



ELDORADO CANYON STATE PARK VISITOR USE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Public Engagement Report

January 2020
Submitted to Colorado Parks and Wildlife by the Keystone Policy Center

Table of Contents

Figures.....	2
Executive Summary.....	3
1 Eldorado Canyon State Park.....	10
2 The Visitor Use Management Plan.....	10
2.1 Introduction	10
2.2 Planning and Development.....	11
2.3 Desired Future Conditions	12
3 The Public Engagement Process	13
3.1 Scope and Background.....	13
3.2 Public Engagement Methodology.....	13
4 Visitor Use Management Scenarios for Improving Traffic Flow and Parking	14
4.1 Scenario A	16
4.2 Scenario B.....	25
4.3 Scenario Discussion.....	35
5 Visitor Use Management Strategies	37
5.1 Traffic Flow and Parking Management Strategies	37
5.2 Additional Visitor Use Management Strategies.....	40
6 Additional Considerations.....	41
7 Demographics of Public Engagement Process Participants.....	42
7.1 Overview	42
7.2 Breakdown by Primary Use.....	43
7.3 Breakdown by Residence	44
7.4 Breakdown by Visitation Patterns	45
8 Cross-Cutting Themes	47
9 Next Steps	48
Appendix A: Public Meeting Agenda.....	49
Appendix B: Online Survey.....	51

Figures

Figure 1: Visitor Use Management Plan Input and Criteria	11
Figure 2: To what extent do you agree that Scenario A would be effective at improving traffic flow and parking issues?	17
Figure 3: To what extent do you agree that Scenario A would be beneficial in general?	17
Figure 4: Frequency of Scenario A suggestions by Topic	22
Figure 5: To what extent do you agree that Scenario B would be effective at improving traffic flow and parking issues?	27
Figure 6: To what extent do you agree that Scenario B would be beneficial in general?	27
Figure 7: Frequency of Scenario B Suggestions By Topic.....	33
Figure 8: Public Meetings Scenario Preference	36
Figure 9: Online Survey Scenario Preference.....	36
Figure 10: To what extent do you support or oppose paid, reserve-in-advance permits?	38
Figure 11: To what extent do you support or oppose time limited parking permits?	38
Figure 12: To what extent do you support or oppose a free or low-cost shuttle?.....	39
Figure 13: What are the highest priority additional upgrades and strategies for the continued operation of the park?.....	41
Figure 14: What is your primary activity at Eldorado Canyon State Park?	43
Figure 15: Where do you live?	44
Figure 16: How frequently do you visit Eldorado Canyon State Park?	45
Figure 17: What time of day do you most often enter Eldorado Canyon State Park?	46
Figure 18: How long do you tend to stay when you visit Eldorado Canyon State Park?	46

Executive Summary

Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) is developing the Eldorado Canyon State Park Visitor Use Management Plan (VUMP) to address visitor use management and access issues, enhance user experiences, and protect park resources (natural, cultural, infrastructure). The plan will draw from research, including a comprehensive biological and cultural resource inventory, assessment and management document (Eldorado Canyon State Park Resource Stewardship Plan); and a capacity and traffic study assessing visitor numbers and experience at the park.

Plan development will also be informed by an Interagency Team comprised of state, county and city representatives, a multi-stakeholder Task Force comprised of Eldorado Springs residents and park user or interest groups, and input from the public.

Eldorado Canyon State Park protects a steep-walled canyon of the same name near Boulder, Colorado, attracting visitors from both near and far due to its exceptional scenic qualities. It can be accessed by vehicle through one entrance by a two-lane dirt road. An entrance station controls entry, preventing the park from exceeding capacity, as measured by filling its roughly 200 parking spaces. Park visitation has increased dramatically in the past few years, and the park reaches maximum vehicle capacity on most summer weekends and holidays. The combination of increased visitation and limited access have resulted in illegal parking and congestion on roads outside the park, impeding traffic flow for emergency services and nearby residents. Concerns have been raised regarding whether and to what degree this situation is having negative effects on visitor experience and natural resources, which are being assessed as part of the VUMP development process.

As a component of the planning process and to inform the drafting of the plan, CPW engaged members of the public to gather information and feedback on strategies for visitor use management. The agency used the public meetings and online survey as forums for discussion on park management issues that have been highlighted in recent years through public comments, visitor feedback through surveys, park staff experiences, and comments from private neighborhoods adjacent to the park. The Task Force and Interagency Team provided valuable insights and suggestions for crafting the meetings and survey.

CPW held two-hour public meetings in Boulder on Monday, September 9, 2019 and Tuesday, September 17, 2019 and opened an online survey that was available in both English and Spanish to the public from September 9 through September 30, 2019. A total of 360 members of the public engaged in the process – 45 attending one of the two public meetings, and 315 responding to the online survey.

Keystone Policy Center (Keystone), a third-party, non-profit organization, facilitated the public meetings and reviewed and analyzed feedback from the meetings and the online survey to assess preferences and attitudes on:

- Two visitor use management scenarios for improving traffic flow and parking on busy summer weekends and holidays (detailed below)
- Three traffic flow and parking strategies (paid, reserve-in-advance parking permits; time-limited parking permits; and a free or low-cost shuttle)
- Additional visitor use management strategies (including improving trail design to reduce erosion, altering the Streamside Trail, and establishing a reservation system for picnic sites)

This report summarizes an analysis of the input received during the public engagement process.

Visitor Use Management Scenarios for Improving Traffic Flow and Parking

CPW developed two scenarios to test combinations of potential strategies for improving traffic flow and parking on busy summer weekends and holidays (i.e., the ‘peak season’) at Eldorado Canyon State Park. These scenarios utilized in the public engagement process were considered specifically for summer weekends and holidays and are not fully inclusive of the strategies being considered in the VUMP development process. Instead, the scenarios focused on strategies that received the most discussion among the VUMP Task Force and required the most public feedback. The scenarios were intended only as discussion material for the September 2019 public engagement process and are not draft approaches for inclusion in the draft VUMP.

Scenario A was designed to gather feedback on a combination of strategies to reduce and more evenly distribute traffic coming into the park throughout the day on busy weekend days during the peak visitation season and holidays by requiring advance reservation of motor vehicle parking permits with designated park entry times. To manage parking capacity and account for visitor use patterns, 80 percent of parking spaces would be made available for reservations.

Scenario B, like Scenario A, was designed to gather feedback on a combination of strategies to manage traffic and parking on busy summer weekends and holidays by requiring reserved-in-advance motor vehicle parking permits. It also introduced time limits on parking permits, a more restricted reservation system with 50 percent of parking spaces made available for reservations, and a free shuttle. Scenario B considered the number of vehicles in the park, the number of total users arriving by vehicle or shuttle, and convenience-based incentives to use the shuttle.

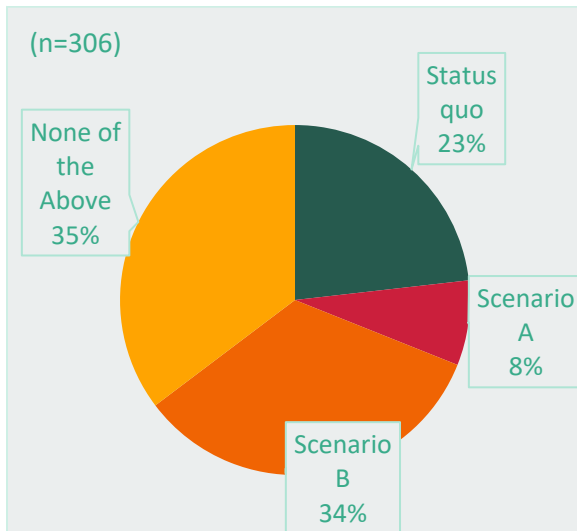
After reviewing and providing feedback on the scenarios, participants were asked to consider which scenario they would prefer by selecting one of the four options:

- Status quo park access (first come, first served; park entry closes at capacity)
- Scenario A: Reserved-in-Advance, Motor Vehicle Parking Permit
- Scenario B: Free Shuttle + Reserved-in-Advance Motor Vehicle Parking Permit + Time Limits + Free Shuttle
- None of the Above (please describe a scenario you would prefer)

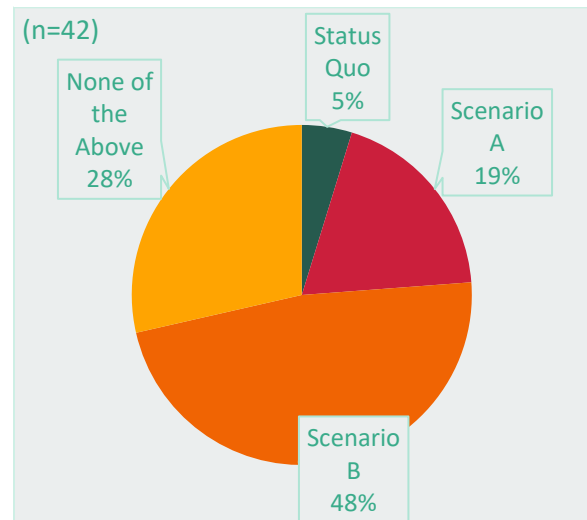
Nearly half of public meeting attendees preferred Scenario B above the other options. Those opposed to Scenario B generally disliked the time-restricted parking structure and expressed concerns over the logistics of the shuttle service. Less than 20 percent of attendees selected Scenario A as their preferred option. Those opposed to Scenario A generally felt that it added barriers to visitation but did not go far enough to limit traffic to and within the park. Only 5 percent preferred the status quo, and three-quarters of attendees did not feel that the status quo is effective for managing traffic flow and parking issues at Eldorado Canyon and the surrounding community on busy summer weekends.

Among online survey respondents, Scenario B was more popular than Scenario A, but more respondents selected None of the Above as their preferred option, and instead described an alternative scenario as their preference. The alternative scenarios suggested were a combination of new scenarios and versions of Scenarios A and B with modifications.

ONLINE SURVEY SCENARIO PREFERENCE



PUBLIC MEETING SCENARIO PREFERENCE



Frequently suggested modified scenarios include:

- Status quo with shuttle service – Shuttle service with no parking permit system and no restrictions on parking
- Shuttle service and parking permits without time-limits
- Vehicle restrictions on weekends – Shuttle access only on weekends and holidays (no vehicle access)
- A hybrid system that includes some first-come, first-served parking and some reserved in advance permits
- Shuttle service with pay-per-hour vehicle parking

Scenarios with new strategy components include:

- Building a designated bike lane and/or trails to access the park
- Modified park entry fee structure to incentivize carpooling and bicycle/pedestrian access
- Bypass lane access to rideshare users, and a new cell tower to ensure connectivity
- Lot-specific parking reservation assignments

Meeting attendees were polled, and online survey respondents were asked to what degree they supported or opposed each of the three major visitation strategies presented in the two scenarios. These results are summarized below.

TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU SUPPORT OR OPPOSE EACH OF THE FOLLOWING STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING TRAFFIC FLOW AND PARKING ON BUSY SUMMER WEEKENDS?

	Strongly Support	Support	Neither Support nor Oppose	Oppose	Strongly Oppose
Public Meeting Attendees (percentages of 45 attendees polled for these questions)					
Paid, reserve-in-advance parking permits	24% ¹	40%	13%	13%	9%
Time-limited parking permits (i.e., with 4-hour or 8-hour options)	7%	31%	20%	18%	24%
A shuttle (free or low-cost)	53%	16%	9%	16%	7%
Online Survey Respondents (percentages of 303 respondents to these questions)					
Paid, reserve-in-advance parking permits	15%	26%	16%	18%	24%
Time-limited parking permits (i.e., with 4-hour or 8-hour options)	12%	21%	15%	19%	32%
A shuttle (free or low-cost)	55%	23%	10%	5%	8%

Given the recent increases in annual park visitation, participants were also asked to select the three highest priority additional upgrades or strategies for the continued operations of the park. Participants were provided seven upgrades and strategies for consideration:

- More information on the CPW park website to encourage planning
- Exhibits and other educational materials near the park entrance
- Signage to denote climbing access trails to reduce casual hiking traffic
- Signage to advise safe use of the road by vehicles and pedestrians
- Adjustments to Streamside Trail that add an additional easy trail to provide an alternative to walking on the road
- Improvements to trail design to reduce erosion on at least the first mile of each trail
- A reservation system for picnic sites

Improvements to trail design and an adjusted Streamside Trail were the most popular strategies presented overall, with over half of meeting attendees and survey respondents ranking these strategies in their top three choices. Introducing a reservation system for picnic sites was the most popular choice among meeting attendees. However, fewer survey respondents, including those identifying as picnickers, selected this strategy as a priority. Alternatively, adding signs to denote climbing access trails was a priority strategy for about 40 percent of survey respondents, but less than 20 percent of meeting attendees consider this a priority upgrade.

¹ Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number, which in some cases may make them not add up to exactly 100% for each question.

Demographic Insights from Online Survey:

As part of the online survey, information was gathered on participant demography. This data was used to gather insights into the preferences of specific user groups, including respondents who primarily visit the park to climb, hike, and picnic, as well as residents of the Denver Metro Area, residents of Eldorado Springs & Valley, and residents of Boulder County as a whole. The latter group accounted for 63 percent of survey respondents, and the group's sentiments were similar to respondents as a whole. For the other user groups, there were several instances where sentiments varied by 10% or greater from respondents as a whole. Those insights are collected and summarized here.

Compared to respondents as a whole, **climbers** were more likely to:

- *Oppose* paid, reserve in-advance parking permits (68% vs. 42% of respondents as a whole).
- *Oppose* time-limited parking permits (78% vs. 52%).
- *Agree* that the status quo would be effective in improving traffic flow and parking issues (45% vs 35%).
- *Disagree* that Scenario A would be effective in improving traffic flow and parking issues (46% vs 32%).
- *Disagree* that Scenario B would be effective in improving traffic flow and parking issues (40% vs 30%).
- *Agree* that the status quo would be beneficial, in general, for the park and its visitors (60% vs. 43%).
- *Disagree* that Scenario A would be beneficial, in general, for the park and its visitors (62% vs. 42%).
- *Disagree* that Scenario B would be beneficial, in general, for the park and its visitors (47% vs. 35%).

Compared to respondents as a whole, **hikers** were more likely to:

- *Support* paid, reserve in-advance parking permits (61% vs. 42% of respondents as a whole).
- *Support* time-limited parking permits (49% vs. 33%).
- *Agree* that Scenario A would be effective in improving traffic flow and parking issues (64% vs. 51%).
- *Disagree* that the status quo would be beneficial, in general, for the park and its visitors (55% vs. 35%).
- *Agree* that Scenario A would be beneficial, in general, for the park and its visitors (57% vs. 41%).
- *Agree* that Scenario B would be beneficial, in general, for the park and its visitors (63% vs. 53%).

Compared to respondents as a whole, **picnickers** were more likely to:

- *Support* time-limited parking permits (50% vs. 33% of respondents as a whole).
- *Oppose* a free or low-cost shuttle (28% vs. 13%).
- *Agree* that the status quo would be effective in improving traffic flow and parking issues (50% vs. 35%).
- *Disagree* that the status quo would be beneficial, in general, for the park and its visitors (50% vs. 35%).
- *Agree* that Scenario B would be beneficial, in general, for the park and its visitors (67% vs. 53%).

Compared to respondents as a whole, **residents of the Denver Metro Area** were more likely to:

- *Disagree* that Scenario B would be effective in improving traffic flow and parking issues (40% vs. 30% of respondents as a whole).
- *Agree* that the status quo would be beneficial, in general, for the park and its visitors (53% vs. 43%).

Compared to respondents as a whole, **residents of Eldorado Springs & Valley** were more likely to:

- *Support* paid, reserve in-advance parking permits (65% vs. 42% of respondents as a whole).
- *Support* time-limited parking permits (55% vs. 33%).
- *Oppose* a free or low-cost shuttle (25% vs. 13%).
- *Disagree* that the status quo would be effective in improving traffic flow and parking issues (80% vs 43%).
- *Disagree* that the status quo would be beneficial, in general, for the park and its visitors (55% vs. 35%).
- *Agree* that Scenario A would be beneficial, in general, for the park and its visitors (60% vs. 41%).

Cross-Cutting Themes

During the public engagement process, several broad themes and management considerations frequently arose across feedback on the visitor use management scenarios and strategies. These themes, identified and compiled here by Keystone, represent ongoing questions and concerns for CPW to consider in the VUMP development process. Some themes and considerations are outside of the scope of the VUMP and/or CPW's authority.

- **Conflict Reduction.** Participants expressed concern about the relationships between Eldorado Springs residents and visitors of the park and said they would prefer strategies to be focused on creating a positive experience for all parties, including visitors, residents, and park staff.
- **Considerations for Annual Pass Holders.** Participants were concerned that added fees (even at a discounted rate) and restrictions on visitation would devalue the Colorado State Parks annual pass and suggested that all management strategies consider annual pass holders.
- **Education and Communications.** Participants emphasized that widespread education and strategic communications efforts will be an essential component of successfully implementing any management strategy, including effective signage, social media outreach, and easily accessible information about any changes to the system that impact visitation. Participants stressed the importance of designing an education and communications strategy in a way that reaches both frequent visitors and potential visitors both in and out of the state.
- **Enforcement and Misuse.** If CPW implements a parking permit system, participants expressed concern that it could result in an increase in illegal parking by those who are unable to obtain permits and said that proper parking enforcement would be essential – both within the park and in the town of Eldorado Springs. Others expressed concerns that an online permitting system would be easy to misuse. People purchasing permits they do not intend to use, and purchasing permits with the intent to sell, are two concerns that were raised.
- **Equity of Access.** Participants expressed that maintaining equitable access to the park is a priority. In implementing new visitor use management strategies, participants discussed that it will be important that CPW consider and address potential financial, technical, and scheduling barriers that could make the park less accessible for some visitors.
- **Planning and Spontaneity.** Some participants were concerned about the degree that traffic flow and parking management strategies could impact spontaneous and unplanned visits to the park. Others expressed their desire for a predictable and guaranteed park visit.
- **Protection of Natural Resources.** Participants expressed their concern that the protection and preservation of natural resources at Eldorado Canyon (including water quality, air quality, ecosystem health, and trail sustainability) would be considered only as an afterthought to strategies focused on managing visitor use.
- **Safety.** Participants said that safety for all users, pedestrians, and drivers is essential, adding that they would like to see this goal clearly addressed in the VUMP.
- **Visitor Capacity vs. Vehicle Capacity.** Participants were concerned with the total number of visitors at the park and expressed interest in management strategies that focus on the number of visitors within the park in addition to the number of vehicles that enter the park.

