



PARKS & RECREATION
CITY OF EL PASO

PARKS & RECREATION MASTER PLAN

Parks & Recreation Advisory Board
Parks & Recreation Master Plan Steering Committee

Wednesday, May 13, 2026

WHY ARE WE HERE?

PURPOSE OF TODAY'S WORKSHOP

- Community Voices Recap
- System-wide Goals
- Park Performance & Score Cards
- Project Prioritization Framework



The background of the slide features a photograph of a park-like setting. In the foreground, there is a large, rectangular concrete structure, possibly a utility box or a bench, with some faint markings on its surface. Behind it, several trees with green foliage are visible against a clear blue sky. The ground appears to be gravel or dirt. On the right side of the image, there is a vertical decorative bar with a gradient from purple to orange.

COMMUNITY VOICES

KEY THEMES & TAKEAWAYS

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Over 2,500 Community Touchpoints
 - Council & Staff Interviews
 - Community wide Survey
 - Targeted Focus Groups
 - 5 Community Meetings
 - 6 Park & Chat Stations



COMMUNITY KEY THEMES

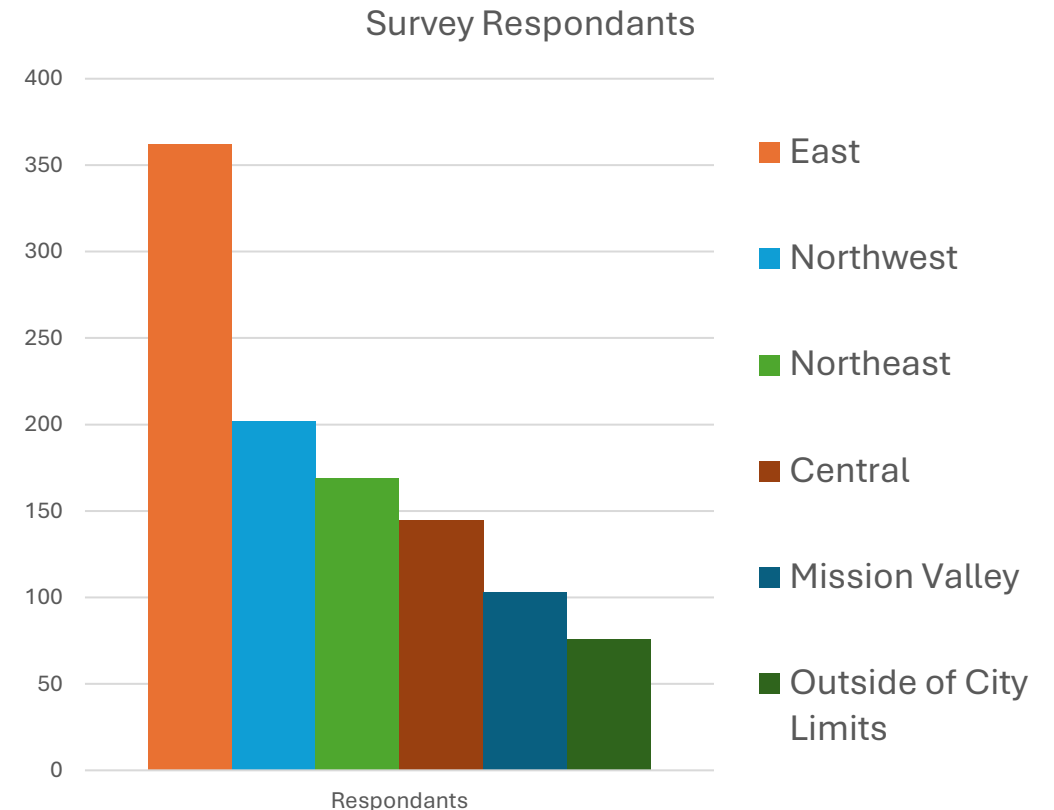
- Prioritizing Park Quality and Daily Usability
- Essential Adaptation to Desert Climate and Comfort
- Strong Need for Programming and Indoor Facilities
- Convenience Influences User Experience
- Importance of Connectivity, Trails, and Safe Mobility
- Demand And Need for Specialized, Large-capacity Amenities (sports, aquatics)

