



Castle Rock Park

MASTER PLAN 2020



PREPARED FOR:
Parks, Recreation, & Public Lands Department
City of Billings
390 North 23rd St, Billings, MT 59101
406.657.8371
billingsparks.org



APPROVED MASTER PLAN

Adopted xxx

Prepared for



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Prepared by

Cushing Terrell®

13 North 23rd Street
Billings, MT 59101



City Council Adoption Letter



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thank you Billings!

We are indebted to the Billings community for their support, guidance, and valuable input on the Castle Rock Park Master Plan. Since the park was first developed, local groups have continued to donate their time, raise funds, and volunteer towards improving the park. The meaningful input from stakeholder groups and residents reflected how the park is well-loved and will continue to serve the community into the future.



Heights Task Force

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December 17, 2020

Dear Mayor & Council

The Heights Task Force wishes to express its strong support for the Castle Rock Master Plan and to urge Council's adoption of the report when it comes before you. We are excited to see development of Castle Rock Park be a priority for the City and believe the Master Plan represents an important step for the project.

Castle Rock Park is a beautiful 25-acre facility that has been partially developed for decades. With the adoption of the Master Plan, we can move forward as a community to complete the park and make this asset an even more valuable component of the City's park infrastructure. The Master Plan represents months of community input and collaboration to develop a unique Park vision that enhances recreational opportunities in the Heights and offers new amenities to the Billings Community as a whole. The Heights Task Force has been engaged as a partner throughout the planning process, resulting in a meaningful collaboration between City staff and residents. In addition, City staff and Cushing Terrell worked diligently to ensure that input from the entire community was included – an important step, as Castle Rock Park will be a benefit to all of Billings.

The Master Plan discusses a spectrum of funding scenarios, including both sustained public and private investment in Park amenities. While the Task Force does not support hard targets (i.e., \$X private dollars must be raised before \$X public dollars will be spent), we are fully committed to partnering with the City to strategically identify opportunities for private fundraising, private grants, and budgeted public investments. The precise funding sources will vary as opportunities arise, but we hope to work collaboratively over time with the City to accelerate the development of Castle Rock Park. The budgeted destination playground for 2021 will be an important catalyst for an ongoing public-private partnership. We hope the City will identify appropriate funding sources for the event pavilion previously included in the Capital Improvement Plan and return that amenity to the CIP in the next cycle.

Overall, we believe the Master Plan has found the appropriate balance between preserving and improving existing Park amenities and adding new assets – especially an accessible, unique natural playground -- that will be welcomed by the entire City. As one of the largest parks in the City, Castle Rock will surely be one of Billings' premiere recreational facilities. We are grateful that Council was willing to amend the FY2020 budget to fund this Master Planning process and look forward to continuing mutual collaborations going forward.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Owen

Chair, Heights Neighborhood Task Force



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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Castle Rock Park is a quiet storm for community events

The 2020 Castle Rock Park Master Plan is a guiding document to achieve improved park and recreational facilities in the largest park in the growing Heights neighborhood. The primary goal of the Master Plan is for the community to create a vision for a park that meets the needs of the Heights neighborhood and the greater Billings community. This Plan is intended to anticipate and provide for cost effective delivery of facilities and programs in Castle Rock Park. Rapid growth in the Heights neighborhood and voiced community recreational needs instigated the creation of this Master Plan.

Process

Beginning in July 2020, data for the Master Plan was derived from the following investigations: a topographic survey, inventory and assessment of existing conditions, engagement with the public and community groups, personal interviews with stakeholders, assessment of City-wide needs, and collaborative design charrettes. Community involvement and guidance from the Heights Task Force Sub-committee were the most significant influences over the final site plan and recommendations in this Master Plan. After a series of design charrettes with local groups and organizations, a public online survey, stakeholder interviews and public meetings, community feedback was integrated into the park assessments. A draft site plan was presented to the public in October 2020, and after incorporating additional comments, revisions were made and the plan was finalized in November 2020.



“My kids attend both schools located by the park. We enjoy the spray park every summer and Celebrate Freedom there along with soccer, sledding and other activities! We love the park and I know the schools do too.”

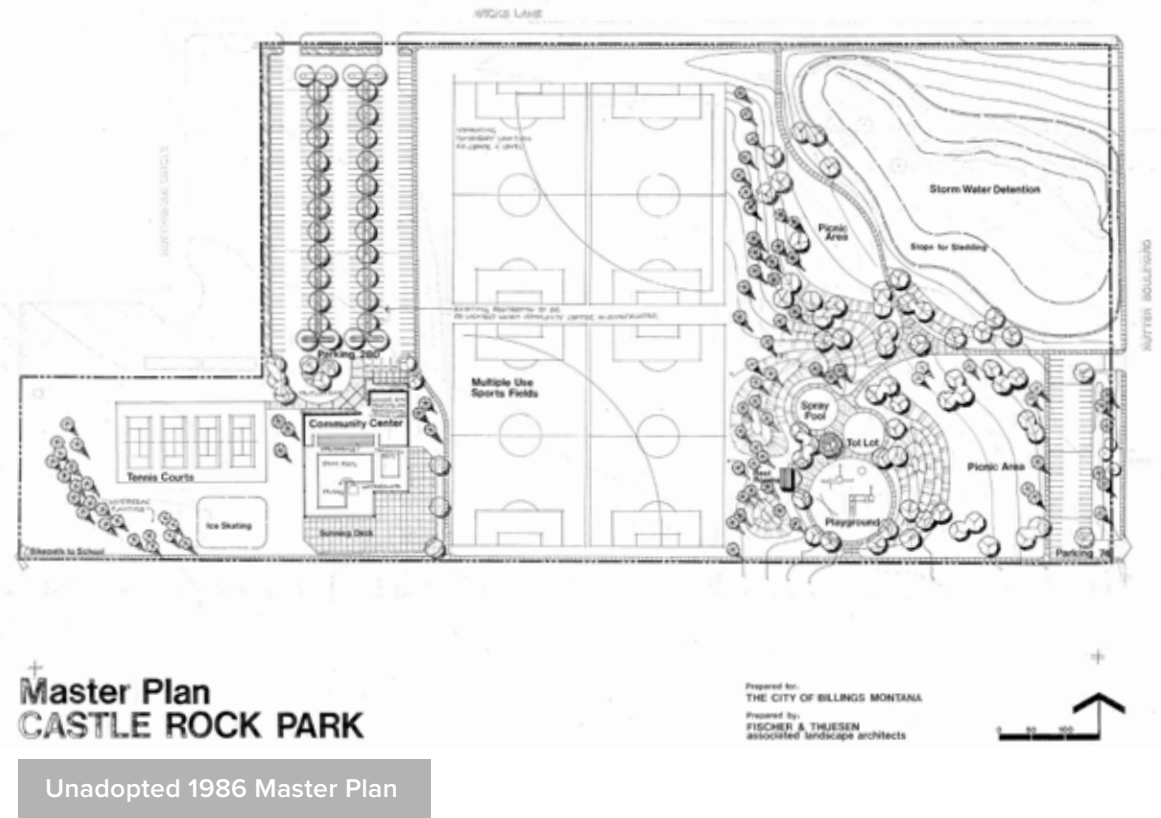
- Comment from Public Survey

Park Background

The first developments to Castle Rock Park were made in 1982, with subsequent improvements being made thereafter. Known as a hot spot for soccer in the 1980s and 1990s, the park drew attention as a potential place for several future amenities due to its size, location, and open areas for development. A site plan for the park was drawn up in 1986 but was never officially adopted by City Council. The need for a public pool at the park has been a point of interest for many years since the 1986 plan was created but has been voted down 3 times on election ballots in Billings.

The most recent additions and upgrades to the park include the stormwater and irrigation pond completed in 2003, the splash pad installed in 2006, and the post-tension tennis courts in 2015. The most popular event held at the park is the Celebrate Freedom 4th of July Fireworks event, which draws people from all over Billings.

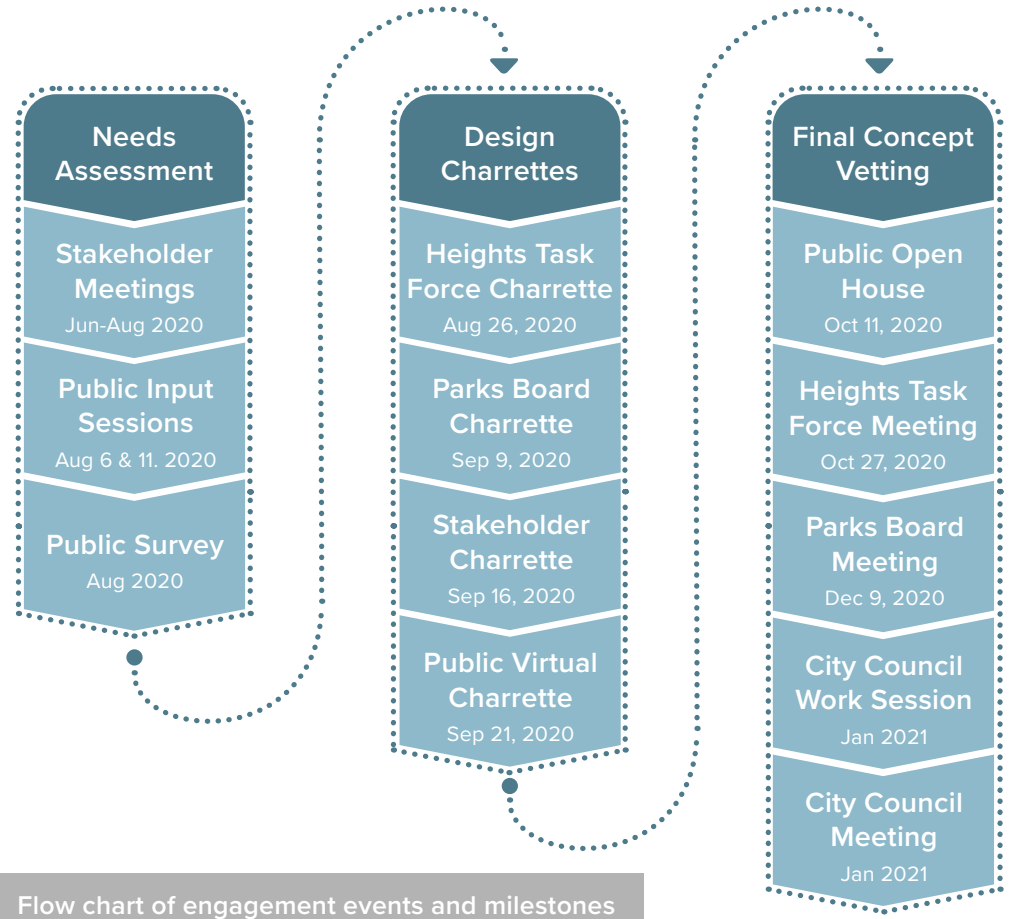
In local planning documents, Castle Rock Park is slated to host a trailhead to connect to nearby trails. Adjacency to schools, residential homes, and West Wicks Lane positions the park in a place to meet essential community needs and continue to form a



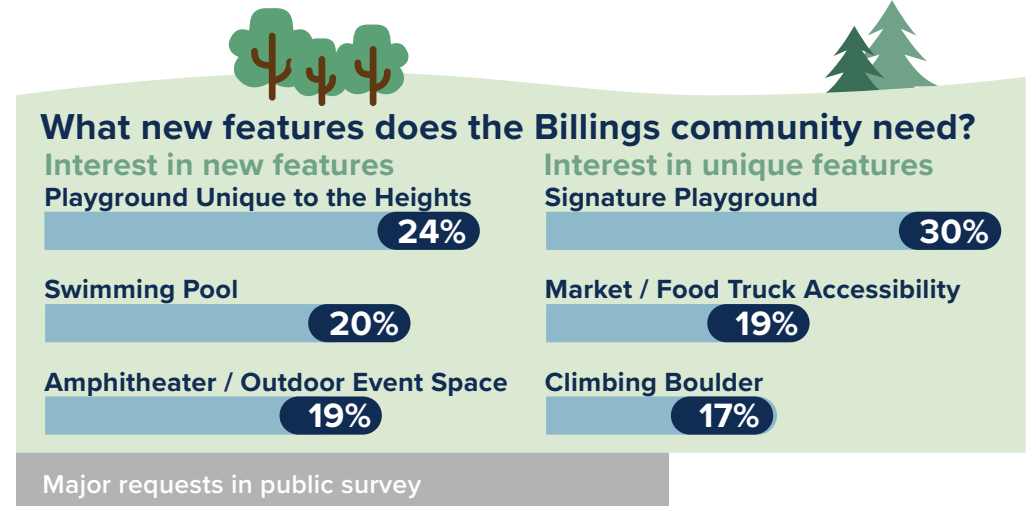
Public Engagement

Involving the public was central to the master plan process. From start to finish, opportunities to provide feedback was accessible via the online comment form on the master plan website, a public survey, virtual meetings, and one in-person event at the park. Updates about public feedback on the site plan was shown on social media, the Billings Parks Department website, and the master plan website. The Heights Task Force and stakeholders such as neighbors, park users, and City staff were heavily involved.

The public survey revealed primary reasons the park is currently used and desires for future amenities and improvements. Major requests were concentrated around a playground, community events, and a swimming pool. These three major components influenced the many iterations of the park site plan.



Flow chart of engagement events and milestones



“I personally use the park on occasion but would love to use it more if there was more to offer.”

“We used the park all the time when my kids were younger in all seasons and weather; sledding, 4th of July, soccer, tennis, splash pad, walking to school.”

“We took my 91 year mother sledding along with our grandchildren.”

- Comments from Public Survey



Open house event at the park in October 2020

Playground & Splash Pad

A composite image featuring a site plan of a playground and splash pad area. The site plan includes labels for 'ADULT EXERCISE EQUIPMENT', 'RESTROOMS', 'SPLASH PAD', 'PLAYGROUND 15,000 SF', and 'SHELTER 25 x 35'. There are also labels for 'EXISTING TENNIS COURTS' and 'stationary equipment with phone chargers at playground, more athletic equipment spread out along sidewalks'. The plan is surrounded by various photos of people using the facilities, including a person on a stationary bike, a person on a splash pad, and a person on a wooden play structure. There are also icons for feedback, such as thumbs up and thumbs down, and a green checkmark. A yellow callout box says 'prefer poured in place surface for inclusive access'.

Playground and splash pad discussion page

Preferred Site Plan

The site plan evolved over many virtual meetings and input from several local groups including the Heights Task Force. Notably the highly requested playground is located next to the existing splash pad to form one complex for children to walk back and forth between the two features. The updated bathrooms are located near the splash pad and playground for ease of convenience for families. The future sports facilities such as pickleball, sand volleyball, and basketball are grouped near the existing tennis courts on the west side of the park.

The grass playing fields are preserved due to heavy input from the public to maintain flexible open space. Shelters are placed around the park to meet the increasing need for covered gathering space.

The east side of the park is envisioned to hold event space and a community center as seen from the public survey results and stakeholder meetings. The desire for community concerts, social events, outdoor movies, and meeting space is reflected in these future amenities. A future indoor pool will be an addition to the community center.



Preferred site plan



Community center



Event pavilion and market space



Natural inspired playground

Phasing & Cost Estimates

To further develop the park, a phasing approach is proposed as an efficient way to implement each new portion. The playground and the event pavilion are the first phases that will stimulate activity and excitement around the park, encouraging future improvements. The playground and event pavilion are seen as critical to community needs and reflects the feedback from public engagement.