Next Steps

CPW will use the information provided in his report, along with the Capacity Study, the Resource Stewardship Plan, and additional input from the Interagency Team and Task Force to guide its efforts in

drafting the Eldorado Canyon State Park Visitor Use Management Plan. The draft plan is expected to be available in the spring of 2020.

1 Eldorado Canyon State Park

Eldorado Canyon State Park protects a steep-walled canyon of the same name near Boulder, Colorado, attracting visitors from both near and far due to its exceptional scenic qualities. Founded in 1978, Eldorado Canyon is one of 41 parks part of the Colorado State Park system managed by Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW). The park consists of 3 parcels of land (Inner Canyon, Crescent Meadows, and the Jefferson County Eldorado Canyon State Park parcel) and encompasses 1,442 acres. Eldorado Canyon offers over 500 technical rock-climbing routes, as well as hiking and biking trails, picnic sites, and opportunities for fishing, horseback riding, winter sports, and sightseeing.

The park employs 4 full-time staff and has an annual operating budget of \$160,000. Infrastructure at Eldorado Canyon includes an entrance station, a visitor center, 10 picnic sites, 17.1 miles of trails, and approximately 200 parking spaces.

2 The Visitor Use Management Plan

2.1 Introduction

CPW is developing the Eldorado Canyon State Park Visitor Use Management Plan (VUMP) to address visitor use management and access issues, enhance user experiences, and protect park resources (natural, cultural, infrastructure). The plan will draw from research, including a comprehensive biological and cultural resource inventory, assessment and management document (Eldorado Canyon State Park Resource Stewardship Plan); and a capacity and traffic study assessing visitor numbers and experience at the park.

. Plan development will also be informed by an Interagency Team comprised of state, county and city representatives, a multi-stakeholder Task Force comprised of Eldorado Springs residents and park user or interest groups, and input from the public.

Eldorado Canyon State Park can be accessed by vehicle through one entrance by a two-lane dirt road. An entrance station controls entry, preventing the park from exceeding capacity, as measured by filling its roughly 200 parking spaces. Park visitation has increased dramatically in the past few years, and the park reaches maximum vehicle capacity on most summer weekends and holidays. The combination of increased visitation and limited access have resulted in illegal parking and congestion on roads outside the park, impeding traffic flow for emergency services and nearby residents. Concerns have been raised regarding whether and to what degree this situation is having negative effects on visitor experience and natural resources, which are being assessed the VUMP development process.

The scope of the VUMP is limited to current visitor use management issues at Eldorado Canyon and will not include a decision on the Eldorado Canyon to Walker Ranch multi-use trail connection. For more information, see the Visitor Use Management Plan frequently asked questions on the CPW website: <https://cpw.state.co.us/placestogo/parks/EldoradoCanyon/Pages/Visitor-Use-Management-Plan.aspx>.

2.2 Planning and Development

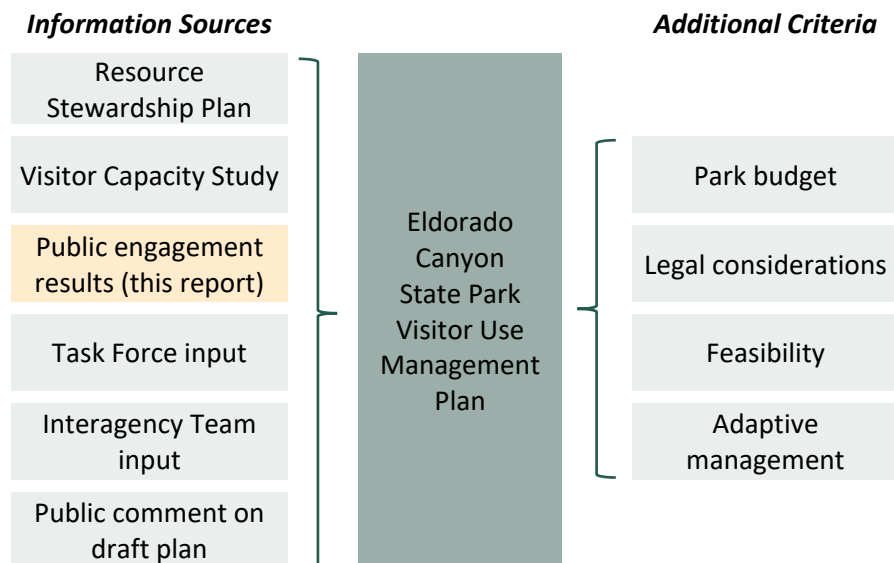
In May of 2019, CPW contracted Keystone Policy Center (Keystone)² and SE Group³ to facilitate the planning process and VUMP development. Keystone designed and facilitated the public engagement process including the analysis of public comment and drafting of this report. Keystone also facilitates the Task Force and Interagency Team (described below). SE Group has conducted a visitor capacity study that includes traffic data, user counts, and on-site interviews. SE Group also consults on the drafting of the VUMP.

The Eldorado Canyon State Park Visitor Use Management Plan Task Force (the Task Force) is a multi-stakeholder forum that serves in an advisory role to provide input into the VUMP process. Task Force meetings provide a collaborative environment for information and perspective sharing, deliberation, and consensus-building. The group's charge is to identify and provide non-binding feedback to CPW regarding visitor use management strategies and approaches.

The Interagency Team includes representatives from CPW, Boulder County Parks & Open Space, City of Boulder Open Space & Mountain Parks, and Boulder County Transportation, and was convened to provide a forum to share information and coordinate on multi-jurisdictional strategies that would impact local transportation issues and open space lands.

This report summarizes an analysis of the input received during the public engagement process, which is one of several components of the VUMP development process. The figure below gives an overview of the sources of input and information and the additional criteria that will be considered in the development of the plan.

FIGURE 1: VISITOR USE MANAGEMENT PLAN INPUT AND CRITERIA



² Keystone Policy Center is a Colorado-based non-profit organization founded in 1975 to drive actionable, shared solutions to contentious environment, energy, education and public health issues.

³SE Group is a strategy, permitting, planning and design firm that has been working with public and private sector clients since 1958 to deliver extraordinary experiences and enduring value.

Visitor use management planning for Eldorado Canyon began in June of 2019 and will continue through the anticipated drafting of the plan in the spring of 2020. In June 2019, the Task Force was convened to discuss desired outcomes of the process. In August 2019, the Task Force considered the initial results of the capacity study undertaken for the VUMP alongside visitor use case studies from other public lands and developed strategies for consideration. These strategies were compiled and utilized to generate scenarios and questions for feedback from the public. The public engagement process took place in September 2019 and consisted of two public meetings and an online survey. The Task Force met again in late October 2019 to hear and respond to updates on planning and public engagement, and to discuss methods for evaluating and addressing the impacts of visitor use and behavior on the natural environment, public access, and visitor experience.

The anticipated next steps in the VUMP development process include finalization of the capacity study conducted by SE Group, publication of the CPW Resource Stewardship Plan, and solicitation of additional input from the Interagency Team and Task Force.

2.3 Desired Future Conditions

The following desired future conditions were developed by CPW with input from the Task Force. They are aspirational, qualitative statements describing the long-term preferred characteristics of natural resource conditions and visitor experience. The VUMP will include strategies to guide the management of Eldorado Canyon directionally toward the desired future conditions listed below. Objective, quantifiable measures may also be developed.

User experience: A positive experience in nature for all users

- An inclusive place where users of all types and abilities can have an outdoor experience, including underserved communities
- Outdoor recreational opportunities maintained/enhanced as they exist today and additional opportunities compatible with the park mission considered if and when appropriate⁴
- Optimization of the park's unique character as part of the broader state park system, for example, as a world-class rock-climbing destination
- An improved and predictable transportation experience for all users, nearby residents, and first responders, including enhanced multi-modal access to park
- Reduced traffic congestion and illegal parking
- Visitation that does not negatively impact the local community
- Outdoor experiences that promote physical health and mental well-being
- Safe, healthy, and accessible facilities and infrastructure for visitors and staff
- Trails that will support visitation for at least 50 years with limited impact to geology, wildlife, and vegetation
- Users can easily learn where to go, what to do, and the behavior expected in the park
- Users can discover why the park, and nature in general, is special and ways to keep it that way
- Users can contribute to preserving the park, including having their voices heard and see themselves as public lands stewards

Ecology: A park where native plants and animals can thrive

⁴ Existing recreational opportunities are listed on the Eldorado Canyon State Park website: Biking, boating, camping, cross-country skiing, dog walking, attending educational programs, fishing, hiking, horseback riding, hunting, photography, picnicking, rock climbing, and snowshoeing. For full descriptions see <https://cpw.state.co.us/placestogo/parks/EldoradoCanyon/Pages/Activities.aspx>

- Healthy, diverse, abundant wildlife as part of functional ecosystems
- Protection for threatened and endangered species and other species of conservation interest
- Management based on sound biological and scientific evidence
- Reduction/elimination of invasive species
- Healthy forests and reduced wildfire risk
- Reduced soil loss into South Boulder Creek
- Reduced resource degradation in high use areas of the park
- Protection against and effective management of fires, flooding, and other natural disasters
- Good air quality maintained

3 The Public Engagement Process

3.1 Scope and Background

The purpose of the CPW public engagement process was to gather information and feedback on strategies for visitor use management to assist in drafting the VUMP. CPW held two-hour public meetings in Boulder on Monday, September 9, 2019 and Tuesday, September 17, 2019 and opened an online survey that was available to the public from September 9 through September 30, 2019. The agency used the public meetings and online survey as forums for discussion on park management issues that have been highlighted in recent years through public comments, visitor feedback through surveys, park staff experiences, and comments from private neighborhoods adjacent to the park. A total of 360 members of the public engaged in the process – 45 attending one of the two public meetings, and 315 responding to the online survey.

3.2 Public Engagement Methodology

Public engagement began on September 9, 2019 with the first of the two public meetings and the opening of an online survey. The meetings and survey were advertised to the public by CPW via press release, TV interviews, updates to the CPW website, social media posts, and physical posters and flyers at the park in both English and Spanish. To the extent possible, the survey and the public meetings were designed to be comparable opportunities for participation – providing the same background information and asking the same questions. Despite this commonality, the data gathered between the two are reported separately, since the input gathered at meetings resulted from conversation among participants and the input gathered online resulted from individual written input.

The public meetings were hosted by CPW and facilitated by the Keystone. The agendas were identical (see Appendix A for full agenda), including information presented by CPW, followed by small group discussions of desires and concerns related to Eldorado Canyon and feedback on visitor use scenarios developed for consideration, concluding with a survey on the presented scenarios, additional strategies, visitor use, and demography. The small group discussions were facilitated by Keystone with support from SE Group and CPW staff, with designated staff note-takers to capture comments and themes. Attendees were invited to submit handwritten comments on provided notecards, email CPW directly, and/or participate in the online survey if they wished to provide additional feedback.

The online survey was published in English and Spanish and was shared on the CPW website. The survey was written by CPW and Keystone and included 28 questions on the scenarios developed for consideration, additional strategies, visitor use, and demography (see Appendix B for the full English-version survey). The presentation delivered by CPW at the public meetings was made available for download as an informational resource on the same webpage as the link to the survey.

Keystone reviewed and analyzed the responses from the meetings and the survey to assess preferences and attitudes on the strategies and scenarios. In summarizing the analysis, this report includes a combination of paraphrased responses and synthesized points made by respondents.

The management strategies to address visitor use issues that were submitted to the public were initially discussed and compiled by the Task Force, then framed for consideration by CPW and Keystone. A handful of strategies that focus on resolving traffic congestion and parking issues are tightly interrelated, requiring the consideration of trade-offs in combination with each other. These strategies were

Understanding the results to open-ended survey questions

The online survey included a total of 14 open-ended questions on Scenarios A and B. Keystone reviewed each response to these questions and used tags to organize the responses by theme. This process enabled Keystone to track the frequency of mentions of each theme. Some responses received multiple tags. For example, a response that mentioned a dislike about the shuttle would be tagged both for “dislikes” and “shuttle.” However, each tag was only used once for each response. If the same response mentioned two dislikes about the shuttle, it was only tagged once. Therefore, when this report notes the quantity of responses mentioning dislikes (a single tag), it effectively only counts each respondent once.

While this system does allow for some degree of quantification, it is not an exact science and is intended to indicate broad trends rather than precise degree of opinions. Just as, if not more, important are the individual ideas captured in the open-ended responses, which have been synthesized in this report.

compiled into two detailed management scenarios. The scenarios were not fully inclusive of the strategies being considered in the VUMP process. Instead, the scenarios focused on strategies that have received the most discussion among the VUMP Task Force and needed the most public feedback. The remaining strategies identified by the Task Force include improvements and maintenance to resolve in-park issues and are less directly related to park access. These strategies were listed individually for prioritization. Additional recommendations for strategies were solicited from the public apart from the scenario-specific and prioritization questions.

The public meetings and online survey both invited participation through general advertisement and outreach, and those who participated self-selected to do so. As such, although the participants are users of Eldorado Canyon, the group that provided feedback does not match the demographic nor user group balance of the park’s full visitation. Participants’ responses to the demography and park use questions can help to inform any further outreach that may take place in order to receive input from groups that are included in the Eldorado Canyon State Park user base but may not have participated in this phase of public engagement.

4 Visitor Use Management Scenarios for Improving Traffic Flow and Parking

CPW developed two scenarios to test combinations of potential strategies for improving traffic flow and parking on busy summer weekends and holidays in Eldorado Canyon, which represent the peak visitation days (i.e., the ‘peak season’) for the park. These scenarios utilized in the public engagement

process were considered specifically for summer weekends and holidays and are not fully inclusive of the strategies being considered in the VUMP process. Instead, the scenarios focused on strategies that received the most discussion among the VUMP Task Force and require the most public feedback.

4.1 Scenario A

Scenario A: Reserved-in-Advance, Motor Vehicle Parking Permit⁵

Scenario A aims to reduce and more evenly distribute traffic coming into the park throughout the day on busy weekend days during the peak visitation season by requiring advance reservation of motor vehicle parking permits with designated park entry times.

Features of this scenario:

Reserved-in-Advance Motor Vehicle Parking Permit

- On busy weekend days during the peak season, a reserved-in-advance motor vehicle parking permit would be required to park inside Eldorado Canyon State Park. The fee for the vehicle permit is yet to be determined. The vehicle permit fee would be discounted for annual pass holders. The permit would act as the vehicle's day pass.
- Parking permits would be available online and/or by phone (not at the park). An order number or email confirmation would function as proof of purchase. Entrance station employees would verify parking permits at the entrance station.
- Parking permit reservations would provide each vehicle with an entry window for the park, staggered in 1-hour increments throughout the day. Each entry window would be 2 hours.
 - For example, if you had a permit reservation with a 10 a.m. entry time, you could enter between 10 a.m. and Noon. If you had a permit reservation with a 1 p.m. entry time, you could enter between 1 p.m. and 3 p.m.
- Parking permits would be for stays valid from the start of the reservation entry window until the park closes at the end of the day.
- The number of reservations made available per hour would be based on user patterns and peak park visitation times, with the goal of not exceeding 80% of parking spot capacity in the park.
 - Parking permits would be available for any spot in the park; specific spots cannot be reserved.
- When the permitting system is active, signage near the intersection of CO-93 and CO-170 would display "Vehicle reservations required for Eldorado Canyon State Park. No park vehicle access without reservation."
- A bypass lane at the entrance station would accommodate park staff, residents, and emergency vehicles.
- Existing park pedestrian/bike entry fees (\$4 per person) would still apply.

4.1.1 Scenario A: Sentiment Overview

Participants were asked to respond to Scenario A, which would require visitors to obtain paid parking permits in advance of their visit to park personal vehicles within the park on peak season weekends and holidays.

Participants were asked to what extent they agreed that Scenario A would be effective at improving traffic flow and parking issues and to what extent they agreed the scenario would be beneficial to the

⁵ These scenarios were intended only as discussion material for the September 2019 public engagement process and are not draft approaches for inclusion in the VUMP.

park in general. These results are summarized in the following graphs. “Agree” was the most common response in all cases, and “Strongly Agree” was the least common response in all cases. Survey respondents were divided when asked to what extent they agreed the scenario would be beneficial to the park. Forty-one percent of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed, and 42 percent either disagreed or strongly disagreed.

FIGURE 2: TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU AGREE THAT SCENARIO A WOULD BE EFFECTIVE AT IMPROVING TRAFFIC FLOW AND PARKING ISSUES?

