

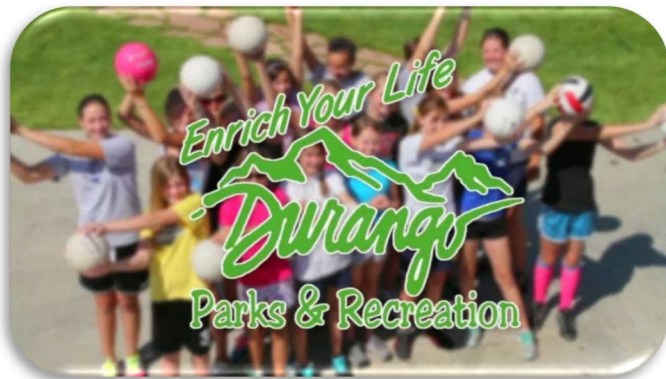
## CHAPTER ONE : OPERATIONAL & MAINTENANCE REVIEW

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

The City of Durango Parks and Recreation Department is a nationally accredited agency through the Commission for Accreditation of Parks and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA) and is home to a diverse and expansive parks and recreation system. This in turn requires a highly functional team of individuals to operate and maintain the system's parks, facilities and programs in order to provide an exceptional level of service to residents and visitors. The Department has requested an operational and maintenance review.

The operational review is an analysis of current practices, future Department organization and staffing needs, improved operational efficiencies, policy development, technology improvements and marketing/communication opportunities. The maintenance review is an analysis of maintenance protocols, efficiency and sustainability, work management, asset management, performance measures, staffing levels and equipment management.

In addition, the planning team is looking to see if there are opportunities to improve overall operations and the Department's capacity to implement the comprehensive Master Plan. The process included review of existing Department policies, a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis, interviews of key staff, facilities tours, and reviews of Department processes, reports, and organizational structure.



Parks and recreation agencies continue to face a multitude of growing market demands, ranging from providing a superior customer experience, addressing the needs of neighborhoods and community at large, capital development project management, keeping up with changing industry regulatory requirements, to attracting and retaining the best possible employees. At the same time, challenges such as cost recovery, customer retention, expenditure reduction, brand awareness/consistency, and technology applications can present an opportunity to improve efficiency and effectiveness in delivery of service.

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#### 1.1.1 DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

##### MISSION:

The mission is to enrich lives every day.

##### VISION:

The Vision is to be the reason why people want to be in Durango.

### CORE VALUES:

The Core Values of the Department include:

- Service Excellence
- High Quality Offerings
- Innovation with an Element of Fun
- Health and Wellness
- Environmental and Fiscal Sustainability

This overview of the Durango Parks and Recreation Department shows the multitude of responsibilities including:

- 38 Neighborhood, community, and regional parks
- Recreation and fitness programs for a wide variety of ages, skill levels, and interests.
- 5,306.69 acres of park land including pocket parks, neighborhood parks, community parks, regional parks, special use parks, natural areas, cemeteries and undeveloped acres.
- Durango Parks and Recreation has – 15.5 miles of paved trails and 96 miles of unpaved trails
- Staff: 38 full-time, 480 part-time and 136 seasonal employees
- Parks and Recreation Advisory Board
- Natural Lands Preservation Advisory Board

The following indoor facilities are under the management of the City Parks and Recreation Department.

- Durango Community Recreation Center 71,557 square feet
- Special Use Facility (Chapman Hill) 33,600 square feet
- Durango Gymnastics 11,710 square feet
- Mason Center 17,886 square feet

In addition to the responsibilities and facilities above, the City also maintains the following outdoor facilities in the system.

- 21 Shelters/Pavilions
- 6 Baseball/softball fields
- 5 Multi-use/soccer fields
- One basketball court
- 8 Tennis Courts
- 22 Playgrounds
- 1 Dog park
- 1 Skate park



## 1.2 OPERATIONS

Operational reviews seek to identify opportunities for change and modification of operations management. This includes looking for opportunities that could lead to efficiency, cost containment, and increased capacity to meet the needs of the community. In addition, recommendations will focus on optimizing operational performance. Properly aligning people, processes, resources, and technology with the right strategy helps staff discover and create unique solutions to challenges.