Funding sources are depicted in a gradient from public partnerships to financial partnerships. While some public funding can jumpstart the development of the park, other sources are needed to make the improvements in a timely manner. Over the years, Castle Rock Park has received donated time, labor, and materials from local groups and non-profits to make improvements. Private entities, local groups, and grants are examples of sources of funding that would be donated to the City. Financial partnerships are needed to complete the vision of the park.

FUNDING SOURCES

Public Partnerships	Financial Partnerships
---------------------	------------------------

PHASE 1 - PLAYGROUND

Item	Size/Quantity	Total
1. Playground	16,000 SF	\$400,000
2. Climbing Boulders	3	\$45,000
3. Trees	5	\$3,000
4. Boulder Terracing	550 LF	\$44,000
	TOTAL	\$492,000

PHASE 2 - EVENT SPACE

Item	Size/Quantity	Total
1. Event Pavilion	1	\$500,000
2. Amphitheater	1	\$100,000
3. Trees	3	\$1,800
4. Art/Sculpture	1	\$3,000
	TOTAL	\$604,800

Disclaimer: All costs are estimates until items are fully designed.

FUTURE

Item	Size/Quantity	Total
1. Adult Exercise/Fitness Equipment	6 EA	\$15,000
2. Art/Sculpture	1 EA	\$3,000
3. Basketball Court	1 EA (50x94)	\$100,000
4. Bike Racks*	15 EA	\$15,000
5. Community Center	22,000 SF	\$4,730,000
6. Entry Signage*	2 EA	\$30,000
7. Updated Splash Pad	1,200 SF	\$25,000
8. Indoor Pool	10,000 SF	\$4,000,000
9. Information Kiosk & Park Signage*	1 EA	\$20,000
10. Market Space	4,200 SF	\$58,500
11. Paved Parking Lots with Islands*	250 Spaces	\$800,000
12. Pickleball Courts	6 Courts	\$450,000
13. Picnic Seating*	40 EA	\$48,000
14. Pump Track	16,000 SF	\$107,200
15. Restrooms*	1,500 SF	\$412,500
16. Sand Volleyball	1 EA (50x80)	\$12,000
17. Shelters*	5 EA (25x35)	\$250,000
18. Sidewalk Trail Loops*	8,500 LF	\$255,000
19. Trees	37 EA	\$22,200
20. Water Bottle Filler*	1 EA	\$5,000
21. Water Aerator at Pond	1 EA	\$10,000

Bold items indicate deferred maintenance

* Indicates amenities typically provided at trailheads



1996 aerial of Castle Rock Park

2. PARK BACKGROUND



History & Development

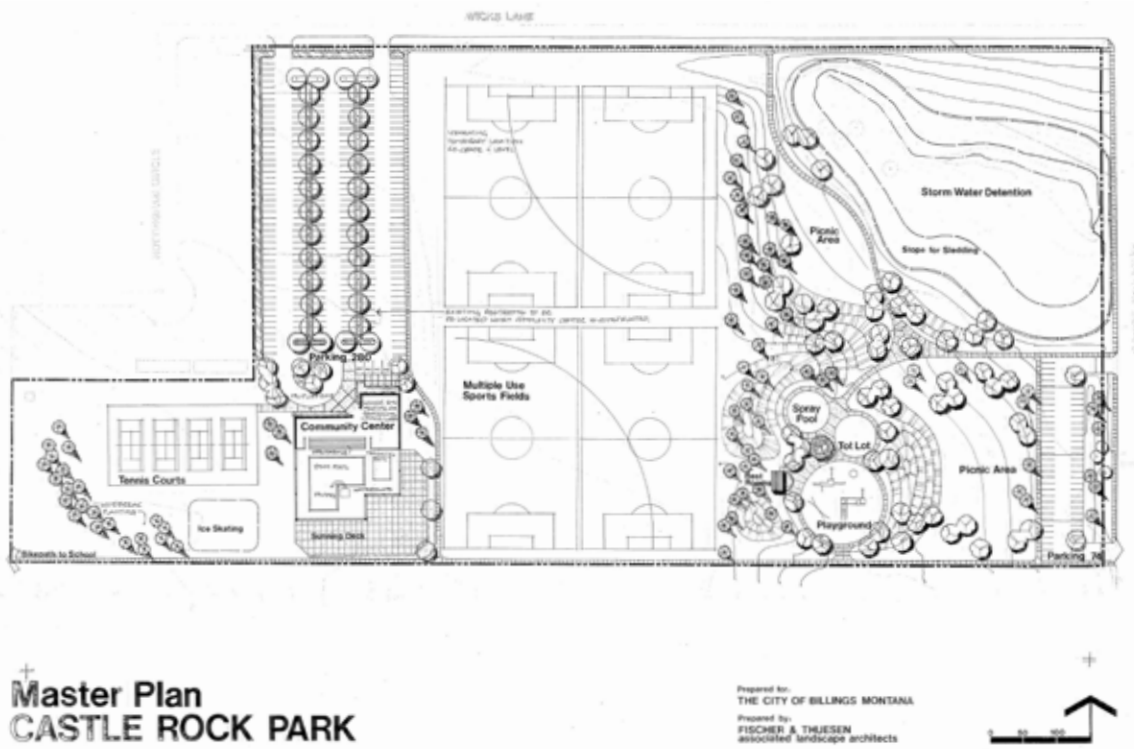
Early Development

Castle Rock Park is a 25-acre community park located in the Heights neighborhood. The property was donated by Ken Hollar to the City of Billings between 1969 and 1971. Hollar helped name the park after the prominent sandstone formations, called castle rocks. The first improvements to the park were made in 1982, which included playing fields, parking, and a playground. Before Amend Park was fully developed, Castle Rock Park held the most playing fields in Billings. It was the most popular venue for soccer practice, tournaments, and clinics for many years, as well as other sports like football and rugby. Funding for tennis courts was approved by City Council in 1984, and the courts were built that same year. In 1985, the Billings Heights Exchange Club completed accessible restrooms for \$12,000, built over the course of two years.

1986 Master Plan and Pool Proposals

A master plan for the park was drawn in 1986 by Fisher & Thuesen Associated Landscape Architects, but it was never adopted by City Council. However, during that same year, a wading pool, irrigation, and a stormwater area at the corner of Wicks Lane and Nutter Boulevard were installed. The wading pool was 60 feet in diameter and featured two concrete porpoises. The excavation of the stormwater area allowed for a hill to be formed; sledding then became a popular winter activity in the park.

As the Heights has steadily grown and was annexed into the City of Billings in 1985, there has been an increasing political and financial pursuit of a pool and community center, which were shown in the 1986 master plan. Heights residents have shown a strong interest in having a pool at Castle Rock Park, and for many years enthusiasm has been regularly seen in survey results, discussed during elections, and voiced by local organizations. The unmet need for a pool led to three separate attempts to fund a pool through increased taxes seen on election ballots; Billings residents voted against the tax increases in 1990, 1999, and 2004. Further reducing aquatic options, the wading pool was closed in 2000 after the city discovered it did not meet updated health code requirements, which required chlorination and filtration.



Master Plan CASTLE ROCK PARK

Unadopted 1986 Master Plan

- 1969 Ken Hollar donates Castle Rock Park to the City of Billings
- 1982 Castle Rock first developed with playing fields, parking, and playground
- 1984 Four tennis courts installed
- 1985 Restrooms added by Billings Heights Exchange Club
- 1986 Master plan completed, irrigation, stormwater area, and wading pool with concrete porpoises installed
- 1987 Playground addition
- 1990 Horseshoe pits added
- 1999 Picnic sites installed
- 2000 Wading pool ordered to be closed due to lack of chlorination and filtration
- 2003 Stormwater area is upgraded to pond
- 2004 Voters strike down 3rd attempt for swimming pool bond
- 2005-2008 Billings East Sunrise Rotary Club plants trees and shrubs, sidewalk and soft trail is added
- 2006 Splash pad installed
- 2010 Tennis courts close
- 2015 Tennis courts are reconstructed with post-tension concrete
- 2020 Master plan initiated

Splash Pad and Pond Developments

Soon after voters rejected the last pool funding option on the 2004 ballot, the Heights Task Force advocated for a new spray ground. The wading pool was removed, and the currently existing splash pad was completed in 2006. The splash pad has been featured in local newspapers and is frequented by many families with young children and daycares.

The detention pond in the northeast corner of the park property received much attention in the early 2000s. It was updated into a combination stormwater and irrigation pond in 2003, collecting stormwater from Wicks Lane and irrigating the park and adjacent school properties. The pond was sized to capture 13.2 acre-feet, and dynamite was used to excavate the pond to the appropriate depth needed for water storage. Landscape architect Jolene Rieck was hired in 2004 to design options to further develop the pond. Through a grassroots community effort of local donations and volunteer work, trees, shrubs, and a crushed stone trail have been installed around the pond.

Community Events and Tennis Court Reconstruction

Common community events that have been hosted at the park include movie nights, Easter egg hunts held by local churches, and the Reading Rocks school lunch program. Celebrate Freedom, a community event with a 4th of July fireworks display and family activities, has attracted thousands each year since Harvest Church started hosting the event in 2002.

The tennis courts came into disrepair and were closed around 2010. Emergency funding for post-tension concrete was used to reconstruct the courts in 2015. Youth lessons, team practices, and high school competitions occur at the courts. The tennis court reconstruction was the last major improvement to the park.



Castle Rock Park Pond



Tennis Court Reconstruction

Initiating the Master Plan

Through both professional evaluation and continued public feedback over several years, Castle Rock Park is described as containing limited amenities despite it being the largest park in the Heights neighborhood. With desirable natural features and a large population surrounding the park, it has high potential for successful additions and improvements. The need for further development of Castle Rock Park was identified by the Parks, Recreation, and Cemetery Board as a priority in their 10-year development plan in 2017. A master plan for Castle Rock Park was recommended in the 2017 Parks, Recreation and Public Lands Comprehensive Parks and

Recreation Master Plan to address deficiencies and community needs. Significant public input was solicited for the Castle Rock Park Master Plan because the park serves the entire Billings community. The procedure outlined in the Billings Park Master Plan Policy describes two required public meetings and subsequent review by City of Billings staff, the Parks, Recreation, and Cemetery Board, and lastly City Council. When the 1986 master plan for Castle Rock Park was left unadopted by City Council while community needs in the park accumulated, the need for a new assessment of the park became apparent. The adoption of the master plan by City Council leverages new development and provides a clear road map of park improvements for the next 20-30 years.



2019 Aerial of Castle Rock Park



Park Inventory & Analysis

Features and Amenities

Major features and amenities are identified on the map on the following page. The terrain of the park is roughly divided into three tiers, separated by linear arrangements of trees and sloped areas that are oriented north and south. A topographical survey shows a 65-foot elevation change from the western high point to the eastern low point, which is the pond. Actively engaging features are on the west side of the park, where the splash pad, tennis courts, and restrooms are located. Grass playing fields are seen in the central tier, and passive amenities such as picnic tables, a grill, the pond, and horseshoe pits are found on the east side of the park. Most features and amenities are in overall very good condition. Improvements to the restrooms and parking lots would increase comfort and efficiency.

Internal Circulation and Mobility

Sidewalk connections are lacking between the tiers, limiting pedestrian mobility across the park. Public sidewalks paralleling Wicks Lane and Nutter Boulevard provide perimeter access around the park. Two parking lots servicing the park are ideally accessible away from the intersection of Wicks Lane and Nutter Boulevard for safe vehicular access. The west parking lot allows space for turning around, however the east parking lot is narrow and restrictive in maneuvering. ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) parking spaces are seen in both the west and east parking lots. Parking stalls are unmarked, resulting in an inefficient configuration.

“We go there to fly kites and sled. Love the wide open space and well-kept grass. We also are regular attendees of Celebrate Freedom, which really shows off the park’s size and versatility.”

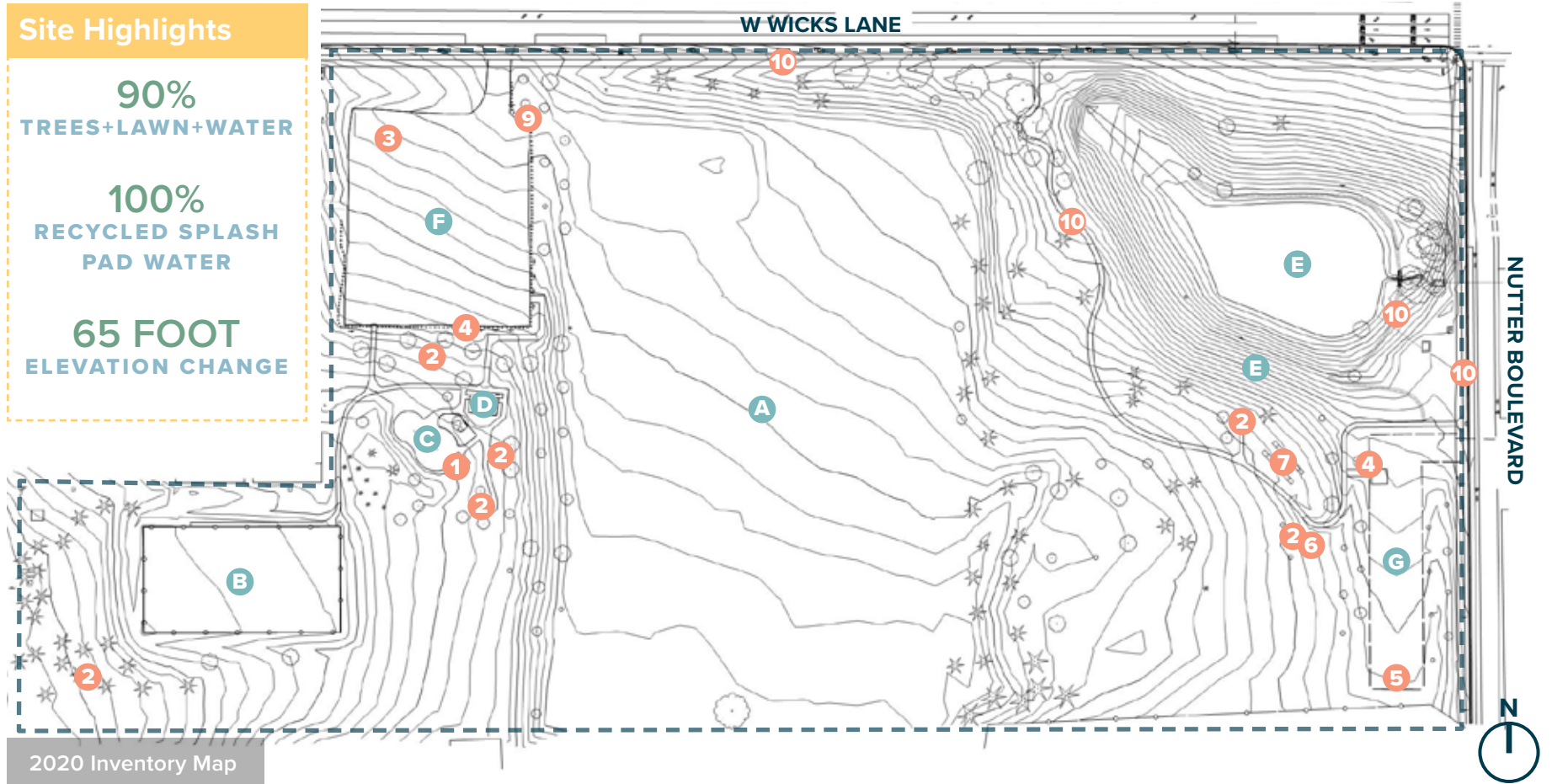
- Anonymous comment from the public survey

Events and Programs

Castle Rock Park has been an anchor for community events and programs for several years. Athletic competitions, school programs, and Celebrate Freedom are the most notable and longstanding events at the park. Club sports, Billings YMCA, and Big Sky State Games have hosted athletic practices, leagues, and competitions at the park. Billings Public Schools typically use the park for middle school cross country, high school girls and boys tennis, outdoor learning sessions, and a summer reading program called Reading Rocks. Celebrate Freedom, a community event with a 4th of July fireworks display and family activities, has attracted much attention and support since Harvest Church started hosting the event in 2002. Local churches and volunteer groups have held various Easter egg hunts, family friendly events with food and crafts, outdoor movies, and the Youth Bicycle Rodeo, where free bicycles are given away to children. Community events are restricted by limited access to electricity and park facilities. Castle Rock Park has been used as a drop off and grinding location for downed branches after storms, and a trash drop off during a strike by Solid Waste workers in 2004. Public candidate forums have been held at the park.