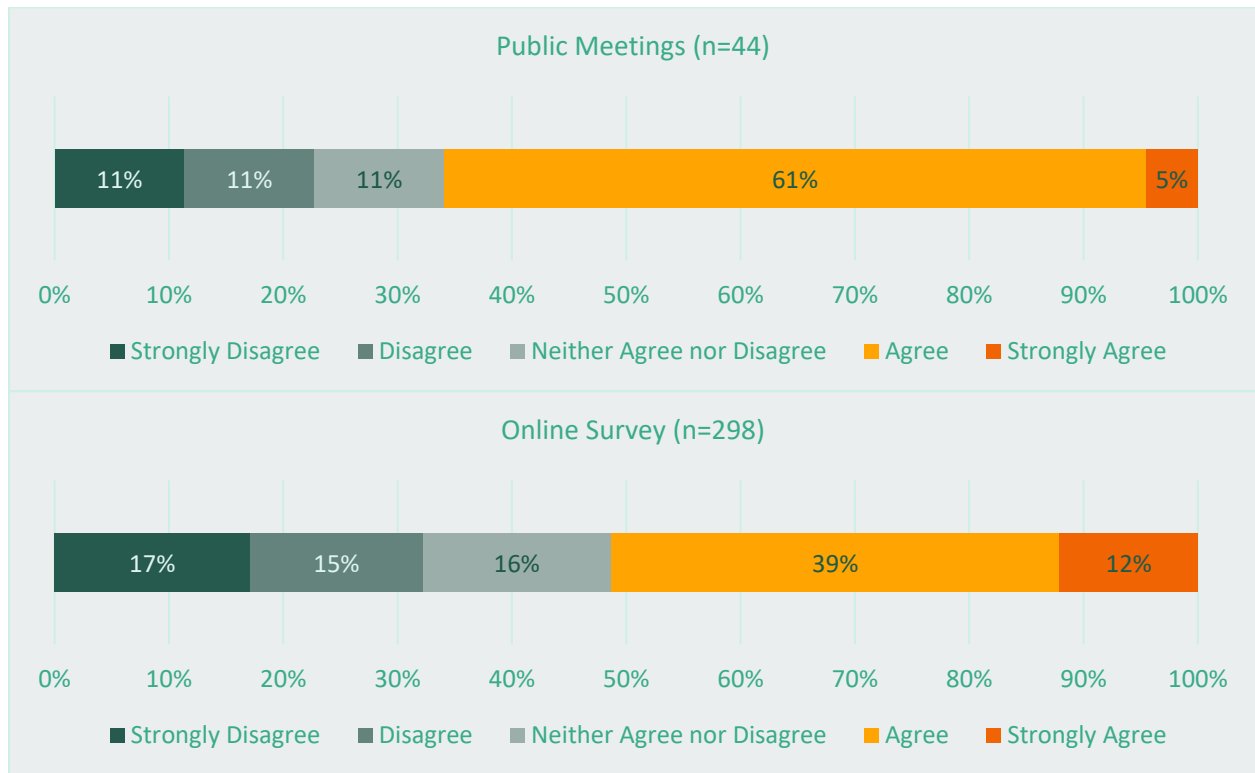
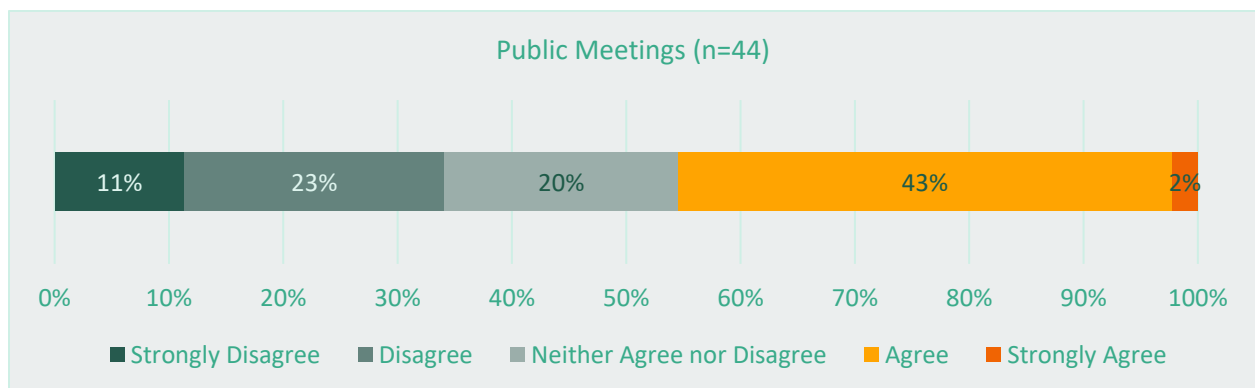
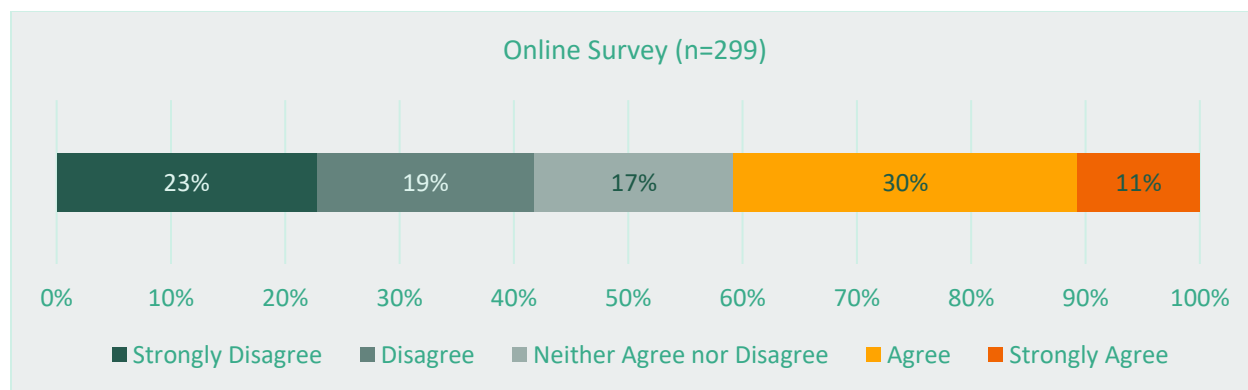


FIGURE 3: TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU AGREE THAT SCENARIO A WOULD BE BENEFICIAL IN GENERAL?





Sentiment Overview: Input from Public Meetings

Some meeting attendees liked that Scenario A would reduce the total number of vehicles in the park, and also lessen the burden on park staff to manage parking. Others felt that the scenario was too vehicle-oriented and created a barrier to entry without fully mitigating the traffic congestion.

Sentiment Overview: Input from Online Survey

Input on likes and dislikes about Scenario A was provided by 297 survey respondents. Over two-thirds of survey responses mentioned a dislike, and over one-third mentioned a like. The following bullets represent unique ideas that appeared in open-ended responses and have been paraphrased and grouped for inclusion here.

Summary of Scenario A Dislikes

Planning and Uncertainty

- The scenario would exclude those who cannot plan in advance due to variable schedules (e.g., those with children, those with unpredictable work schedules).
- The need to plan in advance would negatively affect local, casual visitors the most, benefitting out-of-area destination visitors.
- Scheduling multi-person parties around weather conditions is hard enough without also factoring in reservations.
- Without knowing what the weather will be, making a reservation is a gamble.
- The system seems to penalize early morning arrivals (prior to entrance station opening), especially for day-long visits.
- Reservations devalue the strategy of showing up early to claim a spot.
- Evening entry has not been an issue for spontaneous visits and should not require a reservation.
- Reservations will likely sell out well in advance.

Fees and the Annual Pass

- The additional cost of a parking permit would make it too expensive to visit regularly.
- Charging annual pass holders extra for permits and not permitting spontaneous entry devalues the pass.
- Later entry times would cost the same but be worth less due to the diminishing amount of time in the day.
- The added cost of a permit might encourage visitors to stay longer than they would have usually to get the most worth out of it, reducing availability for entry later in the day.

Enforcement and Misuse

- The reservation system seems difficult and expensive for the park to manage and enforce.
- Those who enter the park before the entrance station opens would increase in number and may conflict with the first wave of permitted entrances.
- Entry windows do not have much meaning without required exit times.
- Many parking spaces would remain unoccupied due to no-shows, denying many potential visits.
- Entry windows with no exit times will favor early morning reservations, which will be taken by climbers who will then stay all day.
- For some, it may be worth the money to buy multiple permits to ensure at least one good weather day and not use the others, wasting spots.
- A 2-hour entry window is too generous. To be more efficient, permits should be invalidated and released to visitors on a first-come, first-served basis after 30- or 60-minute windows.
- Signage will not deter drivers from attempting to drive up the canyon without a reservation and park illegally in Eldorado Springs.

Equity of Access

- The scenario favors those who have consistent and reliable computer access, which raises concerns about equity of access.
- Reservations will likely be very competitive and difficult to get when they go on sale for a given date.
- This system does not seem to permit multi-day parking for backpacking, which will be important if the trails are connected regionally.
- The scenario would require knowing in advance how the system works, which would disadvantage out-of-area casual visitors.
- The reservation system would make visiting the park too complicated to be worth the effort.

Summary of Scenario A Likes

Planning and Uncertainty

- Reservations would reduce uncertainty about being able to get into the park.
- Reservations would require planning ahead, which might make for more prepared visitors.
- No required exit times makes the experience more relaxed and safer if activities take longer than expected.

Simplicity and Organization

- This procedure is more organized than the current system.
- The reservation system seems straightforward and easy to understand.
- Reservations are a proven system and work well at Muir Woods in Marin County, California.
- Reservations would allow for better record-keeping of those who enter the park, in case of crime or other emergencies.

Congestion

- The scenario would reduce traffic congestion in Eldorado Springs.
- The scenario would reduce crowding in the park, which would improve the experience of visitors and safety for all those who use the road.
- The system would encourage more carpooling.

- Reservations would reduce short "drive-through" use of the park which would reduce congestion.

Qualified Response

- This would be a good system, provided it is used for weekends only.

4.1.2 Scenario A: Potential Impacts on Visitation

Participants were asked how Scenario A would affect their park visitation.

Visitation Impacts: Input from Public Meetings

Scenario A could discourage visitors from visiting the park or could encourage them to alter their visitation patterns by carpooling with larger groups, visiting only during non-peak times, or by planning ahead and purchasing a parking permit. Some meeting attendees liked the predictability and guarantees that come with holding a parking permit. Others felt that the inability to visit the park spontaneously would negatively impact their experience at the park. Some attendees expressed the concern that the system would make it more difficult for certain users and groups to access the park, including low-income visitors, those without internet access, and visitors with unpredictable schedules. A permit system might also encourage the development of a secondary market, with individuals buying and reselling permits.

Visitation Impacts: Input from Online Survey

Input on visitation impacts was provided by 295 survey respondents. About one-third of those responses mentioned that Scenario A would reduce or eliminate visitation to the park while permitting is in effect. Some respondents attributed this to the fact that it would be difficult to plan around weather and to coordinate groups. Others added that this scenario would reduce the ability to spontaneously visit the park. Some shared that they would be unlikely to purchase an annual pass if the purchase did not guarantee entry without a permit, as an added fee would devalue the pass and its purpose.

Roughly one-quarter of responses mentioned that Scenario A would have no impact on visitation. These respondents either already avoid busy summer weekends and holidays or typically access the park via foot or bike.

About 20 percent of responses mentioned that Scenario A would not impact visitation frequency but would alter visitation patterns. Respondents said they would plan ahead to either participate in or work around the permitting system, either by visiting on weekdays instead, carpooling, or biking into the park on busy summer weekends and holidays.

Less than 5 percent of responses mentioned that the predictable experience and reduced traffic congestion would make them more likely to visit under this scenario.

4.1.3 Scenario A: Fee Structure

Participants were asked to consider vehicle permit fees ranging from \$9 to \$28⁶ (inclusive of the vehicle day pass), and to share how this range of fees might affect their park visitation.

Fee Structure: Input from Public Meetings

Meeting attendees emphasized equity as a key consideration for CPW when it comes to setting the permit fee. Some suggested that a fee of about \$15 total would be acceptable. However, others said

⁶ These amounts were provided for discussion purposes only and are subject to change.

that at that price some people would reserve and pay for permits without showing up. Some felt that a \$28 fee (the high end of the price range under consideration by CPW) would be prohibitively expensive. On the other hand, proponents of the higher fee said it would likely decrease overall visitation, and effectively manage congestion issues at the park. To mitigate the restrictive impacts of a \$28 fee, some suggested that CPW could offer special rates for low-income visitors. The more expensive it is to access the park and the more steps one is required to take to do so, the more important it is that an optimal, peaceful, and safe park experience is guaranteed.

Fee Structure: Input from Online Survey

Input on fee structure was provided by 291 survey respondents. About 40 percent of responses mentioned concerns over increasing fees. Less than 15 percent expressed either that they approved of additional fees or that additional fees would not significantly impact their visitation patterns.

One-third of responses included feedback on specific fee ranges. Of these responses:

- 70 percent preferred with fees in the lower range of \$9 to \$15, often citing concerns over equity of access.
- About 15 percent would be content with fees in the mid-range of \$16 to \$22, but also often expressed that fees in the higher range would reduce equity of access.
- About 15 percent expressed a preference for or would be content with fees in the higher range of \$23 to \$28.

Over a quarter of responses included questions or concerns related to how the fees would apply to annual pass holders.

4.1.4 Scenario A: Planning Park Visits

Participants were asked how far in advance they would prefer to make a reservation (if they made a reservation).

Planning Park Visits: Input from Public Meetings

Meeting attendees expressed the desire to maintain a degree of spontaneity and would therefore like to be able to reserve a parking permit 1-3 days before visiting the park, with some expressing a preference for same-day reservations. Some suggested that a week would be an acceptable reservation window. Others said they would be willing to make a reservation up to a month in advance. Being required to reserve a permit more than one month out was perceived as overly restrictive and unrealistic. Some suggested staggering the release of parking permits, so that some permits only become available 1-2 days before the visitation date.

Planning Park Visits: Input from Online Survey

Input on reservations was provided by 295 survey respondents. Over two-thirds of responses mentioned a preference to reserve a permit within a week of visiting the park, with one-third of those responses (one-quarter overall) including a stated preference for making a reservation within one day of visiting the park.

In about 13 percent of responses, survey takers mentioned that they would not reserve permits under this scenario.

4.1.5 Scenario A: Suggestions

Participants were asked to provide suggestions to improve Scenario A.

Suggestions: Input from Public Meetings

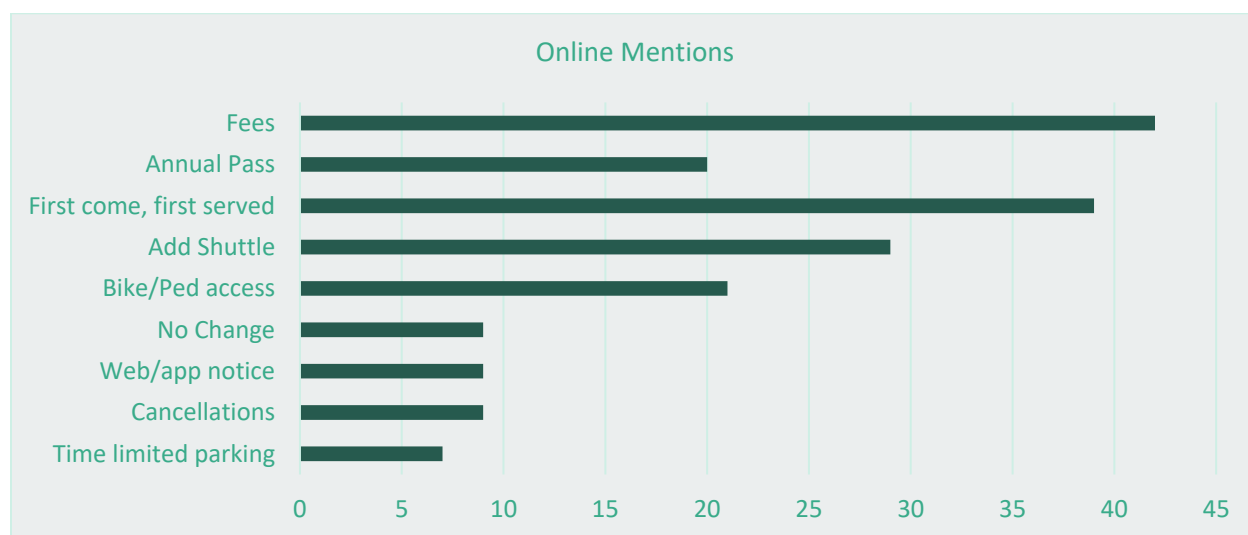
Suggested modifications to Scenario A from meeting attendees include:

- First-come, first-served parking should be available before 6am.
- An app should be adopted that live-tracks and communicates parking ability to potential visitors.
- Strict penalties should be instituted for no-shows and system misuse.

Suggestions: Input from Online Survey

Respondents suggested modifications to improve Scenario A. The figure below shows the frequency of mentions in the survey responses by suggestion topic.

FIGURE 4: FREQUENCY OF SCENARIO A SUGGESTIONS BY TOPIC



The following bullets represent unique suggestions for modifications to Scenario A that appeared in open-ended responses and have been paraphrased and grouped here.

Fees, the Annual Pass, and Bike/Pedestrian Access

- To reduce no shows, make parking permits free for all but take a deposit for all reservations, refundable upon arrival at the park.
- Carpooling should be incentivized.
- Walk-in and bike fees should not change.
- Bikes and pedestrians should be allowed to enter for free.
- Group discounts should be given to bikers and pedestrians entering as a group.
- Allow annual pass holders to reserve parking permits for free.
- Add an annual Eldorado Canyon parking pass to the annual pass to permit entry without a reservation.
- Morning entry passes should be more expensive, since they could potentially spend a longer time at the park than those with an entry window in the afternoon.
- Reservations should be time-limited, with a surcharge added for additional time spent in the park.
- A lower fee option should be available to ensure equity.
- Those who leave within 2 hours should be refunded a portion of the fee.
- Reservation fees should be waived for park volunteers.

- Fees should be raised across the board, keeping the first-come, first-served entry system.
- Season-long parking passes that do not require reservations should be avoided as a potential strategy, to keep from giving those with a pass a monopoly on spaces.

First-come, First-Served

- Some permits should be held and sold to visitors at the park entrance on a day-of first-come, first-served basis.
- First-come, first-served parking should be available for those arriving early in the morning.
- Reservation cancellations should be released and sold to visitors at the park entrance on a day-of first-come, first-served basis.