COMMUNITY KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Maintenance, cleanliness, and repair are important improvements
 - **Shade lighting, restrooms, and safety define park usability**
 - Many parks are used, but conditions limit experience
 - **Heat, sun exposure, and lack of cooling features limit park use**
 - Strong support for waterwise, climate-responsive design
 - **High demand aquatics, fitness, cultural and family programming**
 - Indoor recreation demand includes tracks, pools, and flex spaces
 - **Awareness and communication gaps significantly limit participation**
- Residents widely perceive uneven park quality and access across neighborhoods
 - **Smaller parks are valued but often lack desired amenities and variety**
 - Larger community parks are strongly preferred for their range of amenities, programming, and flexibility
 - **Trails are valued but not fully accessible; key barriers: shade, safety, signage, and gaps**
 - Sports fields and facilities are widely used but dispersed across the system
 - **Lack of concentrated complexes limits tournaments, leagues, and regional competitiveness**
 - Users express preference for centralized, multi-field destinations with supporting amenities
 - **Fragmentation reduces efficiency for programming, maintenance, and operations**

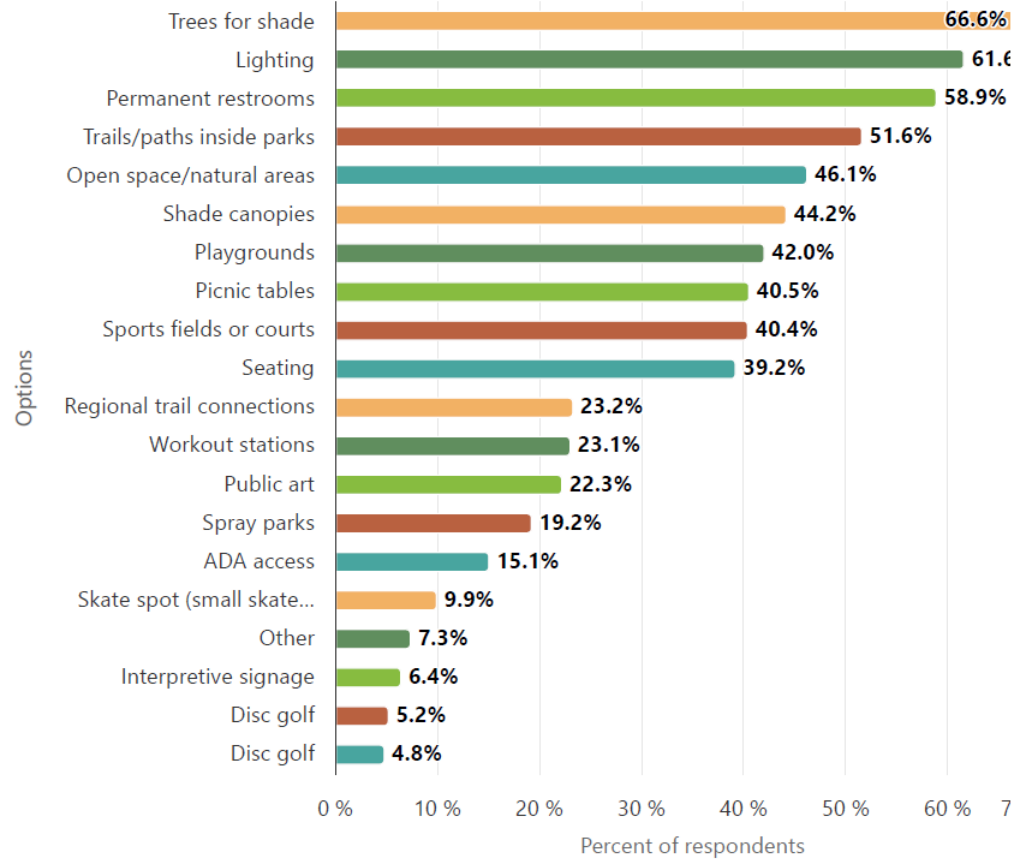
SURVEY INSIGHTS

- **Strong local representation:** 86.6% of respondents live within El Paso
- **Predominantly long-term residents:** 73% have lived in El Paso 20+ years (54% for 30+ years)
- **Core age groups represented:** 26–54 make up the majority (~74%), with smaller shares of younger and older populations
- **Family-oriented households dominate:** 56.6% report children under 17 at home
- **Balanced household mix:** Responses also reflect non-family households and those with older children
- **Diverse income range:** Largest groups fall between \$50K–\$150K, with both lower- and higher-income households represented