Major Features	Qty	Condition	Notes
A Playing Fields	3-4	Very Good	total playable area 430 feet x 660 feet
B Tennis Courts	4	Excellent	reconstructed in 2015
C Splash Pad	2000 SF	Very Good	6 above-ground features and 5 below ground features
D Restrooms	1	Poor	men's and women's, no stall doors
E Sledding Hill / Pond	1	Fair	muddy on lower slope
F West Parking Lot	1	Fair	asphalt millings, no stalls delineated, boulders line the perimeter
G East Parking Lot	1	Fair	gravel, no stalls delineated, metal railings line the perimeter

Amenities	Qty	Condition	Notes
1 Shade Shelter	1	Very Good	18 feet x 24 feet, two picnic tables
2 Picnic Tables	8	Excellent	aluminum
3 Recycling Bin	1	Very Good	aluminum cans and newspaper
4 Trash Bins	2	Fair	plastic with steel rack
5 Dumpster	1	Fair	extra large, front loading
6 Grill	1	Good	charcoal
7 Horse Shoe Pits	2	Good	stakes need repair
8 Trees	190	Varies	112 deciduous, 78 evergreen
9 Bike Rack	1	Poor	aged, freestanding
10 Sidewalk / Trail	4476 LF	Excellent	2062 LF of street sidewalk, 1844 LF of internal sidewalk, 570 stone trail

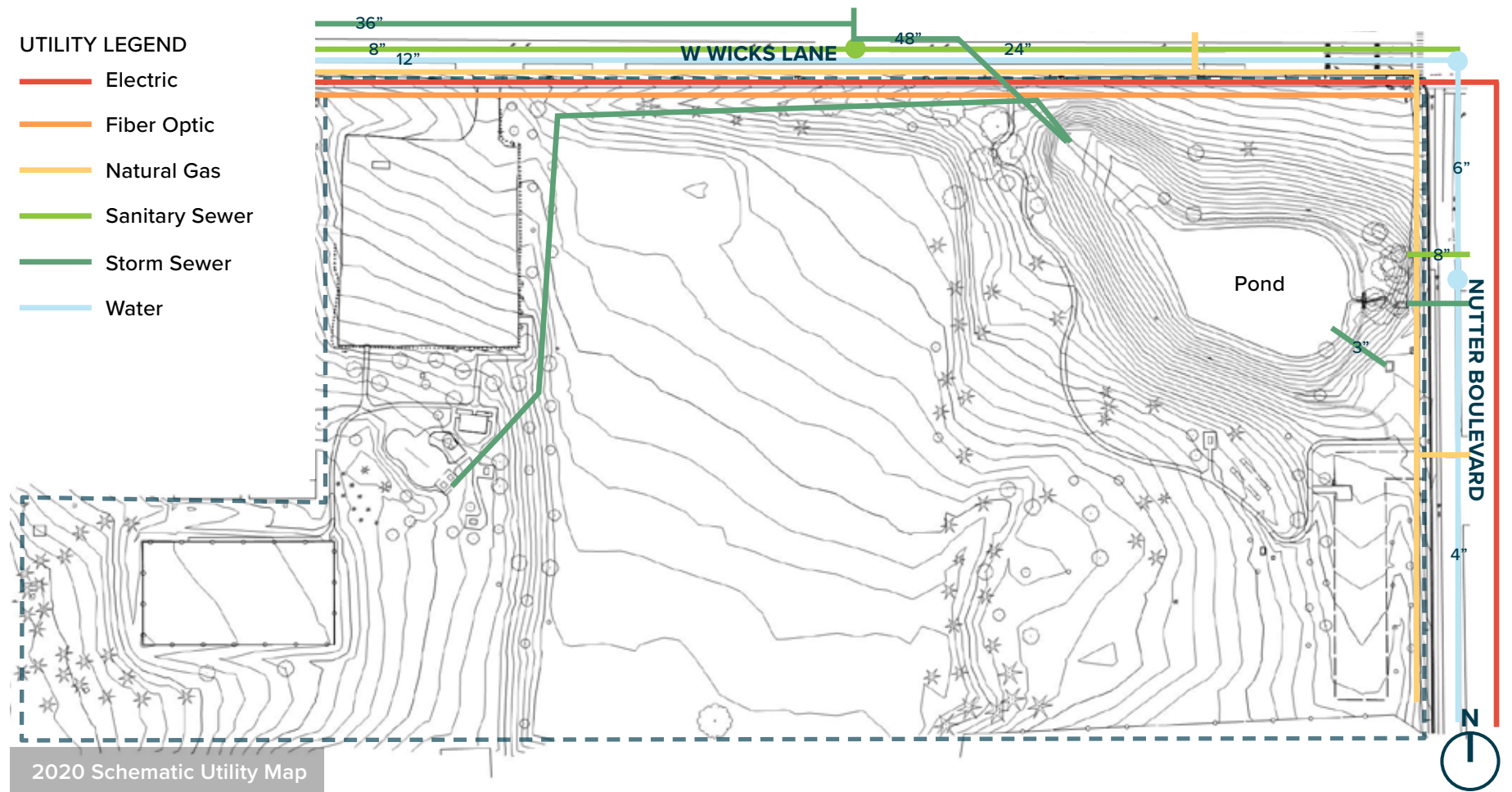


Existing Utilities

The park contains natural gas, overhead power, and fiber optic lines around the perimeter of the park. Storm sewer, sanitary sewer, and domestic water lines are located under Wicks Lane and Nutter Boulevard. Future development requiring utility connections would be accessible, though extensions from remote areas of the park could be required and costly.

Stormwater Infrastructure

Regarding stormwater on the park property, 90% of the materials on site are pervious. The pond, designed to capture stormwater and be used as an irrigation source, receives water from multiple sources. Offsite stormwater from Wicks Lane and other public infrastructure is directed into the pond. Water is pumped from the local irrigation canal into the pond every spring, and water from the splash pad drains into the pond to be recycled as irrigation water. Natural plantings surround the edge of the water to deter swimmers in the warm months, and the pond is drained every winter as a safety precaution during winter sledding to prevent risk of drowning.



Park Context and Analysis

Land Use and Development Context

Castle Rock Park is situated near several residential neighborhoods, churches, daycares, and schools. The north boundary of the park is formed by Wicks Lane, an arterial street that is expected to receive increased traffic due to job and residential growth west of the park. The park is in an ideal location for improvements and investment due to the high number of homes and school age children that are in close proximity to the park. The nearby schools, Castle Rock Middle School and Sandstone Elementary, generate traffic and pedestrian use in the area. Skyview High School is located about 1 mile west of the park. The park benefits the schools, providing outdoor learning space and recreational opportunities.

While there are few commercial developments nearby, transportation facilities may expand in the future to accommodate growth to the west. Two small groups of properties north of the intersection of Governors Boulevard and Wicks Lane and adjacent to the intersection of Babcock Boulevard and Wicks Lane are the nearest commercial lands. The completion of the Inner Belt Loop is forecast to intensify use on Wicks Lane.

Several acres of undeveloped land are located within a mile of the park that is primarily zoned residential with a few commercial properties. When nearby properties are developed, Castle Rock Park could receive increased and longer visits. Extensive future development in the park vicinity could warrant additional needs assessments and traffic studies for the community.



Current land uses and development

Existing Level of Service

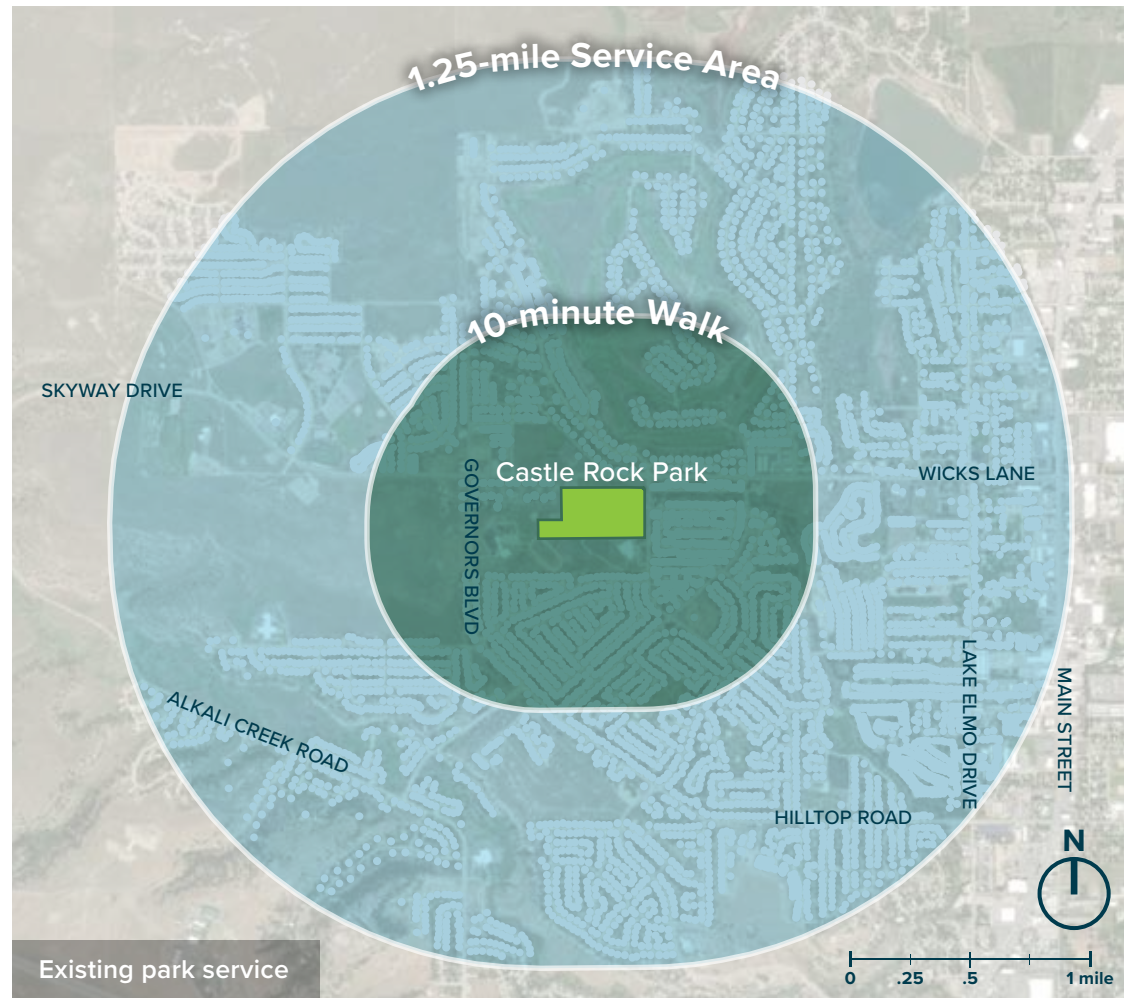
In the 2017 Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan, a general 1.25-mile service radius was calculated for Castle Rock Park. The radius was determined by existing amenities in the park, and does not represent the full population or locations that are served by the park. Level of service is an indicator or tool for investigating equitable park facilities across Billings. An estimated 15,725 residents live within the 1.25-mile service radius, which is roughly half the population of the Heights neighborhood. Upon improvements and added amenities, this service area could increase to reach more residents.

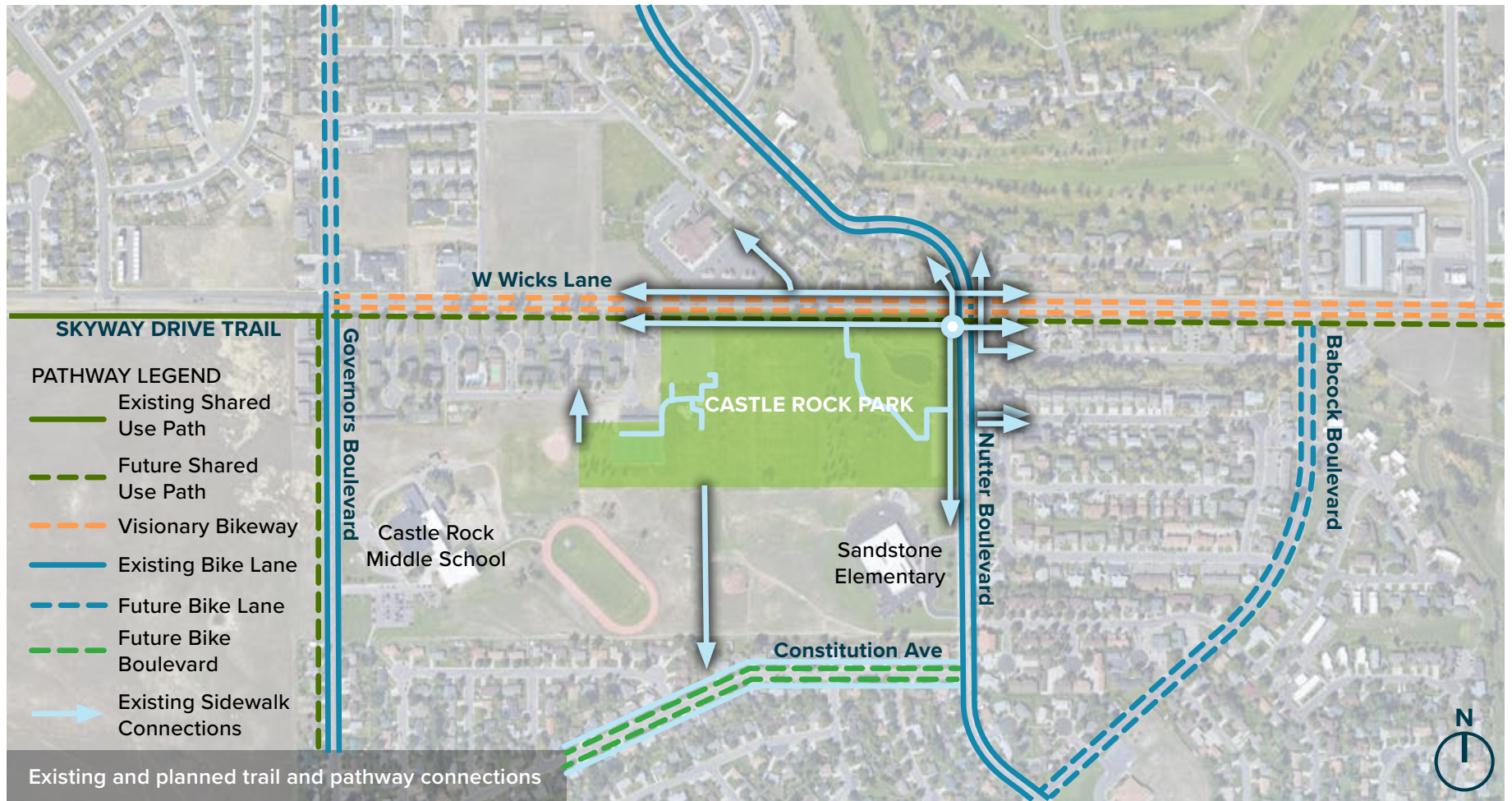
The 10 Minute Walk campaign is a national movement to increase access to parks and green spaces. Approximately 5,031 residents are within a 10-minute walking distance of Castle Rock Park, which is a distance about half of a mile. The goal of the campaign is for 100% of Americans living in cities to safely access a park or green space within a 10-minute walk by the year 2050. To aid in achieving this goal, sidewalk and trail accessibility to the park could be analyzed within the shaded area.

