreation agencies are in a unique position to champion efforts that advance diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI). By assuring representation of diverse life experiences and voices, park and recreation professionals will better reflect the communities their agencies serve. Inequity is the ultimate challenge facing the nation, and parks and recreation can make a profound difference.

## TRENDS IN PLAYGROUNDS

Across multiple communities, residents strongly value their parks and recreation facilities and park playgrounds are an important element in outdoor recreation. Reported in Landscape Architect magazine, the top five playground industry trends for 2021 were compiled from data and feedback from parks professionals, landscape architects and educators.

1. Inclusive Playgrounds, increasingly popular over the last few years, have been evolving beyond meeting basic ADA guidelines. Designers are seeking to expand accessible playground equipment, consider multi-generational play, and leverage inclusive play to help overcome societal barriers.
2. Rope-based Playgrounds, climbers and playground nets provide a technique for working around natural environments and unusual topography. Their flexibility in placement offers more options for connecting with the landscape rather than working around difficult topography.
3. Outdoor Fitness has increased importance during the COVID-19 pandemic as many gyms and indoor fitness centers closed and forced more people to seek outdoor options. Outdoor fitness spaces are being increasingly integrated into park and trail designs to encourage health and physical fitness for all ages.
4. Outdoor Learning has been implemented during the pandemic to replace or supplement indoor classrooms. Outdoor classrooms can encourage activity in children to counteract the reduction in recess time due to hybrid class schedules and remote learning. Seating, tables, shelters, hand sanitizer stations and other outdoor products are helping create outdoor classrooms.
5. Human-powered Play engages users to provide physical energy to “power-up” the activity, such as turning a handle, pressing foot pedals, rotating wheels. These products often relate to sensory experiences like lights and music, story-telling or social games.

Spurred on by the social distancing of the pandemic, these five trends in playground design and development point to more human-to-human interactions that reinforce the value of social connections, even in a physically distanced environment.

## PARKS FOR CLIMATE RESILIENCY

Numerous studies have been documenting the contributions of parks and public lands to better climate resiliency. Parks, open space and natural lands can cool urban heat islands, buffer flood impacts, improve water quality and improve air quality. Urban tree canopy in parks can remove air pollution and sequester carbon. Parks and greenways along storm-affected coastlines are being created to help buffer impacts of anticipated flooding due to sea level rise, storm surges, and increased precipitation. Climate resilience strategies involving parks can focus on resilient shoreline development, green stormwater infrastructure and increased tree groves.

As the climate changes, outdoor recreation opportunities and availability can become more inconsistent. Wildfires, flooding, reduced snow pack and other environmental impacts from climate changes can directly and indirectly affect visitor-use patterns. Recreation planners and managers play a role in climate resiliency by protecting vulnerable resources that can impact outdoor recreation opportunities.

## 2019 SPECIAL REPORT ON PADDLESPO RTS & SAFETY

In 2019, the Outdoor Foundation produced a report focused on paddlesports data based on a participation survey (over 20,000 online interviews with a nationwide sample of individuals and households). In 2018, 22.9 million Americans (approximately 7.4% of the population) participated in paddle sports. This represents an increase of more than 4 million participants since the study began in 2010. Over the last five years, there continues to be an increase in paddlesports popularity among outdoor enthusiasts, with significant portions of the nationwide growth occurring in the Pacific region.

Recreational kayaking continues to grow in popularity but may be driving some of the decline in canoeing. The popularity of stand-up paddling has soared, increasing by 1.5 million participants over the past five years, though it does not have nearly as high a participation rate as either recreational kayaking or canoeing.

Most paddlers are Caucasian, other racial and ethnic groups are largely under-represented. However, Caucasian participation has remained relatively flat while participation by people identifying as Hispanic or Black/African American has grown by 0.5% to 1% per year since 2013. This growth has led to more than 773,000 new Hispanic paddlers in just six years, signaling the importance and potential of engaging minority groups in paddlesports.

One in eight paddlers have been participating in the sport for 21 years or more. However, many participants – between thirty and sixty percent, depending on the discipline – tried a paddlesport for the first time in 2018. Such high levels of first-time participation may produce longer term growth in paddling, assuming participants continue to enjoy the sport.

