

Riverside Park: A Community Vision for the Future

Survey shows strong support for expanding recreational opportunities while preserving what makes Riverside Park special

What should Riverside Park look like five, ten or twenty years from now?

That is the question Boundary County Parks & Recreation recently put to the community through a Riverside Park vision presentation and public survey. The vision comes as the park looks toward the future following the acquisition of five additional acres, providing new opportunities for expansion and recreation.

The presentation explored a variety of potential recreation opportunities and improvements for the park, including a playground, multi-use fields, a pavilion, basketball courts, expanded waterfront access and more. Conceptual maps were also presented to illustrate how different areas of the park could potentially be developed and connected.

The survey results show strong community interest in expanding recreational opportunities while preserving the qualities that make Riverside Park unique.

Both the presentation and survey were shared publicly through Boundary County Parks & Recreation's Facebook page. The information post reached approximately 5,900 people, while the presentation video has received 711 views to-date. The survey received 168 responses, with 77.4% of respondents indicating they were "Supportive" or "Very Supportive" of the vision after reviewing the video.

The survey also confirmed that Riverside Park is an active part of community life. More than 96% of respondents visit the park at least a few times each year. Walking, softball and baseball, nature observation, picnicking, dog walking and river access were among the most commonly reported uses.

What Residents Want to See

The survey provides a snapshot of what respondents value as they consider the park's future.

Youth Recreation and Activities was selected by 60.1% of respondents as a priority for future development, while 57.1% selected Family Recreation Opportunities.

When asked about specific improvements and amenities, the nature-themed playground ranked first, selected by 43.5% of respondents. Other leading responses included:

- **Nature-themed playground — 43.5%**
- **Restrooms — 39.3%**
- **Splash pad — 31.5%**
- **Walking paths/additional trails — 30.4%**
- **Bike pump track/skills park — 27.4%**
- **Fishing and general-use dock — 24.4%**
- **Picnic tables, benches and seating — 21.4%**
- **Pickleball — 19.6%**
- **Parking improvements/kayak launch with ADA access — 16.1%**
- **Softball/baseball fields — 14.3%**

The responses reflect a broad range of interests, from youth and family recreation to walking, biking, waterfront access, accessibility and organized sports.

Preserve What Makes the Park Special

Interest in additional recreation was accompanied by a strong desire to preserve the character of Riverside Park.

More than 82% of respondents said preserving the park's natural character and riverfront setting is "Important" or "Very Important." Overdevelopment was the top concern about future expansion, followed by cost and taxes.

Together, these findings show that respondents value both additional recreational opportunities and the natural character, riverfront setting and open spaces that already make Riverside Park an important community resource.

Stewardship and Flexibility

Riverside Park is more than its individual facilities. Its open spaces, riverfront, walking paths, recreation areas and natural surroundings serve the community in many ways. Future planning will need to consider how improvements can expand opportunities while maintaining these resources.

"We need to look at what opportunities we can provide that may not currently be available in Boundary County, while also asking what we need to preserve, maintain and protect," said Parks & Recreation Board Vice-President Brandon Glaza. "Our responsibility is to look at the park as a whole and make thoughtful decisions about what we add, what we improve and what we can responsibly afford to sustain."

Where possible, improvements can serve multiple uses and users, allowing the park to adapt as community needs and interests evolve. Planning must also consider maintenance, infrastructure, accessibility, parking, safety and long-term operating costs.

The Conversation Continues

The Parks & Recreation Board thanks everyone who took the time to watch the vision presentation, complete the survey and share their ideas. With 168 survey responses, the results provide a documented snapshot of community input about the future of Riverside Park.

Boundary County Parks & Recreation, along with Waterways, is planning another public presentation in the near future to share information and continue the conversation. Details about the presentation will be announced as they become available.

The video presentation and survey results can be found on the Boundary County Parks & Recreation website at <https://boundarycountyparksandrec.org/riverside-park>.