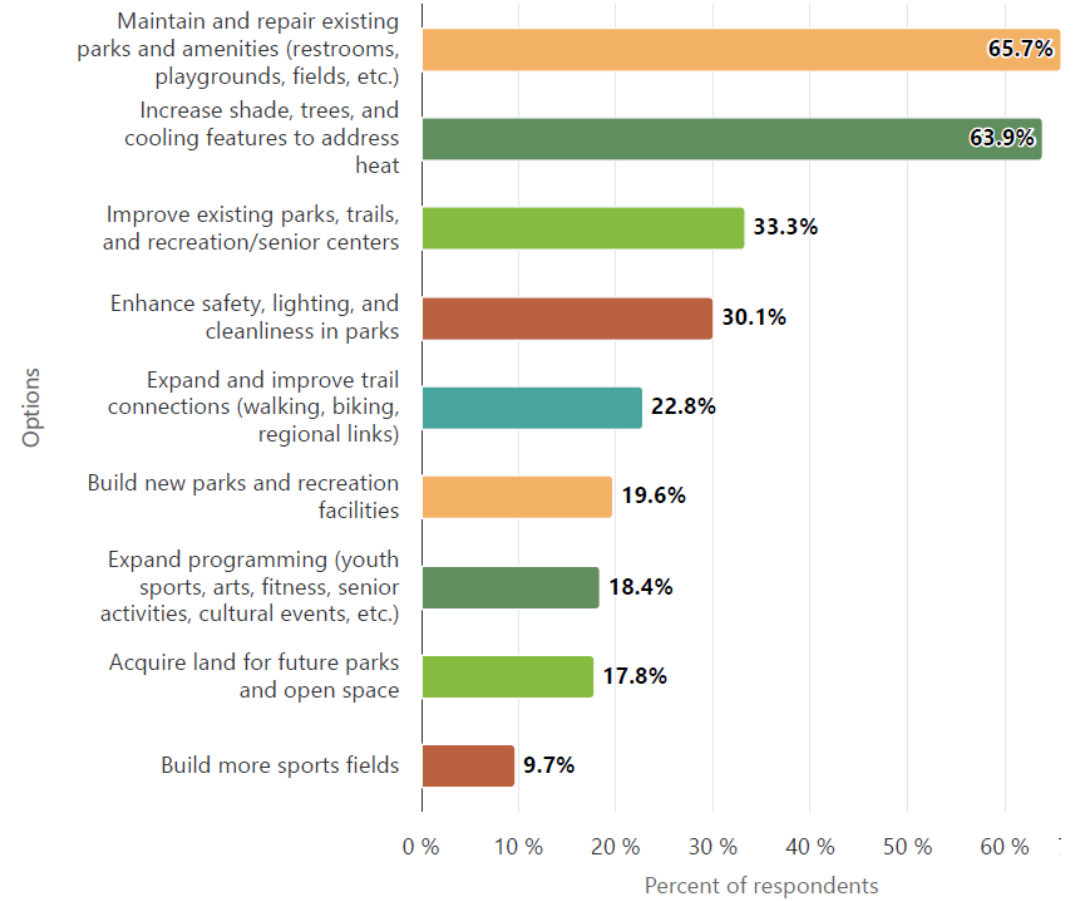
What amenities are most important to you? Select all that apply.

Submitted respondents: 1574
Total respondents: 2371



What should the City of El Paso's top 3 priorities be over the next 10 years? (Select three)