Cancellations, No-Shows, and Notification Systems

- Require that those with reservations check-in 24 hours before their arrival, otherwise their reservation is cancelled, and their permit released back into the system.
- Make it easy to cancel, refund, and resell permits - ideally through a mobile app.
- Cancellations and voided permits should show up as available permits in real-time on the reservation system, including for those who show up with a day-long permit but leave after a shorter stay.
- Cancellations with a full refund should be available in cases of base weather.
- There should be a penalty for those who make reservations that are not used, such as being banned from making future reservations.

Other

- Bikes and pedestrians should be the only traffic allowed into the park on busy summer weekends.
- Visitors should be restricted to a limited number of reservations per month.
- Multi-day reservations should be available.
- Track and post the number of available parking spots online and on a physical sign in lieu of a reservation system.
- Release some permits far in advance and some closer to visitation date to accommodate different kinds of visitors.

4.1.6 Scenario A: Additional Questions

Questions: Input from Public Meetings

Meeting attendees raised several questions about Scenario A.

- Could CPW pair a picnic space with a parking permit?
- Would average vehicle occupancy (AVO) increase with permits? Could this increase the total number of visitors?
- Would there be penalties for no-shows? Would CPW offer refunds for weather and/or unexpected events? How would the agency prevent misuse of the refund system?

Questions: Input from Online Survey

Survey respondents raised several questions about Scenario A.

Permit questions

- Some respondents were unclear about the 2-hour permit entry window. The proposed permit entry window allows permit holders to enter within a 2-hour period, based on reservation. Once in the park, visitors may stay as long as they want.
- How much would parking permits cost, both in general and for annual pass holders?
- How much would entry for bike and walk-in visitors cost?
- How would the reservation system work? How do visitors reserve permits?
- Would the reservation system benefit those with fast internet connections?
- What would the refund, cancellation, and no-show policies be?
- How far in advance would permits become available for reservation?
- Would there be a limit on the total number of reservations allowed for an individual per season?
- What is the anticipated demand of the permits? Will there still be permits available to reserve at the last minute, or would they need to be reserved immediately after they become available?
- Why does this scenario include capping parking capacity at 80% instead of maximizing the park's parking infrastructure?
- How would reservations later in the day be guaranteed a spot given the uncertainty of exit times?

Other questions

- How would this scenario be communicated to the public?
- How would this scenario be managed and enforced?
- Will illegal parking in Eldorado Springs be enforced?
- How would this scenario impact low-income visitors?
- How would this scenario impact park usage and park visitation levels?
- Will there be special accommodations for climbers?

4.2 Scenario B

Scenario B: Reserved-in-Advance Motor Vehicle Parking Permit + Time Limits + Free Shuttle⁷

Scenario B adds time limits and a free shuttle to the reserved-in-advance motor vehicle parking permits in the first scenario. Scenario B aims to reduce the number of personal vehicles entering the park, reducing traffic congestion and competition for parking spaces on days during the peak season. Scenario B considers the number of vehicles in the park, the number of total users arriving by vehicle or shuttle, and convenience-based incentives to use the shuttle.

Features of this scenario:

Reserved-in-Advance Motor Vehicle Parking Permit + Time Limits

- On busy weekend days during the summer/peak season, a reserved-in-advance motor vehicle parking permit would be required to park inside Eldorado Canyon State Park. The fees for the vehicle permit are yet to be determined; an 8-hour reservation would be more expensive than a 4-hour reservation. The vehicle permit fee would be discounted for annual pass holders. The permit would act as the vehicle's day pass.
- Parking permits would be available online and/or by phone (not at the park). An order number or email confirmation would function as proof of purchase. Entrance station employees would verify parking permits at the entrance station.
- Parking permits reservations would provide each vehicle with an entry window for the park, staggered in 1-hour increments throughout the day. Each entry window would be 2 hours.
- Parking permits would be for any available spot in the park – specific spots cannot be reserved.
- Parking permits would be more restricted during peak hours than at other times to offset increased visitation from shuttle passengers and to maintain (not increase) the total current numbers of visitors entering the park. For example, parking availability may be reduced with a goal of not exceeding 50% parking spot capacity at peak visitation times.
- No reservation or parking fee would be required after 5pm.
- When the permitting system is active, signage at the intersection of CO-93 and CO-170 would display "Vehicle reservations required for Eldorado Canyon State Park. No park vehicle access without reservation. Free shuttle available"
- A bypass lane at the entrance station would accommodate permit park staff, residents, and emergency vehicles.

Free Shuttle

- Free shuttles that run continuously throughout the day.
- Shuttle stops would be: City of Boulder, the intersection of CO-93 and CO-170, Doudy Draw and South Mesa trailheads, and three stops within the park (Entrance Station, Fowler Trail, and Visitor Center)⁸.

⁷ These scenarios were intended only as discussion material for the September 2019 public engagement process and are not draft approaches for inclusion in the VUMP.

⁸ The shuttle stops proposed are hypothetical and for review purposes only. The shuttle route has not been reviewed or approved by Boulder County or the City of Boulder Open Space and Mountain Parks.

- Shuttles would include three 15-passenger mini-buses running on rotation to all of the stops, with an estimated 20 to 30-minute interval between them.
- The first shuttle would depart at 6 am. The last shuttle to leave the park would depart at 5pm.
- Those riding the shuttle to Eldorado Canyon State Park would pay the walk-in park entrance fee, which is \$4 for adults and free for those ages 15 and under; or they would use their annual pass.
- Shuttles would be first-come, first-served and would not be reservable.
- A bypass lane at the entrance station would accommodate shuttles, park staff, residents, and emergency vehicles to enter.

4.2.1 Scenario B: Sentiment Overview

Participants were asked to respond to Scenario B, which, like Scenario A, which would require visitors to obtain paid parking permits in advance of their visit to park personal vehicles within the park on peak season weekends and holidays. Unlike Scenario A, these permits would include time limits of either 4 or 8 hours. Additionally, a free shuttle would be available to transport visitors into the park.

Participants were initially asked to what extent they agreed that Scenario B would be effective at improving traffic flow and parking issues and to what extent they agreed it would be beneficial to the park in general. These results are summarized in the following graphs. “Agree” was the most common single response in all cases. The share of survey takers who responded either that they strongly agreed or strongly disagreed with these questions tended to be larger than in response to the same questions on Scenario A, indicating that the combination of strategies in Scenario B yielded a more polarized response.

FIGURE 5: TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU AGREE THAT SCENARIO B WOULD BE EFFECTIVE AT IMPROVING TRAFFIC FLOW AND PARKING ISSUES?

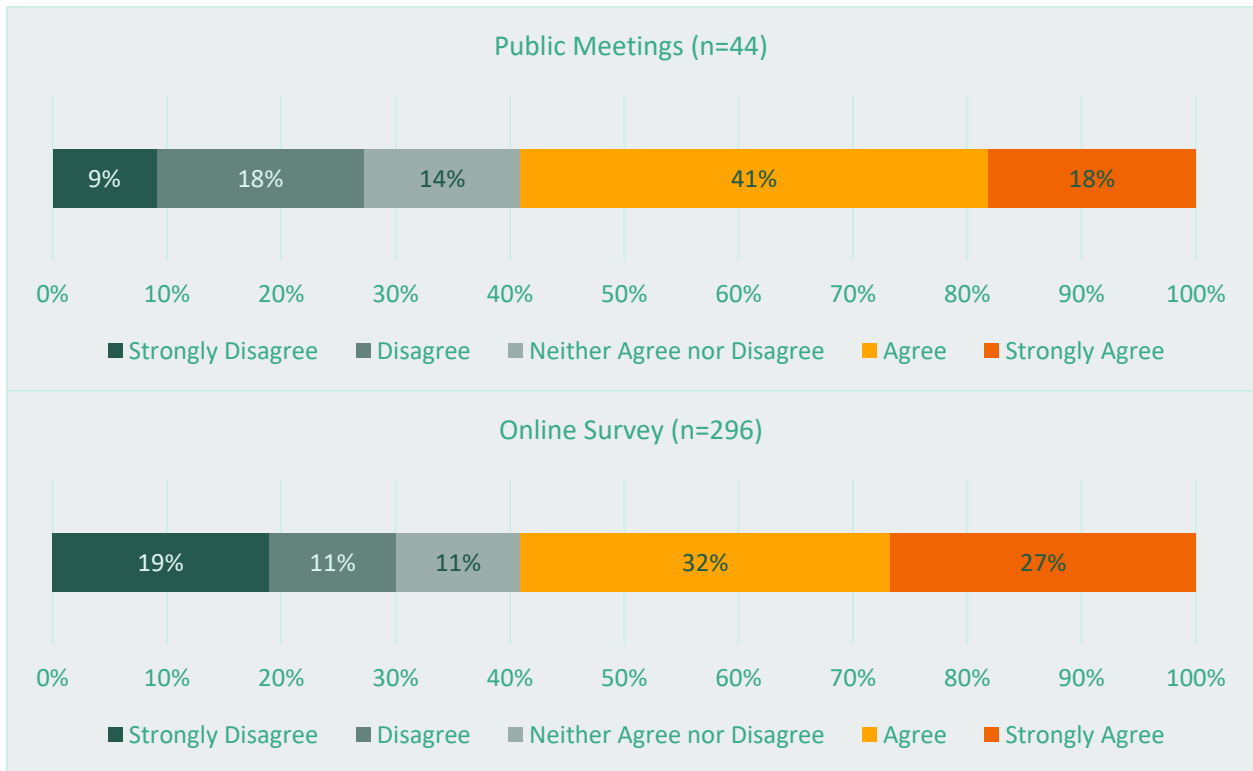
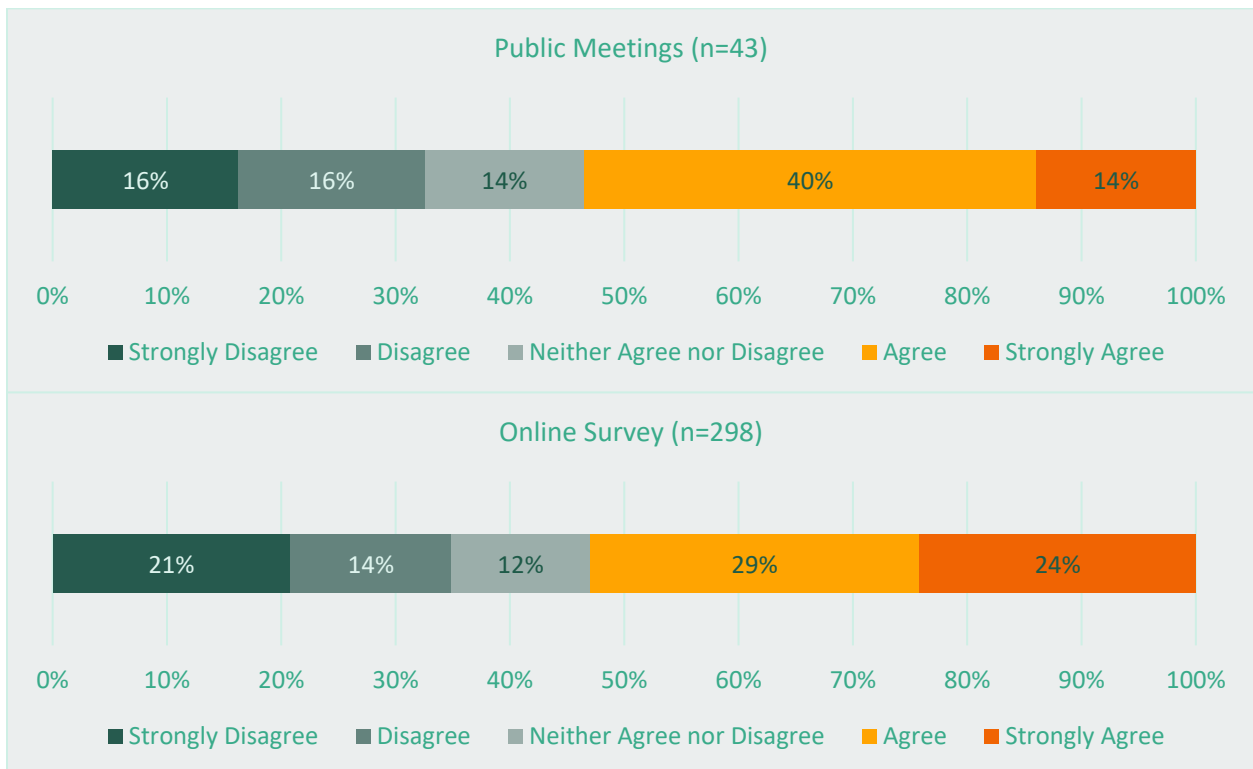


FIGURE 6: TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU AGREE THAT SCENARIO B WOULD BE BENEFICIAL IN GENERAL?



Sentiment Overview: Input from Public meetings

Meeting attendees liked that Scenario B would spread out visitation to Eldorado Canyon throughout the day, and that the limited capacity of the shuttle meant avoiding a large influx of visitors entering the park at once. Some participants liked that Scenario B would likely reduce the number cars travelling to Eldorado Canyon, which could in turn reduce vehicle emissions. The shuttle would also provide an alternative means of park access for potential visitors without personal vehicles or with other transportation barriers.

Some attendees agreed that the shuttle would reduce traffic, while others had concerns that it would increase noise levels, disturbing the residents of Eldorado Springs.

Attendees expressed concern about parking congestion and shuttle demand at the hypothetical shuttle stops. If CPW implements a shuttle system, attendees agreed on the importance of adequate parking and facility infrastructure at the shuttle stops to account for demand and quality of experience. Some attendees were concerned that demand for the shuttle would exceed availability, especially considering the shuttle's 15-person capacity and proposed frequency of service.

The time-limited parking permit system was a divisive issue among meeting attendees. Some felt that the 4- and 8-hour parking windows lined up well with existing park turnover rates and provided enough flexibility for a variety of users. Others expressed concern that time-limited parking was too restrictive and would take away from the park experience.

Sentiment Overview: Input from Online Survey

Input on likes and dislikes about Scenario B was provided by 296 survey respondents. About 40 percent of survey responses mentioned a dislike and over half mentioned a like. Since Scenario B included both reserve-ahead parking permits and a shuttle system, the likes and dislikes related to these two strategies differed in quantity. Over a third of responses mentioned likes about the shuttle, which was nearly ten times the number of dislikes mentioned about the shuttle. Meanwhile, about a sixth of the responses mentioned a dislike about the permits, which was nearly four times the number of likes mentioned about the permits. The following bullets represent unique ideas that appeared in open-ended responses and have been paraphrased and grouped for inclusion here.

Summary of Scenario B Dislikes

Shuttle Schedule, Route, Parking, etc.

- The shuttle stopping service at 5pm is too early, especially in the summer when it is light out until late in the evening, and visitors could be stranded far from their cars if they miss the last shuttle.
- If the shuttle stops at South Mesa and Doudy Draw,⁹ it will make crowding worse at these lots.
- The lot at the intersection of Highways 170 and 93 is already crowded on busy weekends and will get worse if it's made into a shuttle stop.
- The shuttle would push the parking problem elsewhere. Existing parking lots for the shuttle to pick up from are also stressed on busy summer weekends and holidays.
- It would be difficult to use a shuttle with small children due to unpredictable schedules and a lot of gear.
- The limited shuttle drop-off points prevent enjoyment of the whole park.
- It seems like shuttle wait times would be too long with three 15-passenger buses.

⁹ The shuttle stops proposed are hypothetical and for review purposes only. The shuttle route has not been reviewed or approved by Boulder County or the City of Boulder Open Space and Mountain Parks.

- A shuttle would require too much waiting, especially if the number of people waiting for the shuttle exceeds the number of spots available.
- The shuttles may not be big enough to accommodate climbing gear, all of which would have to be carried.

Fees and the Annual Pass

- The combination of shuttle and parking permits is too complicated.
- Parking reservation fees devalue the annual pass.
- An annual pass would no longer be sufficient to get a group into the park, which devalues it.
- Parking reservations would still be cheaper for groups arriving by car than the individual entry fees for groups arriving by shuttle or on foot or bike.
- The scenario fails to incentivize the use of non-motorized over motorized vehicles for park entry.

Congestion and Crowding

- The scenario would not reduce parking pressure in Eldorado Springs, as visitors without reservations would still drive up the road to try to find parking.
- A shuttle would remove limitations to visitation, increasing visitor crowding in the park.
- A shuttle would encourage more casual visitors, who would not value or take good care of the park.
- The shuttle is too large a vehicle for the space available on the road within the park.
- A shuttle would block the road while it is loading and unloading.
- It doesn't seem necessary to restrict in-park parking to 50% while running the shuttle.

Reservation End Times

- Reservation windows with required exit times would not work well for climbing schedules and rushing to finish a climb could be unsafe.
- A required exit time would reduce the enjoyment, relaxation, and safety of climbing, running, and other activities that can take a variable amount of time.
- Even the 8-hour time limit is too short for climbing days, which can stretch to 12 hours.
- It seems unrealistic and expensive for CPW to enforce time-limited parking permits.

Equity of Access

- Charging more for 8-hour passes would shift costs to climbers more than other park users.
- It would be difficult to communicate the reservation and shuttle system to those unfamiliar with the park.
- Requiring reservations to be made online would raise equity concerns because it would benefit those with better computer access.
- Reserve-ahead permits would not allow for spontaneous visits and would make it difficult for those with variable schedules.

Summary of Scenario B Likes

Planning and Convenience

- The shuttle would allow for access to those who have not reserved ahead of time.

- A shuttle would open up opportunities for point-to-point recreation that doesn't require returning to a parked car.
- This scenario would allow more room for spontaneity than Scenario A.
- The permit system ending at 5pm would free up opportunities for spontaneous evening visitation.
- Time limitations would encourage morning visitors to release spots for afternoon use.
- Parking would still be an option.
- The shuttle would provide flexibility in planning.
- The shuttle would provide a Plan B for those whose reservation plans fell through.

