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## 1. Introduction

Nestled into the base of the Beartooth Mountains, Red Lodge serves as the northeast gateway into Yellowstone National Park and the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness. Located near some of the tallest peaks in Montana, this gorgeous mountain town provides outdoor recreational activities to both residents and tourists alike. Although this vast mountain range provides nearly 950 thousand acres of recreational space, it is imperative to implement and preserve outdoor recreational spaces within the town through established parks and trails. The purpose of this study is to develop a comprehensive parks plan for the City of Red Lodge in order to analyze, improve and promote the current parks system.

The Red Lodge community embraces an economy primarily based on outdoor recreation, tourism, service, and entrepreneurship. This has evolved from the City's roots as a mining and agricultural community over the past 100+ years. Retirees and young families comprise a higher than average percentage of Red Lodge's residents. They are attracted to the town qualities including recreational opportunities, beautiful environment, tight knit community, and diverse culture in Red Lodge. The active lifestyle embraced by the community is both promoted and shaped by parks, trails, open space, and recreational activities offered by the City.

City parks and open space provide a broad range of benefits to the City and its residents. Not only do they promote a healthier population but also provide economic, social, and environmental benefits to the community.

- **Economic:** Research shows that a majority of home buyers are not only more likely to buy homes near parks and green space but are also willing to pay a higher price for this benefit. This extends to commercial properties as well, leading to higher tax revenues. This is known as "Proximate Principal" and has been shown in a number of recent studies. Increasing property values and promoting a more attractive community are direct benefits seen to the City through promoting parks and open space.
- **Social:** Social benefits include lower crime rates, stronger communities, and healthier children. These social benefits are essential to establishing a prospering and attractive community. Citizens who engage in moderate physical activities, which are often provided by parks, substantially improve their health and quality of life including reduced risk in premature death and heart diseases. Participating in activities offered through parks has also been shown to provide psychological benefits such as relieving symptoms of anxiety and depression. All these factors encourage the continued growth of a healthy and prospering community in Red Lodge.

- **Environment:** Trees, grass, and open space benefit the environment in many ways such as controlling air pollution, filtering water pollution, and controlling stormwater runoff. The natural filtering system of water and air through green space, trees, and soils prevents many pollutants from contaminating nearby streams and water sources. Trees and green space also serve as an effective and less expensive form of storm water runoff control rather than concrete sewers and drainage ditches.

Therefore, it is vital for Red Lodge to implement and maintain parks and open space in order to promote growth within this prospering community. In order to have a positive effect on property values, a park must be maintained as an amenity and avoid problems with traffic congestion, vandalism, and maintenance. This comprehensive parks plan will serve as a planning and development aid for the City of Red Lodge to use as it expands and upgrades its current parks system as will be demanded by future growth.

## 2. Purpose

The purpose of the City of Red Lodge Comprehensive Parks Plan is to inventory existing parks, present a vision for the development of future parks and recreational activities, as well as provide direction regarding the role of the Parks Board in conjunction with Public Works and City Council. This plan is meant to guide public officials in making decisions on land acquisition, budgeting, partnerships, and park facility upgrades. Based on a needs assessment and public input, the plan prioritized services and improvements to meet community needs.

### 1.1 Policy and Ordinance Relationship

This comprehensive parks plan has been created in conjunction with existing plans created by the City of Red Lodge, including the: Zoning Ordinance (2014), Growth Policy (2015), Capital Improvements Plan (2015), Parks Board Strategic Plan (2012), Trails Plan (2006), and Urban Forest Management Plan (2009). Close correlation and interaction between all plans and policies will ensure that common goals are achieved without conflict.

#### 1.1.1 Zoning Ordinance (2015)

The Red Lodge Zoning Ordinance allows for "Public Parks and Recreation" as a land use in each of the zoning designations. This allows park dedications in each zone, and promotes parks and open space throughout all areas of town. Each of the dedicated parks is currently listed as "Park District Zone (P-1)" on the most recent Zoning Map. The purpose and intent of "Public Use Zoning District 1" is stated as:

*“The purpose and intent of P-1 Zoning District is to provide an adequate amount of land for a variety of public and semi-public uses that serve the public health, safety and general welfare, implement the Red Lodge Growth Policy and protect critical natural resources. These uses include various public buildings, parks and recreational facilities, and open spaces. This zoning district further intends to minimize incompatibility between the public uses and neighboring private uses.”*

Dimensional standards for P-1 zones are as follows:

**Table 1.1: P-1 Zone Standards**

Dimensional Standards P-1	
Lot Standards	
Lot area, min. sq. ft	NA
Lot frontage, min. ft	NA
Setbacks (ft.)	
Front, Maximum	10
Side	6
Rear	5
Side Corner	6
Building Standards	
Building height, max. ft	35

\*Reference *Red Lodge Zoning Ordinance* section 4.3.140 for addition zoning information

The zoning ordinance was also reviewed for lot size restriction within each zoning designation. The Residential designations establish a minimum lot size of 5,000-square feet and no limits regarding maximum size. Future Park dedications in non-public zones will need to consider these regulations if an immediate zone change is not completed.

### 1.1.2 Growth Policy (2014)

The Red Lodge Growth Policy places high importance on development and maintenance of parks and open spaces. As stated in the policy:

*“Abundant, accessible open space, unobstructed views, and enjoyable neighborhood parks and trails must be planning priorities if the people of Red Lodge and the surrounding area are to maintain their present quality of life.”*

Chapter 10 of the Red Lodge Growth policy should be referenced for further information pertaining to growth in relation to trails, parks, and open space. This chapter references the Comprehensive Parks Plan and establishes goals and strategies for future development and expansion. The growth policy puts an emphasis on acquisition of open space along the Rock Creek riparian corridor as well as connection of parks and open space through trails. The Comprehensive Parks Plan has been created in accordance with the goals and strategies set forth in the Growth Policy. Some pertinent sections of the policy are given below:

*-Grow and develop around a network of City streets and the planned system of trails, parks and open spaces. We will promote a multi-modal transportation network that emphasizes walkability, is aesthetically pleasing, and is pedestrian and bicycle friendly.*

*-Rock Creek is a remarkable asset to the City and the neighborhoods through which it flows. Mountain views are an important element of Red Lodge's sense of place. Abundant, accessible open space, unobstructed views, and enjoyable neighborhood parks and trails must be planning priorities if the people of Red Lodge and the surrounding area are to maintain their present quality of life.*

*-Improving parks, building trails, and protecting riparian lands will require substantial public investments. These investments can also yield impressive returns, not just in local quality of life, but in dollars and cents. Research documents the economic value of open space. The City's investment in protecting open space will increase property values and tax collections.*

*-The City of Red Lodge has 11 officially dedicated public parks to be held and reserved for public use. These parks are Finn Park, Pride Park, Rotary Park at Rock Creek, Lions Park, Mountain Springs Villa, The Spires, Diamond C Links, Field School Park, Skate Park, The Pool and Double Ditch Park.*

*-Open space planning issues include the distribution of parks, the limited parks budget, the possible impacts of future development on Rock Creek, the loss of wildlife habitat, the visual impact of development on the slopes above the City, and the lack of safe multi-modal connections from the City center to the benches.*

*-Rock Creek is a remarkable asset to the City and the neighborhoods through which it flows. Preservation of and access to the Rock Creek corridor is valued by the Red Lodge community and shall be pursued through acquisition by trade, purchase, or dedication of parks and open space.*

*-All neighborhoods shall have public parks and open spaces. Small isolated municipal lands should be dedicated as neighborhood "Pocket Parks." Pocket parks serve as gathering places, open space, and centers of neighborhood pride.*

### 1.1.3 Red Lodge CIP (2015)

The Red Lodge Capital Improvements Plan references projects identified for Parks and Recreation within the Public Works Department. A summary of the relevant projects and a general budget for each is identified in Table 2.1. The projects identified in the CIP will be included in the Comprehensive Parks Plan analysis and implementation strategy. The Red Lodge CIP is scheduled for an update in fall of 2014. The updated CIP will incorporate the goals and objectives outlined in the Comprehensive Parks Plan.

**Table 1.2: Summary of Capital Improvements Projects**

PROJECT description	Estimated cost	RATIONALE
Rotary Park. Install restrooms in park and add piers & decking over Rock Creek.	\$205,000	Rotary Creek Park sees extensive use by visitors. Porta-potties have been used. City needs to protect water quality in Rock Creek and provide a pleasant, accessible experience for visitors.
Field Park. Replace sidewalk & install underground sprinklers.	\$192,500	Replace substandard sidewalk and underground sprinklers in centrally-located, well-used park. Park is located in close proximity to skate park, Boys and Girls Club, and the daycare center.
Rock Creek Linear Park Development.	\$250,000	Funding needed for constructing trail segments and Rock Creek access identified in adopted Comprehensive Trails Plan.
West Bench Linear Park Development, including Land Acquisition.	\$175,000	Funding needed for constructing a west bench trail identified in the Trails Plan.
Parks and Recreation Equipment. Replace equipment.	\$36,000	Regularly scheduled replacement of parks equipment.

Lions Park. Rehab/replace Lion's Den, warming hut rehab/replacement & an additional gazebo.	\$410,000	The Lion's Den has become an eyesore. If the Den was moved to a location within the park, the City could benefit from new leasable land. A 2 <sup>nd</sup> gazebo could be placed by the horseshoe pit.
Coal Miners Park Improvements. Upgrade restrooms to ADA standards, resurface baseball field, rehab park drainage, develop parking area & develop upper field.	\$445,000	Coal Miner Park, while not dedicated, attracts many users and has vast untapped potential. The park could be one of the most used parks in the City if fully developed.
New Neighborhood Park, including Land Acquisition.	\$250,000	Additional parks could be added on the west bench and in the southern portion of town.
City Soccer Field.	\$65,000	A private soccer group could fund a soccer field and the schools could help with ongoing expenses.
Multi-Use Complex. Could include a pool, rec center, and soccer & baseball fields.	\$3,000,000	A multi-use facility was sought by many Parks Board attendees through the public meetings. There is a need for a multi-use facility that could be located at Coal Miners or the airport.
Swimming Pool. Rehab swimming pool.	\$250,000	Current swimming pool is aged. A major rehab of the pool is needed to bring or continuous concerns and issues will be ongoing.
Skate Park. Reconstruction.	\$130,000	The wood ramps at Skate Park decay quickly and the ramps are not challenging enough for older kids.

#### 1.1.4 Parks Board Strategic Plan (2012)

The Parks Board Strategic Plan was completed in 2010 and updated in 2012. The purpose of the Strategic Plan is to give focus to the work of the Red Lodge Parks Board over the next several years. The mission statement, vision, and goals stated in the Strategic Plan are as follow:

*Mission Statement:* The Mission of the Red Lodge Parks Board is to protect, enhance, and maintain parks, facilities, natural resources, open space, trails, tree, and plants by developing and executing a Park Plan, Trails Plan, and Trees Plan.

*Vision:* In the future, the City of Red Lodge will be providing a geographically distributed and well maintained portfolio of Parks, Trails, and Open Spaces that serve a wide range of interests, ages, and abilities proportional to the current and future population. Parks will draw visitors and stimulate the economy. There will be scheduled and organized events, activities, and tournaments. There will also be an expanding, connected network of trails, heavily used by the community and visitors and a diverse and healthy urban forest. There will be public awareness of the park and tree assets and their uses through active promotion. Operationally, there will be a continuity of adequate funding to support the vision and goals, a well understood methodology for executing plans, and perhaps a dedicated parks and recreational staff.

*Goals:*

1. Complete major capital projects
2. Develop a Parks Plan and review, update, and execute our three guiding plans (Parks, Trail, and Trees) on a five year cycle.
3. Improve operations effectiveness and efficiency of the Parks Board
4. Improve public awareness of parks, trails, trees, and resources
5. Promote and schedule organized uses of parks and trails and define a process for reservations
6. Develop a process for handling development and use requests for park property
7. Actively engage with other related planning activities (e.g., Zoning, Subdivision regulations, Growth policy, Capital improvements plan, Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, etc.)

8. Maintain existing assets to provide a safe and diversified recreational experience

### 1.1.5 Comprehensive Trails Plan (2006)

The City of Red Lodge adopted a "Comprehensive Trails Plan" in 2006, outlining plans for the implementation of the Rocky Fork Trail System. This plan is particularly pertinent to this Parks Plan, as the primary purpose is to connect parks, open spaces, and neighborhoods throughout Red Lodge. As the Trails Plan was designed to incorporate existing parks, it will be analyzed primarily for "Park Development Guidelines" section of this report. The Rocky Fork Trail System will allow for non-vehicle access to open spaces surrounding the City and will connect parks within city limits as seen in **Appendix A**.

The Rock Creek Pathway runs along the Rock Creek corridor and is considered vital in the Growth Policy. Though land along this corridor may be difficult to attain, future land acquisitions and dedications opportunities in this area should be pursued in order to adhere to the goals of the Growth Policy. A map of the Rocky Fork proposed trail system is included in **Appendix A**.

### 1.1.6 Urban Forest Management Plan (2009)

The Urban Forest Management Plan, adopted by the City of Red Lodge, establishes guidance on implementation and management of the City' urban forest. Forestry is an important part of all parks and open spaces in regards to both aesthetics and functionality. Plans for upgrades to existing parks and implementation of new parks/open space will almost assuredly involve urban forest related planning.

An inventory of trees within Red Lodge with more than 50% deadfall is presented in the Urban Forest Management Plan and shows such trees in Coal Miners Park, Rotary Park, Finn Park, and Lions Park. As the Parks Board advises on both parks and urban forestry issues, upgrades and park/open space dedications will be performed according to outlines from both plans respectively.

The Parks Board does recommend the Urban Forest Management Plan be updated to address the coming threat and have a response plan for the Emerald Ash Borer. This insect is known for devastating ash trees throughout the country, and is quickly advancing west. It was recently found in Boulder, Colorado, and it is believed its arrival in Montana will be within the few years. Many of the trees in the Red Lodge Parks are ash trees.

## 1.2 Scope

The scope of work for this study includes, but is not limited to the following sections:

### 1) Inventory of existing parks.

A tour of existing parks with members of the Park Board and City Staff was conducted in order to assess existing facilities, amenities, irrigation systems,

current maintenance, and functionality of the developed parks within Red Lodge. Undeveloped parks and other city land were also inventoried in order to plan for future development and acquisitions.

**2) Identifying needs through user groups and public input.**

In order to identify and prioritize needs of the current park system, user groups were interviewed, public hearings held, and an online survey was conducted. The user groups included youth sports organizations, contributing non-profit organizations, schools, and clubs. Results and suggestions from these interviews were analyzed, presented to the Parks Board and used for prioritizing maintenance and expansion needs.

**3) Compilation of findings and recommendations**

Once completing the inventory and study phase, the findings were compiled and analyzed according to seven categories: Public Health and Safety, Cost, User/Public Input, Operation and Maintenance, Land Acquisition, City Plan Coordination, and Recreational Benefit. Recommendations and guidelines were then presented according to analysis of the conducted studies.

## 2 Regional Context

### 2.1 Population Demographic

Located at the base of the Beartooth Mountains, Red Lodge is frequently visited by tourists and day-trippers from surrounding areas. This causes city services, including parks, to serve a larger number of users than would be suggested by population data. With these non-residents serving as an important factor to Red Lodge's economy, it is important to account for these individuals when assessing the demand on the Parks system. The 2010 census lists the population of Red Lodge at 2,125. According to the "American Community Survey, 2007-2012, from the US Census Bureau", the population has increased to 2,155. As shown in the historic population table below, Red Lodge has seen steady growth over the last 40 years. Carbon County's population has fluctuated much more, but overall has experienced an increase. Table 2.1 outlines the historical population data.

Table 2.1 Historical Population

Year	Red Lodge	% Growth	Carbon County	% Growth
1970	1844		7080	
1980	1896	2.82	8099	14.39
1990	1958	3.27	8077	-0.27
2000	2177	11.18	9561	18.37
2010	2125	-2.39	10079	5.42
2012	2155	1.41	9886	-1.91

The Census and Economic Information Center (CEIC) at the Montana Department of Commerce released Montana State & County Projections through 2060. This data is presented in **Table 2.2** and shows an expected steady decline in population for Carbon County. However, Red Lodge is expected to go against this trend foreseen to much of Carbon County. Red Lodge has increased in popularity, seen large amounts of development, and shows signs of continued growth. Therefore, a 0.5% growth per year is projected for the next 25 years.

The Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research at the University of Montana conducted a study to assess the economic impacts and visitor use of the Beartooth Highway. This study is cited, as Red Lodge is also impacted by users of the Beartooth Highway. The study stated:

*"On Average, nonresident visitors spend 2 nights in the Beartooth Region including Red Lodge, MT, Cooke City/Silver Gate, MT, Cody, WY, and along the highway itself."*

The study also showed 57,727 visitors to enter the Beartooth Highway through Red Lodge, MT each year with 91% being nonresident visitors. The large amount of visitors causes a higher than expected demand on Red Lodge facilities such as the parks and open space.

Table 2.2 Projected Populations

Year	Red Lodge		Carbon County	
	% Growth	Projection	% Growth	Projection
2012		2155		9886
2013	0.50	2166	-0.82	9805
2014	0.50	2177	-0.80	9727
2015	0.50	2187	-0.66	9663
2016	0.50	2198	-0.57	9608
2017	0.50	2209	-0.50	9560
2018	0.50	2220	-0.47	9515
2019	0.50	2232	-0.38	9479
2020	0.50	2243	-0.38	9443
2021	0.50	2254	-0.26	9418
2022	0.50	2265	-0.17	9402
2023	0.50	2277	-0.18	9385
2024	0.50	2288	-0.23	9363
2025	0.50	2299	-0.16	9348
2026	0.50	2311	-0.14	9335
2027	0.50	2322	-0.04	9331
2028	0.50	2334	0.08	9338
2029	0.50	2346	0.05	9343
2030	0.50	2357	0.05	9348
2031	0.50	2369	0.00	9348
2032	0.50	2381	-0.04	9344
2033	0.50	2393	-0.09	9336
2034	0.50	2405	-0.13	9324
2035	0.50	2417	-0.18	9307
2036	0.50	2429	-0.25	9284
2037	0.50	2441	-0.30	9256

## 2.2 Age Demographics

The 2010 American Census shows Red Lodge to have a fairly evenly distributed age demographic with the largest percentage of the population falling in the range of 40-59 years. This leads to a median age of 47.3 years, which is over 10 years higher than the median age of the United States of 36.8.

- 0-19 years: 18.5%
- 20-39 years: 21.6%
- 40-59 years: 32.6%
- 60-79 years: 19.8%
- 80+ years: 7.7%

The median household income (MHI) for Red Lodge is \$54,583, which is generally higher than other similar sized Towns throughout Montana. It should be noted that Census data does not account for second homes and only considers year-round residents.

### 3 Parks Board Organization

The Red Lodge Park Board consists of eight members whom advise the City Council and Public Works Department on the Red Lodge parks system. Red Lodge Ordinance No. 810 established the Parks Board and its responsibilities.