Submitted respondents: 1543
Total respondents: 1593





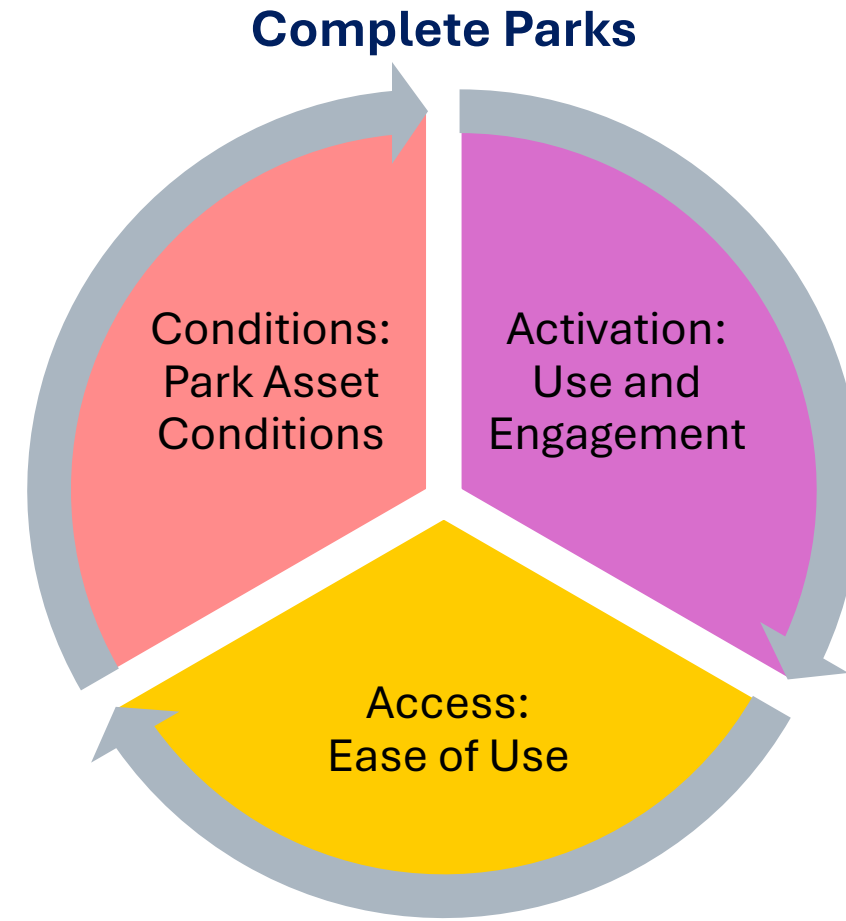
PARK PERFORMANCE

SCORE CARDS

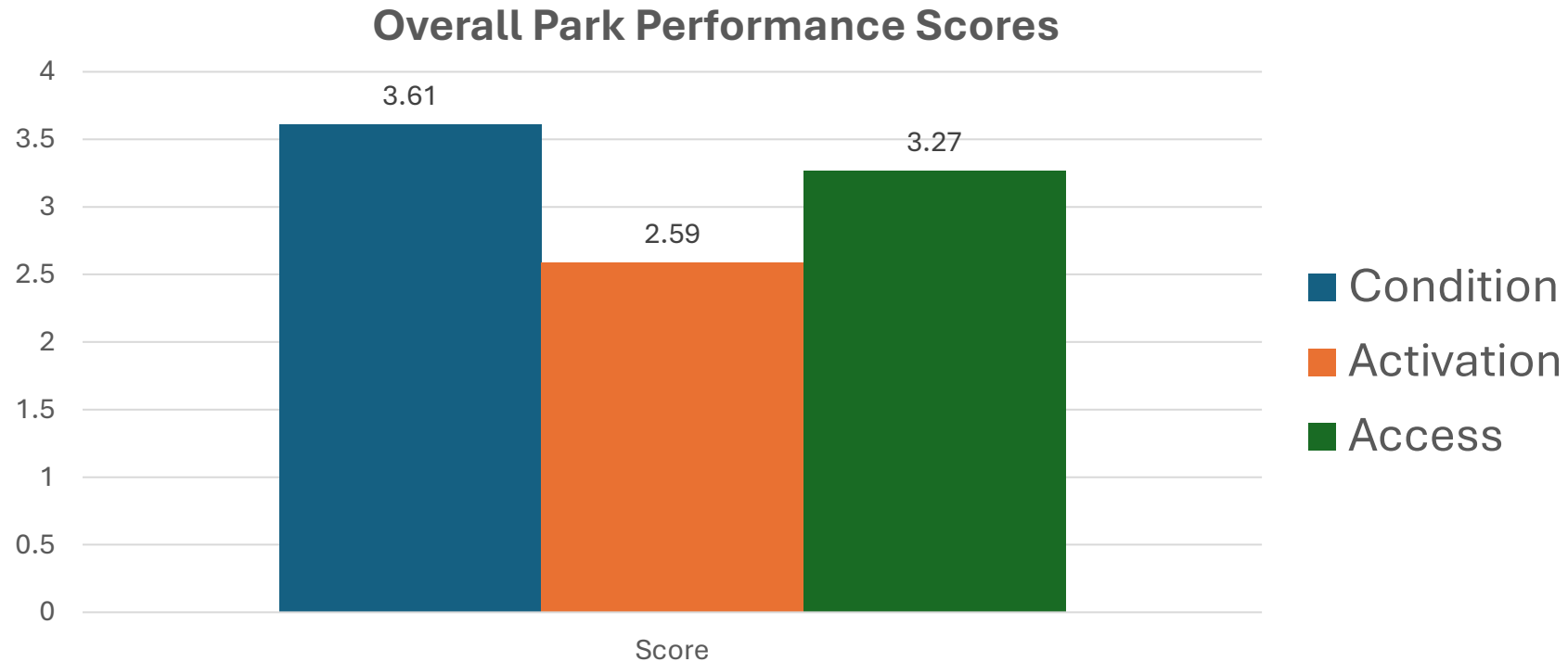
PARK PERFORMANCE INDEX

Evaluate each park not only on physical condition but also on how well it serves the community.