Congestion and Crowding

- The scenario would reduce traffic on the way to and inside the park.
- The scenario would help to stop illegal parking in Eldorado Springs.
- The scenario would allow more visitors, which is okay given that trails do not yet feel crowded.
- The shuttle would reduce the impact of traffic on the park's natural resources.

Fees

- It is good that the shuttles would be free.
- Tiered reservation fees based on time expected to stay in the park seem like a good idea.
- The shuttle would provide a lower cost option to enter the park for individuals.
- The shuttle would be helpful for locally based frequent visitors, and especially convenient for those with annual passes.

Equity of Access

- The shuttle would enhance mobility and may give access to those who would not have come to the park otherwise.

Environmental Benefits

- The shuttle would support "car free" transportation in Boulder and assist with achieving carbon emissions reduction goals.

4.2.2 Scenario B: Potential Impacts on Visitation

Participants were asked how Scenario B would affect their park visitation.

Visitation Impacts: Input from Public Meetings

Meeting attendees said they would take the shuttle if it were an accessible and convenient option for all visitors and user groups. Attendees said the shuttle would need to be ADA accessible and accommodate a variety of equipment, including, but not limited to, climbing gear, bikes and coolers. If CPW were to implement a small fee per individual, attendees expressed concern that the shuttle would not be a cost-effective transportation option for families or large groups.

Visitation Impacts: Input from Online Survey

Input on visitation impacts was provided by 274 survey respondents. About one-quarter of responses mentioned that Scenario B would likely discourage park visitation due to the inconvenience of the shuttle and reservation system. Some responses mentioned the inconvenience of the shuttle, in

particular, for families, large groups, and those bringing equipment to the park (e.g., picnicking supplies, climbing gear, bikes).

About 20 percent of responses mentioned a willingness or desire to plan ahead or work around the shuttle and reservation system by reserving a permit, using the shuttle, visiting the park on weekdays only, or by entering on foot or bike.

Less than 10 percent of responses mentioned the likelihood of visiting the park more if Scenario B were implemented, noting that the shuttle would be a more convenient and reliable mode of entry on busy summer weekends and holidays.

4.2.3 Scenario B: Fee Structure

CPW envisions piloting a free shuttle to test the implementation of the strategy. However, there is a possibility the agency would charge a small fee for the shuttle in the future. Public meeting and online survey participants were asked how the application of a small fee would impact their opinion of a shuttle service.

Fee Structure: Input from Public Meetings

One of the primary concerns meeting attendees had about a shuttle fee was the inconvenience of multiple transactions required to access the park. Some asked whether fees would be applied to each individual or to groups, as the former could decrease the accessibility of the shuttle and make driving to the park a more cost-effective option. Attendees suggested that instead of applying a shuttle fee, CPW could instead increase the general admission fee. Or, if a shuttle fee is applied, some suggested that the vehicle fee should be at least four times the price of the individual shuttle fare. Attendees preferred a free shuttle as it would incentivize use of the shuttle over driving.

For time-limited parking permits, some attendees proposed a tiered pricing structure based on the parking window, so that visitors pay based on time spent in the park.

Fee Structure: Input from Online Survey

Input on fee structure was provided by 268 survey respondents. Forty percent of responses mentioned disliking a fee or the intent not to ride the shuttle if a fee were required. Responses indicated that charging a fee would disincentivize the shuttle's use, especially for families, groups, and annual pass holders. About 18 percent of responses mentioned either liking the idea of a fee or that it would have no impact on the respondent's use of the shuttle. About 20 percent of responses said that a small fee (up to \$5) would be okay, particularly if it helps sustain the shuttle system operation.

4.2.4 Scenario B: Planning Park Visits

Participants were asked three questions about how they would plan to visit the park under Scenario B:

- Whether they would take the shuttle or reserve a parking spot in advance;
- If they were to make a reservation, how far in advance would they prefer to do so; and
- If they were to make a reservation, would they be more likely to choose the 4-hour or 8-hour window.

Planning Park Visits: Input from Public Meetings

Overall, meeting attendees indicated that they would be more likely to take the shuttle to the park than to reserve a parking permit in advance.

See Sections 5.1.4 ([Scenario A: Planning Park Visitation](#)) and 5.2.2 ([Scenario B: Potential Impacts on Visitation](#)) for a summary of permit reservation and park access preferences.

Planning Park Visits: Input from Online Survey

Input on planning park visits was provided by 270 survey respondents. Over half of responses mentioned a preference for the shuttle, compared to less than 30 percent that mentioned a preference for making a parking reservation. Similar to the responses to Scenario A, the majority of responses indicated an increased likelihood of making a reservation less than a week before visiting the park. The 4-hour or 8-hour parking reservation options were roughly equally in favor overall, though some responses indicated that the preference would depend on the activity planned for the day. In fact, among respondents who primarily climb while at Eldorado Canyon, nearly 70 percent of the user group's responses mentioned that they would be more likely to reserve an 8-hour parking permit. In contrast, about 63 percent of survey respondents who primarily hike at the park mentioned they would be more likely to reserve a 4-hour permit.

4.2.5 Scenario B: Suggestions

Participants were asked to provide suggestions to improve Scenario B.

Suggestions: Input from Public Meetings

As proposed to meeting attendees, the shuttle would stop running at 5pm on summer weekends and holidays. Some participants suggested that the shuttle run later, as the park is still busy at 5pm during the summer months. Additionally, while some said the shuttle did not need to start as early as 6am, others preferred the early start time and said they would drive to the park if the shuttle service did not start until later in the morning.

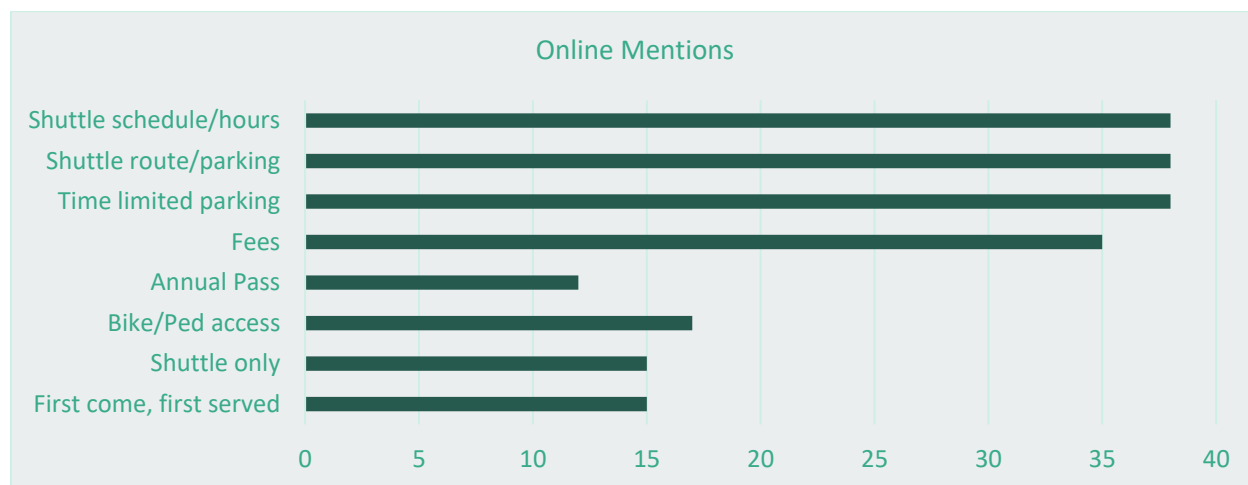
A lottery system for parking permits was proposed, given that there would be an alternative means of accessing the park for those unable to obtain a permit.

Some attendees suggested that CPW integrate the Eldorado Canyon shuttle service with Chautauqua or other park systems to further spread out parking and to encourage point-to-point recreation opportunities.

Suggestions: Input from Online Survey

Respondents suggested modifications to improve Scenario B. The figure below shows the frequency of mentions in the survey responses by suggestion topic.

FIGURE 7: FREQUENCY OF SCENARIO B SUGGESTIONS BY TOPIC



The following bullets represent unique suggestions for modifications to Scenario B that appeared in open-ended responses and have been paraphrased and grouped here.

Shuttle

- The shuttle should accommodate dogs, bikes, picnicking equipment, and climbing gear.
- The shuttle should require reservations.

Shuttle Schedule

- The shuttle should run until later in the day (e.g. 6pm, 7-8pm, sunset), and the shuttle frequency could be reduced after 5pm.
- The shuttles should start earlier to be useful for climbers who want to arrive at the park early in the morning.
- There should be more than 3 shuttle buses to minimize waiting times.
- Shuttles should run on a set schedule, so users can arrive shortly ahead of time and count on catching it.
- Implement a web or mobile notification system informing users when the next shuttle will depart and how many people are in line to board it at each stop.

Shuttle Route

- The shuttle stops should have enough parking capacity to handle demand.
- The skier’s lot at Highways 170 and 93 would require improvements to support shuttle rider volume.
- The shuttle idea should be expanded with the help of RTD to service all of the popular trailheads in the area.
- The shuttle should run to McCaslin RTD Park and Ride to better enable visitors from Denver.
- The shuttle should run from the Table Mesa and Broadway RTD stop, from which there are direct connections to a number of municipalities.
- The shuttle should also service Superior and Louisville.

- The shuttle route should include two stops: an off-site parking lot and the park entrance. A second shuttle could take visitors to locations within the park.
- A quick and short shuttle trip with minimal stops will lower time and cost and make it easy to understand and use.

Time-limited Parking

- The parking permits should not be time limited.
- The 8-hour permit option should be the only option offered.
- The longest permit should be longer than 8 hours to allow for all day visits.
- A 6-hour permit option should be offered.
- A 1- or 2-hour permit should be available for casual visitors to ensure quick turnover.
- Those who show up early in the morning should be exempt from parking permits.
- Parking in the park should be allowed to fill to capacity with reservations.

Fees and the Annual Pass

- Parking permits should be the same cost regardless of time.
- Parking should be charged by the hour.
- Time stayed past the initial reserved time should incur an incremental fee increase rather than a fine.
- The car entry fee should be based on vehicle occupancy (charged per person) to match the shuttle, bike, and pedestrian fee structure.
- Those who take the shuttle, bike, or walk in should get into the park for free.
- Cars with higher vehicle occupancy should get an entrance discount.
- The shuttle should have a fee in addition to the park entry fee and be the only mode of entry once the park is full.
- Fees should not be raised above current rates to avoid reducing access for lower income people.
- Parking permits should be free.
- Purchasing an annual pass should include a parking permit and/or shuttle pass add-on option
- The annual pass should require no additional fees for park entry, shuttle use, or parking reservations.
- If a shuttle fee is applied, the payment system should be quick and convenient (e.g., cashless option, RFID card, app based QR code payment, single transaction for shuttle and park entrance).
- The shuttle should cost something, even if nominal, to contribute towards its operation. Annual pass holders should be able to bring a guest with them on the shuttle at no additional cost to incentivize it over driving.

Bike/Pedestrian Access

- Shuttles should have bike racks.
- Highway 170 should have a bike lane.
- Bikes should be able to access Eldorado Canyon from Boulder by trail.

Shuttle-only Option

- The park should be able to be entered only by shuttle, bike, or on foot.
- Access to the park should be limited to shuttle-only from 9am-3pm on busy summer weekends.

First come, first served

- Run a shuttle and keep the first-come, first-served parking system.

4.2.6 Scenario B: Additional Questions

Participants were asked what additional information they needed to make a decision about Scenario B.

Questions: Input from Public Meetings

Meeting attendees said it would be important to clarify whether the reservation window starts at the time of arrival, or at the start of the reservation period.

Questions: Input from Online Survey

Survey respondents raised several questions about Scenario B.

Time-limited parking permit questions

- How much would permits cost?
- How would the time-limited parking system be enforced?
- Would there be first-come, first-served parking for early entrants?
- Would permits be refunded in the case of bad weather or other unforeseen events?
- Would there be a vehicle occupancy cap per vehicle reservation?
- Why does this scenario include capping parking capacity at 50% instead of maximizing the park's parking infrastructure?

Shuttle questions

- How much will the shuttle cost?
- How long will people need to wait for the shuttle? Will there be long lines?
- Would the shuttle allow dogs and accommodate bikes and climbing gear?
- What hours will the shuttle run (could it run past 5pm)?
- How will parking at the proposed shuttle stops be managed? Will additional parking be added at these locations?
- Would CPW include additional/alternative shuttle stops?
- What will the shuttle's schedule be and how frequently will it run?
- How would the park road accommodate a shuttle?
- How would the shuttle be financed?

Other questions

- How would the scenario impact annual pass holders?
- How would this scenario impact low-income visitors?
- How would this scenario impact park usage and park visitation levels?
- How would this scenario be communicated to the public?

4.3 Scenario Discussion

4.3.1 Scenario Preferences

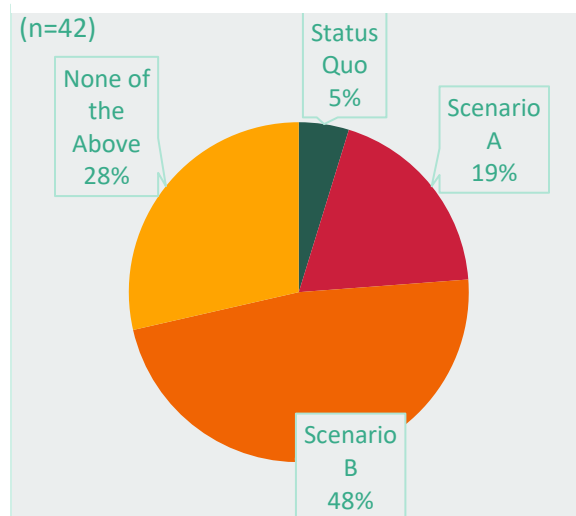
After reviewing and proving feedback on the scenarios, participants were asked to consider which scenario they would prefer by selecting one of the four options:

- Status quo park access (first come, first served; park entry closes at capacity)
- Scenario A: Reserved-in-Advance, Motor Vehicle Parking Permit
- Scenario B: Free Shuttle + Reserved-in-Advance Motor Vehicle Parking Permit + Time Limits + Free Shuttle
- None of the Above (please describe a scenario you would prefer)

Public Meetings

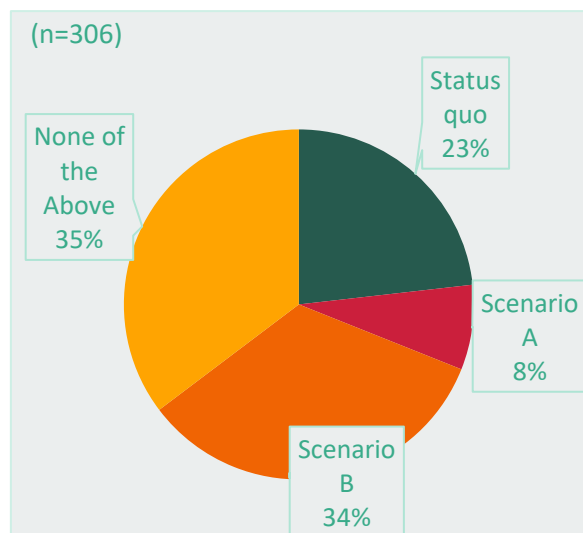
Nearly half of public meeting attendees preferred Scenario B above the other options. Those opposed to Scenario B generally disliked the time-restricted parking structure and expressed concerns over the logistics of the shuttle service. Less than 20 percent of attendees selected Scenario A as their preferred option. Those opposed to Scenario A generally felt that it added barriers to visitation but did not go far enough to limit traffic to and within the park. Only 5 percent preferred the status quo, and three-quarters of attendees did not feel that the status quo is effective for managing traffic flow and parking issues at Eldorado Canyon and the surrounding community on busy summer weekends.

FIGURE 8: PUBLIC MEETINGS SCENARIO PREFERENCE



Online Survey

FIGURE 9: ONLINE SURVEY SCENARIO PREFERENCE



Among online survey respondents, Scenario B was more popular than Scenario A, and less than 10 percent of respondents selected the latter as their preferred option. However, None of the Above was the most preferred option among respondents.

4.3.2 Modified and Additional Scenarios

When asked which scenario they would most prefer, over one-third of respondents selected None of the Above and instead preferred either a new scenario or a version of Scenarios A or B that includes modifications. Meeting attendees also proposed a few modified scenarios that incorporate strategic components from both Scenario A and Scenario B.

Frequently suggested modified scenarios include:

- Status quo with shuttle service – Shuttle service with no parking permit system and no restrictions on parking
- Shuttle service and parking permits without time-limits
- Vehicle restrictions on weekends – Shuttle access only on weekends and holidays (no vehicle access)
- A hybrid system that includes some first-come, first-served parking and some reserved in advance permits
- Shuttle service with pay-per-hour vehicle parking

Scenarios with new strategy components include:

- Building a designated bike lane and/or trails to access the park
- Modified park entry fee structure to incentivize carpooling and bicycle/pedestrian access
- Bypass lane access to rideshare users, and a new cell tower to ensure connectivity
- Lot-specific parking reservation assignments

5 Visitor Use Management Strategies

Participants were asked to share any additional recommendations for strategies for consideration in the VUMP.

5.1 Traffic Flow and Parking Management Strategies

In addition to Scenarios A and B, participants provided feedback on the individual traffic flow and parking management strategy components of the scenarios above.

5.1.1 Parking Permits

Participants provided their opinions on paid, reserve-in-advance parking permits (featured in Scenario A) and paid, reserve-in-advance parking permits with time limits (featured in Scenario B).

