TRANSPORTATION ACCESS TO PARKS (TAP) STUDY

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION OF SOUTHERN NEVADA (RTC)

Prepared by
DESIGNWORKSHOP

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Photo Credit: Design Workshop

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01.

INTRODUCTION

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TRANSPORTATION ACCESS TO PARKS IN SOUTHERN NEVADA

Southern Nevada is home to a beautiful and diverse range of outdoor spaces.

Access to the outdoors is a key part of life in Southern Nevada, but many communities are not able to reach outdoor spaces easily -- or at all. Nearly half of residents cannot walk to a park within 10 minutes, and for many, especially those without cars, parks feel out of reach altogether.

While recent initiatives by the Regional Transportation Commission of Southern Nevada (RTC) and their partners have made strides to improve mobility in the region, park access remains stratified by race, place, ability and income. Gaps in park access are distributed across both urban and rural parts of the region, but there are concentrated gap areas in southwestern and northeastern Las Vegas and in North Las Vegas south of the 215 Beltway. These areas also tend to overlap with neighborhoods that have historically not benefitted from infrastructure investments.

WHY IT MATTERS

Parks aren't just places to play – they are essential for physical and mental wellbeing. They offer relief from stress and opportunities for physical activity and social connection. In a region as hot as Southern Nevada, they are often the coolest (literally) place to go. For these reasons, it is essential that they are designed and located to serve everyone.

Improving access to parks will help everyone experience the benefits of the outdoors.

THE STUDY

Over the course of one year, the Transportation Access to Parks (TAP) Study investigated how people get to parks in Southern Nevada to develop informed recommendations for addressing barriers and improving access. Some of the study's key questions included:

- What communities are left out when it comes to park access?
- What types of parks do people want to access?
- What makes getting to a park feel safe or welcoming?
- What needs to change in Southern Nevada so all people are able to reach and enjoy outdoor spaces?

KEY FINDINGS					
	Southern Nevadans value the outdoors -- both natural areas and urban parks.	Heat is one of the most significant barriers to accessing parks.	The types of parks people want to visit, and the reasons they can or cannot visit those spaces, are different across demographics and geographies.	42% of Southern Nevadans live in a Park Gap area, meaning they do not have adequate access to parks. Park Gaps are distributed across the region, in both urban and rural areas.	56% of Southern Nevadans can walk to a park within 10 minutes of their home.
WHAT'S NEXT?	The TAP study provides a framework for providing more bus service and connections to parks, to make it easier for people to reach their favorite outdoor places.	The TAP study offers strategies for making it safer and more comfortable to travel to parks during the Southern Nevada summer.	The TAP study analysis was regional in scale, but it offers insights about specific communities' needs.	The TAP study defines High-Needs Neighborhoods that will be prioritized for park investments due to current gaps in access.	The TAP study addresses many factors that influence residents' walk access to parks and offers strategies for making parks part of day-to-day life in Southern Nevada.

PURPOSE AND CONTEXT

STUDY AREA

The TAP study focuses on the urbanized areas of Clark County, Nevada, including residents living in the cities of Las Vegas, North Las Vegas, Henderson, Boulder City, unincorporated Clark County and the rural City of Mesquite. Other rural areas of the County were also considered.

STUDY PURPOSE

The Transportation Access to Parks (TAP) study is a year-long effort led by the Regional Transportation Commission of Southern Nevada (RTC)'s Metropolitan Planning Organization. The TAP study presents a vision for access to outdoor spaces across Southern Nevada (see Figure 1), with a particular focus on community members that lack access to a personal vehicle.

The TAP study was funded through a Nevada Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure grant through the Nevada Division of Outdoor Recreation (NDOR). The findings will allow RTC and partners to identify priorities for transportation and park investments, align with partners around shared transportation and park improvement opportunities, and guide future investments in the region. This document identifies policy and partnership recommendations that can be implemented in the short-term, along with capital improvement projects that warrant further study. Funding for advancing these recommendations is programmed through RTC's FY26/27 Unified Planning Work Program.