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### 1.2.1 MANAGEMENT

The operations of Durango Parks and Recreation is fluid, flexible and agile to achieve the outcomes. Staff seek out a deeper understanding of challenges to adapt and succeed in delivery of services to the community. Responsiveness is a key component to the Department's success which is possible through the established foundation of standard operating procedures. These standards are also what has empowered the Department to becoming and retaining the distinction of CAPRA Accreditation. While these standards are the foundation, it is the teamwork that sets Durango Parks and Recreation apart from others. The Department has a high level of commitment to each other internally and to other departments within the City.

The internal teamwork and solution-minded approach is strong, as demonstrated with staff stepping up and stepping down to fulfill responsibilities in absences and during times of open positions. The Department operates with a heavy reliance on part-time and seasonal staff which leads to long hours and heavy workloads, especially during peak season. Staff work diligently to avoid operational challenges from spilling over to impacting residents' ability to participate in recreation services and enjoyment of parks, recreation and facilities. This level of creativity and effort is why the community is very supportive and the Department is highly regarded. While the public's satisfaction is a huge motivator for Department staff, there are times where this level of productivity can reach a breaking point. The spirit of teamwork and care for each other is what will continue to get them through these periods, when they occur.

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### 1.2.2 STAFFING

Current staffing levels are such that gaps are beginning to appear in operations. Some gaps affecting the Department are on follow through with guest services, custodial needs, lifeguards, maintenance details being overlooked, as well as consistent supervision and leadership of part-time and seasonal staff. These challenges are not uncommon when managing a system that has such high demand for existing/new facilities and services.

It is important for the Department to consider enhancing the onboarding process and training program for part-time/seasonal staff to build knowledge and skills for operations. Highlighting the Department's commitment to developing staff through skills training and how employment with the City will result in personal growth can help increase the quality of the applicant pool when going through the hiring process.

Additional staff is needed to continue being a high-performing Department, especially with new assets coming on line for the community to use. Additional full-time staff is recommended in the areas of park maintenance, recreation services, and marketing. If new full-time positions are not possible, there may be benefit to combining part-time positions to create a full-time opportunity. This can create a powerful impact on covering operations. Ultimately, support staff are needed to handle the responsibilities of programming out new parks, maintaining the parks, and marketing of services. In the benchmark analysis

regarding FTEs the Department is under the median of the benchmark communities. **Figure 1:** shows where Durango is by comparison.

### 1.2.3 CURRENT ORGANIZATIONAL COMPARABLE AGENCIES

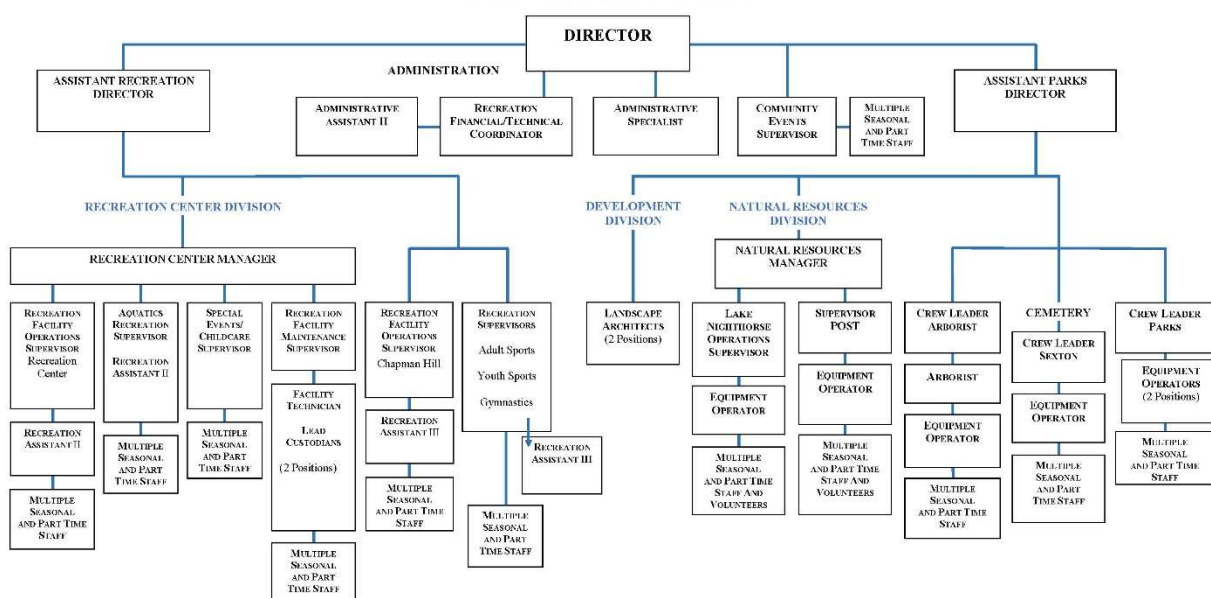
Agency	Population	Total FTEs*	FTEs per 10,000 Residents
Cortez Parks and Recreation	9,007	40	44.0
Steamboat Springs Parks and Community Services	12,690	52	40.6
Golden Parks and Recreation	18,867	47	24.9
Glenwood Springs Parks and Recreation	10,197	21	20.6
<b>Durango Parks and Recreation</b>	<b>18,909</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>20.1</b>
Flagstaff Parks and Recreation	72,656	86	11.8
Castle Rock Parks and Recreation	56,645	44	7.8