#### **ORDINANCE NO. 810 AMENDED (2)**

#### **AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 7 SECTION 8-7-2 AND 8-7-3 REGARDING THE MAINTENANCE OF CITY PARKS, BOULEVARDS, PARKWAYS, TRAILS AND OTHER MUNICIPALLY OWNED PROPERTY.**

*8-7-2: DEFINITIONS: As used in this chapter, the following words and terms shall have the meanings ascribed to them in this section:*

*PARKS: All public recreation lands now existing in or to be developed within Red Lodge and designated for public use.*

*PARK TREES AND PLANTS: Trees, shrubs, bushes, and other beautification or landscaped plantings, now or hereafter planted or growing within Red Lodge.*

*STREET TREES: Trees, shrubs, bushes and all other woody vegetation on land lying between property lines on either side of all streets, avenues or ways within the city.*

*TOPPING: The severe cutting back of limbs to stubs larger than three inches (3") in diameter within the tree's crown to such a degree so as to remove the normal canopy and disfigure the tree.*

*EQUIPMENT AND STRUCTURES: Defined as but not limited to picnic tables, benches, grills, playground equipment, bathrooms, storage sheds, signs and fences.*

- A. Established: Membership of the Board shall total eight (8) members and shall be comprised of six (6) ordinary citizens and two (2) City representatives. Two members can reside outside of the City limits but within Carbon County. One City member shall be an employee of the Public Works Department (PWD) and the other shall be a City Council member. The two City representatives shall have voice but no vote. All*

*eight (8) members shall be appointed by the Mayor with the approval of the City Council.*

- B. Term of Office: The term of the six (6) voting members shall be for three (3) years serving staggered terms with at least two members' terms expiring each January 1. As each member of the Board completes her/his term, the Mayor shall reappoint that member or appoint a replacement with the approval of the City Council. The City representatives shall serve a two (2) year term with the possibility of reappointment.*
- C. Officers and Responsibilities: Officers shall consist of a Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary and a Treasurer. Term of office shall be one year, with the possibility of re-election. Officers shall be elected by the Board.*
- 1. The Chairman shall preside at all meetings or appoint the Vice Chairman to do so. She/he shall call special meetings when they are deemed necessary. She/he shall appoint committees, shall certify expenditures and shall sign all official papers and plans, which she/he will submit to City Council. The Chairman shall serve as liaison to the City Council*
  - 2. The Vice Chairman shall assume the duties and powers of the Chairman when called upon by the Chairman to do so. If both Chairman and Vice Chairman are absent from a meeting, the Board may elect a temporary Chairman.*
  - 3. The Secretary shall keep the minutes of all regular and special meetings of the Board. She/he also shall keep the minutes of any special committee meetings when asked to do so. She/he shall give notice of all regular and special meetings of the Board. The Secretary shall maintain a file of all studies, plans, reports and recommendations. If the Secretary is absent, the Vice Chairman shall assume the duties and powers of the Secretary. If the Vice Chairman is unable to assume the duties of the Secretary, then the Board may elect a temporary Secretary.*
  - 4. The Treasurer shall keep track of the amounts budgeted to the Parks Board by the City, all expenditures and any grant monies or donations. She/he shall help prepare the annual budget and submit it to the City Council in a timely manner, keeping in mind that the budget period begins July 1.*
- F: Duties and Responsibilities: It shall be the responsibility of the Board to:*
- 1. Identify park and tree needs.*
  - 2. Provide oversight for development of a five (5) and ten (10) year plan for existing and future parks. These plans shall address development and maintenance of parks and will be reviewed and updated*

- annually. An annual action plan shall be formed based on the long-term plans.*
- 3. Prepare an annual budget recommendation to implement that year's action plan.*
  - 4. Ensure that the City and County require developers to dedicate parkland and/or "funds in lieu of" parkland, when required by law to do so, based on the formula in Montana Code Annotated. The Parks Board shall additionally compete for other sources of funding in order to develop, maintain and improve parks.*
  - 5. Develop the recommend rules and penalties for use and misuse of parks by the public.*
  - 6. Recommend the planting, pruning and removal of trees, shrubs and plantings located on public property.*
  - 7. Maintain a list of recommended and not recommended trees, shrubs and other plantings in accordance with the prescribed guidelines provided by the Community Forester, State Department of Lands.*
  - 8. Work cooperatively with other community organizations and encourage them to become involved in park beautification projects.*
  - 9. Recommend action to the City Council.*

The current 810 ordinance is in need of update to enable more effective decision making and execution of prioritized projects. Proposed changes to Ordinance 810 that would help achieve these goals include:

- Update and add to definitions of parks/trails (i.e. dedicated park, open space, subdivision park)
- Remove organizational language. Membership, term of office, etc would be stated in separate bylaws.
- Update specific duties and responsibilities of the Parks Board to include all activities performed. Examples include, Coordinate Arbor Day, maintain Tree City USA designation, review MOU's, maintain and update parks, trail, and trees plans.
- There is a separate set of bylaws which contain duplicate information with Ordinance 810. The bylaws should be incorporated into the update.

The current Park Board members are Chairman Dan Seifert, Ray Masters, Rue Freeman, Bob Matter, Paul Otsu and Doug Mackay. Red Lodge City Planner James Caniglia, Public Works Director Jim Bushnell, and City Council member Bill Foisy serve as the city staff representatives. The Board would also like to recognize Tom Kohley and his efforts in assisting the Board and the City with the park system.

## 4 Existing Conditions and Inventory

An inventory of the developed parks located in Red Lodge was completed on August 2, 2013. The park system consists of both dedicated and city-owned land, and is maintained by Public Works and multiple volunteer organizations. The current state and description of each developed park follows.

### 4.1 Dedicated and Developed Parks

This section provides an overview of each dedicated and developed park with amenities and proposed upgrades.

#### 4.1.1 Finn Park:

Finn Park, located near the intersection of 17<sup>th</sup> Street and Higgins Avenue, is 0.38 acres of both dedicated and developed land. Equipped with picnic tables, benches, charcoal grills, dog waste stations and bear-proof containers, the small park serves as a secluded picnic and recreation area. The park is considered underused, which is thought to be partially due



to a lack of awareness or knowledge of the park. Rock Creek flows along the east end of the park. However, clearing of vegetation and grading would be required to allow creek access for the public. The landscape consists mainly of grass and large trees, and has no irrigation facilities. Due to lack of maintenance, the large branches cause concern in terms of public safety. Hazardous limbs were removed from the cottonwood trees in 2010, but a more thorough pruning is still needed. The large cottonwood trees are reaching the end of their lifespan, and thus it is important to foster growth of younger trees in the park. The park is also overrun by a very large turkey population, which has degraded the condition of the grass and trees, as well as deterred use of the park. Street parking is the only available parking for users.

Amenity	Number	Condition	Notes
Picnic Table	2	Good	Permanent installation on concrete pads
Grill	1	Good	
Bear-proof Container	1	Good	
Dog Waste Station	1	Good	

Possible Upgrades/Maintenance:

- Annual maintenance consists of clearing deadfall branches, cleaning grills and lawn care
- Clearing of vegetation for access to Rock Creek
- Weeding and landscape maintenance to improve aesthetics
- Trimming of overhanging tree branches
- No clear lot line at property boundary

**4.1.2 Rotary Park:**

Rotary Park is 0.71 acres and runs between Rock Creek and Park Avenue from the 19<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge to MT Highway 308. Rotary Park is both dedicated and developed, and is equipped with a variety of picnic amenities. These amenities include picnic tables, benches, dog waste stations, charcoal grills, bear-proof containers, trails, and an RV dumping station. The local Rotary Club currently handles maintenance and upkeep of the park with help from the City on the grills and tables. Trails do currently traverse the south end of Rotary Park. However, the trails are blocked to vehicle access in order to deter illicit activities. The RV Station is set to be removed due to low use and maintenance issues. With sewage lines already connected to this area, it provides a prime location for a permanent restroom facility. The southern end of Rotary Park consists of a natural area maintained primarily by the Rotary Club. This land is one of few areas along Rock Creek readily available to the City and its residents and should be promoted accordingly. Growth of younger trees shall be fostered as large cottonwoods are reaching the end of their lifespan.



Amenity	Number	Condition	Notes
Picnic Table	12	Good	Permanent installation on concrete pad
Bench	5	Good	
Walking Trail	NA	Poor	Blocked off and covered with deadfall
Grill	13	Good	
Bear-proof Container	4	Good	
RV Station	1	Fair	To be removed summer 2014
Dog Waste Station	2	Good	
Parking	~9,000 ft <sup>2</sup>	Fair	Gravel lot near RV station

Possible Upgrades/Maintenance:

- Annual maintenance includes cleaning grills and picking up deadfall branches
- Replace RV station with permanent restroom facility
- Clearing of cottonwood deadfall
- Kayak course (Race gates within park as well as connecting riparian trail to Coal Miners)
- Drinking fountain/faucet
- Bike racks
- ADA picnic sites
- Pier or decking over Rock Creek as an ADA fishing access
- Improve creek access points
- Treat noxious weeds in south end of park

**4.1.3 Pride Park:**

Located near the intersection of 12<sup>th</sup> Street and Broadway Avenue, Pride Park provides a great location and atmosphere to sit, eat, or relax when in downtown Red Lodge. The park is 0.07 acres and is both dedicated and developed. The park is maintained by the Garden Club. Though only about a ¼ of a block large, picnic tables, well-maintained grass, and wooden planter boxes make Pride Park a valuable resource to both locals and tourists. The park previously contained a mural on the wall along the north boundary of the park, and there has been high prioritization placed on bringing back the mural. Both the Garden Club and the Parks Board have expressed interest in bringing back this mural. Street parking is the only available parking for Pride Park.



Amenity	Number	Condition	Notes
Picnic Table	2	Good	Wooden, non-permanent tables
Planters	2	Fair	Need periodic staining
Irrigation System	NA	Good	
Bench	4	Fair	Wooden benches along perimeter of planters
Lighting	1	Poor	Dim lighting and unstable foundation

Possible Upgrades/Maintenance

- Annual maintenance includes tending the garden and lawn care
- Sidewalk repair along 12<sup>th</sup> Street (completed)
- New mural for brick wall
- Closing 12<sup>th</sup> Street from Broadway Avenue to alley in order to implement a walking mall
- Repair/Replace light pole

**4.1.4 Field School:**

Field School Park is a dedicated and developed park located on the west block of Villard between 9<sup>th</sup> Street and 10<sup>th</sup> Street. Field School Park is 1.26 acres and is conducive for recreational sporting activities including tennis, kickball and baseball. Field School Park is one of the more frequented parks in Red Lodge due to its open grassy landscape, tennis courts, and playground. The park has sidewalk along three of its four boundaries



and is lined with Ash trees on all four boundaries. There is no sprinkler system in place; however, the landscape is irrigated from two hose bibs near the west end of the baseball diamond. Street parking is the only available parking for users.

Amenity	Number	Condition	Notes
Bench	4	Good	
Playground	1	Good	4,000 sq. ft. with swings, slides, teeter totters, bars
Baseball Diamond	1	Poor	Patchy grass and uneven surface
Tennis Court	3	Fair	
Dog Waste Station	2	Good	

Possible Upgrades/Maintenance:

- Annual maintenance of striping the tennis courts, playground and lawn care
- Additional striping of tennis courts to include pickle-ball (completed)
- Complete sidewalk across west boundary
- New permanent restroom
- Playground repairs for swing and teeter-totter

- Arborist to trim healthy Ash trees
- Removal and re-plant of trees in dire condition
- Installation of sprinkler system
- Increase height of the fence on the east side of the tennis court

#### 4.1.5 Lions Park:

Lions Park consists of about 5 acres of both dedicated and undedicated land along the east side of Villard Avenue between 8<sup>th</sup> Street and 5<sup>th</sup> Street. Lions Park is Red Lodge's most frequented park due to its location and many amenities. As the name implies, the Lions Club has contributed greatly to the development and maintenance of the park and has received help from numerous other non-profit organizations. With a great location near downtown, a covered pavilion, and a broad range of activities, Lions Park appeals to and accommodates a large range of users. Larger events are often staged at Lions Park, including the Farmers Market. The park also offers year-round use with the conversion of a grass field, used for youth soccer in the summer, into an ice-rink during the winter months. The park is equipped with a sprinkler irrigation system, but there are currently no drinking water facilities. The Moosetrails Playground was constructed by a group which is no longer active, leading to a void in maintenance responsibilities. The City has handled upkeep when possible but maintenance is often behind due to no dedicated maintenance policies. Also, a storage building known as the Lion's Den is just north of the main park, and is used for storage of city parks equipment. The Lion's Den building is in need of major repairs. There is also a City-owned restroom facility on the east edge of the Park. Currently, the Lion's Den, the south end of the park, the area around the gazebo, and the restroom facility are not part of the formally dedicated parkland parcel.



Lions Park could be expanded by closing Villard Avenue from the southern edge of 6<sup>th</sup> Street to the point where it reaches Hauser Avenue. The closing of the street could bring the Villard Avenue Right-of-Way, and what is known as "Triangle Park," into Lion's Park through a park dedication process. The benefits would include the expansion of Lion's Park, reduced driving speeds, increased safety and the connection of City-owned land that is not currently used. Dedication of other portions of Lion's Park would ensure that current public parkland uses are continued into the future.

Amenity	Number	Condition	Notes
Picnic Table	5	Good	
Bench	5	Good	
*Gazebo/Pavilion	1	Good	
*Restroom	1	Fair	
Playground	1	Fair	9500 sq ft, wooden, needs stain and repair
Basketball Court	1	Good	
Grill	3	Good	
*Warming Hut	1	Poor	Often vandalized
Bear-proof Container	1	Good	
Lighting	2	Fair	Used for Ice Rink
Ice Rink	1	Fair	New liner needed in 2014
Irrigation System	NA	Fair	
Dog Waste Station	4	Good	
Volleyball Court	1	Poor	Sand in poor condition
Horseshoe Pit	8	Poor	Overgrown and hard sand
*Parking	~1,200 ft <sup>2</sup>	Good	Near warming hut and restroom

\*= Indicates amenity in non-dedicated section of park

Possible Upgrades/Maintenance:

- Annual maintenance includes wood chips on the playground, lawn care, sand in the horseshoe pits and volleyball court, and winterizing the sprinkler system.
- Drinking Fountains
- Turning or replacement of sand in volleyball court
- Turning or replacement of sand in horseshoe pits
- Staining playground equipment
- Maintenance of screws/lumber in playground to insure safety
- Pour concrete pads for bear-proof containers
- Add woodchips to Moosetrail swings
- Decrease number of horseshoe pits
- Include Gazebo in dedicated park land
- Improve the Lion's Den storage shed
- Install ADA access to the gazebo
- Establish an agreement pertaining to maintenance responsibilities
- Addition of pavilion near horseshoe pits/ removal of horseshoe pits
- Remove dead trees and promote younger tree growth
- Prune/trim young trees

**4.1.6 Skate-park:**

The 0.21 acre skate-park is located on the northeast corner of the Villard Avenue and 10<sup>th</sup> Street intersection and is directly across Villard Avenue from Field School Park. The land is city-owned and is not formally dedicated as park land. All skateboard facilities were built by volunteers, primarily the Boys and Girls Club, but the need for maintenance and upgrades has been burdensome to the City. When open, the skate-park is one of the more highly used public facilities; however, the park has also been a source of concern to both city staff and parents alike. Public input has identified safety hazards and the absence of a parental supervision area as the primary areas of concern. The wooden ramps have deteriorated over the twenty years since they were built, and have not received proper maintenance. Street parking is the only available parking to users.



Amenity	Number	Condition	Notes
Bear-proof Container	1	Good	
Bench	1	Good	
6-ft Halfpipe	1	Fair	Surface needs periodic repair
4-ft Halfpipe	1	Fair	Surface needs periodic repair
4-ft Tabletop Ramp	1	Fair	Surface needs periodic repair
Handrail	1	Fair	

Possible Upgrades/Maintenance:

- Replace wooden ramps with concrete fixtures
- Implement subsurface bowls and ramps to increase safety
- Landscape dirt areas to increase aesthetics and deter littering
- Implement tables/benches to accommodate supervision
- Move to a larger location and re-design it.

**4.1.7 Double Ditch Park**

Double Ditch Park, located atop the west bench of Red Lodge, serves as dog-friendly open space for residents. It is roughly a 4-acre plot of land bordered by goat fencing. Development for the dog park has been minimal, but does consist of dog-waste stations, trails, and natural areas. There is no pressing need for additional amenities, as natural areas best serve a dog park. A drainage ditch runs along the east side of the

park and requires yearly maintenance for clearing of deadfall and debris. Other maintenance has been handled by park frequenters as well as the dog park users group.

Amenity	Number	Condition	Notes
Picnic Table	1	Good	
Fencing	NA	Fair	Needs upgrade at ditch crossings
Bridge	1	Good	
Trails	NA	Fair	
Parking	~2,200 ft <sup>2</sup>	Fair	Dirt lot

Possible Upgrades/Maintenance:

- Additional gate at entrance
- Provide clear definition and signage at parking area
- Improve fencing at ditch crossings to prevent dog escapes
- Vault toilet construction
- Noxious weed treatment
- Install 10' wide gate for lawn mower access

#### 4.1.8 City Pool

The City Pool is located on a 0.615 acre lot at the intersection of 14<sup>th</sup> and Hauser Avenue. The lot has both a men's and women's locker room and a 40 foot by 80 foot concrete-lined outdoor pool. A 14 foot by 14 foot kiddie pool is located southwest of the main pool. Pool usage varies depending on weather conditions but averages 800 to 1000 users per month during the summer months. The pool may pose the most pressing upgrade need to the City. The concrete walls in the pool have major cracking, leading to leakage and even caving of large chunks of concrete. The Public Works Department provides patching to the cracks and holes each spring to keep the pool available for operations, but fear they will not be able to keep it open without major repair. This major rehab would also require implementing ADA accessible requirements to the pool, as it does not currently meet these standards.

## 4.2 Non-Dedicated, Developed Parks

An overview of developed parks which have not been formally dedicated as park land is given below.

**4.2.1 Coal Miners Park**

Coal Miners Park is the largest park facility in Red Lodge, containing just over 49 acres of land. Though it is located on city-owned land, it is not formally dedicated as a park. Located at the northeast end of Red Lodge, the park covers the hillside between N. Haggin Ave and Rock Creek. While the entire park is dedicated to local coal miners, a 2.5 acre portion is a memorial to the 74 miners lost in the 1943 Smith Mine Disaster. Coal Miners Park offers a broad range of activities and uses including a disc golf course, baseball fields, a sledding hill, and bike/pedestrian trails along Rock Creek. The Yellowstone Wildlife Sanctuary and the Red Lodge High School are both located within Coal Miners Park as long-term leases. The site was previously used as a landfill and coal slag dump, leading to minimal vegetation growth in some areas as well as environmental and drainage concerns for certain types of development. Erosion problems exist on the steep sections of the gravel trail and the easternmost Frisbee golf hole. There are restroom facilities available to users; however, they are non-ADA facilities.



Amenity	Number	Condition	Notes
Picnic Table	1	Good	
Bench	3	Good	
Playground	1	Good	
Baseball Diamond	2	Fair	Patchy grass, poor drainage
Dog Waste Station	1	Good	
Batting Cage	1	Poor	To be replaced by Youth Baseball summer 2014
Storage Shed	1	Fair	
Restroom	1	Fair	
Disc Golf Course	1	Fair	
Bleacher Seating	2	Poor	Needs repair
Irrigation System	NA	Fair	Serves baseball fields and landscaping
Water Well	1	Good	
Trails	NA	Good	Along Rock Creek and Coal Miners memorial
Parking	~44,000 ft <sup>2</sup>	Fair	Gravel lot

Possible Upgrades/Maintenance:

- Dedicate as a City Park.
- Annual maintenance includes ball field care
- Extension of trails along Rock Creek
- Upgrade sprinkler irrigation system
- Upgrade restrooms to comply with ADA requirements
- Alter baseball field layouts to accommodate additional sports
- Treat noxious weeds
- Re-vegetate exposed coal slag on east end of park
- Re-design or re-surface steep portions of gravel trail above Rock Creek on east end of park.
- Stabilize and/or re-design access trail for easternmost Frisbee golf hole.
- Parking area surfacing and drainage improvement
- Snowberm at base of sledding hill to slow down sledders
- Install interpretive signs regarding Red Lodge ecology, geology, coal mining history, etc.