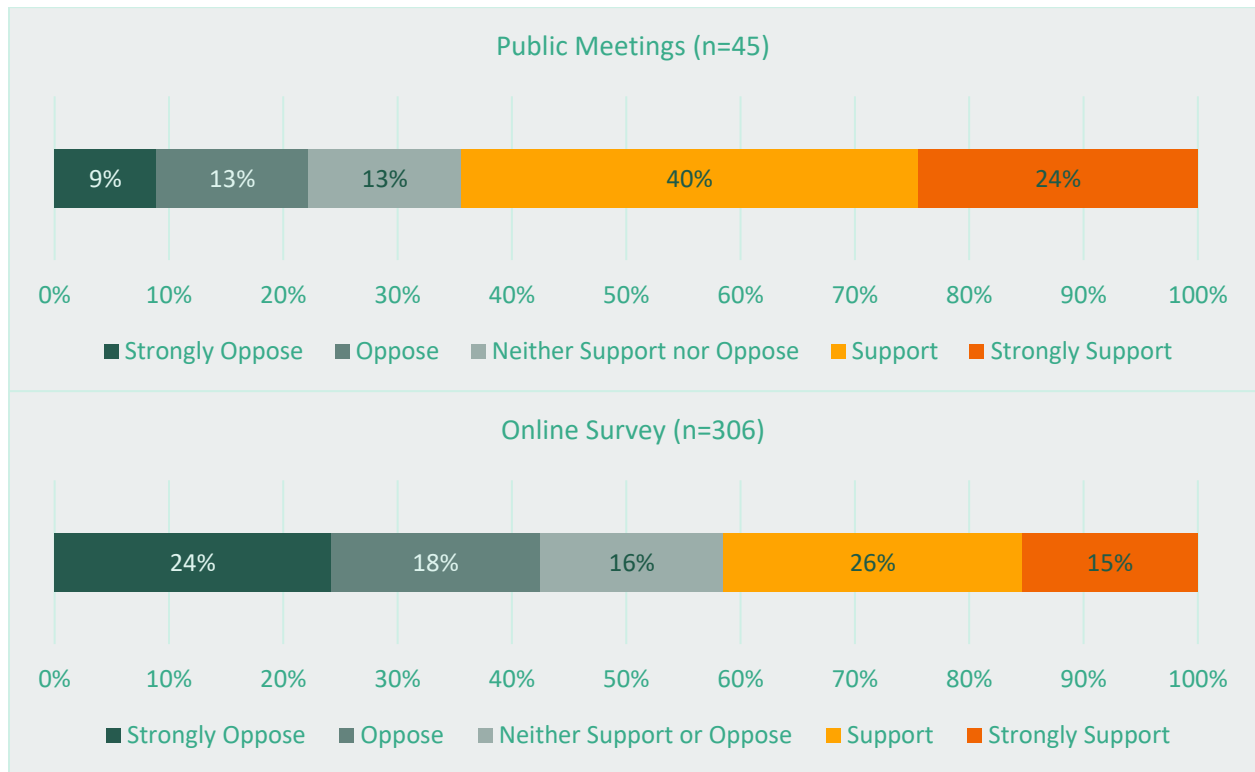
General suggestions to improve the proposed parking permit system include:

- Parking charged by the hour, so fees are determined by length of stay without fines or penalties for longer stays
- Staggering the release of permits available for reservation (i.e., some permits would be available 2 weeks out, and some would only become available 24 hours before visitation)
- An easy cancellation process with a quick or immediate release of permits for new reservations
- Charging a deposit for permits at time of reservation that is refunded upon entry

Paid, Reserve In-Advance Parking Permits

Almost two-thirds of meeting attendees either supported or strongly supported paid, reserve in-advance permits as a strategy to manage traffic flow and parking. Survey respondents were divided on the strategy. Forty percent of respondents either supported or strongly supported parking permits, and another 40 percent either opposed or strongly opposed this strategy.

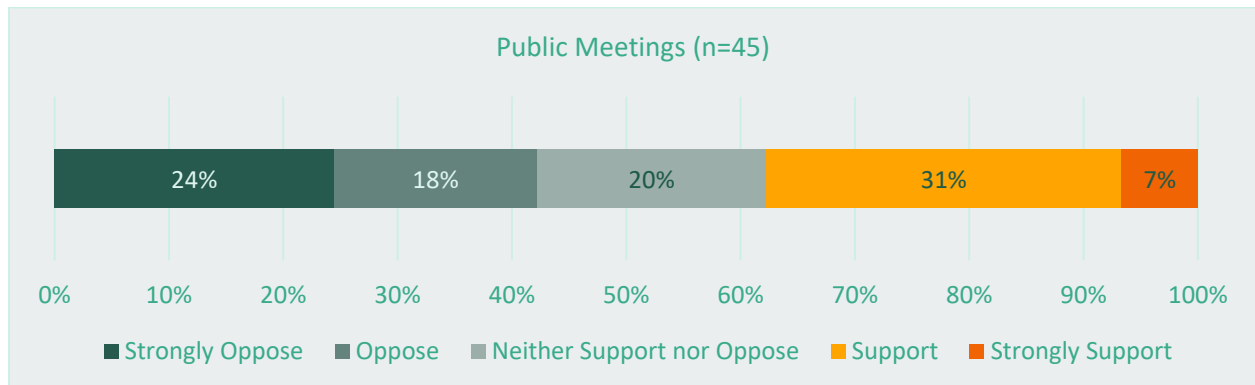
FIGURE 10: TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU SUPPORT OR OPPOSE PAID, RESERVE-IN-ADVANCE PERMITS?

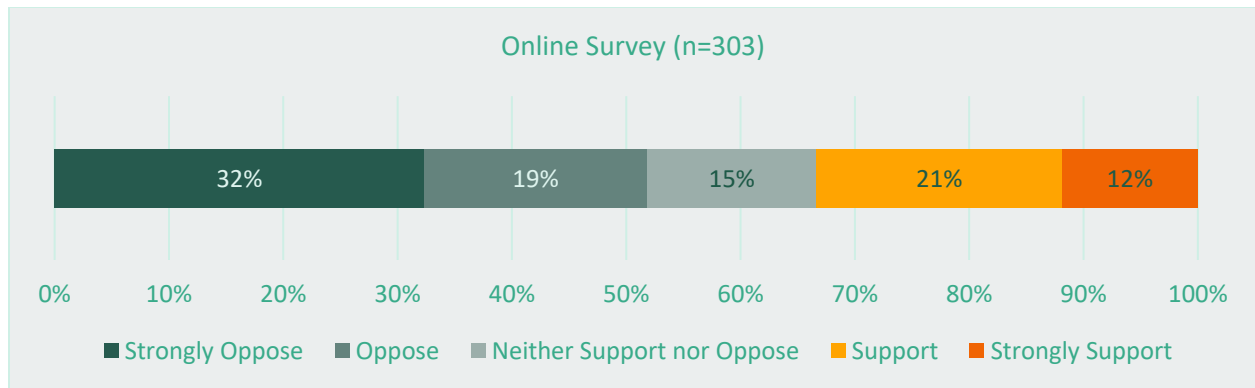


Time-Limited Parking Permits

Meeting attendees were divided on time-limited parking permits. About 40 percent either opposed or strongly opposed the strategy, and another 40 percent either supported or strongly supported it. Over half of survey respondents opposed this strategy, and one-third supported it.

FIGURE 11: TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU SUPPORT OR OPPOSE TIME LIMITED PARKING PERMITS?





5.1.2 Shuttle System

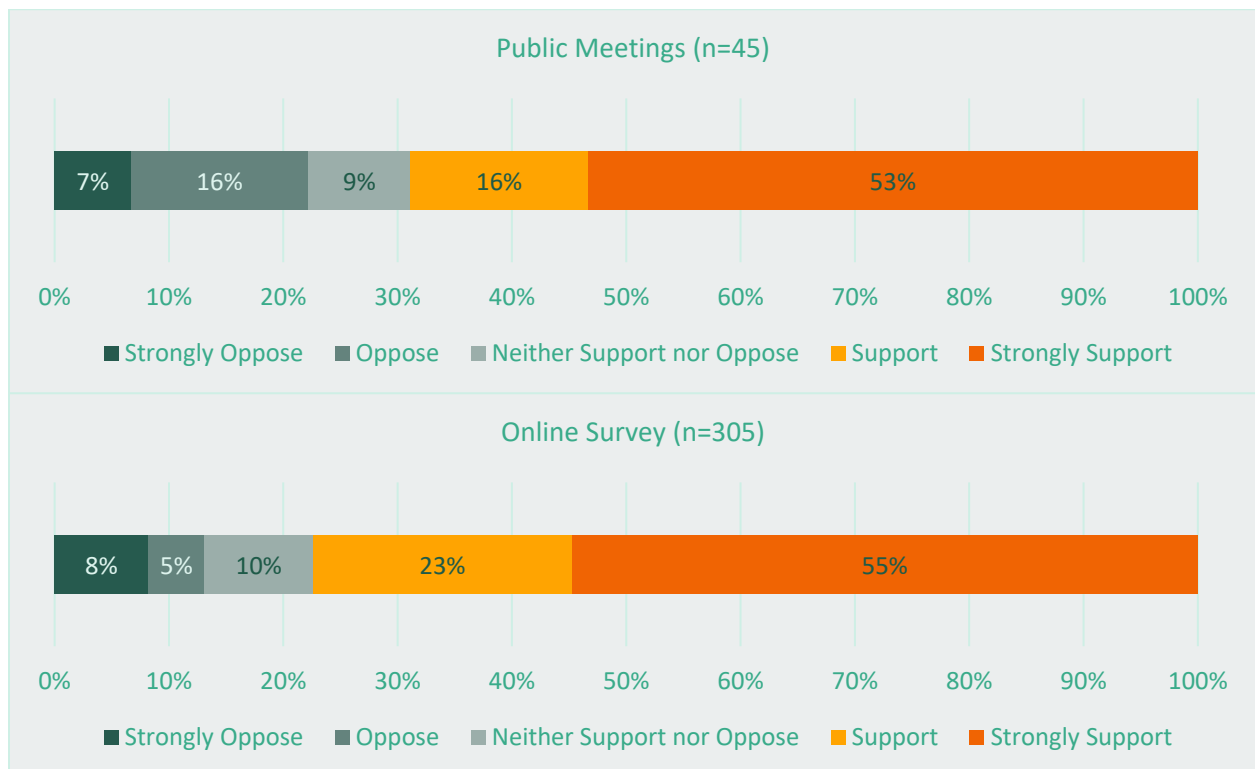
Participants provided their opinions on a free or low-cost shuttle system (featured in Scenario B).

The shuttle was a popular strategy among both meeting attendees and survey respondents. More than two-thirds of meeting attendees and more than three-quarters of survey respondents either supported or strongly supported the strategy.

General suggestions to improve the proposed shuttle system include:

- Accommodations for dogs, bikes, picnicking equipment, and climbing gear
- A quick and convenient payment system if a fee is applied
- Shuttles that run frequently and on a fixed schedule
- A parking permit and/or shuttle pass add-on option for annual pass holders
- Sufficient parking capacity at shuttle stops to handle demand

FIGURE 12: TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU SUPPORT OR OPPOSE A FREE OR LOW-COST SHUTTLE?



5.1.3 Alternative Traffic Flow and Parking Strategies

Meeting attendees and survey respondents also suggested several strategies to manage traffic flow and parking that were not components of either Scenario A or Scenario B.

These suggested strategies include:

- Relocating the entrance station – Participants suggested that moving the entrance station outside of the park could reduce traffic in the town and create a more streamlined party entry process.
- Improving bike access to the park – Participants expressed that bike parking and a bike-friendly road could result in more people accessing the park using bikes, decreasing the overall number of cars.
- Promoting carpooling to the park – Participants suggested carpooling as a means to reduce the total number of cars driving to and from the park, adding that CPW could promote carpooling through the website, promotional materials, or even by creating a park-based carpooling Meetup group.
- Upgrading existing parking infrastructure – Participants suggested maximizing existing parking at Eldorado Canyon by clearly delineating parking spaces. Some participants also suggested parking infrastructure upgrades that include designated parking spaces for horse trailers and motorcycles.

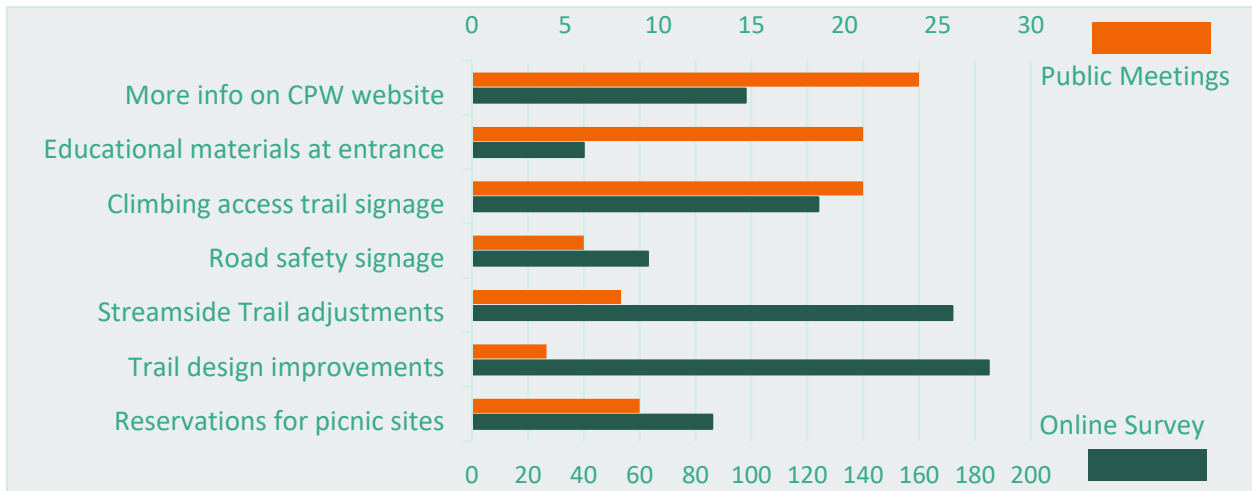
5.2 Additional Visitor Use Management Strategies

Given the recent increases in annual park visitation, participants were asked to select the three highest priority additional upgrades or strategies for the continued operations of the park. Participants were provided seven upgrades and strategies for consideration:

- More information on the CPW park website to encourage planning
- Exhibits and other educational materials near the park entrance
- Signage to denote climbing access trails to reduce casual hiking traffic
- Signage to advise safe use of the road by vehicles and pedestrians
- Adjustments to Streamside Trail that add an additional easy trail to provide an alternative to walking on the road
- Improvements to trail design to reduce erosion on at least the first mile of each trail
- A reservation system for picnic sites

Improvements to trail design and an adjusted Streamside Trail were the most popular strategies presented overall, with over half of meeting attendees and survey respondents ranking these strategies in their top three choices. Introducing a reservation system for picnic sites was the most popular choice among meeting attendees. However, fewer survey respondents selected this strategy as a priority. Alternatively, adding signs to denote climbing access trails was a priority strategy for about 40 percent of survey respondents, but less than 20 percent of meeting attendees consider this a priority upgrade.

FIGURE 13: WHAT ARE THE HIGHEST PRIORITY ADDITIONAL UPGRADES AND STRATEGIES FOR THE CONTINUED OPERATION OF THE PARK?



In addition to the visitor use management strategies proposed by CPW, meeting attendees and survey respondents suggested the following strategies:

- An online calendar showing when large permitted groups are visiting the park
- Improved signage within the park to identify trail difficulty
- Education on responsible recreation and park use
- Increased enforcement of irresponsible recreation and park use
- Upgrades the park’s existing bathrooms and the addition of a new bathroom at the park entrance
- Restrictions or limitations on specific uses of the park to increase equity and/or improve visitor experience
- Recycling bins and pet waste receptacles to the park (e.g. Fowler Trail and before the first vehicle bridge)

6 Additional Considerations

Participants also provided additional comments for CPW to consider regarding the VUMP development process and park management in general.

The topics addressed in these comments include:

- *Potential impacts on the traffic study* - The Eldorado Springs swimming pool is under construction, which has resulted in less traffic. CPW should factor this consideration into their management plan.
- *Access for guides and professionals* - As presented, neither scenario explicitly addresses park access for professional guides. For visitors who depend on access to the park for income, maintaining access is important. Others expressed the importance of ensuring that general public have maintained access to the park and suggested that anyone who does use the park for income should be charged a higher fee than the general public.

- *Defining the ‘peak season’* - Some participants suggested categorizing Mondays and Fridays during the summer months as peak visitation times and applying visitor use management strategies on those days as well as on weekends. However, some participants stipulated that they would only support the reservation system and/or shuttle if they were only employed on busy weekend days. Some participants also suggested fixing a specific set of months as the “peak season.”

7 Demographics of Public Engagement Process Participants

7.1 Overview

The two-hour public meetings were attended by 45 people. The online survey received 315 responses, with an average response time of 20 minutes. For additional context and perspective, participants were asked a series of questions about their park activities, visitation habits, and demographics. As part of the demographic data gathered, participants were also asked to share their racial or ethnical background. Based on this information, the process did not proportionally engage park users of all races and ethnicities as compared with the demographic balance of park visitation.