- **Conditions: Asset Conditions** – Physical condition of parkland, amenities, and facilities; identifies maintenance needs and investment priorities.
- **Activation: Use & Engagement** – Measures how well parks support activities, programming, social spaces, and play opportunities for all ages. High scores indicate parks that are vibrant, engaging, and encourage visitors to stay.
- **Access: Ease of Use** – Assesses how easily parks can be reached and navigated by walking, biking, transit, or vehicle; includes circulation, lighting, and hours. High scores reflect parks that are safe, intuitive, and accessible to all users.



BALANCED SYSTEM, LACK OF ACTIVATION



Parks are accessible and are maintained—but they are not fully usable or engaging.

DIRECTION FROM DATA

- Stop spreading amenities thin
- Focus on upgrading existing parks
- Invest in activation and comfort
- Strengthen community parks as hubs



*The system is not failing.
It is underperforming in how it delivers experiences.*

SYSTEM PERFORMANCE KEY THEMES

Distribution Challenge

Amenities and facilities spread too thin

Lack of high-capacity destinations

Fragmented system limits efficiency

Aging infrastructure and deferred maintenance

Activation Challenge

Lack of shade, seating, and lighting

Limited programming and social spaces

Parks don't support sustained use or longer stays

Experience vs. Access

Access is strong geographically

Amenity quality varies by park

Performance differences are systematic

SYSTEM PERFORMANCE TAKEAWAYS

- **System performance reflects distribution challenge, with gaps in activation and features that are spread thin, rather than concentrated to create high-performing destinations.**
 - Activation is the primary system gaps, with most parks lacking comfort amenities like shade, seating, and programming to support need sustained support and repeat use.
 - **Park performance is defined more by experience than infrastructure condition, with differences driven by how parks function rather than whether they exist or are maintained.**
 - Indoor recreation facilities are heavily used but increasingly constrained by limited space, aging infrastructure, and peak demand pressures
- **Strong demand exists for flexible, modern, multi-purpose facilities (fitness, aquatics, community space) that current buildings cannot fully accommodate**
 - Mid-tier parks represent the biggest opportunity, as most sites are functional but under-activated and could be elevated through targeted improvements.
 - **Aquatic facilities are among the most heavily relied-upon recreation assets, with strong demand for swim lessons, water fitness, and family recreation across the system.**
 - Across most sites, the future need is clear: modernized, climate-controlled, and more flexible aquatic centers that improve circulation, comfort, and year-round usability while expanding programming variety.

SYSTEM STRUCTURE REALITY

- Neighborhood Parks
 - Represents majority of the system (58% out of the 100; 70% of all parks)
 - Smaller scale limits ability to support diverse amenities and programming
 - Dispersed footprint impacts to maintenance and operational efficiency
 - Provides good baseline access, but lacks quality and sustained use
- Community Parks
 - Smaller share of the system (27% out of the 100; 10% all 300 parks)
 - Larger sizes supports programming, events, and higher use capacity
 - More efficient to operate and maintain per users served
 - Hubs for recreation, identity, and revenue generation

El Paso's system is designed for distribution and access, not high performance.

WHAT'S MISSING

- Shade / Trees
- Seating / Benches
- Lighting
- Social/gathering spaces
- Multi-age amenities


These are small elements—but they determine whether parks are used or avoided.



PARK SCORE CARDS & PROJECTS

- Each park receives a performance profile
- Identifies condition, activation, and access gaps
- Informs targeted investments and priorities

PARK CONDITION PROFILE BRADEN ABOUD PARK



PARK TYPE: NEIGHBORHOOD ADDRESS: 4325 RIVER BEND DR
SIZE: 13.11 ACRES PLANNING AREA: NORTHWEST

OVERALL PARK SCORE: 3.29 / 5

PARK ACCESS	2.80
PARK ACTIVATION	3.80
PARK CONDITIONS	3.27

PARK AMENITIES

- Open Lawn
- Shaded Playground
- Bleachers
- Dog Waste Bags
- Multi-Use Field
- Lighted Baseball
- Field
- Lighted
- Basketball Court
- Splash Pad
- Shaded Seating
- Shelter Reserve

Braden Aboud Park is in fair condition, with retaining walls in moderate repair. However, perimeter fencing is in poor condition and requires significant attention. The shade structure would benefit from repainting and minor repairs to improve aesthetics and prolong its lifespan. General cleaning and repairs to the basketball court surfacing is recommended as well.