Once developed, the undeveloped land within proximity to the park could increase the number of residents that access the park. Each individual park feature has a service radius that is depicted in the 2017 Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Unreached portions of the map represent areas that may be reviewed to see if potential additional facilities at Castle Rock Park could extend the existing level of service.

Trail and Park System Context

Identified as a community park in the 2017 Parks, Recreation and Public Lands Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan, Castle Rock Park often attracts visitors from all over the Billings community. Its relationship to nearby parks is primarily limited by lack of sidewalks, trails, and bikeways. A strong connection with High Sierra Park and the High Sierra Disc Golf was created by the Skyway Trail, which links the two parks. Navigational obstacles such as the irrigation ditch and golf course limit connections from Castle Rock Park to other parks. Sidewalks exist along Wicks Lane and Nutter





and a bike lane exists on Nutter Boulevard. Future plans for more bikeways and trails are seen in the 2017 Billings Area Bikeway and Trails Master Plan, which identifies Castle Rock Park as a location for a future major trailhead. The intersection at Wicks Lane and Nutter Boulevard has two crosswalks that are the only designated crossings across traffic for the northern and eastern neighborhoods. Neighborhood access is easily accommodated from the south with a sidewalk along Nutter and a newly installed sidewalk on school property from Constitution Avenue to the southern border of the park. Western neighborhoods can cross safely at the intersection of Wicks Lane and Governors Boulevard to reach the park. Access through and next to the park is important to the nearby schools, where students are walking or biking to and from school.

Improved sidewalk and pathway connections to nearby parks, neighborhoods, and prominent trails could enhance overall safety and satisfaction, increase park use, and accommodate increased use from future park amenities. The development of a trailhead at Castle Rock Park would justify additional amenities and further attract more visitors from around the Billings community to use the park and Skyway Drive Trail. Improvements to the park could also bolster interest in developing the nearby vacant lands. Bikeway improvements that could better link the park to the Alkali Creek Trail Corridor are the bicycle boulevard planned on Constitution Avenue and the bike lane planned on Babcock Boulevard.

Relevant Planning Documents

Castle Rock Park is present in several planning documents for the City of Billings. Summaries of relevant information regarding Castle Rock Park are listed below in the following planning documents:

2006 West Heights Storm Drainage Master Plan

The stormwater pond in the northeast corner of the park is described as essential and needs to remain. The pond is very important to the West Heights storm drainage system as it collects runoff from as far away as Skyview High School and detains it prior to discharge downstream.

2006 Billings Heights Neighborhood Plan

The Heights population has accounted for a large portion of the growth in Billings. Public safety priorities included: emergency access, safe routes to schools, street lighting, trail corridor connections and review of the Billings trail system, and pedestrian connections between schools, parks, and neighborhoods. Transportation priorities included assessment of traffic congestion and flow, route connectivity, non-motorized facilities, and review of the Billings Long Range Transportation Plan. In a neighborhood survey, the need for a community center was identified. Playground safety surfacing and a 3-season picnic facility are mentioned as improvements to be built specifically at Castle Rock Park. Relating specifically to parks and recreation, park signage, a lack of recreational facilities, and a family aquatic center are mentioned as needs or items to consider.

2016 Billings Growth Policy

Essential investments listed in the growth guidelines include developed parks that provide recreation, special amenities, and active living opportunities which are desirable for an attractive and healthy community. Several objectives for placemaking and a strong community fabric included references to parks. More places to enjoy trees, a variety of parks, more natural areas, community gardens, street trees, pedestrian lighting, and trails were some of the park-related objectives. For growth scenarios just west of Castle Rock Park, new community parks were placed 3 miles apart, indicating residents should have access to a community park every 3 miles.

2017 Parks, Recreation and Public Lands Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan

The need for a master plan of Castle Rock Park is identified. Perceived underserved segments of the community included soccer fields in the

Heights. Through a task time analysis on maintenance operations, it was discovered that 42% of the workday for an average park maintenance person is spent traveling between parks and unloading and loading equipment. The lack of a satellite maintenance yard for the Heights was described, and it was recommended that a maintenance yard be built in the Heights to improve efficiency. Equity mapping revealed potential amenities for study that could be considered at Castle Rock Park, including a ball diamond with 90-foot bases, a playground, reservable large picnic shelters, a skate park an indoor swimming pool, and a recreation/senior center. Notable findings in the survey were that usage of parks and trails were high, satisfaction of condition and quality of parks and trails were below national average, participants felt the parks and recreation system makes Billings a more desirable place to live, trails and adult fitness are highly important to Billings residents, covered picnic shelters are highly valued, and unmet needs exist equally for both programs and facilities. Based on desired activities by Billings residents, the survey results found that facilities with the most priority include:

- Walking and Biking Trails
- Aquatic Facilities in Community Parks
- Multi-Generational Recreation Center
- Outdoor Recreation Amenities
- Neighborhood and Community Parks
- Ice Rink
- Off-Leash Dog Park
- Accessible Entry Points to Lakes and Rivers

Based on population growth and level of service standards, the following were identified as focus areas for development:

- Community parks
- Reservable large picnic shelters
- Ball diamonds
- Regulation sports fields
- Dog parks
- Both indoor and outdoor swimming pools
- Recreation/senior center

2017 Billings Area Bikeway and Trails Master Plan

A major trailhead, a long-range bikeway along Wicks Lane, and a shared use path on the south side of Wicks Lane are depicted in the recommendations surrounding Castle Rock Park. Shared use paths typically allow for two-way travel that is off-street, and the shared used path on Wicks Lane is identified as a near-term project. Through new or improved pathway links, major trails that could better connect to Castle

Rock Park include Skyway Drive Trail, Alkali Creek Trail Corridor, and the major trail planned along the irrigation ditch. Chapter 4 page 6 describes, “Major trailheads are gathering points with high usage located at iconic destinations that trail users would typically drive to. They typically have a larger number of amenities that include:

- Parking including Pedestrian access
- Restrooms
- Drinking fountain
- Shelter with seating
- Bike rack
- Trail Information kiosk including: Maps, Trail rules and protocol, and an Information posting area
- ADA accessibility to the site and amenities
- Trash and pick up stations for animal waste

These trailheads would typically be located 3 to 5 miles apart along the Marathon Loop Trail system and at major centers within the City such as at Community and Regional Parks, mass transit hubs, the zoo, major shopping, employment and entertainment centers, etc.”

2018 Billings Urban Area Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)

The strongest concentrations of population and housing were identified in the Heights and west of downtown Billings. Infill is projected to occur in the Heights. Population growth and new jobs are expected west of Castle Rock Park. Between 2013 and 2017, a few reported vehicle crashes and one bicycle crash were shown along Wicks Lane, though no pedestrian crashes were shown near the park. The intersection of Wicks Lane and Governors Boulevard was identified as potentially congested during peak hours. The LRTP recommends building a multi-use trail from Governors Boulevard to BBWA Canal as shown on page 123 and that sidewalks be installed in the neighborhoods north of Wicks Lane on page 158.

2018 Yellowstone County Sports Facility Feasibility

The goal of the study was to identify competitive facilities that could support both the growing local demand for sports and generate economic benefit by attracting competitive regional events. Local and regional sports groups felt that current facilities in Yellowstone County are not meeting demand. Sports seasons are shortened by limited indoor options and outdoor amenities such as lighting and artificial turf. High school swimming and diving has seen the most participation growth in the past 10 years, and the sports with most long-term potential growth are ice hockey, swimming and diving, and lacrosse. Soccer and baseball were rated as the most established sports. Sports facility needs that were identified include:

- A facility that can host large, regional swim meets
- Additional and improved outdoor grass fields
- Indoor, multi-court facilities
- Additional ice rink facility

Billings has potential to become an ideal, primary host for destination sports facilities due to being the most populous market within an 8-hour drive and having affordable hotel rates with nearby outdoor tourism. South Billings was identified as having market potential for a publicly-owned and privately-operated competitive sports facility.

2019 South Billings Aquatic & Recreation Center, Master Plan & Feasibility Study

Part of this study included identifying a site for a future competitive, indoor sports facility in the South Billings area. The destination facility design considered the regional market and local community needs. Within a 45-min drive of Billings, the sports found to have the fastest shrinking participation were golf, softball, and football. Exercise walking, exercise with equipment, and swimming were the top three activities with the most anticipated growth in the Billings area. The property next to Amend Park was determined to be the most appropriate site for a regional sports hub.

Areas for Investigation

From studying the history, physical characteristics, and context of Castle Rock Park, the following focus areas were determined to be appropriate topics for investigation during public outreach and stakeholder meetings:

- Needs identified in the comprehensive parks plan, including trail, aquatic, and recreation needs
- Billings community needs, including event and family needs
- Sports group needs including the value of grass playing fields
- Future trail, trailhead, and traffic projects
- Potential school connections, including safe routes to schools
- Potential neighborhood connections
- Celebration of natural features
- Utility and stormwater pond facilities, including green infrastructure

3. PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

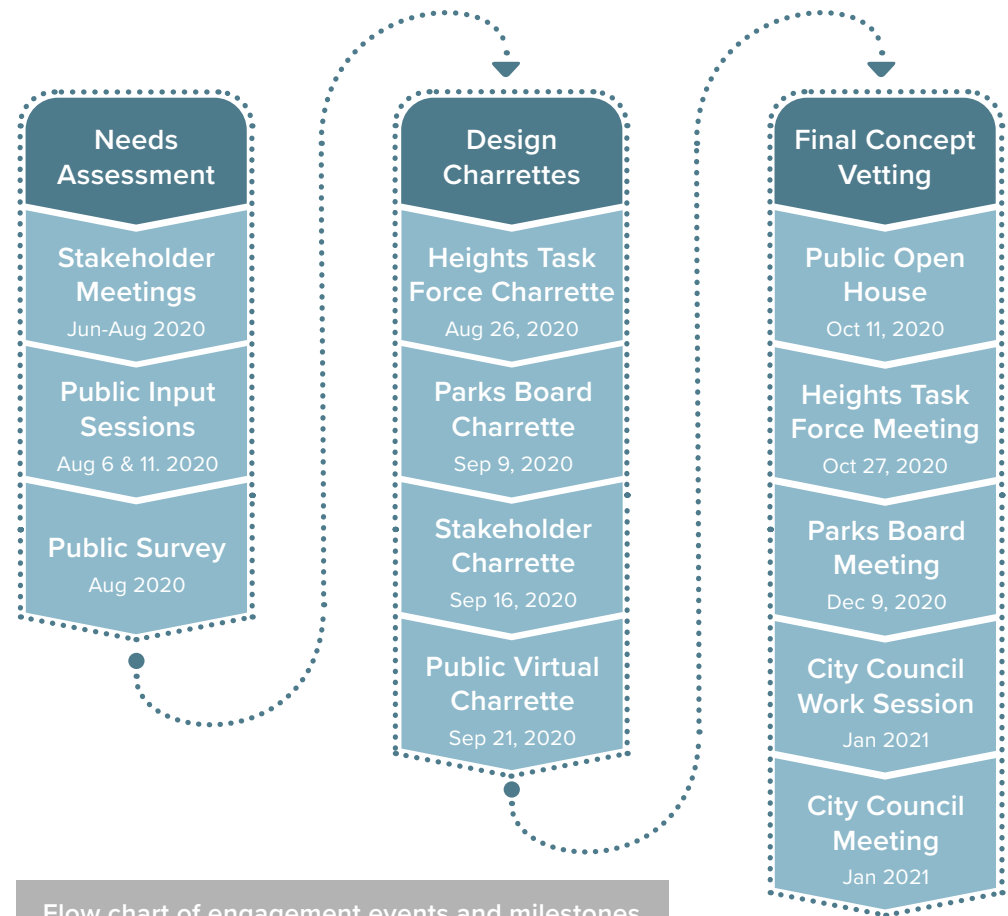


Billings residents voiced their need for a pool, community center, playground, and events.

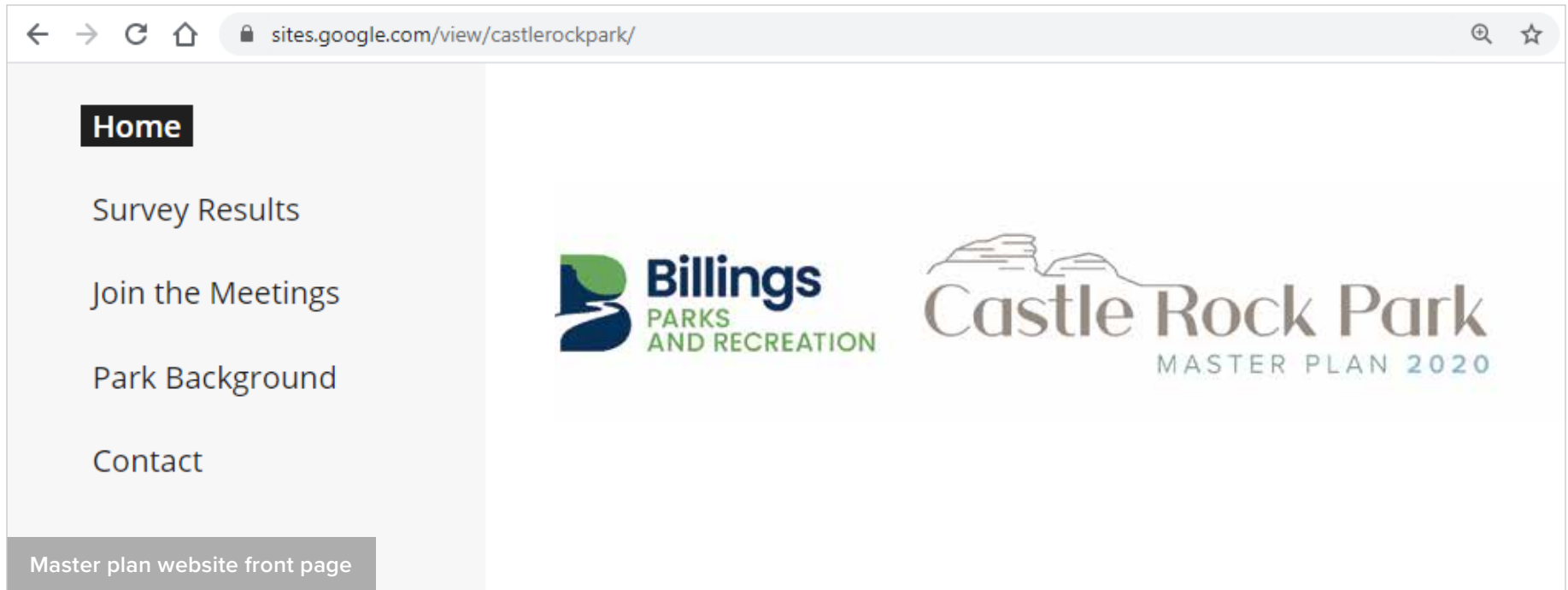
Public Engagement Process

Extensive public engagement took place over a 6-month period in 2020, with primarily virtual events, an online public survey, and one in-person event. The design team would especially like to thank all of the stakeholders and residents that were interviewed and gave expert knowledge and meaningful input that is reflected in this plan. Public engagement phases were comprised of needs assessment, design charrettes, and final concept vetting. The majority of outreach was virtual as a safety precaution due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Public engagement began with identifying and contacting stakeholder groups to schedule interviews. Groups with strong interest and heavy investment such as neighbors, city staff, and the Heights Task Force were among the first stakeholders to be engaged. Early input from stakeholders combined with site assessment led to the launch of the public survey and park video on the master plan website, which introduced the project to the public.