### 4.3 Dedicated/Un-developed Parks

In addition to the developed parks inventoried above, the City of Red Lodge has land which is dedicated to the parks system, but has not been developed. All undeveloped parks are located on the west bench of Red Lodge near the recently developed areas. These parks should be used to address park deficiencies identified in Chapter 6. Parks falling under the dedicated, non-developed category include:

- Spires- 5.1 acres- Spires Park was dedicated from a subdivision and is located at the far northwestern end of the west bench. The Park has a generally flat topography and a marshy, overgrown landscape as it is located on a drainage ditch. Currently, the only development of this parcel consists of a short trail segment with a bridge across an irrigation ditch and mowing of grass in a large field. The owner of the adjacent subdivision constructed the trail and maintains this parkland by mowing grass and treating weeds.
- Diamond C- 20.28 acres- Diamond C is a narrow stretch of land along the edge of the west bench dedicated through subdivision development. The majority of this park land is steep topography as it is located on the steep banks of the bench. There is a relatively flat portion of the park on the southwest corner of the parcel that would be an ideal location for benches and/or a picnic table. Current plans by Beartooth Billings Clinic include construction of a wellness trail from the hospital that would connect to City-owned parkland. The Parks board is interested in

- connecting additional trails to the Beartooth Billings Clinic wellness trail. There are existing infestations of knapweed within this park that need to be managed in compliance with State/City noxious weed plans.
- City Lights-1.48 acres- City Lights is a subdivision dedication also along the edge of the west bench. It has a similar steep topography to Diamond C and has unstable soil conditions. There are existing infestations of knapweed within this park that need to be managed in compliance with State/City noxious weed plans.
  - Mountain Springs Villa- 3.4 acres- Mountain Springs Villa is a subdivision dedication also along the edge of the west bench. Steep topography, unstable soils, and shrubbery make the land unsuitable for development. This Park parcel may provide a good opportunity to connect a linear park / trail from streets on the west bench to the Mountain Springs Villa subdivision. This would likely require donation or acquisition of easements from landowners at the top of the bench.

Due to their configuration and topography, most of these parks are mainly developable only as linear parks with trails and benches. Spires Park does provide a good opportunity for development as a community park due to flat topography and connection to other approved trails within the undeveloped portions of the Spires subdivision.

#### 4.4 Dedication of Park Land

As stated throughout the park inventory, some of the developed parks, though city-owned, have not been formally dedicated as park land. The Parks Board prioritized the need to formally dedicate all developed parks. Formally dedicating park land insures that these assets cannot be sold or altered for reasons other than advancement of the parks system. Any profits from selling or leasing this land would go directly back to the City parks fund. The current process to dedicate parks is for the Parks Board to recommend a resolution to have the legal parcel formally dedicated as park land, which must be accepted by City Council. Once the resolution is adopted by City Council, a zone change for the parcel must be completed. A resolution dated April 24, 2007 approved dedication of the following parks

- Lions Park
- Field School Park
- Pride Park
- Finn Park

It is important to consider many factors when considering land for dedication. The Parks Board shall determine the feasibility of parcel dedications based on habitat, landscape, size, viewshed, accessibility to neighborhoods, long term economic impacts

and connectivity to parks, schools and habitat. The following parks, listed by priority, remain non-dedicated and are recommended for dedication:

- Coal Miners (note the high school area will not be dedicated as park, and the wildlife sanctuary is not a part of the property. However, if the wildlife sanctuary were to close, the property is then turned over to the City for ownership.)
- North End and South End of Lion's Park
- Swimming hole adjacent to Rock Creek behind the mini-storage.
- South end of airport property

### 4.5 Inventory

All Red Lodge park amenities are depicted in Table 4.1. The table shows park users, including both residents and tourists, have many available picnic and relaxing areas available. Tables, benches, and grills comprise a high percentage of total amenities

Amenity	Finn	Rotary	Pride	Field School	Lions	Coal Miners	Skate Park	Totals
Picnic Table	2	12	2		5	1		22
Bench		5	4	4	5	3	1	22
Gazebo/Pavilion					1			1
Restroom					1	1		1
Playground				1	1	1		3
Basketball Court					1			1
Baseball Diamond				1		2		3
Tennis Court				3				3
Grill	1	13			3			17
Bear-proof Container	1	4			1			6
RV Station		1						1
Ice Rink					1			1
Dog Waste Station	1	2		2	4	1		10
Volleyball Court					1			1
Horseshoe Pit					8			8
Batting Cage						1		1
Irrigation System			1		1	1		3
Parking Lot		1			1	1		3
Storage Shed					1	1		2
Skateboard Ramps							3	3
Bleacher Seating						2		2

offered by the parks system.

Table 4.1 Developed Park Inventory

## 5 Public Input

As part the research phase, the Parks Board and Great West Engineering conducted interviews, held 10 public meetings, a public hearing, and opened an online survey in order to involve citizens and prioritize needs within the park system. Park Board meetings focused on the Parks Plan were attended by 8-17 citizens. Public input is highly valued in analysis, as a primary purpose of the parks system is to increase quality of life for residents. With the large contributions of time and money from non-profit organizations, sports leagues, and users to maintain and improve City Parks, it is a focus of the City of Red Lodge Parks Board to include their input in analysis and future parks planning.

## 5.1 User Organization Interviews

Multiple organizations, which were identified as park system users or contributors, were interviewed as part of the public input phase. These interviews addressed how well the parks system met needs of the organization and identified improvements which would promote continued growth and quality of the organization. The organizations prioritized needs and provided insight on the direction they would like to see implemented within the parks system. A summary of each interview is provided below.

### **Red Lodge Youth Baseball**

The Red Lodge Youth Baseball organization has rapidly grown to 115 participants. The organization uses Coal Miners Complex for the majority of events, but also uses Field School Park for tee ball games. Though the presence of Coal Miners has allowed for growth within the organization, the baseball fields are in need of revamping. The organization expressed a surface redesign as the top priority moving forward. The patchy grass and bad drainage have resulted in a poor surface, which presents a safety hazard to players. Infield turf was also requested as part of the surface rehabilitation. Options regarding the addition of infield turf would need to be presented and analyzed, as the Adult Softball League prefers the infield to remain dirt, as it is presently.

The organization has plans to replace the batting cages through volunteer labor and money raised by Youth Baseball, and also contributes by maintaining the fields throughout the baseball season. Additional needs identified by Youth Baseball include implementation of an irrigation system, extending electricity utilities in order to run pitching machines etc, and rehabilitation of current fencing. Long-term goals of the organization are to expand the baseball field complex to include a larger field. The current fields allow for the organization to include kids through the age of 12, but cannot accommodate older participants.

### **Beartooth Recreational Trails Association (BRTA)**

An interview with Beartooth Recreational Trails Association (BRTA) was conducted in order to insure continuity between the Trails Plan and Park Plan. BRTA assists the Parks Board with maintenance and implementation of the trails associated with the Trails Plan via a MOU with the City. There is a MOU in place with the City, but is due for an update in the near future. The organization also operates and maintains the Nordic Center, and assists the City on trail-related projects; However, the Nordic Center operates on the private land of Aspen Ridge Ranch. Though there has been a good relationship between the organizations over the years, operating on private land prevents BRTA from insuring that the Nordic Center will be able to operate in future years. The BRTA emphasized the importance of connecting and expanding trails for walking, jogging,

and biking. Accomplishing the goals set forth in the Trails Plan was prioritized for future development and improvement of the overall park system.

### **City Pool**

The Red Lodge City Pool provides entertainment for users of many ages throughout the warm summer months. Although it is only open three months of the year, it is an important amenity available to residents and visitors alike. A meeting with the pool operator brought to light many areas in need of maintenance or repair. Settlement has caused many concrete cracks along the deck of the pool area. These cracks have formed considerable lips which pose as tripping hazards; thus, they have been covered with rubber mats over the years. Concrete from the sidewalls has also been falling apart as the hydrostatic force of the water is removed when drained. The small revenue generated by the pool has allowed for some small spot repairs to the sidewall areas where the concrete has crumbled, but the pool and deck alike have reached the point of major repair.

The pool has been able to fund small improvements such as the new boiler installed in 2012, but is unable to keep up with the other improvements which are needed. Without new filters, major concrete rehab, and inclusion of ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) amenities, the pool will be unable to stay open in future years. Also on the repair list is the men's shower room, as it shows heavy settlement and leakage.

The pool partially covers operation and maintenance costs through revenue generated by user fees. Day use passes are sold for \$3, while family passes can be purchased for \$125 per season. Records show between 15 and 50 users per day depending on factors such as the weather or day of the week. It is recommended that an independent swimming pool consultant be contacted for a more accurate assessment of repair and maintenance feasibility/costs.

### **Boys and Girls Club of Carbon County**

Located across Villard Ave from Field School Park, the Boys and Girls Club of Carbon County frequents nearby parks such as Field School, Lions, and the Skate-park. The close vicinity to these parks and available amenities has accommodated the organization well. A need for water fountains and public restrooms were expressed as priority throughout the interview. Both of these upgrades would allow for users, such as the Boys and Girls Club, to extend their time at the parks.

### **Rotary Club**

A meeting with members of the Red Lodge Rotary Club was held in order to assess the current state of Rotary Park as well as discuss ideas for future development. The club installed the existing tables and grills about 5 years ago and believes there is vast room

for future development as it lies on valuable ground. The park has proven to be popular with young families as well as visitors from surrounding areas, including Billings residents.

The list of future upgrades discussed with the Rotary Club includes installation of new permanent restrooms, ADA accessible picnic sites, and a RV turnout. With the available Rock Creek access, a pier or decking over the Creek could attract residents, especially in the warmer months. Overall, enhancement of the natural areas through tree removal, trail restoration, and increased amenities was the primary goal of the club.

There is a MOU in place between the City and the Club that is up to date. The Rotary Club has handled small maintenance and cleaning of the park with help from the City. The City has handled maintenance of the grills and picnic tables. Rotary did not express a need for an updated MOU relating to maintenance, but a more established process for larger improvement projects for the park.

### **Lions Club**

The Red Lodge Lions Club has been a great contributor through maintenance and operation of the City's most used park, Lions Park. Lions Park is used by local residents, travelers, and organizations. Lions Park hosts many events including Farmers Market, Arts Guild, Shakespeare Festival, Fun Run, Crafts Fair, Youth Soccer, and Red Lodge Ice hockey games. Members of the Lions Club expressed a need for an updated maintenance agreement with the City to clarify responsibilities. Though located within Lions Park, the Moosetrails Playground is not included in the maintenance scope. Discussion about combining all MOU's for use of Lions Park, to better define roles and responsibilities, has been proposed by multiple organizations. This would combine Red Lodge Ice, Lions, and Moosetrails MOU's.

Lions Park has been kept in good condition through the years, but the broad range of amenities has presented some maintenance issues that need to be addressed. These issues include staining and repair of Moosetrails playground, fertilizing grass, weed killing, shortage of dumpsters, and re-sanding of the volleyball court. Members of Lions club also addressed some ideas for future upgrades to the park including removal of some of the under-used horseshoe pits and construction of a pavilion in this space. The "Lion's Den", which serves as storage space, is also in need of repair as it has major building code issues. The last issue addressed by the organization was the need to dedicate the Gazebo as park land rather than a city lot, as it is currently.

### **Red Lodge Schools**

An interview was conducted with Rex Turnan of Red Lodge High School to discuss the condition of Coal Miners Park and the High School's relationship with the City. The High School is located in Coal Miners Park, which is City-owned land, but not officially dedicated as a park. The school signed a 99-year lease for the land when the school was constructed in 2009. The school includes sporting facilities such as an indoor basketball/volleyball gym, outdoor gravel track, and a football/soccer field. These facilities are located on land leased by the school and are therefore not considered part of the City's park system. However, Rex expressed a willingness to assist whenever possible for future development of Coal Miners Park for mutual benefit of the City and High School.

Park improvements discussed included weed management along the Rock Creek Pathway, development of the upper field area, expanding trails across Rock Creek, and developing a parking area near the Yellowstone Wildlife Sanctuary. The trail expansion across Rock Creek is proposed in the Trails Plan and would especially benefit the cross country and track teams in the area.

### **Beartooth Children's Center**

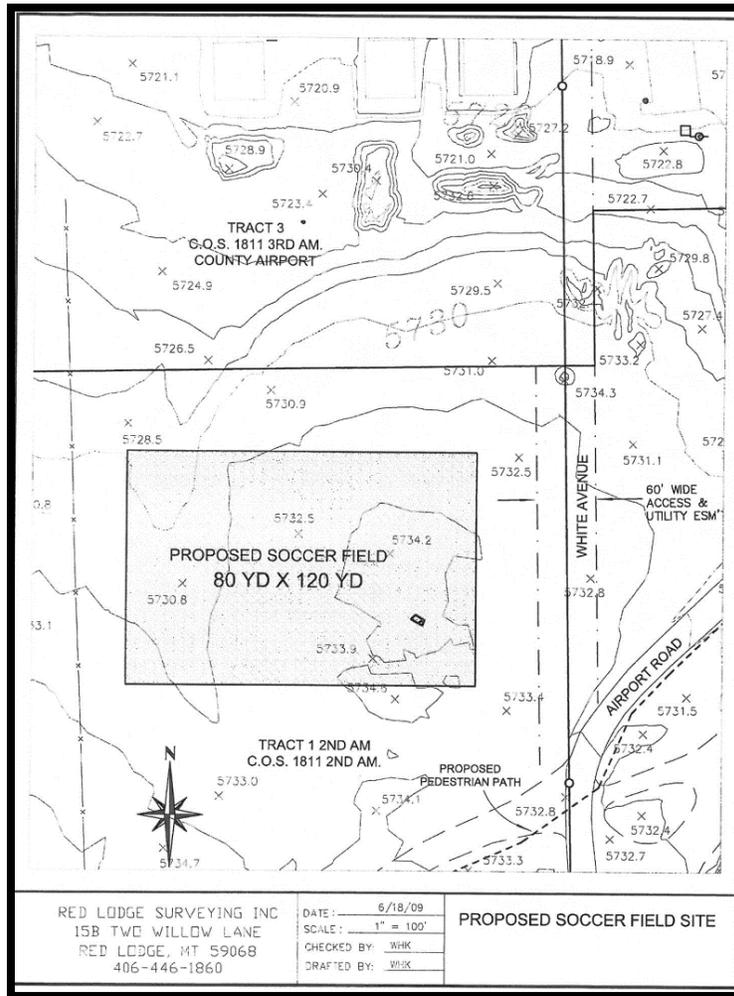
The Beartooth Children's Center is a daycare center for kids ranging in age from 2 to 12 years old. The explorer program frequents Red Lodge parks throughout the summer. Parks used by the organization include Lions, Field School, Coal Miners, and the City Pool. Similar to the Boys and Girls Club, a need for drinking fountains and restrooms was highly prioritized. Also mentioned in the interview was more traffic safety along Villard Ave, near the Children's Center, Boys and Girls Club, Field School Park, and Skate-park. With the close vicinity of these parks and organizations, the area is highly trafficked by children and pedestrians alike.

### **Red Lodge Youth Soccer**

The youth soccer program currently uses Coal Miners Park for games and practices. The organization also uses Lions Park for the younger kids. Neither complex is currently suited to accommodate soccer games, though the organization has made do over the years. The soccer fields are set up in the outfield of the Coal Miners baseball/softball complex. Player safety stemming from a substandard surface is a concern of the organization.

A proposal for a new soccer field near the airport was prepared but has not been approved. The soccer field would be located on City owned land and would allow the Youth Soccer Organization to properly accommodate their current participants, as well as expand the age range of users. The proposal was presented to the Park Board and a summary is included in the **Appendix C**.

Figure 5.1 Youth Soccer Proposed Soccer Field



**Garden Club**

The Garden Club of Red Lodge assists the City of Red Lodge by maintaining Pride Park, located near downtown Red Lodge. The pocket park is primarily used as an outdoor lunch and resting spot for residents and visitors shopping along Broadway Avenue. The two planters, bordered by benches, are planted with flowers and maintained yearly by the Garden Club. Maintenance of these planters comprises the majority of time and expenses provided by the Garden Club. Though no MOU exists between the City and Garden Club, the relationship has worked well in the past. Members of the Garden Club were met with and provided a list goals and concerns pertaining to Pride Park.

Goals that require assistance from the City are repair of sidewalk along 12<sup>th</sup> Street and fixing the drain on the corner of 12<sup>th</sup> Street and Broadway Avenue. The sidewalk is cracking and crumbling as both the base and concrete need replacement. This poses a potential hazard to users. This sidewalk replacement was completed in 2014. The Club was also in favor of bringing back the map mural along the wall of Flashes

Goals of the Club for improving Pride Park which do not require City help are:

- Fixing or replacing the light pole
- Staining raised beds and benches
- Power washing and waterproofing cement pads
- Cleaning out and replanting bed next to Flashes with more pleasing plants
- Replanting bed in back of park next to alley
- Replacing plants along fence next to alley
- Decorating the light pole for Christmas

The Garden Club also expressed a concern for the timeliness of garbage being collected from the park. With the high amount of traffic during summer months, the garbage often overflows and spills out. Of the above projects and improvements, fixing the sidewalk and replacing the light pole were emphasized as priorities by members of the club.

### **Skate Park Users Group**

A meeting with the Skate Park Users Group addressed many concerns with the current Skate Park. The Skate Park is primarily used by elementary and middle school aged students. The park does not currently get much use from high school students. However, this would likely change if upgrades and expansion of the park were to happen. It was expressed that the Skate Park does a great job incorporating kids who are not involved in youth sports and would like to see continued growth to reach out to this demographic. One of the primary concerns of the group was to implement areas for adult supervision. The current set up and location of the park does not accommodate spectators or supervisors.

Other improvements discussed included eliminating “hidden spaces” within the park which have been used for unwanted activities as well as improving the entrance and flow of the park in order to promote safety. Proper flow of a skate park is imperative to help eliminate collisions during high-use periods. Lastly, they expressed a need for a formalized process between the City and volunteers for completing upgrades to the park. Volunteers have helped tremendously in the implementation of the Skate Park but have concerns about being fully responsible for the park. Overall, it was determined that moving the Skate Park to a new location would best incorporate future goals, but the high costs associated with moving may not allow for this to happen immediately.

The most pressing issues to the group are incorporating adult supervision areas and upgrades to ramps and flow to promote safety for kids using the park.

### **Tennis Users Group**

Field School Park consists of three tennis courts which are maintained by both the Tennis Users Group and the City. The court surfacing is in relatively good condition and is expected to have around 4 to 5 more years of use before requiring resurfacing. Ideas were provided by the Tennis Users Group to increase functionality and user experience. In order to increase accessibility, relocating the east gate to the north side of the courts and implementing a walkway from the gate to sidewalk was proposed. Landscaping the east side of the courts was also requested to prevent rocks from this area ending up on the courts. Additional maintenance issues included:

- Installation of garbage can near courts
- Filling cracks in surface with filling compound
- Painting over filled cracks
- Higher fences or nets along east side to eliminate having to retrieve balls from playground

### **Red Lodge Ice**

Red Lodge Ice operates the ice rink in Lions Park during the winter months. The ice rink is used for hockey, figure skating, and recreational skating. The organization funded initial setup of the ice-rink through money from the Lions Club as well as the Red Lodge Area Community Foundation. A MOU is in place between the City and Red Lodge Ice for operation of the ice rink but is not addressed in the Lion's Club MOU. The organization asked that Red Lodge Ice be addressed in the Lion's Club MOU when this agreement is re-established. The ice rink is highly used throughout winter as it is popular with the residents.