Recommended Projects

Comfort and Shade

- Replace damaged or deteriorated picnic tables.
- Repair and renovate the shade structure over the playground.

Programmed Recreation & Amenities

- Repaint and refresh the splash pad surface and associated play features.
- Install additional skatepark features to expand user skill levels and recreational variety.
- Evaluate opportunities to add new sport courts or expand court-based recreation amenities.

Access, Circulation and Connectivity




- Remove the deteriorated brick pathway near the parking lot and replace with an accessible, durable walkway surface.

Safety & Security

- Repair damaged fencing along the skatepark perimeter.

Sustainability & Landscape Management

- Restore and reestablish deteriorated turf areas to improve usability, appearance, and long-term maintenance.





GOAL ALIGNMENT

GOALS

- The goals are based on two key inputs: community priorities and system performance data.



Community voice

- What people experience



System data

- What the park system shows

SYSTEMWIDE GOALS & DECISION PRINCIPLES

Deliver High-performing, Complete Park Experiences

Right-size and Rebalance The System for Long-term Sustainability and Equity

Strengthen Park Connectivity and Access to Support Daily Use

Build Climate-responsive, Shade-first Park System

Design Recreational Facilities as Inclusive, Flexible and for Multigenerational Use

Restructure Sports and Aquatics Into High-performance Assets

Strengthen Delivery, Operations and Long-term Stewardship

GOAL EXERCISE

(10 minutes)

Worksheet



PRIORITIZATION

FRAMEWORK

PROJECT PRIORITIZATION FRAMEWORK

Not all needs can be addressed at immediately and prioritization ensures investments deliver the greatest system-wide value:

- **Impact drives prioritization** – focusing on equity, community needs, and the ability to improve park performance
- **System considerations ensures balance** – strengthening access and distributing investments across the city
- **Delivery grounds decisions in reality** – Prioritizing projects that are feasible, cost-effective and maintainable

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

- **Comfort & Shade** – Features that improve user comfort, dwell time, and basic usability of the park.
- **Programmed Recreation & Amenities** – Physical features that enable active and passive recreation.
- **Access, Circulation & Connectivity** – How people get to, move through, and connect within and beyond the park.
- **Safety & Security** – Features that improve real and perceived safety.
- **Sustainability & Landscape Management** – Environmental strategies and long-term landscape performance.

ACTION CATEGORY MATRIX

	BASELINE NEEDS	ACTIVATION NEEDS
HIGH	Critical Infrastructure Gaps Fix safety, ADA, and other basic amenities	Investment Opportunity Community wide draw, multiple assets, sports-focused, aquatics-focused
LOW	Maintenance Needs Restore and preserve existing assets	Enhancement / Programming Improve shade, seating, and gathering spaces

PRIORITIZATION DISCUSSION

(10 minutes)

Worksheet

PRIORITIZATION DISCUSSION

Core Improvements

vs.

Parks of Excellence

- Number of parks with critical baseline deficiencies
- Park condition assessment scores
- Park activation scores
- Equity and service gap data
- Number of residents impacted

Many Functional Parks

vs.

Fewer High-Quality Parks

- Geographic distribution of investments
- Access gaps across planning areas current
- Park usage patterns potential regional draw of larger projects
- Number of parks that could be improved within available funding

Incremental Fixes

vs.

Complete Transformation

- Capital cost estimates
- Annual maintenance needs
- Staffing capacity
- Project phasing opportunities
- Long term sustainability and replacement costs

NEXT STEPS

- **Revise goals and begin preparing Action Plan & Recommendations (May-June)**
 - Staff review
 - Steering Committee
- **Take feedback on Action Plan & Recommendations (May-June)**
 - Staff review
 - Steering Committee
- **Draft Report – (August-September)**
 - Staff review
 - Council Briefings
- **Community Meetings – (August)**
 - Share findings, recommendations and projects
- **Public Draft Plan (October)**
- **City Approval (November)**

THANK YOU!

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