Among adult paddlers, most participate for excitement and adventure, for exercise, or to be close to nature. Kayakers, rafters, canoers and stand-up paddlers often enjoy, or would be willing to try, other paddlesports. Many also enjoy similar outdoor “crossover” activities such as hiking, camping, walking, and nature viewing.



# Appendix F

## Implementation Tools

The Plan has identified a significant breadth of new projects and improvements that may exceed the capacity of existing resources. For the capital projects involving acquisition and development, a variety of funding sources may provide options for reaching closer to the projected revenue needs. These funding options range from local sources to state, federal and private entities and programs.

## LOCAL FUNDING OPTIONS

Moab possesses a range of local funding tools that could be accessed for the benefit of growing, developing and maintaining its parks, trails and other recreation facilities. The sources listed below represent potential sources though some may be dedicated for other local purposes which limit applicability and usage. Therefore, city leadership will need to consider the feasibility and potential to modify or expand the use of existing city revenue sources in favor of park and recreation programs.

### General Obligation Bond

For the purposes of funding capital projects, such as land acquisitions or facility construction, cities have the authority to borrow money by selling bonds. Voter-approved general obligation bonds may be sold only after receiving a majority vote at a general or special election. The City does not currently have any General Obligation Bonds outstanding.

### Impact Fees

The State of Utah's Impact Fees Act authorizes local governments – including cities, counties and special districts – to charge impact fees on new development to mitigate the costs of providing necessary infrastructure. The impact fee helps ensure new residential and commercial growth is served by adequate municipal facilities. Impact fees can be used to fund the acquisition and construction of new facilities, generally defined as having a life expectancy of at least ten years. They cannot be used to fund operations or maintenance costs. The City of Moab charges impact fees for water and sewer connections, but does not assess an impact fee for parks.

### Recreation, Arts, & Parks (RAP) Tax

The Recreation, Arts, & Parks (RAP) Tax is a 1/10 of 1% sales tax on non-food items. Proceeds can be used on publicly-owned and operated athletic fields and parks, trails, playgrounds, etc. It can also be used to support and help develop cultural organizations to advance and preserve art, music, theater, dance, etc. Local voters approved the RAP Tax in November 2020 and went into effect on April 1, 2021.

## FEDERAL & STATE GRANTS AND CONSERVATION PROGRAMS

### Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program

The Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program, also known as the Rivers & Trails Program or RTCA, is a technical assistance resource for communities administered by the National Park Service and federal government agencies so they can conserve rivers, preserve open space and develop trails and greenways. The RTCA program implements the natural resource conservation and outdoor recreation mission of NPS in communities across America.

### Community Development Block Grants

These funds are intended to develop viable urban communities by providing decent housing and a suitable living environment, and by expanding economic opportunities, principally for low and moderate income persons. The Southeastern Utah Association of Local Governments has been designated by the State of Utah to receive and evaluate applications for (CDBG) funds within the southeast region. CDBG funds can be used for a wide variety of projects, services, facilities and infrastructure.

### Walk-In Access Program

The Walk-In Access program, administered by the Division of Wildlife Resources, compensates willing landowners for allowing public access to their lands for public recreational use (hunting, trapping and fishing). Landowners enrolled in the program receive monetary compensation based upon suitable habitat and wildlife, the amount of land and the length of time the land or water is enrolled in the program. Some landowners may also qualify for habitat restoration projects designed to attract and benefit wildlife species. The Division provides public safety patrols and liability coverage for designated sites.

### LeRay McAllister Working Farm and Ranch Fund

The LeRay McAllister Working Farm and Ranch Fund (formerly known as the Critical Land Conservation Fund) provides grants to preserve or restore critical open land or agricultural land in Utah. Eligible applicants are counties, cities, towns, the Utah Department of Natural Resources, other Utah Agencies, Land Trusts, and charitable organizations that qualify as tax exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. The LeRay McAllister Program uses funds appropriated by the Utah Legislature to purchase conservation easements on important pieces of private land, acquire small parcels in fee title under limited circumstances, and provide small restoration grants to improve conserved lands.