Implementing lights along the west side of the rink is a high priority for the organization. Installing lighting along the west end would minimize light pollution seen by residents west of Lions Park and would allow for the rink to extend its hours of operation during the short winter days. Rehabilitation of both the Lion's Den and the warming hut were also upgrades discussed which would benefit the organization. Upgrading the Lions Den could allow for more storage of the organization's equipment, rather than the warming hut, which would expand the uses available to the warming hut.

An option discussed that would greatly improve functionality of the ice rink was to pour a refrigerated concrete slab in the depression. The refrigerated slab would allow the ice rink to operate an extra 2 to 3 months a year and would improve the ice quality. This concrete slab could be used for basketball courts during the summer months as

basketball is not played outdoors when the ice-rink is open. The current location of the basketball courts could be used as the new location for the skate park. Bogart Park in Bozeman is a good example of the long-term visions for the ice rink.

### **Dog Park Users**

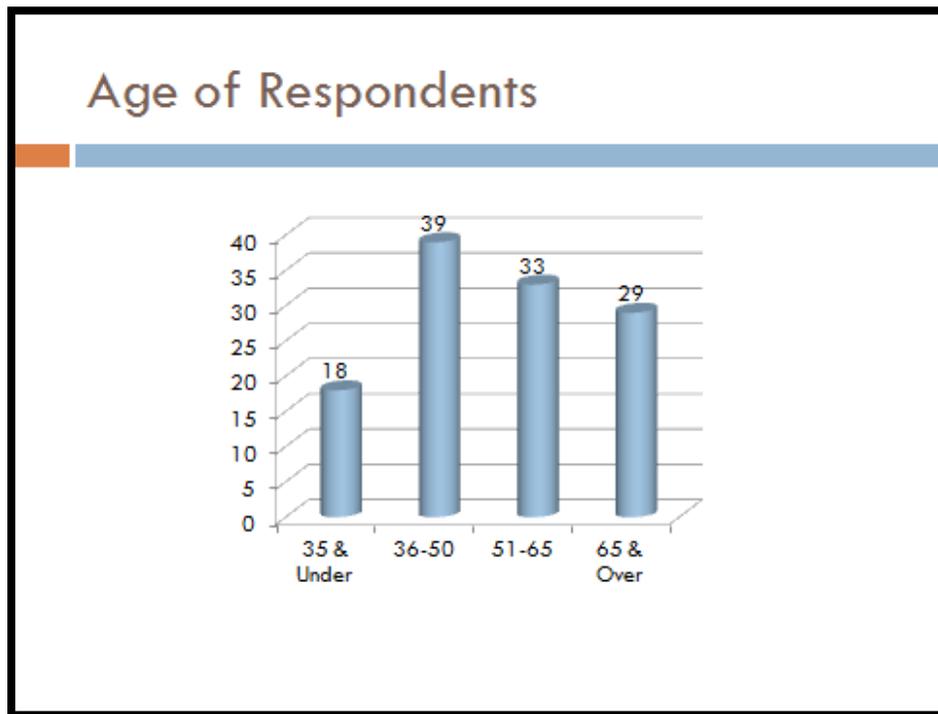
Double Ditch Park provides a great fenced natural area for dog owners to allow their dogs to run and play outside. Users appreciate the feel provided by the natural landscape and minimal development. The dog park was reported to function very well for its designated purpose, but a few maintenance and upgrade ideas were expressed.

- Installation of an additional gate at the entrance to provide “double gate” protection against escaping dogs was addressed. The bridge near the entrance would be conducive to this new gate installation.
- Upgrading the fencing at ditch crossings would reduce the amount of maintenance required with the current setup. The ditch crossings are not well protected by the goat fencing and present a possible escape point for dogs.
- More definition and clarity at the parking area is needed to eliminate confusion.
- Clarify signage between Double Ditch Park and Rocky Fork Trail, as first-time users have been confused by the layout.

## 5.2 Online Survey Results

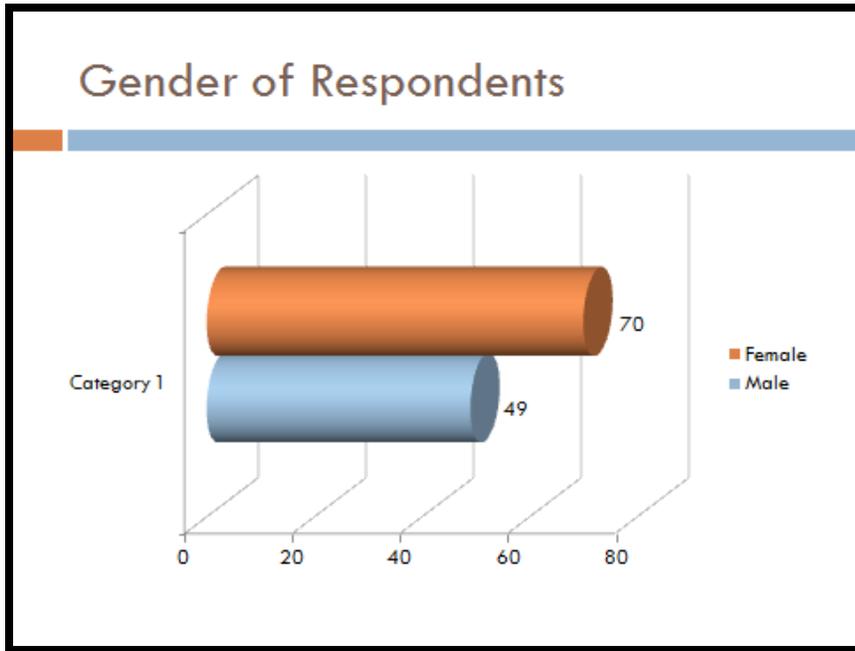
As part of the user input phase, an online survey was open to the public in order to receive feedback on the current parks system as well as future goals and needs. The survey provided an opportunity for residents not involved in particular clubs or organizations to be involved in the park planning process. The results, shown below, addressed many needs not seen through the user group interview phase. The results show a large amount of interest in trails, linear parks, and open space. Interests seen from the online survey differed from the user organization interviews as these organizations are often geared towards a specific activity and/or park rather than the overall function of the park system. Following are graphical representations of results to each question in the survey.

Figure 5.2 Survey Question 1



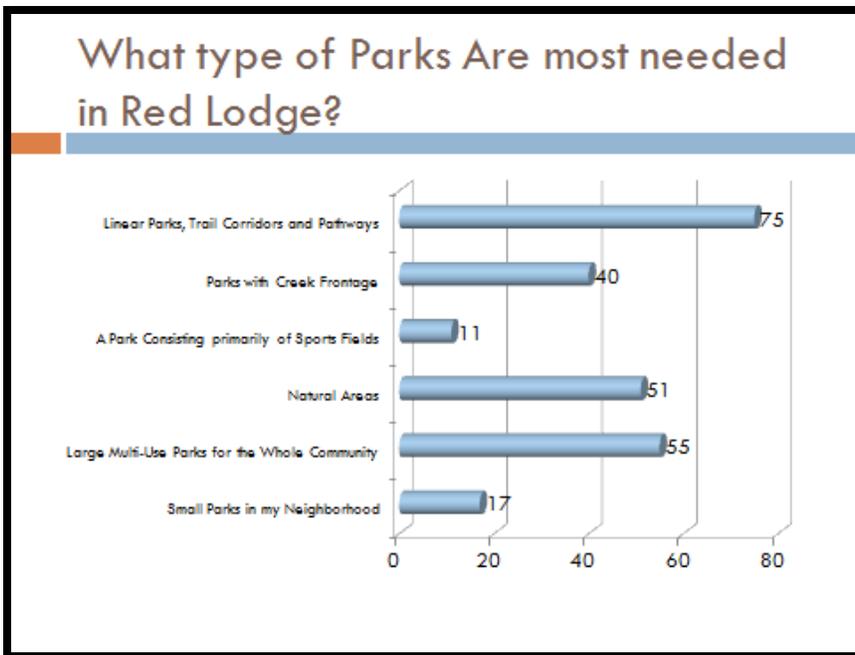
A total of 119 residents participated in the survey with the majority being in the 36-50 age range. Only 15% of participants were under the age of 35 meaning results primarily reflect the middle-aged demographic of Red Lodge.

Figure 5.3 Survey Question 2



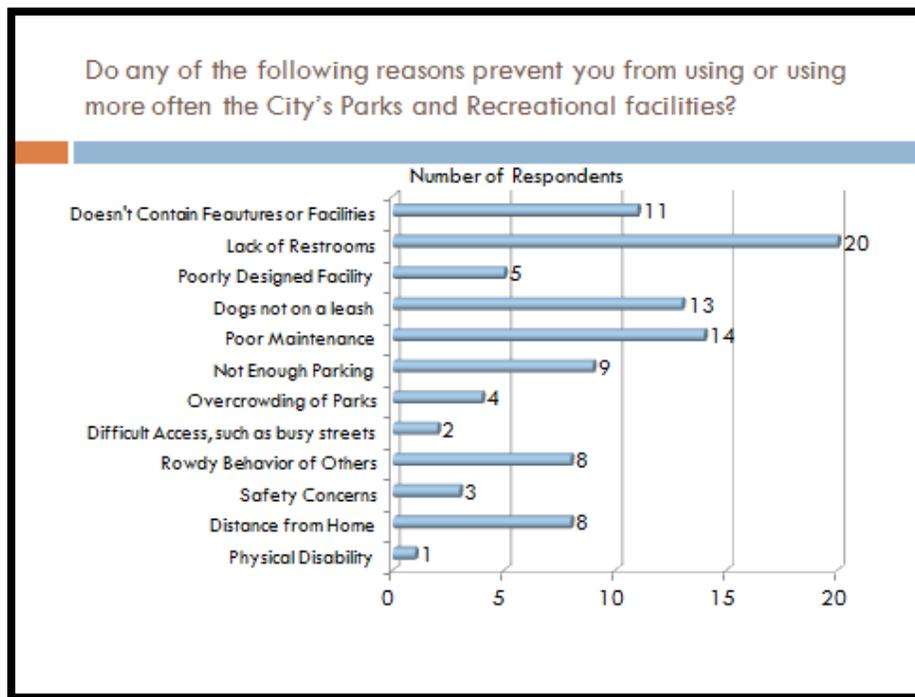
Question 2 shows that a majority of respondents were female and accounted for 59% of the responses. Census data shows 52% of the population to be female, which correlates fairly well with the survey results.

Figure 5.4 Survey Question 3



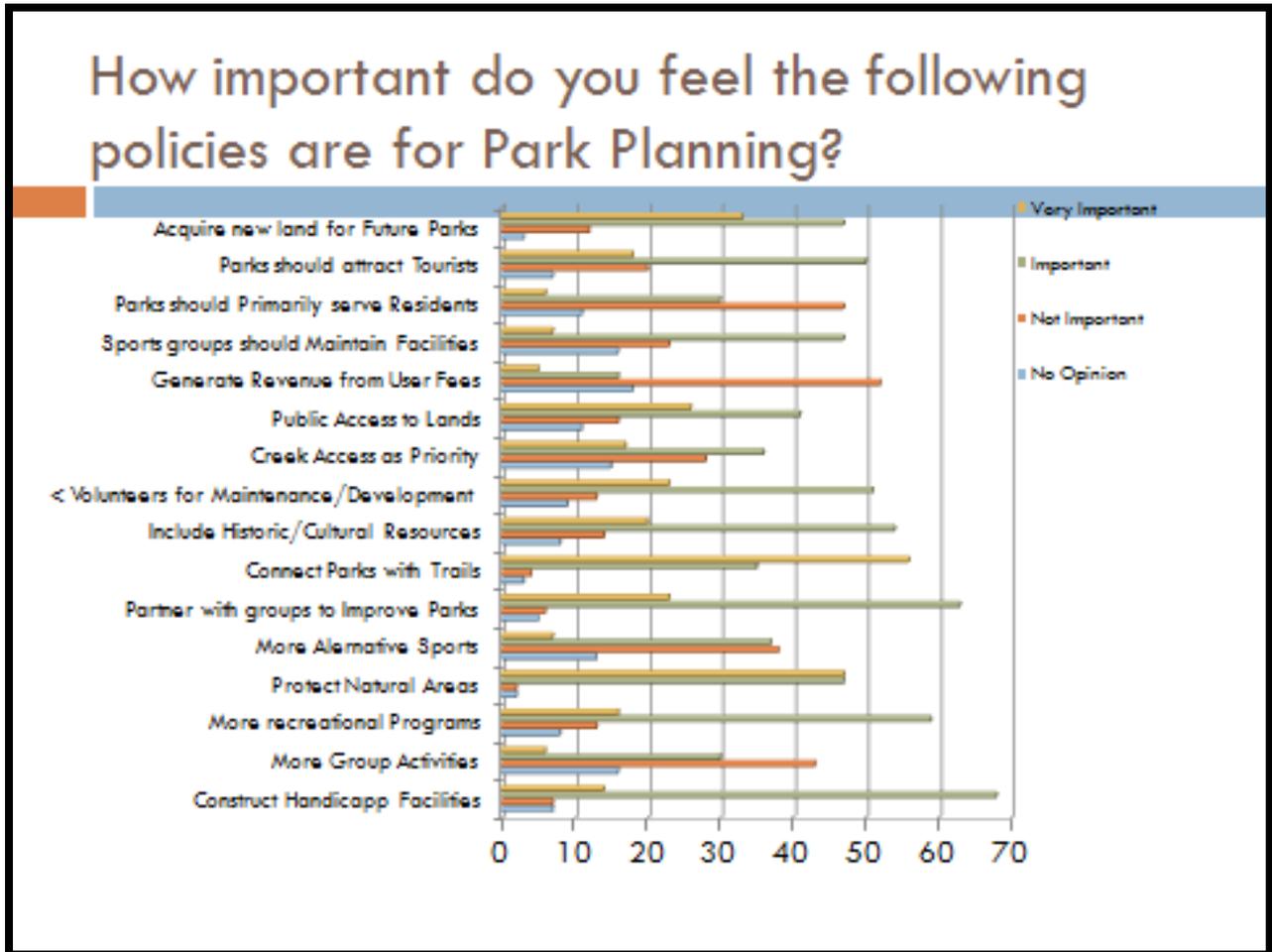
The results of Question 3 show an extremely high interest in linear parks, trails, and pathways. Combining natural areas with linear parks, trails and pathways account for 51% of the total responses. The second most prioritized need was a large multi-use complex serving the entire community. A project of this magnitude is a huge undertaking for a community the size of Red Lodge but can address many needs at once. In place of rehabbing the pool and baseball fields, or implementing a soccer field etc. as separate projects, a multiuse complex could work towards accomplishing all of these in one phased project. The relatively low number of responses for neighborhood parks and sports fields correlates well with the NRPA level of service comparisons (shown in Chapter 6), as Red Lodge is above standard for developed park land.

Figure 5.5 Survey Question 4



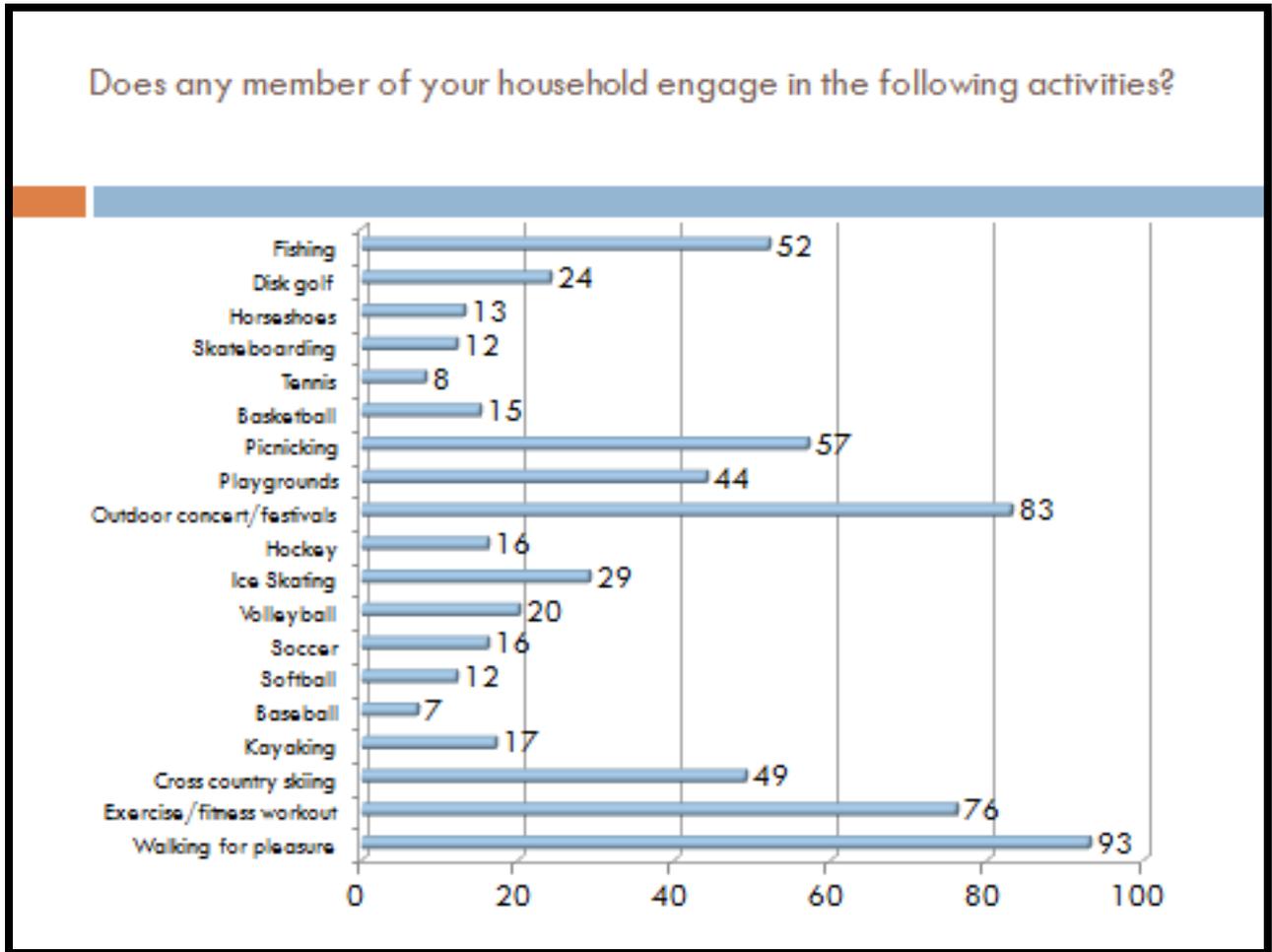
Question 4 shows a large need for public restrooms. This was also prioritized as a need throughout the user organization interviews. Poor maintenance was the second most cited reason for not using the parks system. Questions 7 and 8 however do not follow suit with this response as a large majority are satisfied with park maintenance.

