POLICIES THAT APPLY TO PARKS, OPEN SPACE, RECREATION, AND TRAILS

The Parks and Open Space Master Plan is viewed as a component of the city’s Comprehensive Plan and outlines the key environmental corridors, comprehensive trail network and future parks, open space and recreational facility expansion recommendations.

Two major strategies and key policies were developed for achieving the core Plan goal as a Healthy City With Great Amenities. As part of the Comprehensive Plan, there are specific parks, open space, recreation, and trail policies recommended for adoption by city council, which include:

1. **Major Strategy: Create Engaging Places**

   **Policies:**
   
   **Policy 7.1.2 Create a North Recreation Center District**
   
   The North Recreation Center District takes advantage of the Horizon High School facilities and the adjacent aquatic center with surrounding recreational amenities as the central focal point of this neighborhood-focused district. Amenities included in this district are intended to be ones that encourage social interaction. This district is envisioned to be one that creates a “campus-like” environment, promoting active recreation and developed at a scale compatible with the surrounding residential neighborhoods.

   **Policy 7.1.4 Create a Sports and Wellness District**
   
   The creation of a defined Sports and Wellness District is centered around the existing Margaret Carpenter Recreation Center. The promotion of sports and wellness as a strategic economic development strategy is also a recognized element of this vision. Through the expansion of existing facilities, the Sports and Wellness District is envisioned to include areas for recreational and competitive athletic events as well as the supporting facilities necessary to attract users to these venues.

2. **Major Strategy: Protect And Enhance The Public Realm**

   The public realm is generally defined to include two components: 1) environmentally sensitive areas that should be protected, along with parks and open spaces, and 2) community facilities, public rights-of-way and civic spaces. Examples of enhancing the public realm are the preservation of the Big Dry Creek corridor, expansion of Thornton’s national-caliber park system, and the construction of heritage trail loops that would raise awareness of Thornton’s unique environmental, cultural, and historic resources.

   **Policies:**
   
   **Policy 7.2.1- Preserve environmentally sensitive areas.**
   
   **Policy 7.2.2 - Expand existing “national caliber” Thornton trail and park system.**
   
   **Policy 7.2.3 - Enhance the physical environment of the public realm including community gateways, corridors and intersections through creative design standards that will enhance Thornton’s image.**
   
   **Policy 7.2.4- Require the local transportation system to be designed to link housing, shopping, employments, parks, schools and civic facilities with road and pedestrian/bicycle facilities.**