### Utah State Parks Grant Programs

Utah State Parks operates four grant programs and grants money to local agencies, generally on a matching basis, to acquire, develop and enhance outdoor recreation properties.

#### Land and Water Conservation Fund

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) provides grants to buy land and develop public outdoor facilities, including parks, trails and wildlife lands. Grant recipients must provide at least 50% matching funds in either cash or in-kind contributions. Grant program revenue is from a portion of federal revenue derived from sale or lease of off-shore oil and gas resources. The legislature recently reauthorized the fund.

### National Recreational Trails Program

The Recreational Trails Program (RTP) provides funds to maintain trails and facilities for a range of activities including hiking, mountain biking, horseback riding, motorcycling and snowmobiling. RTP funding may be used for the construction and maintenance of trails and trail related facilities, including the development of staging areas, trailheads, restroom facilities, etc. RTP funding may not be used for non-trail related activities such as the development of campgrounds, purchase of picnic tables, landscaping, or irrigation system development. A local match of 50% is required. This program is funded through federal gasoline taxes attributed to recreational non-highway uses. Typically, Utah receives around \$1.5 million dollars annually to distribute to cities, counties, non-profits, federal agencies and tribes.

### Utah Outdoor Recreation Grant

The Utah Outdoor Recreation Grant program makes grant monies available with a 50/50 match to communities to build outdoor recreation infrastructure which would become an enhancement in the area. These projects must offer an economic opportunity for the community and should have the potential to attract or retain residents and increase visitation to the region. Eligible infrastructure development projects include but are not limited to youth programs, trails, trail infrastructure, and trail facilities; restroom facilities near recreational areas; ramps and launch sites that would improve water access; whitewater parks; yurts; and infrastructure for wildlife viewing areas. The project areas must be accessible by the public to qualify.

### Utah Arts & Museums Grants

Utah Arts & Museums awards grants to assist arts organizations, museums, schools, educators, local arts councils, cultural organizations, and folk artists across the state of Utah. Grants are competitive and reviewed by community panels. General operating support and project grants are available. Grant funding is provided by the State of Utah and the National Endowment for the Arts.

## OTHER METHODS & FUNDING SOURCES

### Business Sponsorships/Donations

Business sponsorships for programs may be available throughout the year. In-kind contributions are often received, including food, door prizes and equipment/material.

### Interagency Agreements

State law provides for interagency cooperative efforts between units of government. Joint acquisition, development and/or use of park and open space facilities may be provided between Parks, Public Works, school districts and utility providers.

### Private Grants, Donations & Gifts

Many trusts and private foundations provide funding for park, recreation and open space projects. Grants from these sources are typically allocated through a competitive application process and vary dramatically in size based on the financial resources and funding criteria of the organization. Philanthropic giving is another source of project funding. Efforts in this area may involve cash gifts and include donations through other mechanisms such as wills or insurance policies. Community fundraising efforts can also support park, recreation or open space facilities and projects.

# ACQUISITION TOOLS & METHODS

## Direct Purchase Methods

### Market Value Purchase

Through a written purchase and sale agreement, the city purchases land at the present market value based on an independent appraisal. Timing, payment of real estate taxes and other contingencies are negotiable.

### Partial Value Purchase (or Bargain Sale)

In a bargain sale, the landowner agrees to sell for less than the property's fair market value. A landowner's decision to proceed with a bargain sale is unique and personal; landowners with a strong sense of civic pride, long community history or concerns about capital gains are possible candidates for this approach. In addition to cash proceeds upon closing, the landowner may be entitled to a charitable income tax deduction based on the difference between the land's fair market value and its sale price.

### Life Estates & Bequests

In the event a landowner wishes to remain on the property for a long period of time or until death, several variations on a sale agreement exist. In a life estate agreement, the landowner may continue to live on the land by donating a remainder interest and retaining a "reserved life estate." Specifically, the landowner donates or sells the property to the city, but reserves the right for the seller or any other named person to continue to live on and use the property. When the owner or other specified person dies or releases his/her life interest, full title and control over the property will be transferred to the city. By donating a remainder interest, the landowner may be eligible for a tax deduction when the gift is made. In a bequest, the landowner designates in a will or trust document that the property is to be transferred to the city upon death. While a life estate offers the city some degree of title control during the life of the landowner, a bequest does not. Unless the intent to bequest is disclosed to and known by the city in advance, no guarantees exist with regard to the condition of the property upon transfer or to any liabilities that may exist.