Figure 5.6 Survey Question 5



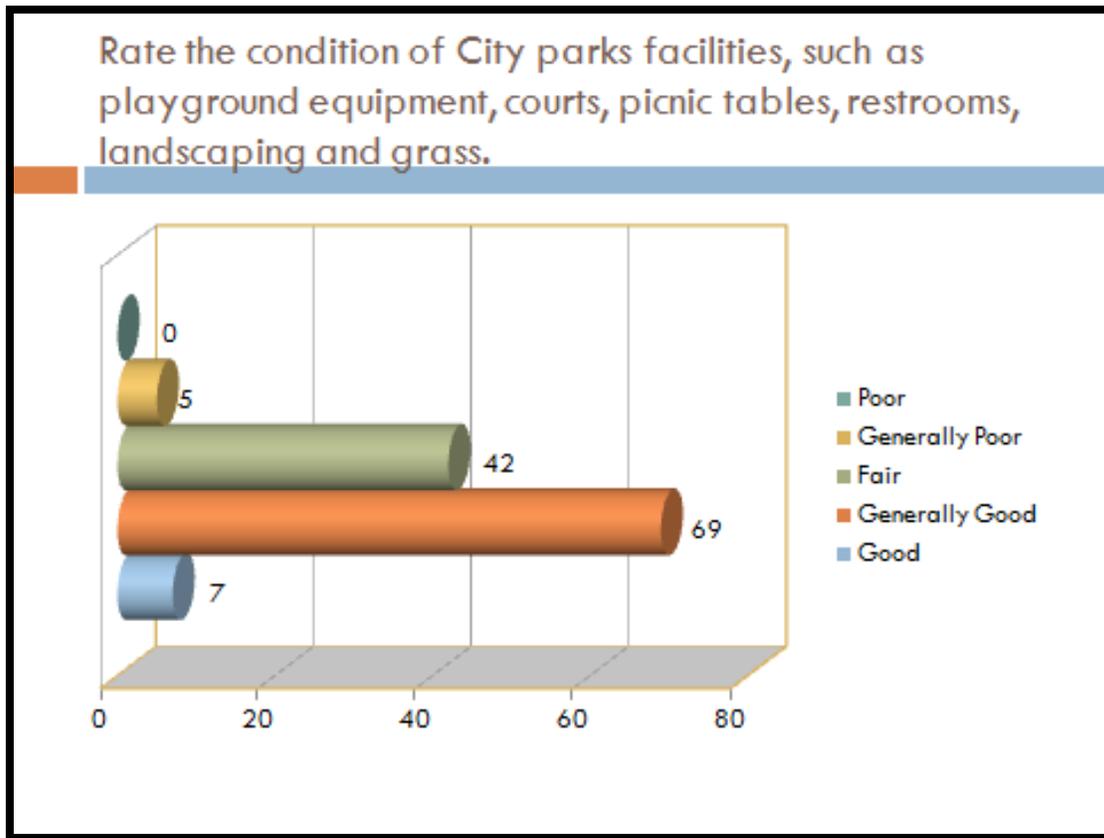
Question 5 shows a few overall themes, though almost every category is seen as important to most respondents. Connecting parks with trails and protecting natural areas received the majority of “very important” votes which reflects the responses to Question 3. Generating revenue from user fees, implementing more group activities, and primarily serving residents were seen as “not important” by a majority of participants.

Figure 5.7 Survey Question 6



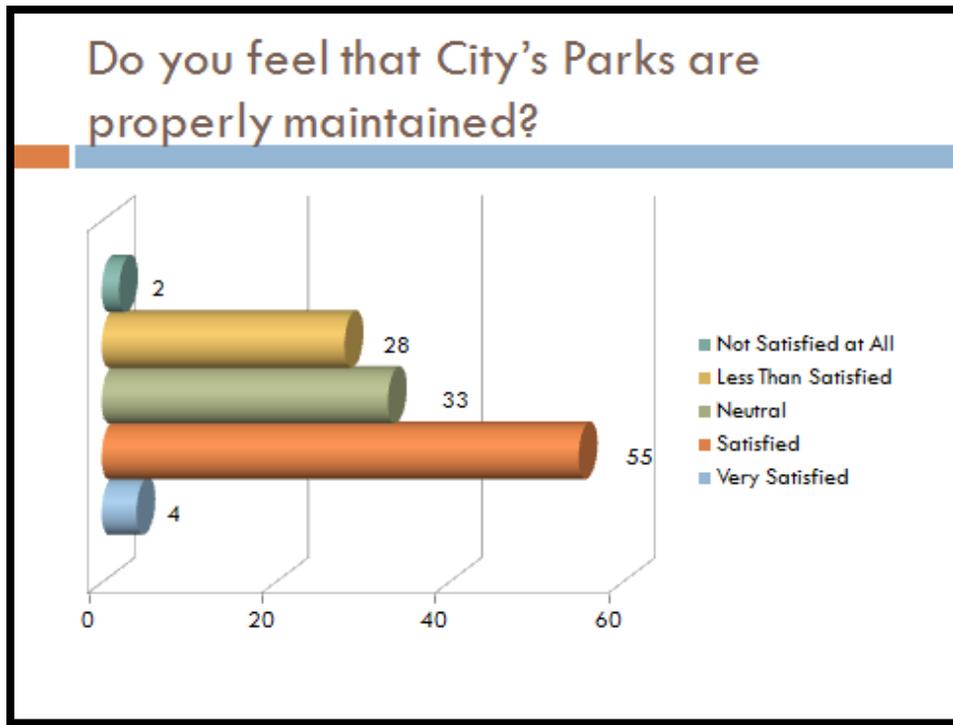
Question 6 shows a high percentage of respondents participate in walking, exercise, and fitness activities. This highlights the need for trails, natural space, and linear parks seen in Question 3. Concerts/festivals, picnicking, and fishing are also popular activities among survey participants.

Figure 5.8 Survey Question 7



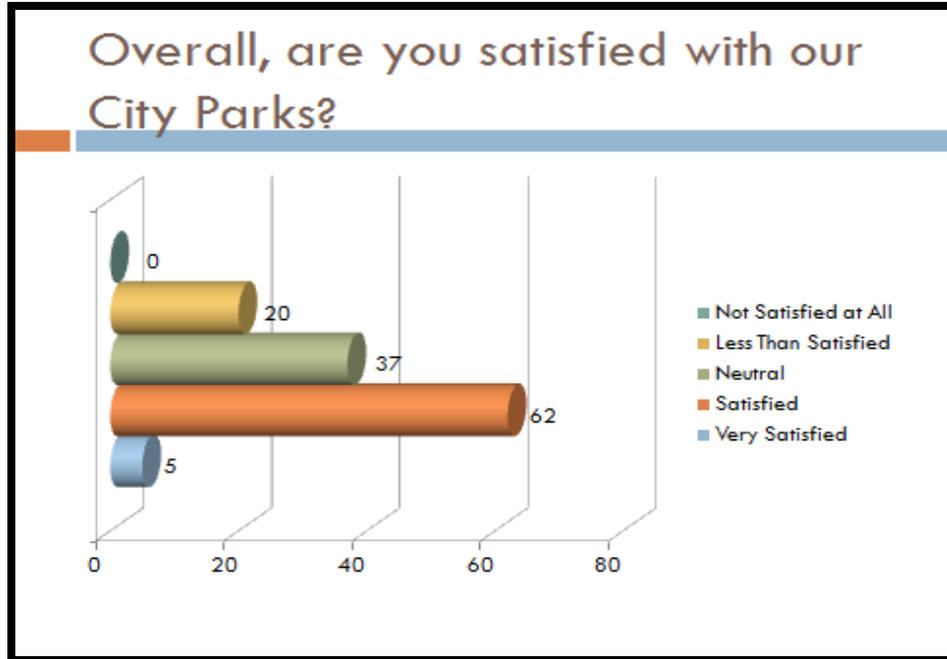
Question 7 shows 56% of participants to consider facilities to be in “generally good” shape with 96% considering facilities to be “Fair” or better. These numbers hint to an overall satisfaction with the condition of park facilities among the residents but also room for improvement,

Figure 5.9 Survey Question 8



Question 8 closely correlates with the responses to Question 7. Forty-eight percent of respondents were “satisfied” or “very satisfied” while 25% were either “less than satisfied” or “not satisfied at all.” Again, this shows a majority of respondents to be satisfied but room for improvement by the City exists.

Figure 5.10: Survey Question 9



Question 9 shows almost identical results to the previous two questions as maintenance and condition of facilities directly correlate to overall satisfaction with the parks system.

The end of the survey also contained an open comment section. A summary of the responses follows:

- 14 comments in regards to expansion of the Trails System. Specific comments were to extend the trail across Rock Creek (2 comments), acquire land above Adams Avenue, pave portions of trails, connect downtown with Country Club Estates, add a trail to Rotary Park, and use a template similar to Bozeman Trails Ordinance as a means of expansion.
- 11 comments in regards to park maintenance. Comments referred to better maintenance at restrooms near the Arts Guild (2 comments), better care of playgrounds (2 comments), the City increasing its responsibility for maintenance (2 comments), maintain what we have and not focus on new parks (2 comments), more weed spraying, maintain Finn Park better, and better MOU's with sports organizations.
- Five comments in regards to Coal Miner's Park. Comments referred to mowing the Frisbee golf course, dedicating the park, expand the park, have a natural area near the Nature Center, and building a multi-use sports complex.
- Five comments were directed towards better Rock Creek access, with two comments specifically referring to Finn Park, and one requesting the City not abandon easements or sell property along the creek.

- Four comments requesting more park land. The City should evaluate City owned land to use as open space or new parks (two comments), acquire land for more parks, more parks removed from the Broadway corridor.
- Two comments requesting a soccer/multi-use facility (such as other sports and concerts) at the airport to be maintained by volunteers.
- Two comments regarding the need for a rec-center with a pool.
- Single comments for each of the following:
  - Provide restrooms at Rotary Park
  - Provide a brick oven for pizza/baking parties
  - Provide more open space
  - Provide more pedestrian crosswalk signs
  - Stay away from fads, we have a gray population and parks should consider the older population
  - Provide more shade and restrooms at Moose Trails Playground
  - Provide a splash park
  - Ban cash in-lieu of parks

### 5.3 Public Hearing Responses

As part of the public input phase, public comments were also accepted through public Parks Board Meetings. The public hearings were attended by 8-17 citizens. Public hearings were held on October 16, 2013, November 20, 2013, January 15, February 19, and March 19, 2014 in which attendees were asked to provide thoughts and ideas on park improvements, the parks plan, and future visioning. Minutes from these public hearings as well as comments and written responses can be found in **Appendix C**.

## 6 Level of Service (LOS) Analysis

The National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) produced standards regarding the level of service provided to residents through the parks, greenways, and open space. These standards can be used as guidelines for assessing how well residents of a town are serviced in terms of parks, recreation, and open space. The NRPA does however suggest using these as general guidelines while keeping in mind that all communities are different and have varying needs. For instance, Red Lodge has a larger than average senior population which would require different amenities and park types than a City with a large percentage of population stemming from a college or university. Below is an overview of how Red Lodge Parks compare to NRPA standards as well as similar communities, followed by a more detailed narrative of how varying demographics of the community are served.

### 6.1 Park Classification

For purposes of level of service (LOS) analysis for the Comprehensive Parks Plan, the following park classifications are used.

**Pocket Park:** Pocket parks are the smallest classification and include plazas, scenic overlooks, tot lots, and landscaped public areas. These parks are generally less than 1 acre in size and provide passive open space for nearby residents. Pocket parks tend to have a localized service radius and provide limited recreational needs. Amenities provided by pocket parks may include picnic table, benches, landscaping, and small playgrounds. Parks classified as pocket:

- Pride Park
- Finn Park

**Neighborhood Park:** Neighborhood parks provide recreational space for residents of nearby neighborhoods. They can range in size from 1- 5 acres and usually provide safe trail or sidewalk access to residents within the service radius. Neighborhood parks are often combined with a school and are located on fully developable land. Parks classified as Neighborhood:

- Field School

**Community Park:** A community park is larger than a neighborhood park and is intended for use by the entire community. By offering a variety of activities and amenities, community parks can appeal to a broader range of residents and visitors alike. These parks are generally larger than 5 acres and provide amenities such as restrooms and drinking fountains in order to accommodate longer stays at the park. Parks classified as community:

- Lions Park
- Coal Miners
- Rotary Park

**Special Use:** Special use parks are unique in that they are designed for a specific use, rather than a range of activities. There is no service radius assigned to special use parks, as proximity plays a small role in attracting users when compared to the use it is designated for. Special use parks include pools, sporting fields, skate-parks, and dog parks. Though diversifying parks to include multiple activities is often preferred, special-use parks address activities especially popular for the town. Parks classified as special use:

- City Pool
- Skate-Park
- Double Ditch Park

**Open Space/Natural Area:** These types of parks are usually environmentally sensitive lands, steep terrain, forested areas, water bodies, and/or other land that is minimally developed. The size of these parks varies greatly but they are often used for

conservation areas, wildlife viewing areas, and other passive recreation opportunities. There are no specific standards for how much open space a community should provide as it is highly dependent on location, availability of land, and historical resources present. Red Lodge benefits from the large amounts of open space offered in the Beartooth Wilderness though this land is National Forest and not owned by the City. The Red Lodge parks system has multiple undeveloped parks that are recommended as open space for the purpose of preserving natural areas, wetlands and view sheds.

- Mountain Springs Villa
- Diamond C
- City Lights
- Spires
- Airport land south of Highway 78
- Easement between 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> along Rock Creek, including remaining Daly Avenue easements best identified through a recommended citywide streets survey.

## 6.2 Service Radius

A tool used to assess how each area of the community is served by parks according to location is the service radius method. It is important that all areas of the community have access to park land and that park development is distributed throughout the community. This method establishes a radius of area in which the park services based on the park classification. Pocket parks tend to primarily attract residents living close to the location as users are unlikely to travel far distances to frequent the park. As implied, neighborhood parks tend to be used by the entire neighborhood or section of town, while users may be willing to travel a larger distance in order to use a community park. The radii associated with each park is:

Pocket Park:  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile radius

Neighborhood Park:  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile radius

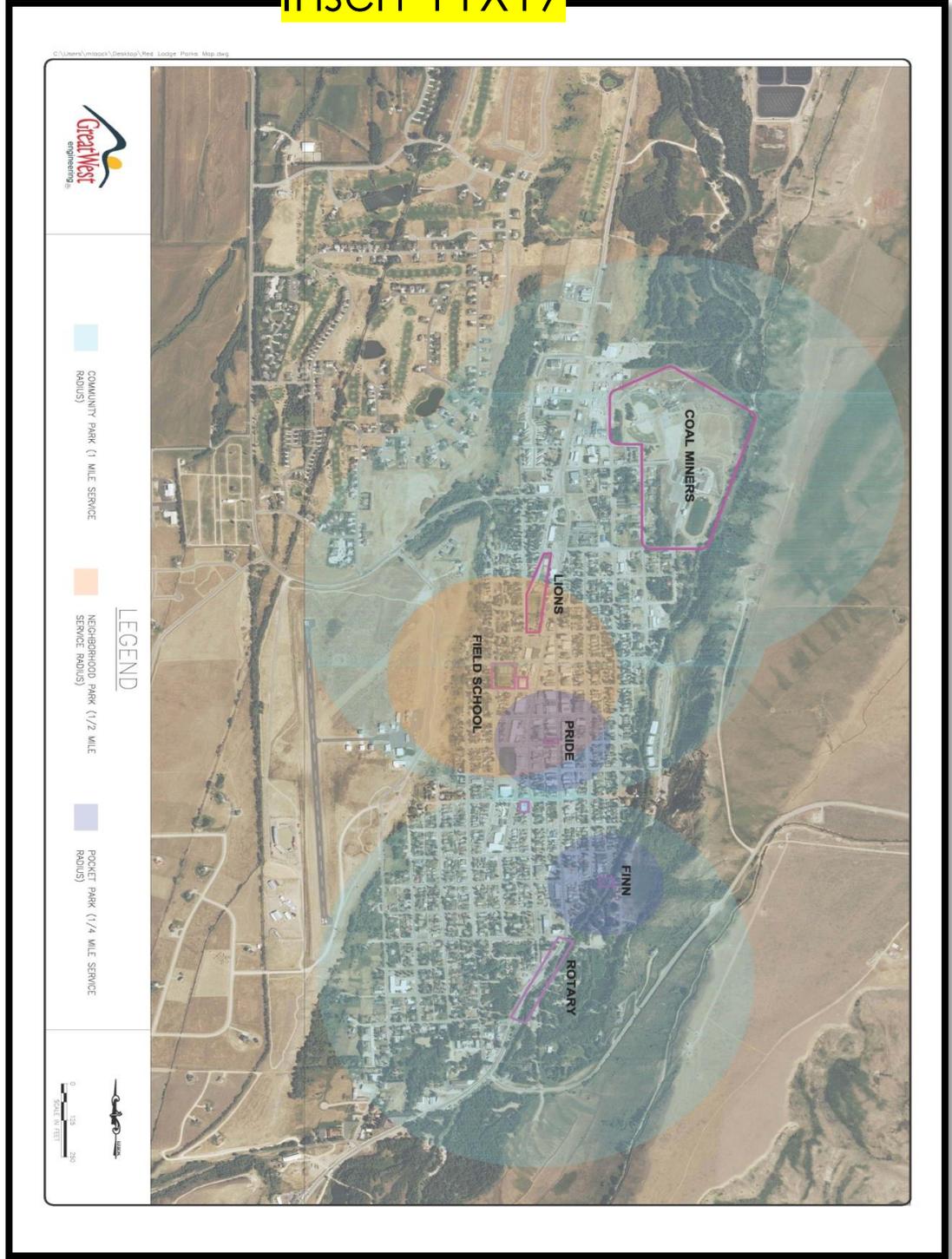
Community Park: 1 mile radius

Special-use parks such as the Pool, Skate Park, and Dog Park are not given a radius as the designated activity plays a much larger role in attracting users than the location of the park. **Figure 6.1** show each park with its designated service radius. The map shows Red Lodge does not have many gaps in service area. With the development that has occurred to the northwest of town, the City has acquired some dedicated park land in this area. This land has not been developed but will be used to service neighborhoods located on the bench as well as address needs identified through this Parks Plan. As development continues to expand from the downtown corridor of Red Lodge,

developed parks will be required to service these areas. Emphasis should be placed on connecting these parks by trail systems, to address priorities seen in the public input section.

Figure 6.1: Service Radius Map

Insert 11X17



### 6.3 Developed Park Acreage and Amenities

**Table 6.1** shows NRPA level of service standards and how the Red Lodge Park system compares to these standards. Though Red Lodge is below standard for pocket, neighborhood, and linear parks, the City well exceeds standards for total park acreage if all developed parks are considered. This is largely due to the fact that nearly 95% of developed park acreage is classified as Community Park. With a population of 2,155 Red Lodge is a relatively small town and thus allows a majority of parks to serve the entire population. Coal Miners Park is not dedicated, so there is no guarantee that this developed park would continue to contribute toward the current Level of Service. Without Coal Miners Park included in the Level of Service comparison, Red Lodge would not meet the Community Park Standards. Lions Park and Rotary Park are both classified as community parks currently but would most likely fall to the neighborhood park category if Red Lodge was to drastically grow and expand. Currently these parks service the entire radius of Red Lodge as well as tourists and are thus considered community parks. Red Lodge would have to reach a population of 3,156 before falling below the presented standards. As this would be a 46% growth rate, the standards suggest that additional developed park land not be a priority of the department. This trend was also seen throughout the public input phase as park improvement, trails, linear parks, and natural areas were seen as a higher priority for future development.