7.2 Breakdown by Primary Use

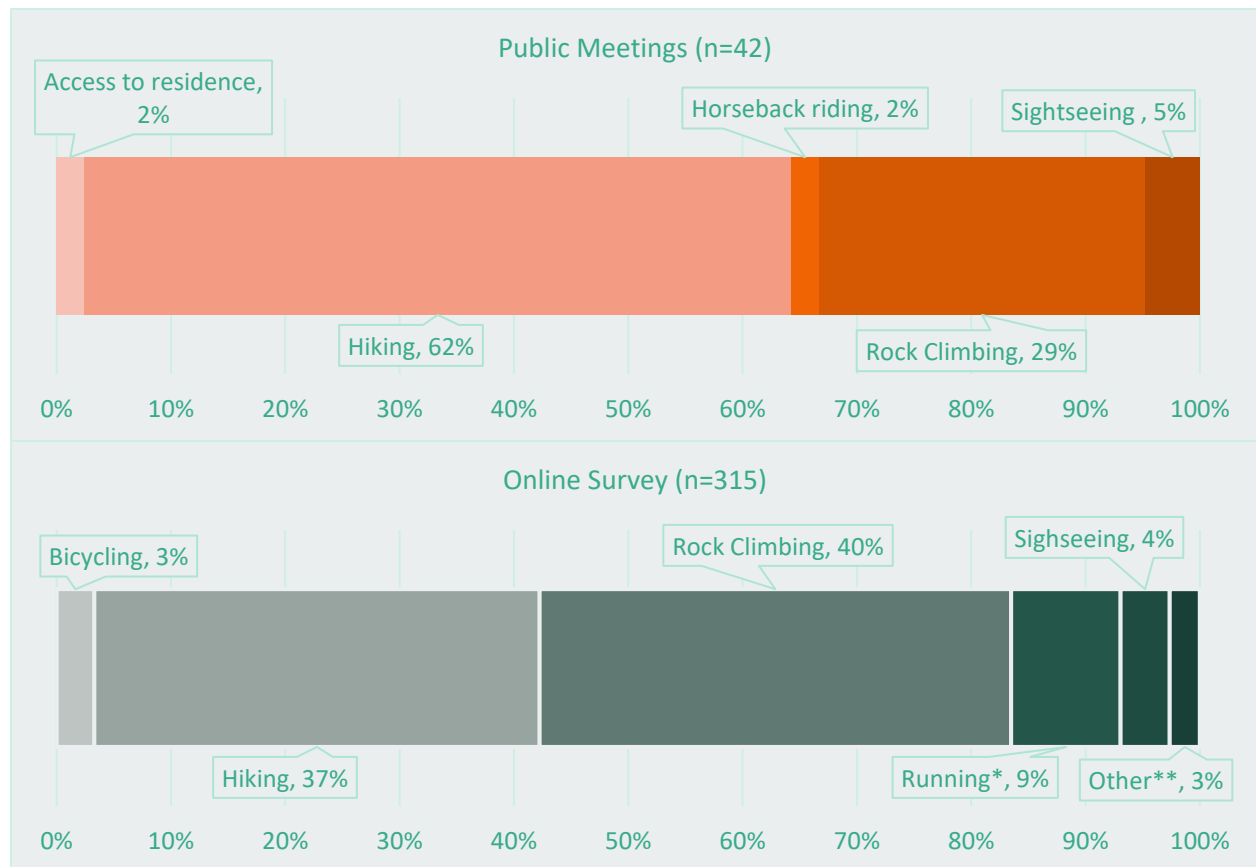
Participants were asked to select their primary activity at Eldorado Canyon from the following options:

- Access to residence
- Bicycling
- Fishing
- Hiking
- Horseback riding
- Picnicking
- Rock Climbing
- Sightseeing (casual short-distance walking, photography)
- Winter sports
- Other

About 60 percent of meeting attendees primarily visit the park to hike. Climbers were the second largest user group, representing 29 percent of attendees.

Among the 315 online survey respondents, 40 percent primarily visit the park to climb. Hikers were the second largest user group, representing 37 percent of respondents. While running was not included on the list of activities, the majority of survey respondents who selected Other, self-identified running as their primary activity, which has been included on the chart representing the online survey results below. For brevity, unrepresented user groups are not included.

FIGURE 14: WHAT IS YOUR PRIMARY ACTIVITY AT ELDORADO CANYON STATE PARK?



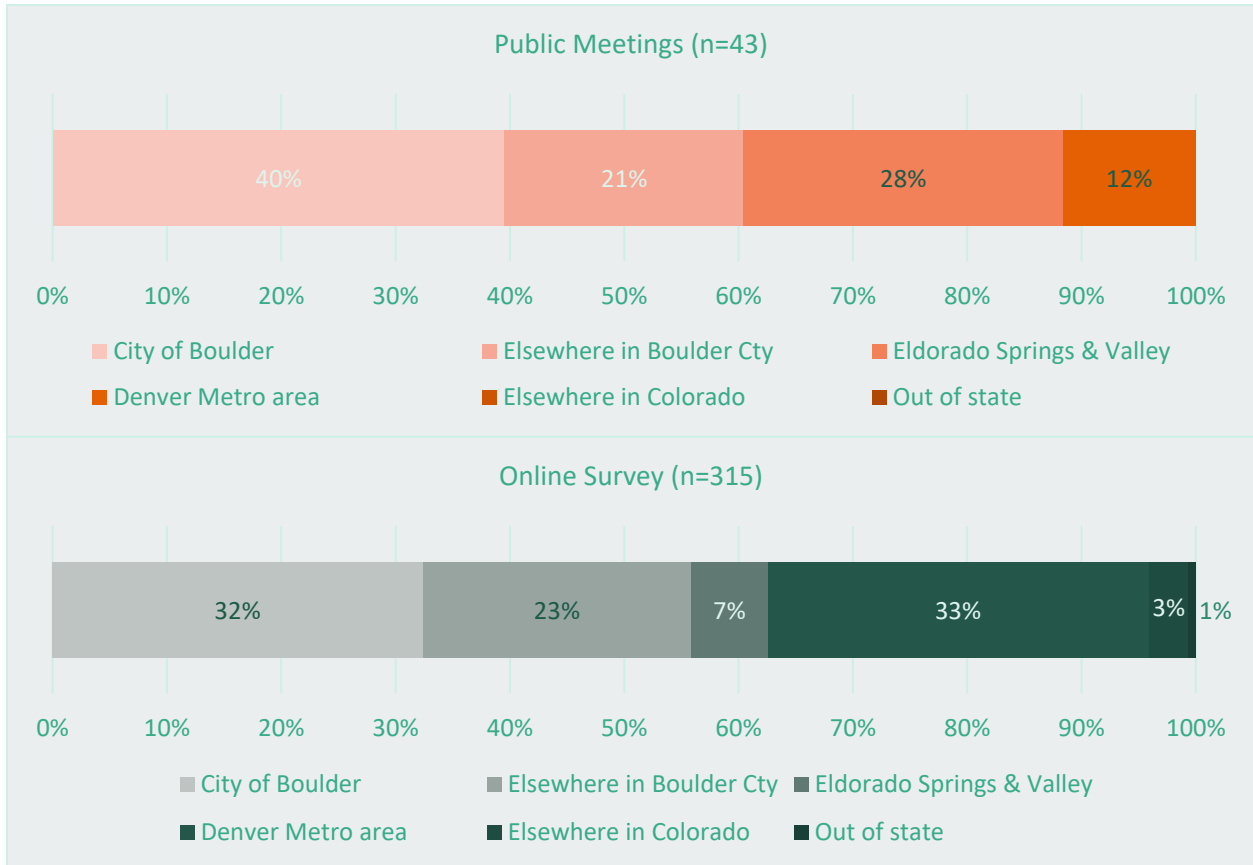
*Most survey respondents who selected "Other" self-identified running as their primary activity, so it was broken out and included as an activity

**Includes respondents who selected Picnicking (2%), Fishing (1%), Horseback riding (<1%), Access to residence (<1%), and Other (3%, excluding runners)

7.3 Breakdown by Residence

Boulder County residents (including City of Boulder, Eldorado Springs & Valley, and Elsewhere in Boulder County) accounted for 88 percent of meeting attendees and 63 percent of survey respondents. One-third of survey respondents live in the Denver Metro area (including Adams, Arapahoe, Broomfield, Denver, Douglas, and Jefferson Counties).

FIGURE 15: WHERE DO YOU LIVE?



7.4 Breakdown by Visitation Patterns

Most meeting attendees and online survey respondents are frequent visitors of the park. Over half of meeting attendees and over a third of survey respondents visit Eldorado Canyon more than twelve times per year. The majority of participants enter the park in the morning, with the most popular average entry time for participants falling between 8am and 10am. Average length of stay at the park was varied among participants. Among survey takers, 60 percent of respondents who identified hiking as their primary activity at the park stay an average of 2 to 4 hours. Climbers were more likely to report a longer average length of stay, as 35 percent of those users responded that they generally stay 6 to 8 hours, and 28 percent typically stay longer than 8 hours.

FIGURE 16: HOW FREQUENTLY DO YOU VISIT ELDORADO CANYON STATE PARK?

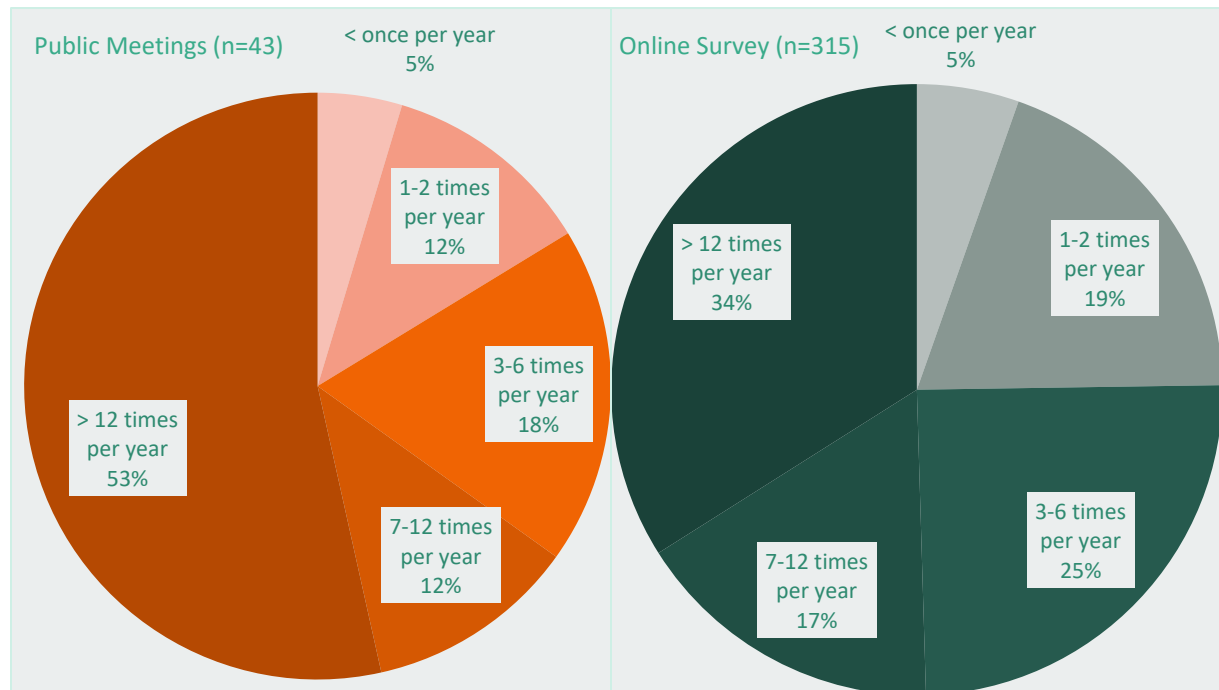


FIGURE 17: WHAT TIME OF DAY DO YOU MOST OFTEN ENTER ELDORADO CANYON STATE PARK?

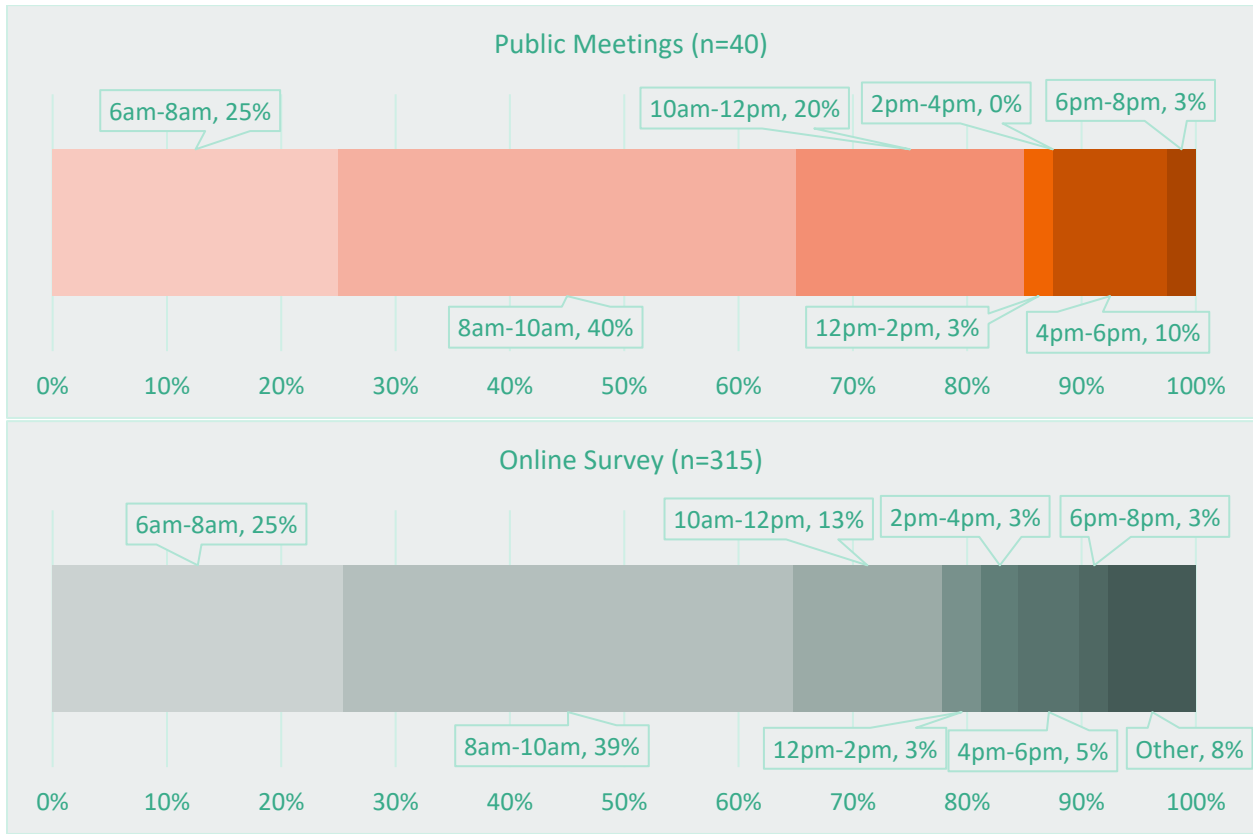
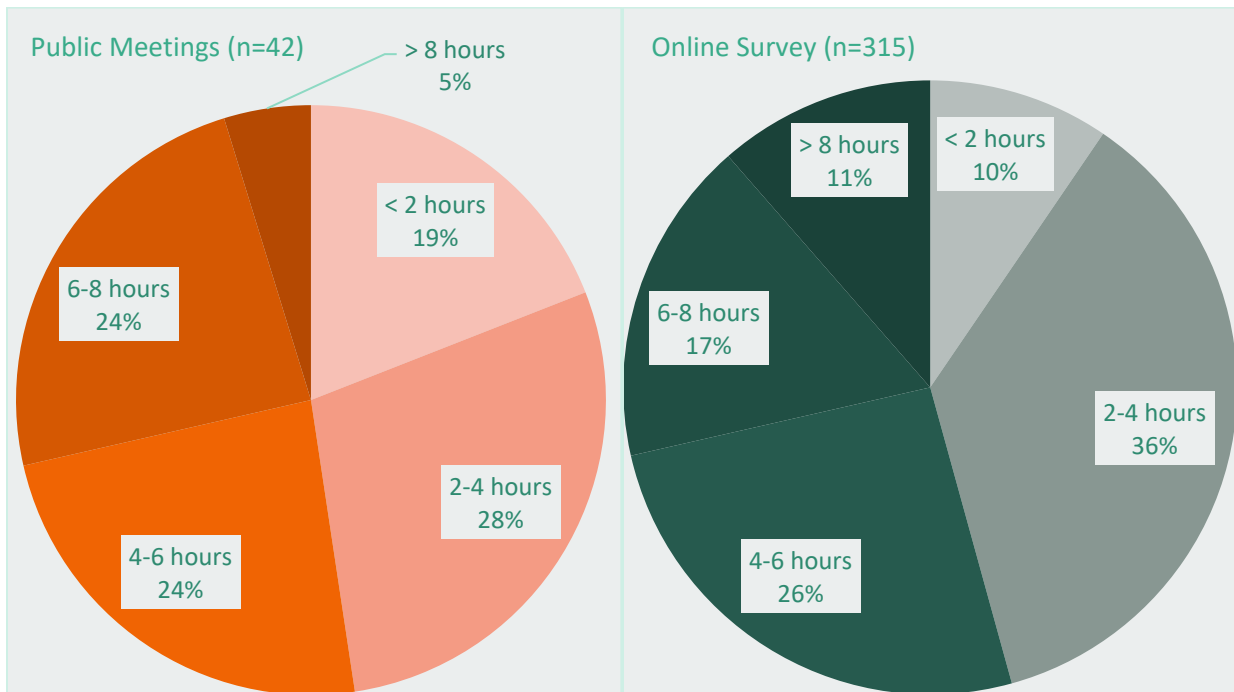


FIGURE 18: HOW LONG DO YOU TEND TO STAY WHEN YOU VISIT ELDORADO CANYON STATE PARK?



8 Cross-Cutting Themes

During the public engagement process, several broad themes and management considerations frequently arose across feedback on the visitor use management scenarios and strategies. These themes, identified and compiled here by Keystone, represent ongoing questions and concerns for CPW to consider in the VUMP development process. Some themes and considerations are outside of the scope of the VUMP and/or CPW's authority.

- Conflict reduction
- Considerations for annual pass holders
- Education and communications
- Enforcement and misuse
- Equity of access
- Planning and spontaneity
- Protection of natural resources
- Safety
- Visitor capacity

Conflict Reduction

Participants expressed concern about the relationships between Eldorado Springs residents and visitors of the park and said they would prefer strategies to be focused on creating a positive experience for all parties, including visitors, residents, and park staff.

Considerations for Annual Pass Holders

Participants were concerned that added fees (even at a discounted rate) and restrictions on visitation would devalue the Colorado State Parks annual pass and suggested that all management strategies consider annual pass holders.