Flow chart of engagement events and milestones



Outreach Platforms

Communication about the master plan process was delivered through a website, email, social media, public advertisements in newspapers, and a video. Virtual events, the survey, and park information was accessible on the website. At any point during the process, the public could send feedback via a “contact us” form on the master plan website.

The video was created in 3 parts and illustrated the master plan process, introducing the public and stakeholders to the project and informing them of feedback and progress. Each of the 3 parts of the video highlighted a milestone in master plan: needs assessment, design sessions, and the preferred site plan with artistic renderings.

Social media and local websites with calendars were used to advertise virtual events. The Billings Parks and Recreation website hosted a web page with information about the master plan, and the Heights Task Force heavily promoted participation in the master plan process on their public Facebook page.



Screenshot of master plan video

Needs Assessment

To gain an understanding of community needs, the design team conducted stakeholder interviews, held two public input sessions, and hosted a survey online. The needs assessment phase provided a variety of ways for the public to provide feedback. The Heights Task Force formed a sub-committee that provided guidance on identifying community needs and the direction of the park design.

Stakeholders

Conversations with stakeholders were primarily informal discussions using aerials, photographs, and existing planning documents as visual aids. Local groups and organizations that contributed to this plan include:

- Better Billings Foundation
- Billings Fire Department
- Billings Parks, Recreation, & Cemetery Board
- Billings Pickleball Association
- Billings Planning Division
- Billings Police Department
- Billings Public Works, Engineering Division
- Billings Public Works, Street-Traffic Division
- Billings School District 2
- Billings Scorpion Lacrosse
- Billings Trailnet
- Castle Rock Apartment Homes
- Castle Rock Middle School
- Heights Task Force
- Oasis Water Park
- Pedal United
- Sandstone Elementary School
- Yellowstone Valley Citizens Council

Public Input Sessions

The two public input sessions were virtually held, and input was collected using a Google Jamboard - online software where meeting participants could use drawing tools and post character images, much like an in-person meeting would be held around a large map with pens and sticky notes. In the virtual meetings, the video was shown to introduce the project, and chat features were used to queue questions, comments, and discussion topics. Large groups were divided into groups, if needed, to facilitate smaller group conversations, which was concentrated around the following questions:

- What do you use Castle Rock Park for?
- What needs to be improved or removed from Castle Rock Park?
- What new or additional items does the park need?

The meetings were well-attended, and generally input was consistent with the public survey results.



Digital sticky notes from a public input session

Public Survey

The online public survey was live for two months and received an overwhelming 391 responses. Online software called Poll Everywhere was used to collect responses. The infographics on the following pages summarize the survey results, but the top themes and needs that emerged through all engagement channels were:

- A unique playground to the Heights
- An indoor pool
- An updated restroom facility
- Preservation of the grass playing fields
- Paved and striped parking lots
- Community center meeting space
- A need for picnic shelters
- An outdoor amphitheater/community event space
- Improvements to the sledding hill
- New pickleball courts
- Internal walking loops

Many personal stories and positive remarks were shared in the survey results.

“I love castle rock park a lot and have been going there for years with different sports and just living in the general area. They’ve done a great job of providing a space for ultimate frisbee to take place and we’ve played many memorable games there over the years. Thanks to those who maintain and who are looking to upgrade the Park!”

- Comment from the public survey

The screenshot shows a mobile application interface for a poll. At the top, there are 'Previous' and 'Next' navigation buttons. The main heading is 'Question 4 of 16 questions'. The question text is '4. What existing park amenities should be preserved as-is? Select up to 3.' Below this, it says 'You have not responded. Each option may only be selected once.' There are six options listed, each with a blue circle containing a '0' and a text label: 'None', 'Grass playing fields', 'Splash pad', 'Sledding hill', 'Tennis courts', and 'Walking paths'. At the bottom, there is a navigation bar with five icons: a bar chart for 'Home', a speech bubble for 'History', a registration icon for 'Registration', a podium for 'Present', and a person icon for 'Log in'. Below the navigation bar, it says 'Web software Poll Everywhere used for the public survey'.

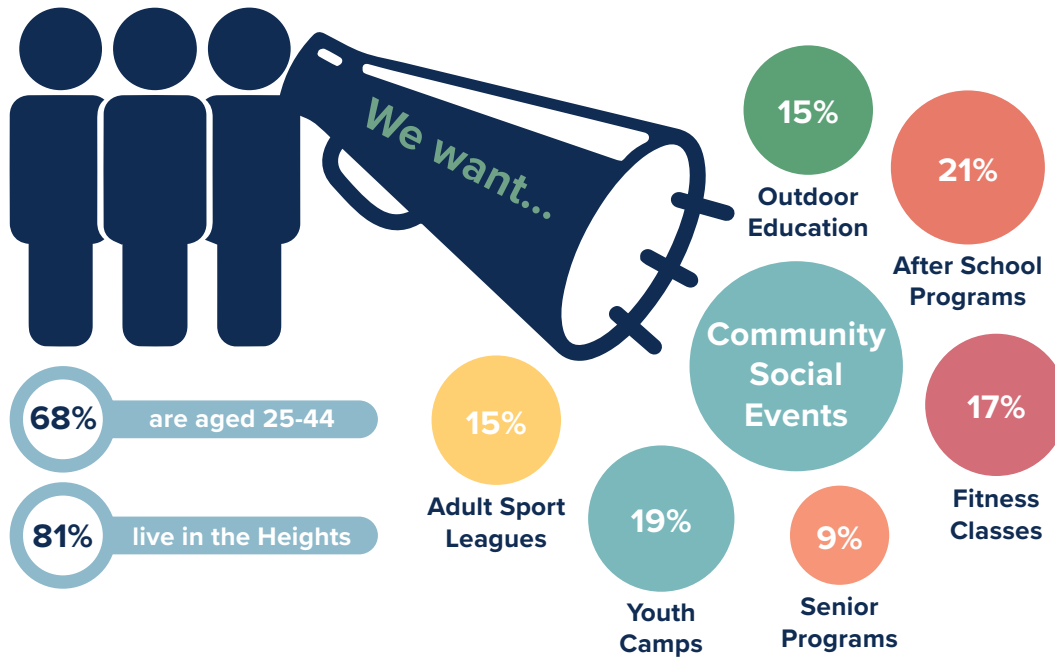
Public Survey Highlights

The following infographics depict notable feedback from the survey. Main feedback included a need for a playground, community social events, climbing boulders, and parking and mobility improvements. Shelters, picnic seating, and a water bottle filler were the most popularly selected low-cost amenities that can be implemented immediately. See the Appendix for complete survey results.

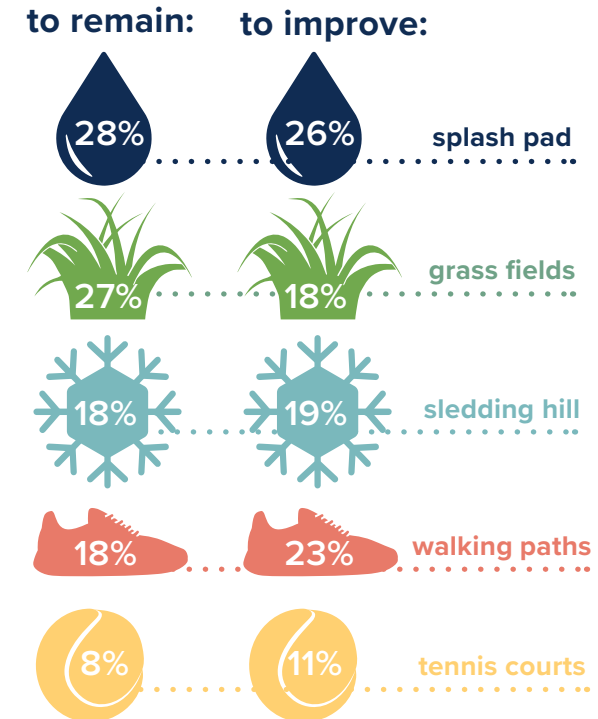
Top 3 Existing Park Uses

- 1 I've been to Celebrate Freedom (28%)
- 2 I go to the splash pad (22%)
- 3 I walk, bike, or pass through the park (18%)

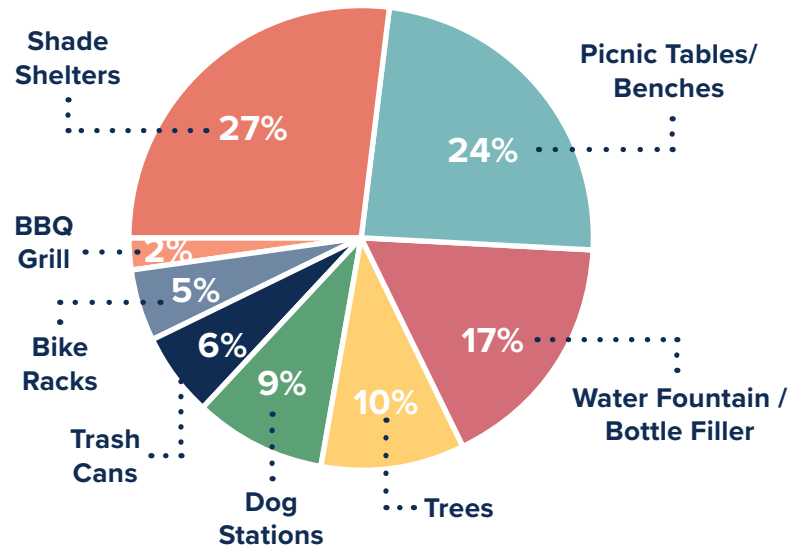
391 respondents



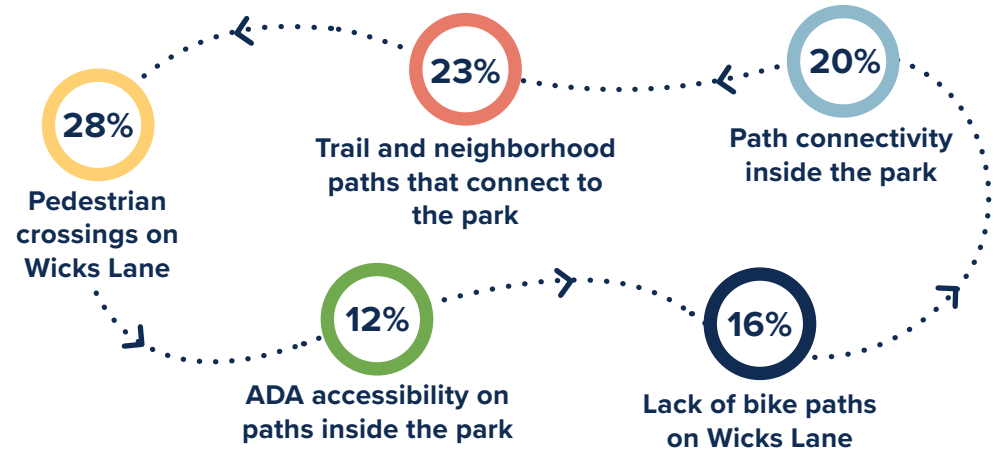
Existing Amenities



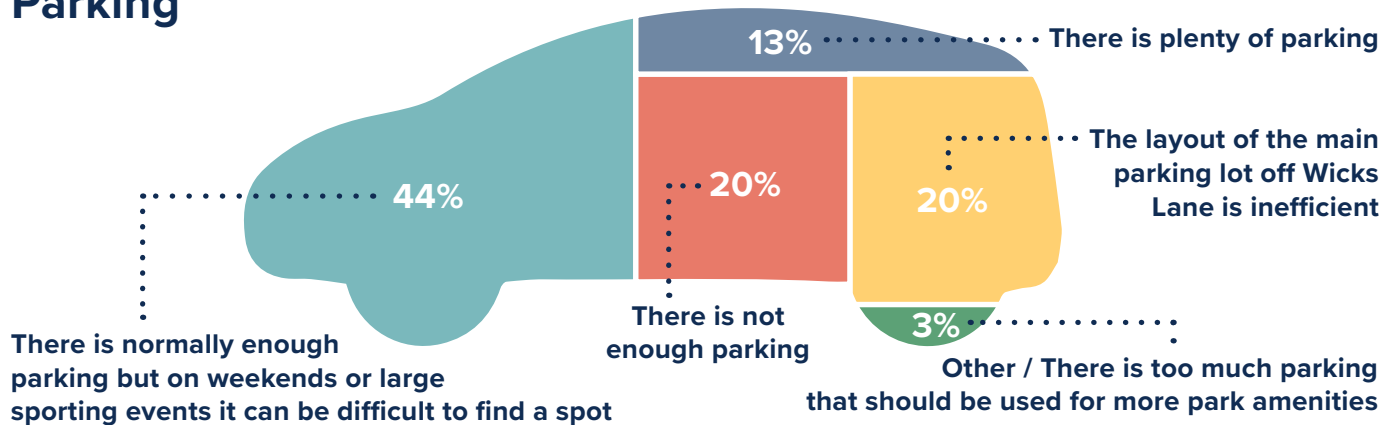
Low-cost Amenities



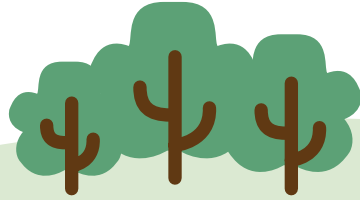
Mobility Concerns



Parking



What new features does the Billings community need?



Interest in new features

Playground Unique to the Heights
24%

Swimming Pool
20%

Amphitheater / Outdoor Event Space
19%

Trailhead to Heights Trail System
11%

Community Center
8%

Internal Trail / Loops
8%

Skate park
4%

Exercise Equipment
3%

Interest in unique features

Signature Playground
30%

Market / Food Truck Accessibility
19%

Climbing Boulder
17%

Community Garden
9%

Nature / Wildlife Area
9%

Fountain Feature in the Pond
8%

Mural or Artwork
5%



Design Charrettes

After the needs assessment phase, the design team took all of the input from the survey, public meetings, and stakeholder interviews and determined which amenities should be explored in the park design. There was strong preference for the following major amenities: a walking loop around the park's perimeter, preservation of the tennis courts, a destination playground, pickleball courts, community event space, preservation of the splash pad, picnic shelters, adult exercise equipment, and a community center with indoor pool. Four initial options were created and illustrated desired amenities placed throughout the park. Google Jamboard was again used to create the initial options, with moveable amenities in a dynamic, digital format. Inspirational image collages were used to communicate the look and feel of potential park features with each concept.