**Table 6.1 Level of Service Comparison**

Park Type	Red Lodge Inventory	Red Lodge Service Level per Population			NRPA 2009 Standard Level per Population			NRPA Standard Met?
Pocket Park	0.94	0.44	acres	1000	0.5	acres	1000	No
Neighborhood Park	1.41	0.65	acres	1000	2	acres	1000	No
Community Park*	45.00	6.08	acres	1000	5	acres	1000	Yes
Linear Park	0.00	0.00	acres	1000	7	acres	1000	No
<b>Total Park Acres</b>	<b>47.35</b>	<b>21.97</b>	<b>acres</b>	<b>1000</b>	<b>15.5</b>	<b>acres</b>	<b>1000</b>	<b>Yes</b>
Open Space	0	0.00	acres	1000	NA		NA	
<b>Outdoor Amenities</b>								
Playgrounds	3	1.39	structures	1000	1	structures	1000	Yes
Picnic Area	22	10.21	structures	1000	6	structures	1000	Yes
Baseball	3	5.57	field	4000	1	field	4000	Yes
Soccer	0	0.00	field	4000	1	field	4000	No
Outdoor Basketball	3	5.57	court	4000	1	court	4000	Yes
Tennis Court	3	1.39	court	2000	1	court	2000	Yes

\* Service level per population includes 10% of Beartooth highway users entering through Red Lodge. Community Park acres include 36 acres of un-dedicated lands within Coal Miner’s Park. Without Coal Miner’s Park, NRPA standard would not be met.

\*\*Although there is no dedicated soccer field, Youth Soccer has been using Doug Brown Field for their activities and they are looking into other fields to share use with other sports.

\*\*\* Total Park acres include 36 acres of un-dedicated lands within Coal Miner’s Park. 3 baseball fields, 1 picnic area, and 1 playground are in Coal Miners Park. Without Coal Miner’s Park, NRPA standards would not be met.

Of the common outdoor amenities, Red Lodge meets all standards outside of a soccer field. A couple of the amenity standards, including the soccer field, are set at 1 field/structure per 4,000 persons though Red Lodge does not meet this population. Youth Soccer has managed to get by using Doug Brown Field and the high school field for their activities thus far.

As described in Section 2, Red Lodge sees a high volume of tourist traffic, especially during the summer months. With over 50,000 visitors per season passing through Red Lodge to travel the Beartooth Highway, it is import to consider this demand on the parks system. These visitors are likely to use the parks system. However, it is expected that visitors would primarily use community parks. To account for this demand, 10% of these visitors were included in the service population for community parks resulting in a service population of 5,250. All other parks and amenities were calculated with a service population of 2,155.

### 6.4 Community Comparison

In addition to NRPA standards, four communities were compared to Red Lodge in terms of parks acreage per population. These communities were chosen due to their similarities as mountain towns which place an importance on outdoor activities. Two communities from Montana, Livingston and Bozeman, and two communities from Colorado, Durango and Silverthorne, were compared in **Table 7.2**.

**Table 6.2 Community Comparison of Developed Parks**

	Red Lodge, MT	Livingston, MT	Bozeman, MT	Durango, CO	Silverthorne, CO
Total Developed Park Acres	48	170	440	169	72
Population	2155	7044	37280	15632	3915
Acres per 1000 Population	<b>22</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>18.3</b>

\* Calculations do not include undeveloped open space/natural areas

Red Lodge has more park acreage per capita than Bozeman, Durango, and Silverthorne and is just under the acreage seen in Livingston. This again shows Red Lodge provides its population with a higher than average amount of developed park land. The two Colorado towns prove to have less developed park acreage than the Montana towns due to the states high priority on open space and natural areas. Colorado is renowned for its open space and trails and this is not accounted for in **Table 7.2**.

One thing to be noted is Coal Miners Park, although developed, is a non-dedicated park. Should Coal Miners be removed as a park, Red Lodge becomes deficient in parkland as shown in Table 7.3 below.

**Table 6.3 Level of Service Comparison without Non-Dedicated Park Land**

Park Type	Red Lodge Inventory	Red Lodge Service Level per Population			NRPA 2009 Standard Level per Population			NRPA Standard Met?
Pocket Park	0.94	0.44	acres	1000	0.5	acres	1000	No
Neighborhood Park	1.41	0.65	acres	1000	2	acres	1000	No
Community Park*	9.00	1.22	acres	1000	5	acres	1000	No
Linear Park	0.00	0.00	acres	1000	7	acres	1000	No
<b>Total Park Acres</b>	<b>11.35</b>	<b>5.27</b>	<b>acres</b>	<b>1000</b>	<b>15.5</b>	<b>acres</b>	<b>1000</b>	<b>No</b>
Open Space	0	0.00	acres	1000	NA		NA	
<b>Outdoor Amenities</b>								
Playgrounds	2	0.93	structures	1000	1	structures	1000	No
Picnic Area	21	9.74	structures	1000	6	structures	1000	Yes
Baseball	1	1.86	field	4000	1	field	4000	Yes
Soccer	0	0.00	field	4000	1	field	4000	No
Outdoor Basketball	3	5.57	court	4000	1	court	4000	Yes
Tennis Court	3	1.39	court	2000	1	court	2000	Yes

\* Service level per population includes 10% of Beartooth highway users entering through Red Lodge

As Table 7.3 shows without the non-dedicated but developed Coal Miners Park, the park system becomes deficient compared to national standards. Dedication of Coal Miners Park is a priority of the Parks Board and will ensure that it remains as a park and keeps the park system up to standards.

## 7 Organized Sports

Organized sports programs are often among the most frequent users of developed parks. Though these programs often contribute greatly to the parks system, they also place a demand on the parks department. It is vital to consider these programs in park planning. The organized youth sports leagues offered by Red Lodge are Youth Baseball, Youth Soccer, and Youth Hockey.

Youth Baseball: Youth baseball primarily functions in Coal Miners Park. The program has around 115 participants and accommodates kids up to the age of 12. The user organization interview section identified the needs of the organization pertaining to the use of Coal Miners Park. The organization hopes to include kids past the age of 12 but cannot achieve this with the current baseball fields. A larger field would be required to extend the program to older kids of the community.

Youth Soccer: The youth soccer organization currently uses the baseball fields at Coal Miners Park, Doug Brown Field and the open space at Lions Park. The program has expressed a strong need for a designated soccer field, as playing games on the baseball field and sharing fields with other sports is not ideal. The proposal for a new soccer field produced by the organization is included in **Appendix C**. This new field would allow for the program to expand and grow, as well as incorporate older kids. The organization has offered to do fundraising and help out financially in order to reduce cost the City.

Youth Hockey: Though the program did not operate in the winter of 2013/14, the youth hockey organization plans to start again next winter and averages 45 to 55 participants. The ice rink is operated by Red Lodge Ice in Lion's Park. The user organization interview section identified areas of which the park can better accommodate the organization. The current ice rink operates well for the organization but a covered ice pavilion and lights are a vision of the organization in the future.

Organized sports leagues offered to adults are limited to Adult Softball. Though many additional activities such as tennis, basketball, and hockey are available to citizens, they are not currently organized leagues. Adult Softball operates on the same fields in Coal Miners Park as the Youth Baseball organization and would similarly benefit from the rehabilitations to the fields mentioned previously.

## 8 Goals and Policies of the Park Board

The vision of the Red Lodge Parks Board states:

*In the future, the City of Red Lodge will be providing a geographically distributed and well maintained portfolio of Parks, Trails, and Open Spaces that serve a wide range of interests, ages, and abilities proportional to the current and future population. Parks will draw visitors and stimulate economy. There will be scheduled and organized events, activities, and tournaments. There will also be an expanding, connected network of trails, heavily used by the community and visitors and a diverse and healthy urban forest. There will be public awareness of the park and tree assets and their uses through active promotion. Operationally, there will be a continuity of adequate funding to support the vision and goals, a well understood methodology for executing plans, and perhaps a dedicated parks and recreational staff.*

Objectives of the Parks Board:

1. Identify opportunities to expand existing parks through acquisition of neighboring properties.
2. Work with community organizations to identify upgrades to current park facilities to meet the park development criteria in this plan and identify funding sources to complete upgrades.
3. Only accept land dedications or donations that meet objectives, standards, and needs of the Comprehensive Parks Plan.
4. Develop standards for park signage and information kiosks as part of the park system.
5. Use needs assessment to determine priority areas for developing and expanding parks system.
6. Park designs should accommodate the population with disabilities and mobility issues.
7. Work with local organizations to develop programs that promote health and wellness.
8. Increase funding from sources such as grants, non-profit fundraising, sponsorship, and public-private partnerships.
9. Formalize agreements between the city, school district, and other entities on the shared use of facilities.

Goals to be achieved through prioritized projects are:

1. Provide diverse recreational opportunities to meet the needs for people of all age groups and abilities.

2. Partner with other community groups such as the school district, non-profit groups, and organized sports to develop and operate a variety of recreational opportunities.
3. Monitor recreation trends and provide opportunities that meet different lifestyle needs for competitive sports, fitness, and outdoor activities.
4. Absorb feedback from the community to adjust programming for always changing needs.
5. Prioritize programs that address activities where there is highest demand and/or partner groups can provide funding.
6. Tailor neighborhood parks to meet demographic needs of the neighborhood.

It is the goal of the Parks Board to use the data and analysis above in conjunction with this vision to prioritize funding use for park maintenance and future park development. With a limited budget, prioritizing projects numerically through a priority matrix gives direction and guidance towards which projects are most pressing to the City. Short term planning is to be for 3 to 5 years as this plan is to be periodically updated in accordance with this range.

### 8.1 Ranking Criteria

The priority matrix contains seven categories in which each project is scored. The seven categories are Cost, Public Health and Safety, User/Public Input, Land Acquisition Requirements, Operation and Maintenance, Recreational Benefit, and City Plan Coordination. Each category is given a weight from 1 to 10 based on how large of a factor the category plays in the decision. The score for each category a project receives is then multiplied by the categorical weight to attain a weighted score. The sum of weighted scores from each category gives the project a total score and is used to rank the projects priority.

**Cost** (Weight= 10): This category accounts for the total cost to complete each project. As cost is a vital factor in the decision making process, it is given the highest weighting factor. Scores are given according to the following criteria:

1= \$250,000 +

2= \$100,000-\$250,000

3= \$30,000-\$100,000

4= \$5,000-\$30,000

5= \$0-\$5,000

**Recreational Benefit** (Weight= 8): This category addresses the recreational benefits that residents will see based on completion of the project. Offering recreational opportunity to the public is a major priority of a parks system and is accordingly weighted as an 8. Scores are given according to the following criteria:

1= Project will not affect usability, aesthetics, or functionality seen by recreationalist

3= Project will increase usability, aesthetics, and/or functionality of the park system for recreationalist

5= Project will greatly increase available amenities to recreationalist and/or will greatly increase usability, aesthetics, and functionality of the parks system.

**Operation and Maintenance** (Weight= 7): This category accounts for the cost and time of operation and maintenance associated with each project. Operation and maintenance is an important consideration as the time and money associated with O & M can become burdensome when summed over multiple years; therefore, it is weighted at 7. Scores are given comparatively to current O & M requirements as follows:

1= Will increase amount of O&M required by city and/or caretaker organization

3= Will not affect amount of required O&M or will slightly reduce O&M hours

5= Will decrease amount of O&M hours currently spent maintaining park

**Public Health and Safety** (Weight= 6): This category addresses health and safety needs of the public. A weight of 6 is given to this category and is scored according to the following criteria:

1= Health and safety of recreationalists minimally affected or not affected

3= Project will increase the health and safety of recreationalists using the park facilities

5= Project is vital to ensure health and safety of recreationalists or is required by federal, state, or local laws

**User/Public Input** (Weight= 6): This category addresses input seen from the previous sections of this report. The category is weighted at a 6 to consider projects prioritized by the public input phase. Scores are given according to the following criteria:

1= Project was suggested 1-2 times in public survey or user interviews but not prioritized by organizations

3= Project suggested by multiple participants in survey and interviews. Considered priority by user organizations but not ranked as top priority

5= Project ranked as top priority by user organization and/or seen as one of top two responses to online survey.

**Land Acquisition** (Weight= 4): This category accounts for feasibility of completing the project based on land requirements. Having to acquire land is costly and time consuming and thus is scored low in the matrix. A weight of 4 is given to this category and is scored according to the following criteria:

1= Will be very difficult to obtain land, easement, right-of-way, or other required elements needed to complete project

3= Project will require land, easement, right-of-way, or other required rights to complete but is foreseen as feasible

5= The city currently possesses required land resources (not including funds) to complete project

**City Plan Coordination** (Weight= 3): This category addresses the need of continuity between all city plans, which were discussed in Section 1. A weight of 3 is given to this category and is scored according to the following criteria:

1= Project does not involve goals/needs addressed in other city plans

3= Completion of project address goals/needs of other city plans but does not directly achieve them.

5= Completion of project would directly help achieve goals/needs addressed in city plans

## 8.2 Developed Park Improvements

Developed park improvement projects identified through previous sections of this report were entered into the priority matrix shown in **Table 8.1**.

Table 8.1 Developed Park Improvements Matrix

Priority	Associated Park/Land	Proposed Improvement	Criteria & Weighting Factors														Total Score
			Public Health & Safety		Cost		User/Public Input		Operation and Maintenance		Land Acquisition		City Plan Coordination		Recreational Benefit		
			Weight: 6	Weight: 10	Weight: 6	Weight: 7	Weight: 4	Weight: 3	Weight: 8								
			Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	
<b>Developed Park Improvements</b>																	
1	Lions Park	Drinking Fountains	5	30	4	40	5	30	3	21	5	20	3	9	5	40	190
2	Lions Park	Lions Den Rehab/Expansion	5	30	3	30	5	30	5	35	5	20	1	3	3	24	172
3	Lions Park	Replace Sand in Volleyball/Horseshoe	5	30	5	50	3	18	3	21	5	20	1	3	3	24	166
4	Lions Park	Moosetrails Staining/Rehab	5	30	5	50	3	18	3	21	5	20	1	3	3	24	166
5	Lions Park	Lighting near Ice Rink	3	18	4	40	5	30	3	21	5	20	1	3	3	24	156
6	Lions Park	Concrete Slab in Depression Area	1	6	2	20	5	30	5	35	5	20	1	3	5	40	154
7	Lions Park	Warming Hut Rehab	3	18	3	30	5	30	3	21	5	20	1	3	3	24	146
8	Lions Park	Sprinkler System	1	6	4	40	3	18	5	35	5	20	1	3	1	8	130
9	Lions Park	New Pavilion near horseshoe pits	1	6	2	20	3	18	3	21	3	12	1	3	3	24	104
1	Skate Park	Supervision Area and Fencing	5	30	3	30	5	30	3	21	5	20	1	3	3	24	1
2	Skate Park	Purchase Modular Ramps	3	18	3	30	3	18	5	35	5	20	1	3	3	24	148
3	Skate Park	Move to Lions Park	3	18	1	10	3	18	3	21	3	12	1	3	3	24	106
1	Rotary Park	Permanent Restroom Facility	5	30	4	40	5	30	1	7	5	20	3	9	5	40	176
2	Rotary Park	Trail System Rehab/Expansion	3	18	4	40	3	18	3	21	5	20	3	9	5	40	166
3	Rotary Park	Drinking Fountains	5	30	4	40	3	18	3	21	3	12	1	3	5	40	164
4	Rotary Park	Kayak Slalom Course	3	18	4	40	5	30	1	7	5	20	1	3	5	40	158
5	Rotary Park	ADA Accessible Picnic Sites	5	30	4	40	3	18	3	21	5	20	1	3	3	24	156
6	Rotary Park	Pier/Decking Over Rock Creek	3	18	2	20	3	18	1	7	1	4	3	9	5	40	116
7	Rotary Park	Public Shower/Permanent Restroom	3	18	3	30	1	6	1	7	3	12	3	9	1	8	90
1	Coal Miners	Park Dedication	3	18	5	50	5	30	5	35	5	20	3	9	5	40	202
2	Coal Miners	Interpretive Trail	1	6	5	50	3	18	3	21	5	20	1	3	5	40	158
3	Coal Miners	Baseball Surface/Drainage Rehab	3	18	1	10	5	30	5	35	5	20	1	3	5	40	156
4	Coal Miners	Irrigation System to Fields	1	6	4	40	5	30	5	35	5	20	1	3	1	8	142
5	Coal Miners	ADA Upgrade to Restrooms	3	18	3	30	1	6	3	21	5	20	3	9	3	24	128
6	Coal Miners	Electricity to Baseball Fields	1	6	4	40	3	18	3	21	3	12	1	3	3	24	124
7	Coal Miners	Parking Area Development	3	18	3	30	3	18	3	21	5	20	1	3	1	8	118
1	City Pool	Replace Pool Filter	5	30	5	50	3	18	3	21	5	20	1	3	3	24	166
2	City Pool	Concrete Replacement/Rehab	5	30	1	10	5	30	5	35	3	12	1	3	5	40	2
3	City Pool	ADA Compliance Upgrade	5	30	2	20	3	18	3	21	3	12	3	9	3	24	134
1	Pride Park	Sidewalk Repair Along 12th	3	18	3	30	5	30	3	21	5	20	1	3	3	24	146
2	Pride Park	Wall Mural	1	6	5	50	3	18	3	21	5	20	1	3	1	8	126
3	Pride Park	Fix Drain at intersection	1	6	5	50	3	18	3	21	5	20	1	3	1	8	126
1	Double Ditch	Parking Area Improvement	3	18	4	40	3	18	3	21	5	20	1	3	3	24	144
2	Double Ditch	Additional Gate	1	6	5	50	3	18	3	21	5	20	1	3	3	24	142
3	Double Ditch	Additional Entrance Gate	1	6	5	50	3	18	3	21	5	20	1	3	3	24	142
1	Field School	Drinking Fountains	5	30	5	50	5	30	1	7	5	20	1	3	5	40	180
2	Field School	Tennis Court Grouting and Painting	3	18	5	50	3	18	5	35	5	20	1	3	3	24	168
3	Field School	Retention Wall Rehab	5	30	4	40	1	6	5	35	5	20	1	3	3	24	158
4	Field School	Underground Sprinklers	3	18	4	40	3	18	5	35	5	20	1	3	3	24	158
5	Field School	Add Picnic Table and Grill	3	18	5	50	1	6	3	21	5	20	1	3	5	40	158
6	Field School	Restroom	5	30	4	40	3	18	1	7	5	20	1	3	5	40	158
7	Field School	Sidewalk Replacement	5	30	2	20	3	18	3	21	5	20	1	3	5	40	152
1	Finn Park	Clearing for Rock Creek Access	1	6	5	50	3	18	5	35	5	20	3	9	3	24	162
1	All Parks	Bike Racks	3	18	4	40	5	30	3	21	5	20	3	9	3	24	162
2	All Parks	Benches and Picnic Tables (CTEP)	3	18	5	50	3	18	3	21	5	20	3	9	3	24	160
3	All Parks	Recycle Bins	3	18	4	40	5	30	1	7	5	20	3	9	3	24	148

### 8.3 New Park Development

The priority matrix of park development projects identified through the study phase are shown in **Table 8.2**. Narrative for the projects which scored highly in the priority matrices follows:

Parkland Dedication: To ensure the City Park System can provide an adequate level of service to Red Lodge residents, Coal Miners Park should be dedicated as City parkland. Coal Miners Park is especially needed as a park since the parcel includes the high school and football field.

West Bench Linear Park Development: Linear park development ranked high due to its high scores in recreational benefit, user/public input, and City Plan coordination categories. Trails, linear parks, and open space were very highly prioritized as a need by the public and the Growth Policy. Linear park development is most feasible on the west bench, as the city owns some undeveloped park land in this area. As development continues in this area, it will be imperative for the City to plan for dedicated park land to be in areas which trails and linear parks can be used as connections between parks. Both the north and south sides of Red Lodge provided viable opportunities for development of linear parks. Other areas for linear park development include establishing a corridor along Rock Creek.