Education and Communications

Participants emphasized that widespread education and strategic communications efforts will be an essential component of successfully implementing any management strategy, including effective signage, social media outreach, and easily accessible information about any changes to the system that impact visitation. Participants stressed the importance of designing an education and communications strategy in a way that reaches both frequent visitors and potential visitors both in and out of the state.

Enforcement and Misuse

If CPW implements a parking permit system, participants expressed concern that it could result in an increase in illegal parking by those who are unable to obtain permits and said that proper parking enforcement would be essential – both within the park and in the town of Eldorado Springs. Others expressed concerns that an online permitting system would be easy to misuse. People purchasing permits they do not intend to use, and purchasing permits with the intent to sell, are two concerns that were raised.

Equity of Access

Participants expressed that maintaining equitable access to the park is a priority. In implementing new visitor use management strategies, participants discussed that it will be important that CPW consider and address potential financial, technical, and scheduling barriers that could make the park less accessible for some visitors.

Planning and Spontaneity

Some participants were concerned about the degree that traffic flow and parking management strategies could impact spontaneous and unplanned visits to the park. Others expressed their desire for a predictable and guaranteed park visit.

Protection of Natural Resources

Participants expressed their concern that the protection and preservation of natural resources at Eldorado Canyon (including water quality, air quality, ecosystem health, and trail sustainability) would be considered only as an afterthought to strategies focused on managing visitor use.

Safety

Participants said that safety for all users, pedestrians, and drivers is essential, adding that they would like to see this goal clearly addressed in the VUMP.

Visitor Capacity vs. Vehicle Capacity

Participants were concerned with the total number of visitors at the park and expressed interest in management strategies that focus on the number of visitors within the park in addition to the number of vehicles that enter the park.

9 Next Steps

CPW will use the information provided in this report, along with the Capacity Study, the Resource Stewardship Plan, and additional input from the Interagency Team and Task Force to guide its efforts in drafting the Eldorado Canyon State Park Visitor Use Management Plan. The draft plan is expected to be available in spring of 2020.

Appendix A: Public Meeting Agenda



**Eldorado Canyon State Park Visitor Use Management Plan
Public Meetings
September 9th and 17th, 2019, 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM
Boulder, CO**

Agenda

The Visitor Use Management Plan will enhance user experiences and protect park resources by identifying effective strategies for managing visitor use and access, including improving traffic flow and parking. Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) is hosting two public meetings to provide information, answer questions, and gather feedback into strategies for visitor use management in Eldorado Canyon State Park.

- 6:00 PM** **Welcome, ground rules, agenda** - CPW and Keystone Policy Center (facilitator)
- 6:10 PM** **History, scope, process, and strategies under consideration for Eldorado Canyon State Park Visitor Use Management Plan** -- Windi Padia and John Carson, CPW; followed by Q/A
- 6:40 PM** **Small group discussions of scenarios for improving traffic flow and parking during busy summer weekends**
- Table facilitators introduce two visitor use management scenarios representing different approaches for managing traffic flow and parking on busy summer weekends. Participants discuss each scenario separately, noting benefits and drawbacks. Next, participants compare scenarios, discussing preferences, trade-offs of various strategies, and any additional strategies that could be considered.
- Times are approximate:*
- 6:40-6:50 *Introductions: what everyone most loves and is most concerned about regarding Eldorado Canyon State Park*
- 6:50-7:05 *Discuss Scenario A*
- 7:05-7:20 *Discuss Scenario B*
- 7:25-7:40 *Compare scenarios and strategies; discuss additional ideas and issues*
- 7:45 PM** **Preference polling:** Participants use clickers to indicate level of support and comparative ranking for different scenarios and strategies for visitor use management (traffic, parking, and other current in-park issues)

Final comments: Review next steps and how public input will be used

8:00 PM

Adjourn

Ground Rules:

- Focus on the topic at hand: current visitor use management issues at Eldorado Canyon State Park. *Please note: the meeting will not include discussion on the proposed Eldo to Walker Ranch multi-use connector trail.*
- Speak and write respectfully; no personal attacks.
- Listen respectfully and empathetically to different points of view.
- Limit comment length; be succinct when agreeing with prior remarks. *Please note: The meeting is discussion-based; there will not be opportunity for prepared comments nor speeches.*
- Promote joint, community problem solving: offer solutions.
- Let the facilitators facilitate.

Appendix B: Online Survey

Eldorado Canyon State Park Visitor Use Management Plan - Public Comment Questionnaire

Input received through this survey will inform the development of the Visitor Use Management Plan for Eldorado Canyon State Park. The Visitor Use Management Plan will enhance user experiences and protect park resources by identifying effective strategies for managing visitor use and access, including improving traffic flow and parking. For more information about this process, please reference [answers to Frequently Asked Questions](#).

The questions and information provided here mirror those at the public meetings scheduled for September, 2019. You can review the presentation provided at the meetings here: <https://cpw.state.co.us/placestogo/parks/EldoradoCanyon/Pages/Visitor-Use-Management-Plan.aspx>. If you provided feedback at the meetings you do not need to also fill out this survey; however, you may also fill out the survey if you choose.

You may stop and resume editing this survey prior to submission, provided you use the same computer and browser each time you access it and that the browser permits cookies. If this is not possible, you may submit multiple partially completed surveys, provide that your responses to question 1 remain the same.

Please note that the full content of these surveys will be available both to Colorado Parks and Wildlife and to Keystone Policy Center, the third party non-profit organization coordinating the public engagement process.

1. Personal Info (Optional)

Your name and email address, if you provide them, will not be made public. They will be used to compile responses for partially completed surveys (see note on stopping/resuming editing, in instructions above). They will not be used to contact you unless you explicitly give permission to do so in the next question.

- a. *First Name*
- b. *Last and other names*
- c. *Email address*

2. Please indicate your communication preferences. Check all that apply.

- a. *I would like to be added to the mailing list for the Eldorado Canyon State Park Visitor Use Management Plan process.*
- b. *I am comfortable with being contacted directly regarding the feedback I have provided in this survey.*
- c. *Please do not contact me as a result of this survey.*

3. Eldorado Canyon State Park is unique because:

Visitor Use Management Scenarios for Improving Traffic Flow and Parking on Busy Summer Weekends

Why are we examining ways to improve traffic flow and parking? Extensive public comments, visitor feedback, and experience from our park staff indicate that on busy summer weekends and holidays, traffic and parking are congested not only in Eldorado Canyon State Park but in the surrounding private neighborhoods.

Two scenarios have been developed to test combinations of potential strategies for improving traffic flow and parking on busy summer weekends (i.e., the 'peak season') in Eldorado Canyon State Park, which represent the peak visitation days for the park. These scenarios are currently only being considered for summer weekends and holidays, not other days or seasons. *If visitation increases outside of the summer weekends and holiday, the park may also consider additional days and/or seasons (e.g., spring and fall) for implementation.*

The scenarios are not fully inclusive of the strategies being considered in the Visitor Use Management Plan (VUMP) process. Instead, the scenarios focus on strategies that have received most discussion among the VUMP Task Force and need the most public feedback.

Your feedback on these scenarios will be incorporated into the development of a draft VUMP. The public will also have an opportunity to comment on the draft plan before it is finalized.

For more information on the Task Force, and the Visitor Use Management Plan process, please see answers to [Frequently Asked Questions on the website](#):

Please read each scenario carefully, then respond the questions.

Scenario A: Reserved-in-Advance, Motor Vehicle Parking Permit

Scenario A aims to reduce and more evenly distribute traffic coming into the park throughout the day on busy weekend days during the peak visitation season by requiring advance reservation of motor vehicle parking permits with designated park entry times.

Features of this scenario:

Reserved-in-Advance Motor Vehicle Parking Permit

- On busy weekend days during the peak season, a reserved-in-advance motor vehicle parking permit would be required to park inside Eldorado Canyon State Park. The fee for the vehicle permit is yet to be determined. The vehicle permit fee would be discounted for annual pass holders. The permit would act as the vehicle's day pass.
- Parking permits would be available online and/or by phone (not at the park). An order number or email confirmation would function as proof of purchase. Entrance station employees would verify parking permits at the entrance station.
- Parking permit reservations would provide each vehicle with an entry window for the park, staggered in 1-hour increments throughout the day. Each entry window would be 2 hours.
 - For example, if you had a permit reservation with a 10 a.m. entry time, you could enter between 10 a.m. and Noon. If you had a permit reservation with a 1 p.m. entry time, you could enter between 1 p.m. and 3 p.m.
- Parking permits would be for stays valid from the start of the reservation entry window until the park closes at the end of the day.

- The number of reservations made available per hour would be based on user patterns and peak park visitation times, with the goal of not exceeding 80% of parking spot capacity in the park.
 - Parking permits would be available for any spot in the park; specific spots cannot be reserved.
- When the permitting system is active, signage near the intersection of CO-93 and CO-170 would display "Vehicle reservations required for Eldorado Canyon State Park. No park vehicle access without reservation."
- A bypass lane at the entrance station would accommodate park staff, residents, and emergency vehicles.
- Existing park pedestrian/bike entry fees (\$4 per person) would still apply.

4. Questions on Scenario A

- a. What do you like and dislike about this scenario?
 - b. How would this scenario affect your visitation at the park?
 - c. Consider vehicle permit fees ranging from \$9 to \$28 (inclusive of the vehicle day pass); please respond to this range of fees and how it might affect your visitation at the park. *Note: these amounts are provided for discussion purposes only and are subject to change.*
 - d. If you made a reservation, how far in advance would you prefer to make it?
 - e. What changes would make this scenario better?
 - f. What else would you need to make a decision about this scenario?
-

Scenario B: Reserved-in-Advance Motor Vehicle Parking Permit + Time Limits + Free Shuttle

Scenario B adds time limits and a free shuttle to the reserved-in-advance motor vehicle parking permits in the first scenario. Scenario B aims to reduce the number of personal vehicles entering the park, reducing traffic congestion and competition for parking spaces on days during the peak season. Scenario B considers the number of vehicles in the park, the number of total users arriving by vehicle or shuttle, and convenience-based incentives to use the shuttle.

Features of this scenario:

Reserved-in-Advance Motor Vehicle Parking Permit + Time Limits

- On busy weekend days during the summer/peak season, a reserved-in-advance motor vehicle parking permit would be required to park inside Eldorado Canyon State Park. The fees for the vehicle permit are yet to be determined; an 8-hour reservation would be more expensive than a 4-hour reservation. The vehicle permit fee would be discounted for annual pass holders. The permit would act as the vehicle's day pass.
- Parking permits would be available online and/or by phone (not at the park). An order number or email confirmation would function as proof of purchase. Entrance station employees would verify parking permits at the entrance station.
- Parking permits reservations would provide each vehicle with an entry window for the park, staggered in 1-hour increments throughout the day. Each entry window would be 2 hours.

- Parking permits would be for any available spot in the park – specific spots cannot be reserved.
- Parking permits would be more restricted during peak hours than at other times to offset increased visitation from shuttle passengers and to maintain (not increase) total current numbers of visitors entering the park. For example, parking availability may be reduced with a goal of not exceeding 50% parking spot capacity at peak visitation times.
- No reservation or parking fee would be required after 5pm.
- When the permitting system is active, signage at the intersection of CO-93 and CO-170 would display "Vehicle reservations required for Eldorado Canyon State Park. No park vehicle access without reservation. Free shuttle available"
- A bypass lane at the entrance station would accommodate permit park staff, residents, and emergency vehicles.

Free Shuttle

- Free shuttles that run continuously throughout the day.
- Shuttle stops would be: City of Boulder, the intersection of CO-93 and CO-170, Doudy Draw and South Mesa trailheads, and three stops within the park (Entrance Station, Fowler Trail, and Visitor Center).
- Shuttles would include three 15-passenger mini-buses running on rotation to all of the stops, with an estimated 20 to 30-minute interval between them.
- The first shuttle would depart at 6 am. The last shuttle to leave the park would depart at 5pm.
- Those riding the shuttle to Eldorado Canyon State Park would pay the walk-in park entrance fee, which is \$4 for adults and free for those ages 15 and under; or they would use their annual pass.
- Shuttles would be first-come, first-served and would not be reservable.
- A bypass lane at the entrance station would accommodate shuttles, park staff, residents, and emergency vehicles to enter.

5. Questions on Scenario B

- a. What do you like and dislike about this scenario?
- b. How would this scenario affect your visitation at the park?
- c. Would you rather take the shuttle or reserve a parking spot in advance?
- d. If you made a vehicle permit reservation, how far in advance would you prefer to make the reservation?
- e. Would you be more likely to choose the 4 hour or 8 hour window for your vehicle permit?
- f. What changes would make this scenario better?
- g. What else would you need to make a decision about this scenario?
- h. CPW envisions piloting a free shuttle; however, there is possibility for a small shuttle fee in the future. How would a fee affect your feedback on the shuttle option?

Comparison of Traffic and Parking Scenarios and Strategies

	Status Quo	Scenario A	Scenario B
Parking Permit Required	No	Yes	Yes
Parking Permit Time Limits	N/A	No	Yes, 4 or 8 hours
Timed entry windows	No	Yes	Yes
Cost per vehicle	\$9 or Annual Pass	Vehicle permit fee TBD. The vehicle permit fee would be discounted for annual pass holders. The permit would act as the vehicle's day pass.	Vehicle permit fee TBD. An 8-hour reservation would be more expensive than a 4-hour reservation. The vehicle permit fee would be discounted for annual pass holders. The permit would act as the vehicle's day pass.
Cost for walk/bike-in (free for ages 15 and under)	\$4/person	\$4/person	\$4/person
Shuttle available	No	No	Yes
Vehicles turned away ...	When parking lots are full	Without reservation	Without reservation

6. Strategies for traffic flow and parking: To what extent do you support or oppose each of the following strategies for improving traffic flow and parking on busy summer weekends:
- Paid, reserve-in-advance parking permits
 - Time-limited parking permits (i.e., with 4-hour or 8-hour options)
 - A shuttle (free or low-cost)

(Strongly Support, Support, Neither Support nor Oppose, Oppose, Strongly Oppose)

7. To what extent do you agree that each scenario would be effective in improving traffic flow and parking issues at Eldorado Canyon State Park and in the surrounding community on busy summer weekends?
- Status quo park access (first come, first served; park entry closes at capacity)
 - Scenario A: Reserved-in-Advance, Motor Vehicle Parking Permit
 - Scenario B: Reserved-in-Advance Motor Vehicle Parking Permit + Time Limits + Free Shuttle

(Strongly Agree, Agree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree)

8. To what extent do you agree that each scenario would be beneficial, in general, for Eldorado Canyon State Park and its visitors:
- Status quo park access (first come, first served; park entry closes at capacity)
 - Scenario A: Reserved-in-Advance, Motor Vehicle Parking Permit
 - Scenario B: Reserved-in-Advance Motor Vehicle Parking Permit + Time Limits + Free Shuttle

(Strongly Agree, Agree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree)

9. Which scenario would you currently prefer the MOST for busy summer weekends?
- Status quo park access (first come, first served; park entry closes at capacity)
 - Scenario A: Reserved-in-Advance, Motor Vehicle Parking Permit
 - Scenario B: Free Shuttle + Reserved-in-Advance Motor Vehicle Parking Permit + Time Limits + Free Shuttle
 - None of the Above (please describe a scenario you would prefer)

Additional Visitor Use Management Strategies

10. Given a recent trend of increased visitation, what are the highest priority additional upgrades or strategies for the continued operation of the park? Pick three from the list below:
- Reservation system for picnic sites
 - Improve trail design to reduce erosion on at least the first mile of each trail
 - Alter Streamside Trail to make another easy trail and provide an alternative to walking the road
 - Signage to advise safe use of the road by vehicles and pedestrians
 - Signage to advise on the purpose of climbing access trails to reduce casual hiking traffic
 - Exhibits and other educational materials near the park entrance
 - More information on the park website to encourage good planning

Please list any additional design and maintenance strategies you think the park should prioritize for managing the impact of recreation within the park.

11. Is there anything else you would like park staff to know about managing the park, or additional strategies you would like them to consider?

12. What is your primary activity at Eldorado Canyon State Park? Select one.

- Access to residence
- Bicycling
- Fishing
- Hiking
- Horseback riding
- Picnicking
- Rock Climbing
- Sightseeing (casual short-distance walking, photography)
- Winter sports
- Other (please specify)

13. What other activities do you do at Eldorado Canyon State Park? Select all that apply:

- Access to residence
- Bicycling
- Fishing
- Hiking
- Horseback riding

- f. Picnicking
- g. Rock Climbing
- h. Sightseeing (casual short-distance walking, photography)
- i. Winter sports
- j. Other (please specify)

14. How frequently do you visit Eldorado Canyon State Park?

- a. Less than once per year
- b. 1-2 times per year
- c. 3-6 times per year
- d. 7-12 times per year
- e. Over 12 times per year

15. What time of day do you most often enter Eldorado Canyon State Park?

- a. 6am-8am
- b. 8am-10am
- c. 10am-12pm
- d. 12pm-2pm
- e. 2pm-4pm
- f. 4pm-6pm
- g. 6pm-8pm
- h. Other (please specify)

16. How long do you tend to stay when you visit Eldorado Canyon State Park?

- a. Less than 2 hours
- b. 2-4 hours
- c. 4-6 hours
- d. 6-8 hours
- e. Longer than 8 hours

17. Where do you live?

- a. City of Boulder
- b. Elsewhere in Boulder County
- c. Denver Metro area (Adams, Arapahoe, Broomfield, Denver, Douglas and Jefferson)
- d. Elsewhere in Colorado
- e. Out of state

18. How would you describe your racial or ethnic background? (Please check all that apply.)

- a. White
- b. Hispanic/Latino
- c. Black or African American
- d. American Indian or Native Alaskan
- e. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
- f. Asian
- g. Other (Please specify): _____