Figure 1: FTEs per 10,000 residents

### 1.2.4 ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

The Department reorganized in 2018 to improve the delivery of services to the community with expanding operations.

#### DURANGO PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



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### 1.2.5 PROCESSES

The Department has several plans, policies, and standard operating procedures in place. Some examples include the marketing plan, revenue and pricing plan, special events, sponsorship/donation/grant policy, strategic plan, operational agreements, partnerships, and park rules and regulations. Implementation processes demand well trained staff and require redundancies be in place to manage risk and limit liability.

Policies and processes are a major component to obtaining and retaining the CAPRA Accreditation. Providing high quality services and experiences, this Accreditation has helped the Department establish a credible and efficient means of achieving desired outcomes. These policies and procedures streamline operations and create quality service delivery. It is a significant commitment and requires the dedication of staff, oversight review, and teamwork within and across divisions to implement.

Currently, processes are in place for sharing marketing and communications among multiple positions for the Department. While this approach and process is successful, there is an opportunity to take customer engagement to the next level and develop impactful communication and awareness. As assets continue to be developed, the gap in marketing coordination will continue to grow as well. Improved marketing management will benefit recreation revenue generation, customer engagement, awareness, brand identity, telling the Department's story, and celebrating community for years to come.

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### 1.2.6 TECHNOLOGY

The Department currently uses common software and technology in today's industry for registration (RecTrac & WebTrac), communications, operations, and reporting. It is important for staff to become proficient in the use of these devices and applications. It is also best practice to have an employee at the appropriate level be the in-house expert, conducting software orientation and training or facilitating a web-based training session with a company representative.

Technology development for devices and applications moves at a rapid pace. It requires focus on technology upgrades that increase productivity, cost efficiency, maximization of software components, and achieving outcomes to deliver on the Department mission. The staff stay informed on new and innovative technologies to solve problems and improve services. Two applications the Department should explore for greater efficiency and quality assurance are a social media/email blast scheduling software (E.g. Hootsuite & Constant Contact) and a customer service app (HAPPIFEET™ - [www.keepphappifeet.com](http://www.keepphappifeet.com)) respectively. Social Media post schedulers help with planned content that reinforces the brand, communicates upcoming events, recognizes milestone days in the development of the park system and fun posts on national days or contests. Customer service applications allow for instant customer feedback from any part of the system or during live programs and events as well.

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### 1.2.7 RECOMMENDATIONS

In conclusion, the City of Durango has a strong Parks and Recreation Department poised and ready to lead quality of life initiatives and deliver leisure services to the community. To better position the Department for success moving forward, the following recommendations should be considered:

- Continue strong internal and external teamwork to achieve outcomes.
- Additional full-time staff is recommended in the areas of park maintenance, recreation services, and a marketing coordinator.