After the first charrette one site plan was favored. With each charrette, the site plan was modified and evolved with each discussion. The digital format of the Jamboard allowed for on-the-fly adjustments during meetings and interactive opportunities for attendees to participate through drawing and adding images. The charrettes resulted in a succinct series of site plans and image boards that traced how the master plan formed.

Option 1

The first of the four options featured a large aquatic facility combined with a community center, two amenities for which the public expressed desire. The large amount of parking required for this concept could warrant a new driveway across from Broadmoor Drive. This option would have eliminated one of the three multi-use grass playing fields due to the size of the building and required parking. The discussion on this option was focused on the loss of grass playing fields as they are heavily used and considered essential to the greater Billings community. This option also had pickleball courts combined with the tennis courts, and the Heights Task Force Subcommittee believed that dedicated pickleball courts were needed.



Option 1 site plan



Community Aquatic Center and neighborhood center

Destination playground

Aquatic Center - 50m competition pool



Compact sports facilities



Amphitheater



Walking Loop

Inspirational image collage

Option 2

The second option featured a community center on the west side of the park across from the existing splash pad. The community center would feature an outdoor stage, and the seating for events would spill out into the grass playing fields. This option strategically left most of the east side of the park as undeveloped open space. With the east side of the park activated with athletic facilities and new playground, the east side of the park would remain natural with picnic shelters and the existing trees. During the charrettes, the Heights Task Force Sub-committee expressed concern that the seating for the outdoor stage would take away from the ability to use one of the grass playing fields, so this option was passed over.



Option 2 site plan



Dedicated pickleball



4-season, multi-use pavilion



Overhead doors or sliding doors



X Sports



Walking Loop



Maximize flexible, open space

Inspirational image collage

Option 3

The third option had a focus on sports, where a grouping of volleyball and basketball courts with a centralized shelter was located north of the grass playing fields along Wicks Lane. A community and recreation center was placed on the southeast side of the park, with an amphitheater just to the north. The Heights Task Force Sub-committee favored the community center in this location, but did not prefer the emphasis on sports nor the concept of artfully painting the athletic facilities.



Option 3 site plan



OPTION 3

Lawn Event Space



Walking Loop



Inspirational image collage



Grouped sports facilities with surrounding trees



Neighborhood Center with Gym



Artful accessories + painting

Option 4

Finally, the fourth option was geared toward increased shelters dispersed around the park. Open space was preserved by clustering new athletic facilities such as basketball, sand volleyball, and pickleball on the west side of the park. The east parking lot was doubled to accommodate event and community space.



Option 4 site plan



Iconic shelter forms



Luxurious Shelters



Unique Shade



Destination playground



Walking Loop



Xsports



Framed park views

Inspirational image collage

Charrette Outcomes

With four preliminary concept designs, the project team held a series of design charrettes to examine and evolve the designs with stakeholders and the public, to eventually arrive at a preferred park site plan.

The first charrette was with the Heights Task Force Sub-committee, where it was clear there was a preference for the fourth option. The design team worked with the Sub-committee to modify this option so that it included amenities the Sub-committee felt were important. The Sub-committee requested that community space be accommodated on the east side of the park by placing the community center and future indoor pool next to the parking lot off of Nutter Boulevard. These amenities were placed in locations that make sense from a park user's standpoint.

The second charrette was held with the Parks Board. The design team presented the four options and spent the most time reviewing the concept that the Task Force Sub-committee preferred and helped design. The Parks Board confirmed that this was the right direction, and recommended that the design team to continue pursuing it.

The third charrette brought in stakeholders from the community to further vet this design concept, and the final charrette was with the public. Using the Google Jamboard, the Task Force Sub-committee, Parks Board, stakeholders and public were able to make changes to the park design, move amenities around, and indicate which inspirational images they desired for Castle Rock Park. In addition to the overall site plan, focus areas including the playground and splash pad, the trailhead, and the pump track were discussed in more detail.

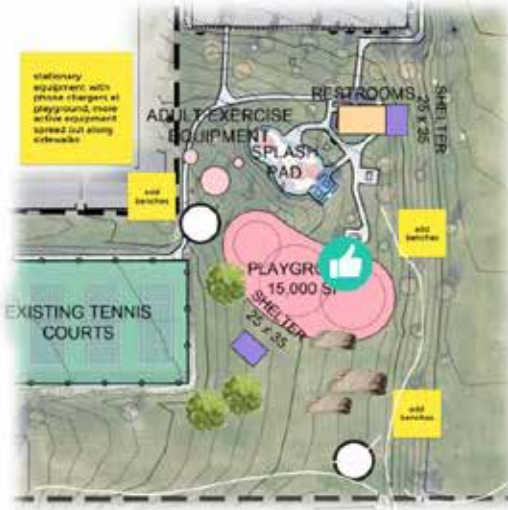


Option selected and modified after the second charrette

Playground and Splash Pad

Charrette attendees showed excitement around a naturally themed playground that was inclusive and ADA accessible with a poured-in-place surface. Sand and water play, wood elements, and rope materials were highly favored. Adult exercise equipment such as ellipticals that charge cell phones and fitness course equipment was desired. Parents or caretakers would be able to exercise and supervise their children playing. Circuit fitness exercise equipment such as pull up bars was thought to be best located along the walking loops of the park. Bench seating was requested around the playground area.

Playground & Splash Pad



Playground and splash pad discussion page

Trailhead

Castle Rock Park is slated to host a trailhead, connecting to nearby trails, and amenities for the trailhead were discussed. Charrette attendees confirmed that signage at entries, restrooms, bike racks and water bottle fillers were critical for the trailhead.

Trailhead



Trailhead discussion page

Skate / Pump Track

On the proposed pump track, various riding equipment, track materials, and all-season interest was discussed. Mountain bikes, skateboards, and uniwheel segways were amongst the equipment seen used in the Billings area. Compacted dirt tracks were preferred for flexibility in adjusting the path of travel and easily brushing off graffiti. Asphalt tracks are low maintenance and help extend use in the spring and fall. The location of the pump track was confirmed due to the undulating ground plane near the pond, the opportunity to incorporate winter riding or boarding with snow packed jumps, and the established trees in the area for interest and weather protection.



Skate / pump track discussion page



Through rigorous public input and stakeholder involvement, a preferred site plan evolved from discussion about desired park features and locations.

Final Concept Vetting

With a preferred park site plan, the project team began a series of meetings to determine if this design met the needs of the Heights neighborhood and the greater Billings community. An open house was held in the park at the splash pad, where park visitors were invited to view the draft site plan and give input. After incorporating comments from the open house, the project team presented the site plan to the Heights Task Force at their October 2020 meeting.

The preferred site plan came to fruition by strategically placing amenities to best suit site conditions and park users of all ages and abilities. Three distinct clusters were envisioned to distinguish areas of the park; an active area for sports and playground in the west, open playing fields in the center, and community and event space in the east.



Preferred site plan

Active Recreation

Beginning in the north west corner of the park, the parking lot is shown as paved and striped for more efficient parking, with planted islands. Users entering from the trailhead enter the park through a new gateway building, which houses public restrooms, a covered shelter, bike racks, a water filling station, and park information. The parking spaces next to the gateway shelter are envisioned with material changes to indicate pedestrian space and accommodate food trucks with electrical outlets.

Moving south, the existing splash pad is preserved and expanded to accommodate a greater number of children and additional water features. The popularity of the splash pad warrants expansion and improvement.

A destination playground is located next to the splash pad, with surrounding adult exercise equipment to allow caregivers to work out while keeping an eye on children. The playground will be nature-inspired with features that are unique to Castle Rock Park. Climbing boulders that begin at the playground get larger as they spill out into the grassy area to accommodate more experienced climbers. The boulders will be designed for age appropriateness and durability using shotcrete. Benches and a small shelter will provide places of respite and comfort. The small shelter has potential to become a reservable space for birthday parties or family celebrations with excellent proximity to the playground. Looped walks will unite and link the new features.



Considering the changes in elevation from tennis court, to the splash pad, to the playing fields, tiered planters and boulder walls allow for level play areas and provide a natural look, while being climbable. Retaining walls in this area can be constructed out of local boulders or shotcrete that is designed to complement the local stone formations.

The south west corner of the park is focused on athletic recreation. To strengthen the presence of existing tennis courts, new facilities such as sand volleyball, pickleball, and basketball courts will be placed nearby to form a collection of sport options. The six pickleball courts feature a small gathering area with seating and picnic tables for social gatherings, leagues, lessons, and tournaments. Future lighting for both the pickleball court and the tennis courts would efficiently light the area and extend play time in the spring and the fall.



Natural play equipment and climbing boulders



New athletic courts

Open Play Area and Pump Track

The center of the park remains a multi-use grass playing field. The space is large enough to allow for shifting or rotating field striping to minimize wearing of the turf. Picnic shelters are located to the north and south of the fields. With new soccer fields on the school property just south of Castle Rock Park, the playing fields have more versatility to host larger athletic or community events.

To the east of the northern playing fields is a pump track that utilizes the existing terrain to provide recreational opportunities for all ages. The pump track is constructed out of a combination of compacted soil and asphalt. Mountain bikers and a person on any wheeled device such as skateboards or uniwheels can use a pump track. The adjacency to the slopes of the pond allow for snowboards to form jumps and integrate routes with the pump track.



Shelter and seating overlooking playing fields



Pump track near Wicks Lane

Community Space

The east side of the park holds amenities for community events. The existing stormwater pond and sledding hill will remain and be integrated into the newly proposed spaces. As the terrain slopes down towards the pond, an amphitheater utilizes the terrain to provide tiered seating down to a stage. Improvements to the sledding hill and pond could be made at the time the amphitheater is constructed. Next to the amphitheater is a three-season event pavilion that can be rented by the public, and used concurrently with the amphitheater for weddings, concerts, or community gathering events. A dedicated market space next to the event pavilion will be accessed by the parking lot. Vendors, food trucks, or booths could be setup during larger events in the market space. Electrical power outlets in the market space would service vendors and events.

Parking

The existing parking lot on the east side of the park should be expanded, paved, and striped to serve the community center, event pavilion, and amphitheater.



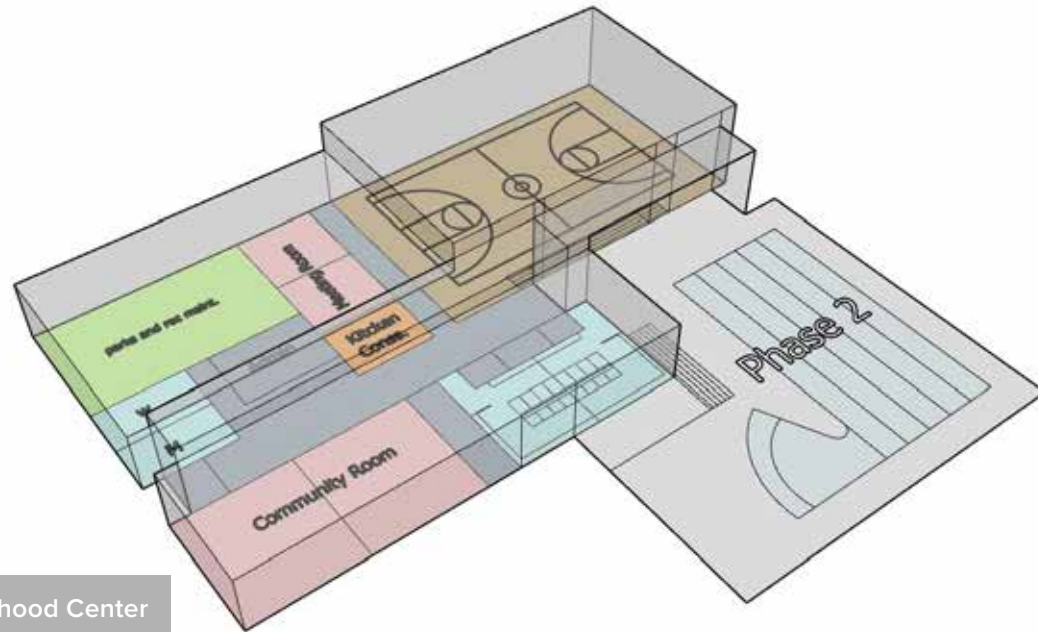
Market space, event pavilion, and amphitheater near pond



Market space, event pavilion, and amphitheater near pond

Neighborhood Center

South of the event pavilion is a community center, which includes a flexible community room, indoor meeting spaces, restrooms, locker rooms, kitchen, concessions and a multi purpose gym space. The Neighborhood Center will serve an essential need for indoor community meeting, gathering and recreation event space in the Heights Neighborhood. The Neighborhood Center will also house additional restrooms that will serve the east side of the park.



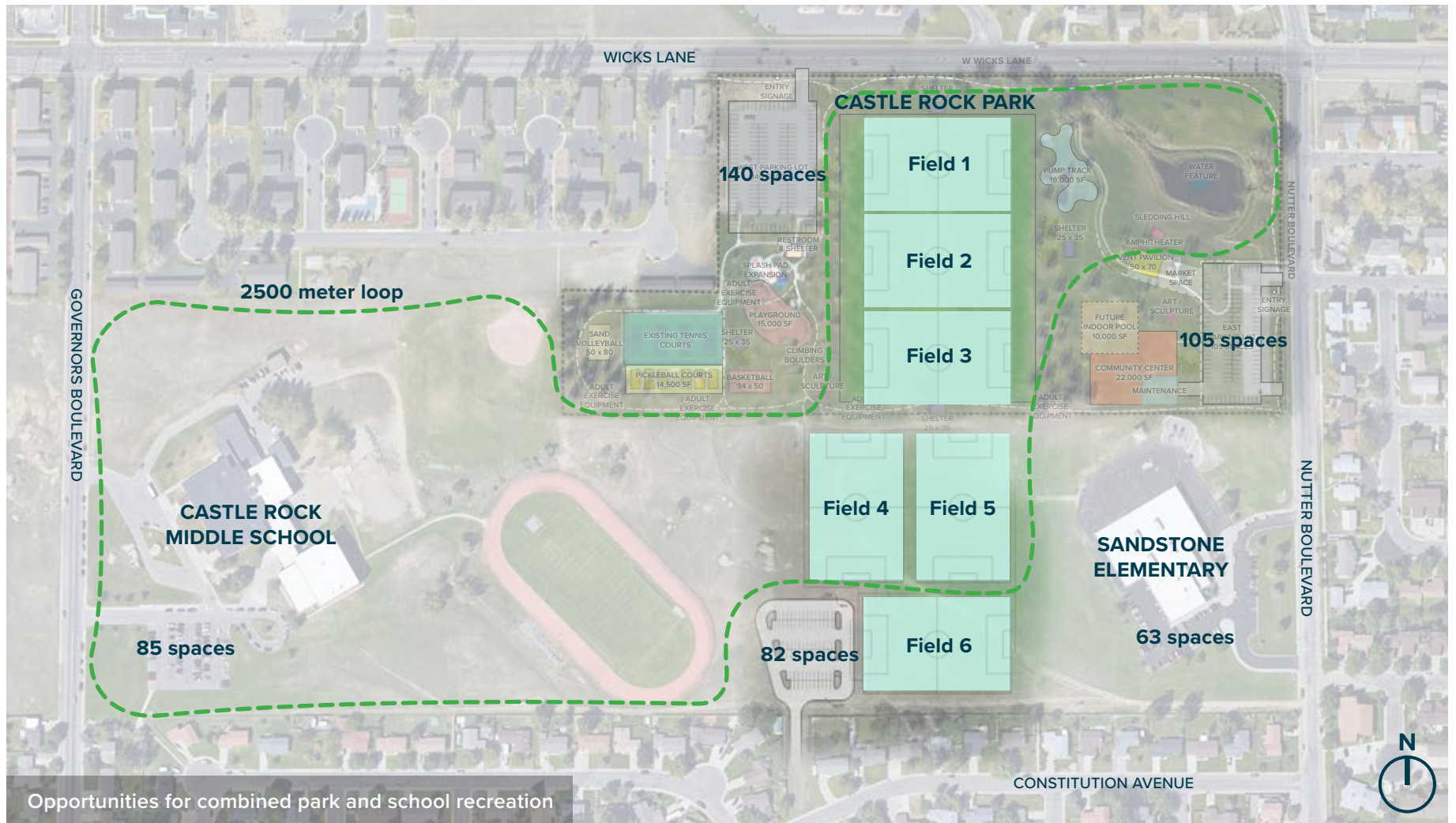
Neighborhood Center

Phase 2 Indoor Aquatic Center

An indoor aquatic center was a priority during the community engagement process, however funding the construction and maintenance of the pool is challenging. The desired aquatic center is to contain a lap pool for exercise and small competitions. There is also to be year-long play amenities that are different from other aquatic centers in Billings to provide a unique amenity that will attract users without competing directly with other aquatic facilities. The Heights Task Force Sub-committee determined that leaving space for a future indoor lap pool was sufficient for this master plan to allow time to determine a dedicated funding source to build it.