### Gift Deed

When a landowner wishes to bequeath their property to a public or private entity upon their death, they can record a gift deed with the county assessors office to insure their stated desire to transfer their property to the targeted beneficiary as part of their estate. The recording of the gift deed usually involves the tacit agreement of the receiving party.

### Option to Purchase Agreement

This is a binding contract between a landowner and the city that would only apply according to the conditions of the option and limits the seller's power to revoke an offer. Once in place and signed, the Option Agreement may be triggered at a future, specified date or upon the completion of designated conditions. Option Agreements can be made for any time duration and can include all of the language pertinent to closing a property sale.

### Right of First Refusal

In this agreement, the landowner grants the city the first chance to purchase the property once the landowner wishes to sell. The agreement does not establish the sale price for the property, and the landowner is free to refuse to sell it for the price offered by the city. This is the weakest form of agreement between an owner and a prospective buyer.

### Conservation and/or Access Easements

Through a conservation easement, a landowner voluntarily agrees to sell or donate certain rights associated with his or her property (often the right to subdivide or develop), and a private organization or public agency agrees to hold the right to enforce the landowner's promise not to exercise those rights. In essence, the rights are forfeited and no longer exist. This is a legal agreement between the landowner and the city that permanently limits uses of the land in order to conserve a portion of the property for public use or protection. The landowner still owns the property, but the use of the land is restricted. Conservation easements may result in an income tax deduction and reduced property taxes and estate taxes. Typically, this approach is used to provide trail corridors where only a small portion of the land is needed or for the strategic protection of natural resources and habitat. Through a written purchase and sale agreement, the city purchases land at the present market value based on an independent appraisal. Timing, payment of real estate taxes and other contingencies are negotiable.

## Landowner Incentive Measures

### Density Bonuses

Density bonuses are a planning tool used to encourage a variety of public land use objectives, usually in urban areas. They offer the incentive of being able to develop at densities beyond current regulations in one area, in return for concessions in another. Density bonuses are applied to a single parcel or development. An example is allowing developers of multi-family units to build at higher densities if they provide a certain number of low-income units or public open space. For density bonuses to work, market forces must support densities at a higher level than current regulations.

### Transfer of Development Rights

The transfer of development rights (TDR) is an incentive-based planning tool that allows land owners to trade the right to develop property to its fullest extent in one area for the right to develop beyond existing regulations in another area. Local governments may establish the specific areas in which development may be limited or restricted and the areas in which development beyond regulation may be allowed. Usually, but not always, the "sending" and "receiving" property are under common ownership. Some programs allow for different ownership, which, in effect, establishes a market for development rights to be bought and sold.

### IRC 1031 Exchange

If the landowner owns business or investment property, an IRC Section 1031 Exchange can facilitate the exchange of like-kind property solely for business or investment purposes. No capital gain or loss is recognized under Internal Revenue Code Section 1031 (see [www.irc.gov](http://www.irc.gov) for more details). This option may be a useful tool in negotiations with an owner of investment property, especially if the tax savings offset to the owner can translate to a sale price discount for the City.

## OTHER LAND PROTECTION OPTIONS

### Land Trusts & Conservancies

Land trusts are private non-profit organizations that acquire and protect special open spaces and are traditionally not associated with any government agency. Moab Area Community Land Trust is the regional land trust serving the Moab area. Other national organizations with regional representation include The Nature Conservancy and the Trust for Public Land.

### Public/Private Utility Corridors

Utility corridors can be managed to maximize protection or enhancement of open space lands. Utilities maintain corridors for provision of services such as electricity, gas, oil, and rail travel. Some utility companies have cooperated with local governments for development of public programs such as parks and trails within utility corridors.

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# 2024 Parks & Recreation Master Plan

CITY OF MOAB, UT

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