- Enhance branding and marketing to better tell the story of “enriching lives every day” to the community.
- Update the Durango Parks and Recreation Marketing Plan and develop a brand / style guide for the Department.
- Consider additional visual marketing with maps and videos for online and printing.
- Develop a strategic use of social media that is consistent across the Department.
- Develop partnership with the hotels, local businesses and tourism industry for cross promotion.
- Research and acquire social media post scheduling software and customer service app for instant feedback across the system.
- Continue to conduct salary studies to address wage compression and identify possible promotional opportunities to fill any gaps that develop
- Explore alternative funding sources for operations, existing facility improvements and capital development to achieve more sustainable dedicated funding.

### 1.3 MAINTENANCE

The maintenance review seeks to reveal opportunities for process improvement and modification to make informed decisions and bring assets to their full life. This includes identifying opportunities where outsourcing aspects of maintenance operations may lead to efficiency, cost containment, and increased capacity to meet other demands whether they be immediate needs, asset preservation, projects or additional assets to preserve. The focus is on increasing efficiency within existing operations to expand the capacity and better manage the magnitude of responsibilities, which is particularly important when thinking about the total cost of ownership (TCO).

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#### 1.3.1 MANAGEMENT

The Department maintenance team has a very diverse skill set including strengths to manage project development, parks, open space, trails, cemeteries, and Lake Nighthorse. This gives them the ability to tackle routine maintenance and in-house projects, as well as the ability to respond to immediate needs. Currently, crews for cemeteries and parks overlap. This cross training to meet the outcomes, gives the maintenance team the ability to move forward in times when they are short-staffed. The staff are driven to meet the needs of the community and are responsive to the changes, aging infrastructure and facilities. Staff are knowledgeable in turf management, landscaping, and irrigation systems from standards developed. The maintenance team has a history of great teamwork and willingness to be part of solutions requiring skilled staff involvement in projects, routine maintenance, emergency situations, special conditions, and even helping with recreation services.

One of the most pressing challenges impacting maintenance is the need for staff to grow commensurate with assets in the system. Current staffing levels impact follow up on attention to detail, adequate supervision, and leadership of part-time and seasonal staff. **Figure 2**, shows that maintenance and repair of older park facilities is highly supported by the survey responses. Despite these challenges, staff remain committed to meeting annually to establish goals and setting milestones to achieve the desired outcomes.

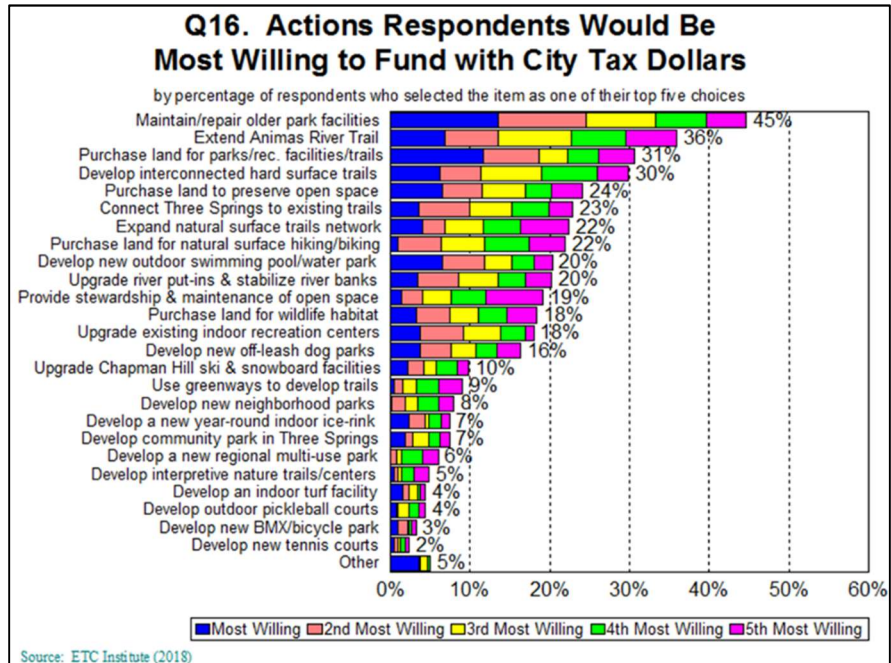
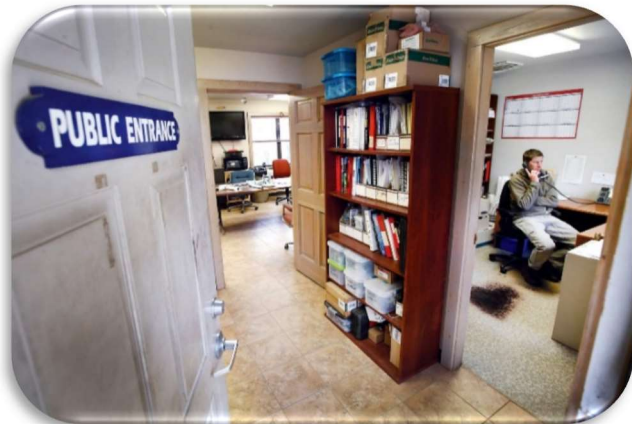