Neighborhood center and outdoor gathering space



School and Park Recreation

There are several opportunities for the nearby schools and Castle Rock Park to combine recreational facilities. With the new development of playing fields on the school property just south of Castle Rock Park, there is the potential for a combined total of 6 multi-use fields. Lacrosse, rugby, ultimate frisbee, and other local sports could investigate the possibility of hosting larger events in this area. Combined parking at the schools and the park, not including parking along the drop off areas or street parking, totals approximately 475 spaces.

Another opportunity for the school’s cross country team is to utilize the park in a looped route for races. Viewing areas for parents and families to observe the race offer 360-degree vantage points at the top of the hill. The loop shown on the map is approximately 2500 meters, half the typical race length for girls and boys cross country. In the winter, this path could potentially be used by cross country skiers.

Shared concessions and shelters near the property boundary could serve both the school and the park during large events.

4. PHASING & COST ESTIMATES

An indoor pool is desired as a future phase to the master plan

Phasing

Phasing will provide a smooth plan forward for constructing each amenity in the Master Plan in a strategic and manageable way. The first phase will begin with park amenities that have already been funded by the Billings Parks and Recreation Department. The construction of a destination playground will serve as a catalyst for developing Castle Rock Park, which is slated to start in the Spring of 2021. Since an indoor pool with capacity to host large swim meet events comes with a very high price tag, the Heights Task Force Sub-committee requested this be in one of the final phases, allowing for time to determine a dedicated funding source for its construction, operation and maintenance.

It was a specific goal of the Parks Department and project team to lay out an achievable phasing and funding plan for Castle Rock Park, since master plans can sometimes be forgotten if they are not implementable. The community's vision is only as strong as its tools to see that vision through to the end.

Funding Strategy

To meet the development and maintenance needs of Castle Rock Park, a collaborative effort is needed for planning, fundraising, and public education. In addition to public monies through the Parks and Recreation Department, financial partnerships are feasible to fund certain components.



Cost Estimate and Funding Sources

The cost estimate has been divided into 3 phases: phase 1 for the playground, phase 2 for the event pavilion and amphitheater, and a future phase for all other improvements. To illustrate the dynamic sources of funding for the park, a gradient of public partnerships and financial partnerships are shown. As phases are developed, funding sources for each item may fluctuate based on availability of items such as grants, private donations, or volunteerism. The spectrum of funding illustrates

that all costs are considered partnership opportunities, which could be weighted towards either public or private sources. The City of Billings will look for partnerships when the park items are noted in blue below, and primarily private sources will be pursued for items shown in orange. The City expects to review and consider providing some level of funding towards all items, overseeing the process. The playground and event space have public funds allocated towards them, and the project team envisioned the amphitheater also being funded publicly. As part of phase one, the Parks Department will be looking for ways to partner with private funding sources for the climbing boulders, trees and boulder terracing.

FUNDING SOURCES

Public Partnerships

PHASE 1 - PLAYGROUND

Item	Size/Quantity	Total
1. Playground	16,000 SF	\$400,000
2. Climbing Boulders	3	\$45,000
3. Trees	5	\$3,000
4. Boulder Terracing	550 LF	\$44,000
TOTAL		\$492,000

PHASE 2 - EVENT SPACE

Item	Size/Quantity	Total
1. Event Pavilion	1	\$500,000
2. Amphitheater	1	\$100,000
3. Trees	3	\$1,800
4. Art/Sculpture	1	\$3,000
TOTAL		\$604,800

Disclaimer: All costs are estimates until items are fully designed.

Financial Partnerships

FUTURE

Item	Size/Quantity	Total
1. Adult Exercise/Fitness Equipment	6 EA	\$15,000
2. Art/Sculpture	1 EA	\$3,000
3. Basketball Court	1 EA (50x94)	\$100,000
4. Bike Racks*	15 EA	\$15,000
5. Community Center	22,000 SF	\$4,730,000
6. Entry Signage*	2 EA	\$30,000
7. Updated Splash Pad	1,200 SF	\$25,000
8. Indoor Pool	10,000 SF	\$4,000,000
9. Information Kiosk & Park Signage*	1 EA	\$20,000
10. Market Space	4,200 SF	\$58,500
11. Paved Parking Lots with Islands*	250 Spaces	\$800,000
12. Pickleball Courts	6 Courts	\$450,000
13. Picnic Seating*	40 EA	\$48,000
14. Pump Track	16,000 SF	\$107,200
15. Restrooms*	1,500 SF	\$412,500
16. Sand Volleyball	1 EA (50x80)	\$12,000
17. Shelters*	5 EA (25x35)	\$250,000
18. Sidewalk Trail Loops*	8,500 LF	\$255,000
19. Trees	37 EA	\$22,200
20. Water Bottle Filler*	1 EA	\$5,000
21. Water Aerator at Pond	1 EA	\$10,000

Bold items indicate deferred maintenance

* Indicates amenities typically provided at trailheads

Funding Options

Special Improvement District

A Special Improvement District (SID) could be a funding source for some park amenities. A SID is a collection of properties where owners make payments for public improvements. Historically, the Heights neighborhood has voted down tax increases for the funding of a pool in the neighborhood, however the public appetite to help fund a pool or other park components may change with the adoption of this Master Plan. The Montana Annotated Code has a provision to fund a “municipal swimming pool and other recreation facilities” per 7-12-4102.

Grants

Some park amenities could be eligible for grants, which often match the amount that is already dedicated toward a project. Potential future grants that should be explored for Castle Rock Park include:

- LWCF recreation grants
- Montana Recreational Trails Program Grant
- People for Bikes Community Grant
- Meet Me at the Park Play Spaces Grant
- Safe Places to Play Grant
- Outride Fund Grant

Other Funding Sources:

- Public-private partnerships to match PD1 public dollars
- Corporate or private donations
- User fees and program fees

Volunteer Labor

Castle Rock Park has a history of receiving community support and volunteers to complete work on site. The pond plantings, pond trail, many trees, the bathrooms, and the horseshoe pits are amongst the many items installed by volunteers over the years.

Deferred Maintenance

The poor condition of many components at Castle Rock Park could be considered eligible for deferred maintenance funding due to postponed upgrades or upkeep. Park amenities and features that are currently existing or have been removed from the park should be considered to receive deferred maintenance funding. Items identified include, but are not limited to, the west parking lot, east parking lot, splash pad, playground, restrooms, and signage. The west parking lot and restrooms should be upgraded at the same time, due to their adjacency, their linked use to the playground, and to attain critical trailhead features. The playground is partially funded, and since a playground was removed from the park in the past, it could be eligible for deferred maintenance funding.



Boulder at Castle Rock Park

Maintenance Budget

Due to the nature of conditional parks and recreation use, the maintenance budget for Castle Rock Park has been expressed generally in hours of maintenance expected on a seasonal basis. Seasons are broken into expected hourly amounts of maintenance for use during three (3) month periods throughout the year. These maintenance hours can quickly be assigned a cost during an ongoing budgeting cycle. For total build-out of the master plan, approximately 1 full-time equivalent (FTE) staff employee would be required for maintenance, not including the staff required for the community center and indoor pool.

Ongoing capital costs for equipment and materials are not reflected in the hours below and should be accounted for in future cost estimates when further detail is provided in the park design.

Following is a description of rationale behind budgeting line item by line item:

Phase 1 - Playground

1. **Playground:** Twenty (20) hours each per spring and summer are anticipated maintenance hours assigned elements such as raking and addressing fall surface materials, reviewing bolt connectivity, cleaning and maintenance associated with anticipated daily use of 20-50 children, and collecting debris and trash. Eight (8) hours are assigned to winterizing the playground. No hours are typically anticipated during winter months.
2. **Climbing Boulders:** Four (4) hours each during the spring, summer, and fall are assigned to general cleanup and trash removal. No hours are assigned to this element during winter.
3. **Trees:** Simple treatment such as pruning, collecting leaf litter, and occasional pesticide treatment are assigned under this element.
4. **Boulder Terracing:** Two (2) hours each during the spring, summer, and fall are assigned to general cleanup and trash removal.

Playground Seasonal Staff Hours

Item	Spring	Summer	Fall	Winter
1. Playground	20	20	8	0
2. Climbing Boulders	4	4	4	0
3. Trees	2	2	4	0
4. Boulder Terracing	2	2	2	0

Disclaimer: All staff hours are estimates until items are constructed.





Phase 2 - Event Space

1. **Event Pavilion:** Two (2) hours per week associated with cleaning of the event pavilion such as sweeping and removing waste. It is anticipated that users of event pavilion will be required to perform their own set up/take down and clean-up of the area around event pavilion. It is not anticipated that the event pavilion will be heavily used during the winter. Four (4) events are planned in the budgeting.
2. **Amphitheater:** Time associated with this program element are mostly focused on general cleanup. One (1) hour per week associated with cleaning of the amphitheater such as sweeping and removing waste. It is anticipated that users of amphitheater will be required to perform their own set up/take down and clean-up of the area around amphitheater. It is not anticipated that the amphitheater will be heavily used during the winter. Two (2) events are planned in the budgeting.
3. **Trees:** Simple treatment such as pruning, collecting leaf litter, and occasional pesticide treatment are assigned under this element.
4. **Art/Sculpture:** This element has two (2) hours associated with periodic vandalism as it occurs. Maintenance costs are identified with overall park mowing.

Event Space Seasonal Staff Hours

Item	Spring	Summer	Fall	Winter
1. Event Pavilion	24	24	24	8
2. Amphitheater	12	12	12	4
3. Trees	2	2	4	0
4. Art/Sculpture	2	0	0	0

Disclaimer: All staff hours are estimates until items are constructed.

Future Park Expansion

1. **Adult Exercise/Fitness Equipment:** These will be most heavily used during spring and summer. Two (2) hours every two weeks is anticipated for maintenance staff to check the condition of equipment and pick up trash. Six (6) hours per year are dedicated to small repairs to equipment in the fall.
2. **Art/Sculpture:** This element has two (2) hours associated with periodic vandalism as it occurs. Maintenance costs are identified with overall park mowing.
3. **Basketball Court:** The basketball court will be most heavily used during spring, summer, and fall. Two (2) hours every two weeks is anticipated for maintenance staff to check the condition of net, backboard, and court and pick up trash. Two (2) hours per year are dedicated to small repairs to backboard and removing the net in the winter.
4. **Bike Racks:** Generally two (2) hours per year is assigned to occasional removal of abandoned bikes and locks and cleanup.
5. **Community Center:** Two full time maintenance staff are assigned to the community center not including programming staff.
6. **Entry Signage:** Two (2) hours per season are assigned to cleaning around the entry sign, replacing dead plants, checking lights, and inspecting the condition.
7. **Expanded Splash Pad:** Hours have been assigned for the splash pad expansion in the spring and fall in association with starting the system and winterization. Minimal hours are associated with winter maintenance. Approximately two (2) hours per day is assigned to this future program element for daily start up, debris cleaning, and shut down.
8. **Indoor Pool:** Two (2) full time employees are planned for the indoor pool. Seasonal life guards and swim instructors are assigned to programs.
9. **Information Kiosk & Park Signage:** Two (2) hours per spring, summer, and fall are assigned to cleaning around the entry sign, replacing dead plants, checking lights,

Future Seasonal Staff Hours (Items 1-9)

Item	Spring	Summer	Fall	Winter
1. Adult Exercise/Fitness Equipment	12	12	6	0
2. Art/Sculpture	2	0	0	0
3. Basketball Court	12	12	12	2
4. Bike Racks	0	0	2	0
5. Community Center	----- 2 Full Time Maintenance Staff -----			
6. Entry Signage	2	2	2	2
7. Expanded Splash Pad	20	180	16	8
8. Indoor Pool	----- 2 Full Time Maintenance Staff -----			
9. Information Kiosk & Park Signage	2	2	2	0

Disclaimer: All staff hours are estimates until items are constructed.





and inspecting the condition.

10. **Market Space:** Hours are budgeted mostly during spring, summer, and fall for cleanup associated with food and drink. Permitting of movable food trucks should include primary responsibility of cleanup with food truck operators.
11. **Paved Parking Lots with Islands:** General cleanup is programmed in spring and summer. Twenty-four (24) hours are assigned during the fall to seal pavement cracks and trim associated landscaping. Two (2) hours per week is programmed for snow removal in the winter.
12. **Pickleball Courts:** The pickleball courts will be most heavily used during spring, summer, and fall. Two (2) hours every two weeks is anticipated for maintenance staff to check the condition of nets and court and pick up trash. Two (2) hours per year are dedicated to small repairs to the courts and removing the net in the winter.
13. **Picnic Seating:** Two (2) hours per season is planned for cleaning picnic tables.
14. **Pump Track:** Two (2) hours is associated in three seasons to drag the dirt track every other week and for general trash cleanup.
15. **Restrooms:** Two (2) hours per day year-round is budgeted for daily cleaning of restrooms.
16. **Sand Volleyball:** One day is assigned to winterizing and spring cleanup. Four (4) hours per week during the summer are assigned to various net repair, straightening, and cleanup.
17. **Shelters:** Two (2) hours per week for inspection and cleanup of each shelter. Rental agreements for officially reserving shelters should include requirement for cleanup and removal of trash.
18. **Sidewalk Trail Loops:** Trash and debris pickup are anticipated budget elements.
19. **Trees:** Simple treatment such as pruning, collecting leaf litter, and occasional pesticide treatment are assigned under this element.
20. **Water Bottle Filler:** Occasional repair of facility. Daily cleanup is associated with restrooms.
21. **Water Aerator at Pond:** Two (2) hours per quarter for cleaning of filter and winterizing.