Soccer Field: Construction of a soccer field on City owned land scored third highest on the priority matrix. With funding available from the youth soccer organization, the project scored higher on cost. The project also had high scores on recreational benefit and public input. The City owned land by the airport as seen on the proposal in **Appendix C** would be the most feasible and cost effective option. The upper field of Coal Miners Park is another feasible option for the field location. Though soil issues due to the old dump site and slag would increase construction costs, this option would keep the field near other park facilities such as the baseball fields and Frisbee golf course.

Pool Rehabilitation: Using the current pool location and researching possibilities of liner rehabilitations was unanimously chosen as the most feasible option by the Parks Board for fixing the current pool deficiencies. By using the current location and existing infrastructure, costs would be minimized. Though the current location is prioritized, further research and consultation will be needed to properly choose how to move forward with the pool rehabilitation.

Rock Creek Linear Park/Open Space: In addition to Linear Park development ranking high, public comment also favors establishing a linear park or trail corridor along Rock Creek. The most effective way to accomplish this for the City is to hold onto current properties, rights-of-ways and easements adjacent to or having access to the stream, work with developers on new developments with creek frontage, and negotiate with existing landowners for rights of way to create a linear park along the creek.

New Neighborhood Park: With the assumption that Coal Miners Park remains as a parkland, the existing Town of Red Lodge is adequately served by the existing parks, any future development will require additional neighborhood parks to keep up with the NRPA standards. Without Coal Miners park, several NRPA standards will not be met and additional parks would be needed to meet NRPA standards. The location of the new parks would need to follow the new developments. The most logical places for new development are south of the City or west above the bench. The City could either work with developers on a large developments to set aside park lands or collect cash-in-lieu payments from smaller developments to fund larger neighborhood parks or parks facilities.

Concrete Skate Park: The existing skate park is on non-dedicated, city owned park land. The property does not function well in that there is no area for adult supervision, little room for amenities and limited parking. Also, maintenance of the amenities is done mainly with volunteers. To mitigate the issues with the current site, moving the skate park over to Field School Park or to another City Park has been suggested, along with improving it with concrete ramps that require less maintenance compared to the existing of wooden structures.

Permanent Restroom Facility: A shortage of restroom facilities was identified multiple times throughout the study phase. The pending removal of the RV station in Rotary Park provides an ideal location for a permanent restroom facility. Sanitary sewer lines already exist in this location and thus greatly reduce the cost of the project. This reduction in cost with the high public health and safety, and user/public input scores caused the project to score highly. They city currently rents portable toilets for Rotary, Field School, and the cemetery, which costs \$1,500 yearly. The existing permanent restroom near Lion's Park costs the City nearly \$15,000 yearly for maintenance and upkeep, and has proved to be an overall burden to Public Works due to frequent vandalism. Therefore, low maintenance and small permanent restroom facilities are prioritized to reduce the future maintenance demands on Public Works. For parks such as Field School, which do not have sewer services, pre-fabricated pit toilets could be installed to avoid costs associated with extending sewer lines.

Multi-Use Complex: A multi-use complex can provide a huge recreational benefit to residents, but can cost well over \$3 million depending on the facilities included. A multi-use complex could include the pool, recreational center, soccer field, and baseball field etc. The complex would provide an exponential rise in recreational benefits but requires years of planning and fund raising. Though the cost of a multi-use complex is much greater than most options, it would address multiple needs seen through the study phase. Coal Miners Park or portions of the Airport area are the only current City owned lands which would provide adequate space for a multi-use complex.

Table 8.2 Park Development Matrix

Priority	Associated Park/Land	Proposed Improvement	Criteria & Weighting Factors														Total Score
			Public Health & Safety		Cost		User/Public Input		Operation and Maintenance		Land Acquisition		City Plan Coordination		Recreational Benefit		
			Weight : 6	Weight : 10	Weight : 6	Weight : 7	Weight : 4	Weight : 3	Weight : 8								
			Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score			
<b>New Park Development</b>																	
1	City Land/Acquisition	Linear Park Development	3	18	2	20	5	30	1	7	3	12	5	15	5	40	142
2	City Land	Soccer Field	1	6	3	30	5	30	1	7	5	20	1	3	5	40	136
3	City Pool	Full Rehabilitation of Current Location	3	18	1	10	3	18	5	35	5	20	1	3	3	24	128
4	Land Acquisition	Rock Creek Linear Park/Open Space	3	18	1	10	5	30	1	7	1	4	5	15	5	40	124
5	City Land/Acquisition	Concrete Skate Park	3	18	2	20	3	18	3	21	3	12	1	3	3	24	116
6	City Land Acquisition	New Neighborhood Park	3	18	1	10	3	18	1	7	3	12	3	9	5	40	114
7	Land Acquisition	Multi-Use Complex	3	18	1	10	3	18	1	7	3	12	3	9	5	40	114
8	Coal Miners	Upper Field Development	1	6	3	30	3	18	1	7	3	12	1	3	3	24	100

## 9 Finances and Implementation

The Parks Board does not operate on a set yearly budget, but is allotted a budget by City Council dependent on projects and maintenance planned for the year. The following table shows the budget and expenses from the last four years. The expenditures reflect resort tax funding:

**Table 9.1: Parks Budget and Expenditure**

PARKS BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES				
Expenditure	Amount			
	2011	2012	2013	2014
Purchased Services	\$ 64,866.10	\$ 59,799.27	\$ 18,105.58	\$ 30,071.85
Personnel Services	\$ -	\$ 10,643.62	\$ 2,464.03	\$ 29,640.61
Worker's Compensation	\$ -	\$ 179.38	\$ 118.13	\$ -
Parts/Machinery	\$ -	\$ 4,883.80	\$ 6,551.51	\$ 8,967.54
Total Expenses	\$ 64,866.10	\$ 75,506.07	\$ 27,239.25	\$ 68,680.00
<b>Total Budget Allocated</b>	<b>\$ 79,500.00</b>	<b>\$ 84,536.00</b>	<b>\$ 78,000.00</b>	<b>\$ 82,500.00</b>
<b>Remaining Budget</b>	<b>\$ 14,633.90</b>	<b>\$ 9,029.93</b>	<b>\$ 50,760.75</b>	<b>\$ 13,820.00</b>

The vaguely defined relationship between the Parks Board, Public Works, City Council, and other departments has led to the remaining allocated budget. With the Parks Board being purely advisory and having no dedicated staffing, they are at the mercy of other departments to complete projects, even when they have an approved and allocated budget. Public Works has limited staffing and is often unable to assist the Parks Board in completing approved projects. Ideally, a dedicated Parks Department with staffing should be established to ensure maintenance is up to date and approved and budgeted projects are completed in a timely manner. A Parks Department and associated staffing would however require significantly higher funding than is currently allocated. Staffing would likely add around \$80,000 to \$120,000 to the parks expenditure, would greatly reduce the demand on Public Works, allow for long term parks project planning, and increase the park system's overall functionality. To achieve this funding increase, the Board will need to look at additional methods of raising funds for additional improvements. Additional funds could be raised by:

**Special Improvements District:** The City could create an SID and dedicate that money strictly for parks improvements and maintenance. There would have to be a defined boundary, such as a subdivision limit, and each dwelling unit or business pay into the fund an equal percentage. SID's are not typically used for park improvements, but are more useful for street maintenance or utility projects. It could be an option for linear park or trails development in localized areas. The intent of such an SID would be to increase the level of funding for Parks. The intent

would not be to reduce the amount of resort tax or general funds allocated for Parks.

**Parks Improvement District:** Similar to an SID, this program would be established to cover the costs of maintenance or for capital fundraising. Establishment of a District would have to be voted on by the general public. This could be useful for raising larger sums of money for improvements such as the Multi-Use Recreation Center. The intent of such a District would be to increase the level of funding for Parks. The intent would not be to reduce the amount of resort tax or general funds allocated for Parks.

**9.1 City Pool Financials**

Pool financials are separate from the rest of the Parks Board Financials. Data from the last three years of the pool is shown in the following table:

**Table 9.2: Pool Expenditure**

<b>POOL EXPENDITURES</b>			
<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>Amount</b>		
	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>
Personnel	\$ 34,276.42	\$ 34,055.00	\$ 31,169.58
Worker's Compensation	\$ 490.86	\$ 1,755.92	\$ 1,825.23
Chemical and Medical	\$ 3,579.62	\$ 3,602.73	\$ 1,858.64
Parts/Machinery	\$ 1,146.67	\$ 2,174.30	\$ 963.59
Electric/Gas	\$ 14,227.16	\$ 2,200.23	\$ 10,335.50
Water Utility	\$ 4,949.58	\$ 8,426.14	\$ 8,426.14
Equipment Repair	\$ 462.50	\$ 916.15	\$ 500.00
Training	\$ 442.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
Building Upgrades	\$ 7,316.00	\$ -	\$ -
Other Expenses	\$ 586.70	\$ 2,223.67	\$ 2,223.67
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 67,477.51</b>	<b>\$ 56,354.14</b>	<b>\$ 47,195.79</b>

Pool revenues were also reviewed. Basically, the pool is funded by swimming pool fees and the remainder is supplemented with General Fund money. The table below shows the funds from the swimming pool fees collected and the amounts supplemented by the general fund.

**Table 9.3: Pool Revenue**

<b>POOL REVENUE</b>			
<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>Amount</b>		
	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>
Swimming Pool Fees	\$21,749.50	\$19,942.10	\$13,815.50

Additional General Fund	\$45,728.07	\$36,412.04	\$33,380.29
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It should be noted the swimming pool fees go into the City's general fund since the pool expenses are covered by the general fund. It should also be noted that the Parks Board has traditionally had little to no involvement in providing the City advice in terms of City Pool management, maintenance, or improvements.

## 9.2 Funding Opportunities

Available funding mechanisms are given in Table 9.4 as well as how each mechanism can be allocated for various park system expenses. It is common to incorporate multiple funding mechanisms to achieve goals set forth in the Parks Plan.

**Table 9.4: Funding Mechanisms**

	<b>Operation &amp; Maintenance</b>	<b>Land Acquisition</b>	<b>Park &amp; Trail Development</b>
City Funds	X	X	X
Land Dedication	X	X	
Cash-in-lieu		X	
User Fees	X	X	X
Resort Tax	X		X
Grants		X	X
Donations	X	X	
Partnerships		X	X
SID		X	
Park Maint District	X	X	

Various grants are in place to support community recreation and parkland enhancement. Grants that could potentially be pursued to help funding include:

- Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)
- Montana Tourism Grant (TIIP)
- Recreational Trails Program (RTP)
- American Hiking Society-National Trails Fund
- Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)

## 10 Park Development Guidelines

It is a priority of the Parks Board to formally dedicate all of the developed park land identified through this plan. This would clarify the assets specifically dedicated to the parks system and eliminate conflicting planning issues between City Departments in the future. The following parks, listed by priority, remain non-dedicated and are recommended for dedication:

- Coal Miners (already platted lots and leases within park, so only portions near baseball field would likely be dedicated) Coal Miners (note the high school area will not be dedicated as park, and the wildlife sanctuary is not a part of the property. However, if the wildlife sanctuary were to close, the property is then turned over to the City for ownership.)
- North End and South End of Lion's Park
- Double Ditch Park
- Skate Park

In addition to dedicating current parks, improvements to subdivision regulations and prioritizing areas of City park needs will help the Parks Board achieve visions and keep up with population growth.

### 10.1 Prioritized Park Types

The Parks Board has prioritized two types of parks as most needed for the overall parks system to properly serve the growing population. Through analysis of the research sections of this Parks Plan, the Board members have advised future development or park dedications to address the following:

- Linear Parks and Corridors connecting existing parks
- Pocket Parks servicing downtown areas or the Rock Creek Corridor
- Open Space and Natural areas

Whether it occurs through park dedication from development or a park land purchase, it is advised to concentrate future acquisition on these park system needs. Appendix B shows a map of City-owned land as well as the dedicated parks. The use or disposition of City land shall also be considered based on the feasibility of the parcel contributing to either (1) the connectivity of existing parks through linear parks and corridors or (2) the development of pocket parks servicing downtown areas and the Rock Creek corridor.

### 10.2 Subdivision Regulations

Park dedications from subdivision development are one of the primary sources for the parks system to acquire land for future development. Subdivision regulations set guidelines for the park dedications, but the current regulations have proven to not properly promote visions of the Parks Board. More stringent and clarified

wording in the regulations would help the Parks Board achieve visioning goals and avoid receiving un-usable land for the dedication. Following is a proposed addition/change to the regulations which would insure park dedication that would be more beneficial to the parks system.

*1. The City Council, in consultation with the Planning Board, Parks Board, and the subdivider, may determine suitable locations for parks, playgrounds and open space.*

*2. Land dedicated for park or playground purposes shall:*

- a. Be usable land for a park required by service area,*
- b. Shall serve residents of the entire city and subdivision,*
- c. Shall be of appropriate shape and size, and*
- d. Shall have convenient access by public or private roads meeting City standards and specifications.*

*3. The following lands shall not be considered appropriate for park purposes unless specific exemption is approved by Parks Board, Planning Board, and City Council:*

- a. Average cross slope of the park site is greater than 10%;*
- b. More than five percent of the park site has an average cross slope greater than 25%;*
- c. More than 25% of the park site is in a designated 100-year floodplain;*
- d. More than 10% of the park site is wet, swampy or marshy;*
- e. Is less than one acre in area;*
- f. Is an undeveloped open space area within a subdivision which does not have appropriate size, dimensions, or access to serve as a park;*
- g. Is in a floodway;*
- h. Commercial or for-fee recreational facilities such as golf courses, athletic clubs, etc., unless the residents of the affected development are offered substantially reduced fees or free use and access.*

## Cash-in-Lieu

With small developments prevalent throughout Red Lodge, cash-in-lieu opportunities can be well utilized for park development. With smaller subdivisions, it is often seen that the park dedication land is not ideal for the parks system, and may be better utilized for residential or commercial land. It is important for the Parks Board to identify these situations and place cash-in-lieu money into savings for development of more needed park facilities such as linear parks or multi-use facility. This will help prevent the parks system from consisting of small and scattered lots which are underutilized, and work towards acquiring more properly located and better usable parcels.

### 10.3 Prioritized Areas for Future Parks

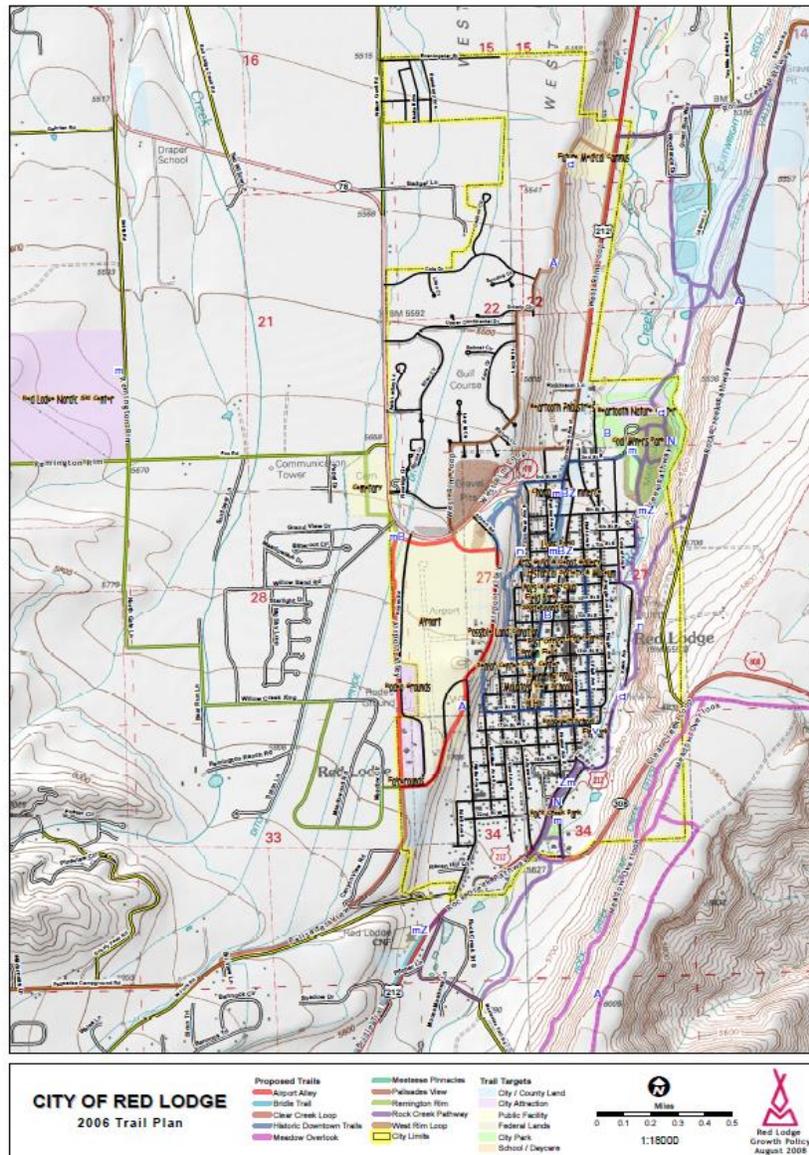
The service level radius map in section 6 shows the southern end of Town and the west bench as the most underserved areas of town. There is a plot of land just south of the intersection of Highway 212 and Highway 308 that has been identified by the Parks Board as an area of high importance in terms of park land acquisition. This is prime land along the Rock Creek corridor and if the parks system was able to utilize this land, multiple goals would be accomplished. With a high likelihood that this land will be developed and annexed, it is a prime opportunity to acquire park land along the Rock Creek corridor, offer riparian access. Parkland in this area would also serve the southern end of Town, which was identified as underserved by the parks system. A linear park or neighborhood park with access to Rock Creek in this area is a major goal of the Parks Board. The Board can accomplish this goal by working with developers in the property south of the City adjacent to the creek.

As noted above, if Coal Miners Park is not dedicated and this land is developed for other uses, several NRPA standards would not be met, resulting in additional needs for Community Parks, baseball fields, etc. Such needs would require larger parcels for future parks.