Figure 2: Actions survey respondents are most willing to support with city tax dollars

In addition, the maintenance facility located in the Greenmount Cemetery is lacking under roof storage to preserve equipment and extend the lifecycle replacement further out. This location drives the need for screening of the facility, equipment, and operations to be respectful of ceremonies celebrating the life of the deceased. There is also a lack of adequate personnel space to perform all aspects of the operation optimally. It was observed that the Department is in the process of alleviating some of these issues with a new facility that will provide much needed personnel space, allow the maintenance division to reallocate other existing spaces with modification, and create a better visual backdrop to ceremonies being conducted in the cemetery.



### 1.3.2 PROCESSES

The maintenance division has the mentality of high-quality and well-maintained facilities, with room for improvement. The teamwork and attitude of the maintenance team is a strength and should continue as the system evolves. The maintenance of the park system uses a set of standard procedures directing staff. These standards are a good baseline to achieving outcomes that preserve the quality of indoor and outdoor facilities. Scheduling tasks identified within the standards is an important component to efficient and effective operations. Weekly meetings to schedule the work, address immediate needs and anticipate challenges are in place and keep the focus during periods of heavy use in the system.

Currently, there is not a work order management system in place. This can leave staff feeling predominantly reactionary. An electronic work order system can help staff track workflow, workload, and report on work accomplished using metrics from key performance indicators. Tracking & scheduling things like routine maintenance, asset preservation, projects, costs, time, and salaries will provide valuable information that will help the Department tell its story. Even more, a work order system will lead to decreasing costs, reduction in response time, identifying the size and frequency of gaps, and increase morale among team members by reporting successes. **Figure 3** shows that investing in maintenance is supported.