Future Seasonal Staff Hours (Items 10-21)

Item	Spring	Summer	Fall	Winter
10. Market Space	48	48	48	16
11. Paved Parking Lots with Islands	12	12	24	24
12. Pickleball Courts	12	12	12	2
13. Picnic Seating	2	2	2	2
14. Pump Track	12	12	12	0
15. Restrooms	180	180	180	180
16. Sand Volleyball	8	24	8	0
17. Shelters	24	24	24	8
18. Sidewalk Trail Loops	24	24	24	8
19. Trees	6	6	6	0
20. Water Bottle Filler	4	4	4	4
21. Water Aerator at Pond	2	2	2	2

Disclaimer: All staff hours are estimates until items are constructed.

5. APPENDIX

Detailed survey results

1. Where do you live?

Response Options	Count	Percentage
Heights Neighborhood	316	81%
City of Billings outside the Heights neighborhood	66	17%
I do not live in Billings	10	3%
TOTALS	392	

2. What is your age

Response Options	Count	Percentage
18 or younger	5	1%
19-24	15	4%
25-44	262	68%
45-64	91	24%
65 or older	13	3%
TOTALS	386	

3. How do you currently use Castle Rock Park? Select up to 3.

Response Options	Count	Percentage
I've been to Celebrate Freedom (4th of July celebration)	236	28%
I go to the splash pad	186	22%
I walk, bike, or pass through the park	149	18%
I use (or my child uses) the park for school activities	116	14%
I regularly play with a sports group	56	7%
Other	49	6%
I use the tennis courts	43	5%
Never been there	10	1%
TOTALS	845	

4. What existing park amenities should be preserved as-is? Select up to 3.

Response Options	Count	Percentage
Splash pad	238	28%
Grass playing fields	227	27%
Sledding hill	158	18%
Walking paths	151	18%
Tennis Courts	71	8%
None	11	1%
TOTALS	856	

5. What existing park amenities should be improved? Select up to 3.

Response Options	Count	Percentage
Splash pad	181	26%
Walking paths	166	23%
Sledding hill	132	19%
Grass playing fields	126	18%
Tennis Courts	80	11%
None	11	1%
TOTALS	707	

**6. What new features does the Billings community need in this park?
Select up to 3.**

Response Options	Count	Percentage
Playground unique to the Heights	202	24%
Swimming Pool	171	20%
Amphitheater / outdoor event space	156	19%
Trailhead connecting to the Heights Trail System	88	11%
Community center	71	8%
Internal trail / walking loops	67	8%
Skate park	35	4%
Exercise equipment	29	3%
Other	19	2%
TOTALS		838

- Pickleball courts.
- Dedicated pickleball courts would be amazing!!! This sport is getting big in Billings and will continue to grow
- must have a community center, long overdue, with est. 30 plus thousand folks living in area. as well as some
- community center building to be used by local organizations for meetings.
- indoor swimming pool for twelve month usage
- Skate park for scooter and skateboard
- Skate Park
- Sledding hill
- Pool. Outdoor park equipment for older aged kids ie; outdoor rock walls, in ground trampoline, arm loops, etc.
- Basketball courts
- connected (maybe one-way/lane) road from Governor's to Nutter for Castle Rock MS drop offs to help with traffic flow
- A fenced area for dogs. A playground for kids.
- Large playground, skating rink
- playground unique to the heights. Outdoor entertainment, amphitheater. Walking trail and improved splash pad
- Skatepark
- We need a swimming pool
- Last question wouldn't let me answer and said it was full
- It won't let me respond to #6. It would be. Ice to have an out door event area or a community center. It would also be nice to add trails and link them to the heights trail system. The grassy area is wonderful because it gives families and sports teams enough space to play as well as for larger community events that are hosted by areas businesses/schools/etc.
- When we moved here in 2013 I was stunned there was no playground at a park this size and location. The splash pad is OK, but I'd use a playground way more. I'd also use a wading pool like they have at Pioneer.

- I would love to see this space be family friendly, ice skating, swimming, large play toy area, coffee shop, outdoor concerts, turf field for soccer game, sandwich soo
- I would love to see more ways that families can enjoy it and play. Ice skating, swimming, big play ground, coffee or sandwich shop
- Soccer Fields
- We go and play with a kickball as a family, ride bikes on the cement side walks, picnics.
- Better bathrooms!!
- Bathrooms need to be available.
- BMX bike track
- Park and Rec classes
- Soccer fields for heights families
- Biking path to school and around area
- We need an indoor pool
- Actual sports appropriate fields, that are maintained and taken care of on a regular basis!
- ice skating rink
- Brought class to play from Castle Rock
- Pickle ball courts
- An indoor/year round pool.
- An indoor playground would be very valuable to the community year-round. There could be a walking/running loop surrounding it as well.
- A larger pond/lake that is frozen and kept cleared in winter for ice skating
- A larger pond/lake
- Better trails, bathrooms, water stations, a decent playground, upgraded tennis courts, multi sport practice field
- Basketball court
- Currently high school kids use Sandstone playground. They drive their cars into the black top so they can listen to music. It has been a safety concern as young kids walk and play on the playground as well. I have reported fights and vandalism many times.
- A good connection to the trail system would be great!
- Gym!!!
- Art display area or a Public Art installation - would act as a connector to the trail system, contribute to wayfinding and provide a landmark identification for the park and surrounding community. Signage within the trail system that points out natural features or has indication of walking distances/times would be very nice as well.
- Two lane biking, running loop. Bike pump track. Stone climbing wall/formation. Covered pavilion. Covered seating areas by playground and splash pad. More trees. Pickleball courts.
- More paved walking paths through the park and a playground
- A pool that is not under a major electric transmission line would be beneficial to Heights residents.
- Picnic tables Playground
- Upgraded bathroom facilities and leveled grass fields
- baaa humbug

7. What events and programs do you think are missing in Castle Rock Park?

Response Options	Count	Percentage
After school programs	147	21%
Youth camps	131	19%
Fitness classes	120	17%
Adult sports leagues	107	15%
Outdoor education	105	15%
Senior programs	64	9%
Other	19	3%
TOTALS	693	

- Pickleball courts
- Pickleball courts
- Pickleball courts
- Public bathrooms that are open year round
- Senior programs would be nice to add to Castlerock park. You could have pickleball , bocce ball, horseshoes, and cornhole leagues. Pickleball is also a multi-generational sport and fun for families.
- I do not think anything is missing, I do think we should enhance what we have though. This is not a heights park, this is a Billings park. We do not need to create more unnecessary division in this community.
- basketball courts (gym), preferably indoor that can be used year round for teams to practice
- A pool, with swimming lessons, would be awesome.
- Softball and baseball
- Outdoor Music events, farmers market
- Youth/ adult theatre.
- Need to have better use of the space available.
- Soccer programs for families so they don't all have to travel to Amend park
- I'm not sure, open to all ideas...
- Sporting events, the heights does a very poor job of maintaining sports fields for the youth to practice and play games on.
- Parks and rec summer programs. Swimming and a place to play in the summer.
- Summer concerts
- After hours events due to no lights and stands
- This park is big enough to bring all of the above to the heights.
- Areas for public art or temporary installation space for children to participate in public art - sidewalk chalk drawings
- Community events: concerts, flea market, art fair, kids events
- community music performances, festivals, adult sports tournaments

8. What unique amenities do you think are needed in the park? Select up to 3.

Response Options	Count	Percentage
Signature playground	234	30%
Market / food truck accessibility	149	19%
Climbing boulder	130	17%
Community garden	71	9%
Nature / wildlife area	69	9%
Fountain feature in the pond	57	7%
Mural or some type of artwork	43	6%
Other	20	3%
TOTALS	793	

- Skatepark
- Skate Park
- pool
- Basketball courts
- Amphitheater or stage of sorts
- Pickleball lines on tennis courts
- Added law enforcement. People are not following dog leash laws, littering, and vandalism
- It's fantastic for little kids and lots of science and learning
- Research Paul Smith Children's Village at the Cheyenne Botanic Gardens
- amphitheater would be great. Access for farmers markets Picnic areas for local schools
- Amphitheater would be great
- Pool
- Basketball court
- mini mountain bike or BMX track - like the one built at that park on 19th?
- mini golf
- Go carts
- Folf course
- Gathering area - community center or stage
- Skatepark! Or pump track!
- Pump bike track.
- Please include sensory items in playground - sand, water, mud kitchens, something for kids to get their hands into.
- Amphitheater or stage
- Some sort of help for the pond - a way to have flowing water so it isn't a mosquito pit

9. What low-cost amenities are needed the most right away?

Response Options	Count	Percentage
Shade shelters	229	27%
Picnic tables / benches	200	24%
Water fountain / bottle filler	142	17%
Trees	85	10%
Dog stations	77	9%
Trash cans	52	6%
Bike racks	41	5%
BBQ grill	20	2%
Information kiosk / signage	5	1%
TOTALS	851	

11. How do you feel about parking in Castle Rock Park?

Response Options	Count	Percentage
I think there is normally enough parking but on week-ends or large sports events it can be difficult to find a spot	142	44%
I think the layout of the main parking lot off Wicks Lane is inefficient	65	20%
I think there is not enough parking	63	20%
I think there is plenty of parking	42	13%
Other	6	2%
I think there is too much parking, that space should be used for more park amenities	4	1%
TOTALS	322	

10. What mobility concerns do you have with Castle Rock Park? Select up to 3.

Response Options	Count	Percentage
Pedestrian crossings on Wicks Lane	172	28%
Trail and neighborhood paths that connect to the park	140	23%
Path connectivity inside the park	126	20%
Lack of bike paths on Wicks Lane	97	16%
ADA accessibility on paths inside the park	72	12%
Other (specify in next question)	9	1%
TOTALS	616	

- There should be a dedicated spot for soccer fields. Put turf down
- Lack. Of parking
- None
- Pedestrian crossing on wicks - the survey would not let me choose this option.
- Handicap playground equipment for the kids & benches for elderly to sit as they walk. Restrooms!
- Lack of paved parking
- Safety within in the park - markers/wayfinding, interior lights along paths
- Not enough parking

12. Do you have any personal stories about Castle Rock Park you would like to share?

- So thankful you're considering improving any park!
- It's a beautiful park in the Heights that could be updated given the amount of green space. We like going to the 4th of July celebration. The addition of an amphitheater is a neat idea so that more events could be hosted there once we get past Covid. We'd also love to see more pickleball courts :)
- Love the 4th of July show!!
- I love castle rock park a lot and have been going there for years with different sports and just living in the general area. They've done a great job of providing a space for ultimate frisbee to take place and we've played many memorable games there over the years. Thanks to those who maintain and who are looking to upgrade the Park!
- There aren't parking lines so people don't know exactly where to park in the middle
- There is no structure to the parking. The lot has not been maintained and lack of upkeep. The accessibility for handicap is very limited. Parking space can be full easily since their are no proper parking spaces drawn or painted
- We used the park all the time when my kids were younger in all seasons and weather; sledding, 4th of July, soccer, tennis, splash pad, walking to school.
- We go there to fly kites and sled. Love the wide open space and well-kept grass. We also are regular attenders of Celebrate Freedom, which really shows off the park's size and versatility.

- Most of the time I am there the bathrooms are trashed. They don't have doors on the stalls most of the time. Sometimes there are port-a-potties, but when there aren't, we have to race home a lot. I used to love sledding at that park, but now there's that stupid pond in the way. I used to like to walk around there in the summers, but thanks to the pond, it is mosquito central! I don't understand why they put the pond there at all... just a giant mosquito farm that stinks and that put an end to sledding for our whole family.
- We love this park! And any upgrades would make it even better!
- My husband and I both grew up in the heights and vowed after finishing college we would buy a house and raise our in this community! We both have many memories of sledding, softball games, and hanging out on the sandstone rocks after school on our way home. This is a fabulous park filled with many of our childhood memories and we cannot wait to make more with our own children.
- My kids attend both schools located by the park. We enjoy the spray park every summer and celebrate freedom there along with soccer, sledding and other activities! We love the park and I know the schools do too.
- Heights deserve parks essential to our community
- We love climbing on the natural sandstone rocks. Our kids saw the construction on the new fields, and they said, "we really hope they don't tear down the climbing rocks!"
- The parking to castle rock park is awful. The road is destroyed and you cannot see the lines.
- The park is the only large open space for a large population and social distancing has made it even more important to develop for the health and safety of our community. It must also be lit better at night for safety.
- It's close to my house but without a bunch of shade my child can't play very long because her body can't handle a lot of heat/sun but loves to play I just need to bring lots of water for her
- I love taking my family to the freedom fire works and wish there were more family things to do there.
- My son planted trees there for an Eagle Scout project. Gt
- I personally use the park on occasion but would love to use it more if there was more to offer.
- If the park is improved to include a swimming pool and better amenities, you will need more parking. If left as it currently is, there is enough parking.
- So many great memories at castle rock park over the years!
- We took my 91 year mother sledding along with our grandchildren.
- I think the parking is too small needs to be paved. The parking lot was to be expanded but now can't due to the splash pad. Put the Splash pad in a different location.
- I hate the 4th of July celebration being there. It's noisy, blocks streets and driveways, terrorizes pets in the neighborhood. If you live anywhere around the park you can't always access your home with the ridiculous influx of traffic in an area not set up to handle that capacity. Having it at Metra this year was something Heights residents have been waiting to have happen since that celebration started. It's ridiculous to bring thousands of people into one neighborhood, and one tiny park.
- It is a good community park. That with a couple of improvements could be a great community park
- As a teacher and a parent our kiddos deserve more. The Boys and Girls club kids walk each day from Sandstone to Castle Rock through the mud and deep snow. Many of these kids don't own or never have boots or rain gear. Now that I have a child attending Castle Rock and will walk the same way...we need shoveled paths and a better setup so they can walk safely.
- I have been/ used Castle Rock park for over 30 years. There is so much potential there. The heights needs a community center with gym, pool, etc.
- Please leave some green space so we can keep the 4th of July celebration in the heights
- Please paint lines in parking lot since people make their own spots and waste space and cause problems
- It is a beating park! Let's enhance the natural beauty!
- Keep the space for the 4th of July. That is a heights tradition
- I teach at a school adjacent to this park and live a few blocks away but I never use the park. It would be great if the fields were maintained so I could take my students there for outdoor classroom opportunities. It would also be great to have a playground there and expanding the splash pad would attract more people.
- We've enjoyed going there as a family to use the splash park when my kids were little, but they've now outgrown it (middle and high schoolers). They've used the park field for practice for t-ball when they were little and we've gone sledding there in the winter. It's a big beautiful park that has tremendous potential to provide the city at-large with unique amenities while also serving the large population of the Heights.
- My backyard connects to the park, our family would love to have to be able to utilize it more. Our neighborhood absolutely loves having the 4th of July celebration there and hopes it will continue!
- My kids played youth soccer in the park. It was a great experience for them to learn about teambuilding and social skills.
- I took my kids to Castlerock park to go sledding when they were little. It was one of the highlights of living in the Heights.
- Great park for field sports! Keep all the grass space and put trails around it!
- I specifically avoid the park during certain times of day to avoid mosquitoes - too many!



Thank you Billings!