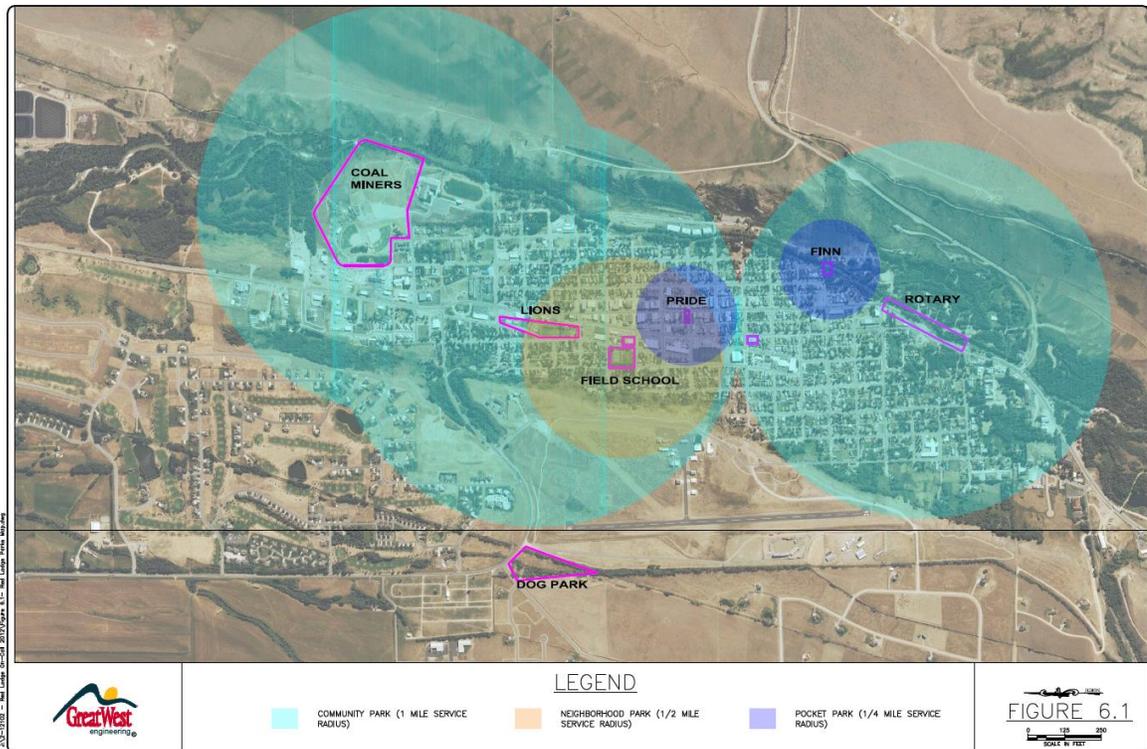
As noted above, the construction of the Beartooth Billings Clinic wellness trail will connect City-owned parks lands on the West Bench to the Highway 212 corridor. This may warrant additional minimal parks development in City-owned parks parcels along the west bench, such as installation of connecting trails and other related facilities.

Additionally, the Parks Board has identified any land adjacent to current parks as priority land, may it become available. Acquiring land adjacent or nearby developed parks would allow the Parks system to work towards a higher degree of interconnectivity. Other opportunities include use of City-owned rights-of-ways, particularly along Rock Creek. Whether rights-of-ways are developed as linear parks or retained for future development, the Parks board recommends that they be retained in City ownership. The Trails Plan, Parks Plan, and Strategic Plan have all expressed the goal of connecting the parks and open space through trail systems.

# Appendix A: Rocky Fork Trail Map



# Appendix B: City Land and Dedicated Parks Map



# Appendix C:

## Public Meeting & Hearing Minutes and Responses

<http://cityofredlodge.net/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/september-18-2013-Minutes1.pdf>

<http://cityofredlodge.net/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/october16-20131.pdf>

<http://cityofredlodge.net/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/november-22-2013.pdf>

<http://cityofredlodge.net/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Parks-Board-Minutes-December-18-2013.pdf>

<http://cityofredlodge.net/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Parks-Board-Minutes-January-15-2014.pdf>

<http://cityofredlodge.net/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Parks-Board-Minutes-Feb.-19-2014.pdf>

<http://cityofredlodge.net/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Parks-Board-Minutes-March-19-2014.pdf>

<http://cityofredlodge.net/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Parks-Board-Minutes-April-16-2014.pdf>

<http://cityofredlodge.net/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Parks-Board-Minutes-May-21-2014.pdf>

<http://cityofredlodge.net/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Parks-Board-Minutes-June-18-2014.pdf>

<http://cityofredlodge.net/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Parks-Board-Minutes-July-16-2014.pdf>

<http://cityofredlodge.net/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Parks-Board-Minutes-August-20-20141.pdf>

<http://cityofredlodge.net/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Parks-Board-Minutes-Sept.-17-20141.pdf>

<http://cityofredlodge.net/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Public-Comments-Parks-Plan.pdf>

**October 16, 2013**

**Maintenance and Capital Needs**

**4 pages, Prepared by Bill Foisy, Council Representative, Red Lodge Parks Board**

**Lions Park**

- Moose Trails Playground in need of repairs to a number of structures used by children. Potential hazard.
- Red Lodge Ice. Steel door to warming shed is often vandalized. New rink liner is needed at \$2,500. Lights to supplement street lights needed. Email sent to City by Red Lodge Ice regarding these issues (narrative attached). Memorandum of Agreement exists between Red Lodge Ice and the City. Red Lodge Ice is now being fiscally sponsored by the Red Lodge Area Community Foundation who will be able to collect and disburse funds on behalf of the organization. Red Lodge Ice also now a Fun Run participant.

**Pride Park**

- Bring back the mural on the wall.
- Potential for bicycle rack. Will need to be negotiated with Garden Club. Recommended locating a rack at Red Lodge Mountain store or Fourth Avenue Meat Market area.
- Sprinkler system has periodic breaks.

**Soccer Group**

- Use a number of parks for soccer activities; primary activity is at the fields at Coal Miner's Park.
- Need better coordination with city employee who locks and unlocks field and facilities.

**Rotary Park**

- Potential for tent sites for touring bicyclists. Rotary members not in favor.
- Potential for permanent restrooms to replace temporary restrooms.

**Triangle Park (near Lions Park)**

- Needs mowing more often.

**Finn Park**

- Temporary bathrooms needed.
- Trees being tom up by turkeys. Some trees need to be replaced (cottonwood). Some new trees need to be planted.

**Coal Miner's Park**

- Needs to be a dedicated park.
- Boundaries for the Wildlife Sanctuary and the High School need to be better defined so as to know the exact area for dedication of Coal Miner's Park.
- Erosion issues.

- Miner's plaque (historical) needs periodic maintenance and a way finding system for visitors to locate.
- Sledding area on south hill.
- Rock Creek access; low head dam presents potential danger.

### **Field School Park**

- Retaining wall needs to be fixed, with concrete.
- Underground sprinklers needed.
- Trees have downed branches, arborist needed.
- Parks Board periodically providing volunteer maintenance assistance. Regular maintenance schedule needs to be established by the City.

### **Skateboard Park**

- Potential use of adjacent vacant property for expansion/relocation.

### **Weed Issue**

- All parks.
- Carbon County does some weed control, but not in City dedicated parks.
- Knapweed at Dog Park.
- Safe, authorized use of weed killer required.
- Need coordination between Red Lodge Public Works, Parks Board and County on what gets sprayed when according to a weed control plan.

### **Dog Park**

- Council needs to reaffirm permanency of park after one year of use.

### **10th Street at Rock Creek/Old Daly Avenue**

- Scope use of 60 foot right-of-way for access to Rock Creek.

### **Vacant City Properties**

- Need to inventory all vacant city property (use zoning/land use map for reference) and determine potential parks use for these properties.

## Red Lodge Parks Board Public Comment (User Groups) November 20, 2013

### Red Lodge Ice (Maintenance Group):

- Self-funded, with a limited budget (funds derived mainly from the Fun Run)
- Have ideas on how to improve the ice rink
- Desire a better voice with the Parks Board
- Have concerns about vandalism at the warming hut (need to repair damaged interior door)
- Would like to improve lighting to supplement street lights (perhaps moving to the west side on a timer)
- Looking for guidance with regulations and financial support
- Want to explore ways to extend seasonal use; need portable refrigeration
- Estimate 55-70 youths using rink under organized programs, additional user groups including adults stretch capacity of rink causing scheduling conflicts
- Need a new liner every couple of years
- Consider other locations that may offer more a comprehensive recreational multi-use facility, but keep current location as a supplemental location as walking to the site is critical for kids
- Red Lodge Ice is a maintenance group; special skillsets involved in maintenance (City Public Works is providing some support, however without the special skillsets needed for maintenance)
- There is a user group who would like investigate the feasibility of a multi-function ice facility

### Red Lodge Youth Soccer:

- Use Coal Miners Park baseball fields for soccer games
- Baseball field grass is in poor shape with lack of sufficient topsoil to allow grass to root properly (with underlying clay cap on top of old dump/mine tailings)
- Sprinkler system is in disrepair
- Bathroom facilities needs maintenance by a designated employee versus volunteers
- Desire an area that would allow for a regulation size soccer field
- Discussed possible alternative locations (vacant land near the hangers at the airport)
- City has expressed their reluctance to accept the liability of a new soccer field near the airport
- Artificial turf would be considered if affordable
- Use of school athletic fields not consistently feasible
- Soccer group has an alternate sites report that evaluates multiple potential soccer field locations on City lands (James Caniglia to provide it to consultant)
- Shared, multi-use recreational facility could be more efficient (i.e. Cody, Bozeman, Crosby North Dakota. Also needs to be within walking distance)

### Beartooth Paddlers Society:

- Use Rotary Park for kayak slalom course racing, primarily on south end of town between Red Box Car and Rotary Park, usually for one weekend per year. Take out spot at Rotary Park a bit eroded
- Discussed options to improve cleanup, including mining remnants
- Desire to leave kayak course gates up to extent use of the waterway
- No permits required from State of Montana to set up a kayak course or hold a kayak event
- Need a changing room (current set-up of rented portable outhouses works OK in the interim)
- Discussed developing a white water play park to draw more users

Farmers Market:

- Good location at Lions Park
- Have a market master that coordinates activities of sellers and the public
- Have been coordinating use and schedule of Park with Lions Club, which is working well

Garden Club:

- Would like more support from the City for maintenance
- Lamp post support broken and needs to be replaced
- Sidewalk repair is in the City Budget for next spring

General:

- Incorporation of youth in parks activities should be a high priority
- Parks Board should have more direct control of park maintenance and activities, possibly through a dedicated parks employee

Attachment: Red Lodge Ice

From: [dacodavis@aol.com](mailto:dacodavis@aol.com)

Date: June 26, 2013, 4:16:52 AM MDT

To: [eiwilliams83@aol.com](mailto:eiwilliams83@aol.com), [maryvettel@gmail.com](mailto:maryvettel@gmail.com), [gloryb@vcn.com](mailto:gloryb@vcn.com),  
[mjsward1@gmail.com](mailto:mjsward1@gmail.com), [wfoisy@hotmail.com](mailto:wfoisy@hotmail.com), [laronforward2@gmail.com](mailto:laronforward2@gmail.com),  
[roatredlodge@aol.com](mailto:roatredlodge@aol.com), [tom@mapmurals.com](mailto:tom@mapmurals.com)

Subject: Red Lodge Ice

Dear City Council Members and Mayor,

Red Lodge Ice would like to thank you for the continued support of the ice rink at Lions Park. We had another great year on the rink:

Mother Nature gave us a late start last fall, but hung on until the very beginning of March.

The Youth programs continue to be a success with the Learn To Skate and Figure Skating programs. The Hockey Fundamentals portion continues to grow with talk of maybe even fielding a youth team in the years to come.

Our adult pick-up hockey program now has a good reputation as a grass roots "pond hockey" program and attracts regulars from as far away as Cody and Billings. Numerous families from Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan and other states plan on making this a part of their vacation.

We continue to see families from surrounding communities come to Red Lodge for the day, spending time on the rink and finishing off in the stores downtown for lunch and shopping.

The rink has been a huge success being promoted in the Chamber of Commerce ads, local news reports as well as Internet blogs.

We have made many additions and improvements to the warming hut: we have added benches, coat racks and shelves (the racks and shelves were made by a local business); we have built shelving and storage areas in the utility room; we have replaced shovels and maintained snow blowers; we have fed the volunteers who show up each fall and spring to install and tear down the rink; we have cleaned the warming hut periodically and done countless other things that have added to the success of the rink.

We look forward to the continued utilization of the rink and future success. We are an all-volunteer group and the majority of our current fundraising is via the Fun Run. Our startup costs were generously given by the City of Red Lodge, Carbon County and the Lions Club. This has met our needs since the inception of the rink. However, as we move forward in maintaining and improving our rink, we would like to request your help in the way of funding and repairs

1. This coming fall we will need to replace the rink liner again (we have gotten three seasons out of our current liner, which is typical given the heavy use and general wear-and-tear). The purchase of the liner is the bulk of our operating costs and an expenditure

we budget for every three to four years. The liner and shipping will cost between \$3500 and \$4000. Can the City budget \$2000 to help with this?

2. Vandalism to the door inside the warming hut that opens up to the utility room has damaged the door jamb, hinges and lock beyond repair. The damage was reported to the local police but to our knowledge nothing has been done. We would like this door to be replaced.

What is the best way to formally ask the council and city for this help? We are open to discuss this at any time and will be happy to come to a meeting or do whatever it takes to steer this through the proper channels to ensure next year's ice rink is a continued success. Your input is greatly appreciated.

Again, thank you for your continued support.

Nate Davis  
Red Lodge Ice President  
RedLodgeMT  
406.425.4644



Topic: Proposal to Build a Soccer Field near the Airport on Red Lodge City-Owned Land

## Proposal

Red Lodge Youth Soccer (RLYS) proposes to build a regulation-sized soccer field (80 yards x 120 yards) and ancillary facilities (parking lot, storage building, accessible restrooms, etc) on Red Lodge city-owned land east of the airport runway and south of the airplane hangars near the Airport Alley Trail. RLYS will raise funds, build the field and facilities and enter into a field maintenance agreement with the City. The City will retain ownership of the field and facilities.

## History of Youth Soccer in Red Lodge

1995 - First year of a Fall Recreational Youth Soccer Program

2007 - Addition of a Spring Competitive/Developmental Youth Soccer Program

2008 - Red Lodge Youth Soccer League, Inc is incorporated as a 501(C)3, non-profit organization.

2011 - Over 400 youth soccer players have or will have practiced soccer, played in soccer games, participated in a soccer tournament or attended soccer camp in Red Lodge during the seven month period of April through October.

## Soccer Play Surfaces/Fields

All soccer activities convened in Red Lodge require the use of City of Red Lodge owned land, Red Lodge Public School owned land or privately owned land primarily used for other purposes. RLYS currently borrows Coal Miners Baseball Fields, Doug Brown Football Field, Palisades Football Field, Lions Park open space and Two Mile Bridge Road private land for soccer practice, games, tournaments and camps. Other organizations such as Little League Baseball, Adult Softball, High School and Middle School Football and Lion's Park Ice Rink have higher priority in using the above facilities. We must schedule our use around baseball, football, an April/May removal date of the Lion's Park ice rink and single to three-day uses for a variety of public and private events in Lion's Park.

Our paint-lined fields are dependent on underlying open space and none are regulation size. Borrowed fields are not graded for soccer; drainage issues result in less than acceptable playing surfaces (slippery surface and standing ponds). Holes and sloping surfaces pose safety problems to players.

Soccer is expected to continue to grow in popularity in Red Lodge. That growth will be hampered if we are not able to provide safe playing fields or host more home games - a requirement of our state- level and local-level leagues. One regulation-sized field (80 x 120 yards) can serve older players and yet be converted to two small-sided game fields (55 x 80 yards) to serve younger players.

RLYS worked with the Red Lodge City Council Land Use Committee, the Red Lodge Parks Board, the Airport Board, Red Lodge Public Schools and private individuals to analyze nine potential field sites. Based on these discussions and analysis of site needs and available features, RLYS concludes that the airport location is the best choice. The cost of development and 5 years of maintenance is estimated at \$250K.

### **Decision to be made**

Grant permission for Red Lodge Youth Soccer to build a soccer field and ancillary facilities on Red Lodge City-owned land adjacent to and east of the airport runway south of the airplane hangars. This action will confirm land commitment and a viable field location so RLYS can begin fundraising for the project.

# Appendix D:

## List of User Group Contacts

As of April 2015

Organization	Contact	Phone			
Youth Baseball	Don/Margie Bohan	446-9038	<a href="mailto:margaretbohan@yahoo.com">margaretbohan@yahoo.com</a>		
Adult Softball	Melissa Rickbeil	671-2096			
Red Lodge Ice	Nate Davis	425-4644	<a href="mailto:dacodavis@aol.com">dacodavis@aol.com</a>		
Red Lodge Ice	Lynn Jackson	446-0324	<a href="mailto:jacksons@paulbunyan.net">jacksons@paulbunyan.net</a>		
Rotary Club	Betsy Scanlin	671-1124	<a href="mailto:bescanlin@msn.com">bescanlin@msn.com</a>		
Rotary Club	Joel Todd	446-1137	<a href="mailto:montanajwt@aol.com">montanajwt@aol.com</a>		
Lions Club	Merv Coleman		<a href="mailto:mcoleman@montana.net">mcoleman@montana.net</a>		
Lions Club	John Gilligan	446-1601	<a href="mailto:info@chateaurouge.com">info@chateaurouge.com</a>		
Lions Club	Leon Odegaard	698-4051	<a href="mailto:odegard100@yahoo.com">odegard100@yahoo.com</a>		
BRTA	Grant Barnard	425-0130	<a href="mailto:gbtelemark@gmail.com">gbtelemark@gmail.com</a>		
BRTA	Laurie Barnard		<a href="mailto:teliskigirl@live.com">teliskigirl@live.com</a>		
Red Lodge Schools	Rex Turnen	446-1903	<a href="mailto:rexl_ternan@redlodge.k12.mt.us">rexl_ternan@redlodge.k12.mt.us</a>		
Boys & Girls Club of Carbon County	Dana Castellani	446-2582	<a href="mailto:carbonbgprograms@gmail.com">carbonbgprograms@gmail.com</a>	<a href="mailto:dana.castellani@gmail.com">dana.castellani@gmail.com</a>	
Beartooth Childrens Center	Ann Lannoye	446-1919	<a href="mailto:bchildrenscenter@beartoothbillingsclinic.org">bchildrenscenter@beartoothbillingsclinic.org</a>		
Youth Soccer	Rena Beck		<a href="mailto:paul.rena@montana.net">paul.rena@montana.net</a>		
Youth Soccer	Beth Graham	672-5360	<a href="mailto:cookmangraham@gmail.com">cookmangraham@gmail.com</a>		
All Nations Garden Club	Jerry Kriner	446-3323			
Carbon County Arts Guild	Debra Kline Sonderman	425-3963	<a href="mailto:carboncountvartsguild@yahoo.com">carboncountvartsguild@yahoo.com</a>		
Farmers Market	Sam Long, market manager	426-1150	<a href="mailto:samanthajordanlong@gmail.com">samanthajordanlong@gmail.com</a>		
Farmers Market	Martha Brown, Food Partnership	445-7214	<a href="mailto:mbrown.mt@gmail.com">mbrown.mt@gmail.com</a>		
Disc Golf	Cole Stewart	426-0159	No email		
Skate Park user group	Travis Burdick	559-676-2497	<a href="mailto:travisliketodraw@gmail.com">travisliketodraw@gmail.com</a>		
Tennis user group	Jerry Underwood	425-0943 / 446-3175	<a href="mailto:jdunder@cablemt.net">jdunder@cablemt.net</a>	not current	
Pool user group	Mike Schoenike, council public works	425-0021	<a href="mailto:mjsward1@gmail.com">mjsward1@gmail.com</a>		
	Cindy Hanson	426-0077	no email		
Chamber of Commerce	Sherry & Tim Weamer	446-1718	<a href="mailto:redlodgechamber@qwestoffice.net">redlodgechamber@qwestoffice.net</a>		
Downtown Merchants Association	Jennifer Nelson, AAA Rentals	425-2125	<a href="mailto:piney@aaaredlodgerentals.com">piney@aaaredlodgerentals.com</a>		
County Commissioners	John Prinkki	425-1516	<a href="mailto:commissioners@co.carbon.mt.us">commissioners@co.carbon.mt.us</a>		
Dog Park	Betsy Scanlin	671-1124/446-1016	<a href="mailto:bescanlin@msn.com">bescanlin@msn.com</a>		
Dog Park	Judy Streets	446-2140/(510)295-5242	<a href="mailto:jswolf.judy@gmail.com">jswolf.judy@gmail.com</a>		
Kayak Group	Mike Holmes	425-0743	<a href="mailto:ootek34@aol.com">ootek34@aol.com</a>		