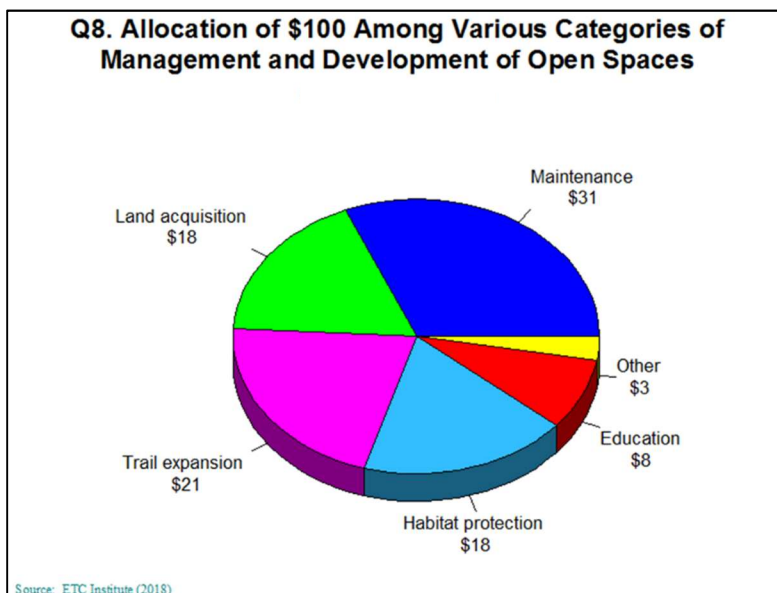


Figure 3: Allocation of \$100 among management categories

Not to mention, the work order system can help the Department better understand the cost of service and total cost of ownership. Ensuring accurate and timely information is a must with a work order system. It is best practice to have a person designated as data entry person for the work order system. This will in turn allow staff to accomplish more and report more. In some instances, staff have an administrative position assist with data entry and hire a part-time position to help during peak operations.

### 1.3.3 TECHNOLOGY

Technology currently has a place within maintenance operations, but not a work order system. Providing maintenance staff with technology that increases mobility and captures pertinent information about the efforts to maintain and preserve assets is very valuable. A web-based work order system (Dude Solutions and MainTrac) would also allow for identifying and tackling the most pressing issues impacting the system in real time. This is most important during peak season when the park system is more heavily used with seasonal facilities open and operating.

The system is not capable of meeting all the needs of the Department specifically notification in the field. Researching other applications to field-notify in real-time and track key performance indicators including response time, costs associated with the ticket, and reporting could improve efficiencies and develop an understanding of the cost of service in operations. In addition, the Department has an inspection report system in place for playgrounds.

These are conducted monthly to ensure the safety and enjoyment of these amenities. This also requires well trained staff and redundancies in place to achieve the desired outcomes. An example of applied technology would be the ability to use a tablet for fillable forms when conducting playground safety inspections and save the report to the server in real time. This could also be applied to other Department inspections such as open spaces, parks, ADA, and immediate needs.



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#### 1.3.4 EQUIPMENT

Currently, the City conducts regular training on equipment operation and safety. In addition, routine maintenance is conducted on equipment to ensure the safe use and reliability of vehicles and equipment. The City also has a lifecycle replacement schedule for vehicles and equipment. These schedules are more than assigning a date to replace, it also includes a deeper understanding of the equipment, its useful life and regular monitoring to see if replacement dates can be extended.

In many instances there is a dialogue between fleet mechanics and the Department about use, dependability based on scheduled maintenance, and recorded repairs takes place and is justification for extending replacement. These best practices help to ensure that the staff have the right equipment available at the right time to achieve the results for the community. A lifecycle replacement schedule for indoor and outdoor facilities was not observed as part of this review. If one is in place, it is important to update the schedule as new assets are added. If one is not in place, it is recommended to have one.

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#### 1.3.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

In conclusion, the City of Durango has strong Parks and Recreation maintenance staff with developed skills and drive to keep the quality of the system safe, clean and well-maintained. To better position the maintenance division for success moving forward, the following recommendations should be considered:

- Complete the development of a better parks maintenance facility including adequate personnel spaces, storage, and screening as the system evolves and grows.
- Research and implement a web-based work order management system keep to make better data driven decisions.
- Continue to update and improve inventories within operations and maintenance.
- Increase mobility with technology and fillable forms when on-site to help increase efficiency and effectiveness.
- Consider feasibility of satellite facilities to support the maintenance hub needs in key locations for easy access and maintenance
- Develop facility maintenance plans that address the unique challenges each poses outside of documented routine maintenance.
- Consider specialized dedicated facilities for major sustainable functions in recreation to free up spaces for operational needs.
- Continue strong internal and external teamwork to achieve outcomes.
- Include operations and maintenance staff in programming discussions or debriefings to gain perspectives from all facets of operations helping to implement programs and events.
- Continue the intentional efforts to include staff, when possible, in discussions and responsibilities above their current position.
- Develop existing staff through a succession plan to replace institutional knowledge as tenured staff retire.
- Additional staffing needs exist within the division for full-time staff to help with assets being added into the system.

An administrative staff person would help with development of a work order system, data collection, data entry and reporting successes from key performance measures.