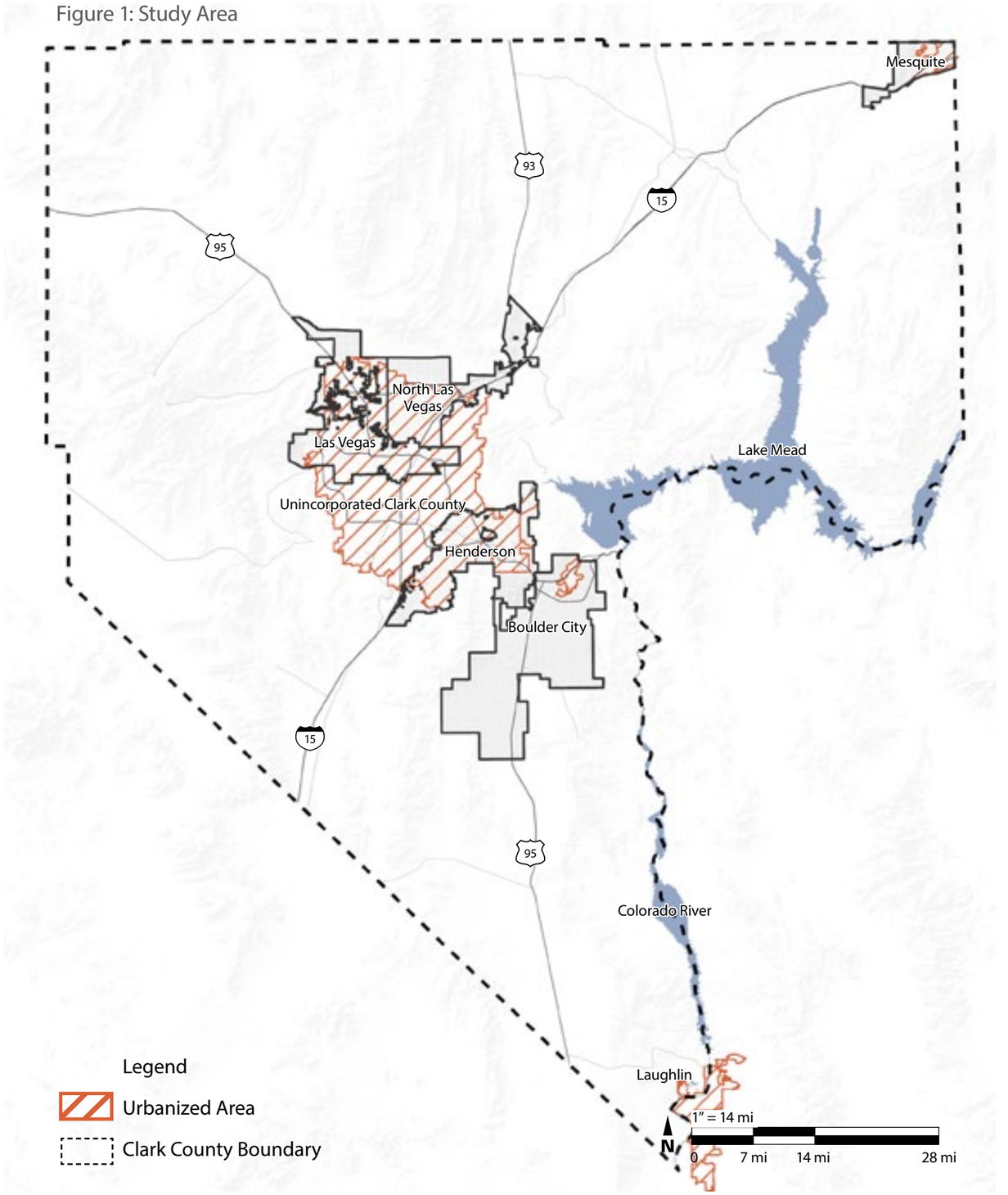
LOCAL CONTEXT

Southern Nevada has experienced rapid growth since 1980, bringing the region to an estimated population of 2.3 million as of 2025. However, a lack of coordinated regional planning has resulted in a disjointed, auto-centric land use condition that makes it difficult for people without a car to reach services and amenities like parks. Public transportation, sidewalks and bike lanes are available across the region, but they are not always well-connected, safe, or convenient, especially in suburban and rural areas. While some communities can easily enjoy Southern Nevada's unique and beautiful parks and natural resources, others are limited by geographic and social barriers to access.[1]

Despite these challenges, the outdoors is important to people in Southern Nevada: 83% of TAP study survey respondents agree or strongly agree with the statement "spending time outdoors is important to me." But not everyone can easily access and enjoy the region's iconic outdoor places. The TAP study explores complex barriers to park usage and offers strategies for connecting the communities with the highest need to the outdoor spaces that are most impactful.

1 Southern Nevada Strong Regional Plan (2015)

Figure 1: Study Area



PURPOSE AND CONTEXT

44% of Southern Nevada residents live within a 10-minute walk of an Everyday Park, Destination Park, or an Outdoor Experience Park.

69% of Southern Nevada residents can access a Destination Park or an Outdoor Experience Park within a 30-minute bus ride.

WHAT PARKS ARE INCLUDED IN THE STUDY?

For the purpose of the TAP study, parks are defined as any publicly accessible outdoor recreational opportunity, including parks, open space, trails, and other natural resources and outdoor recreational assets. Private parks, such as those within subdivisions, and school play and recreation facilities that limit or do not allow public access are not included. The TAP study focused on parks that provide the most value to users, categorized as 'Everyday Parks', 'Destination Parks', and 'Outdoor Experience Parks'.

For more information about these park types, see Chapter 3. To view park maps for each jurisdiction, including rural areas of Clark County, reference the Appendix.

Figure 5: Key Map

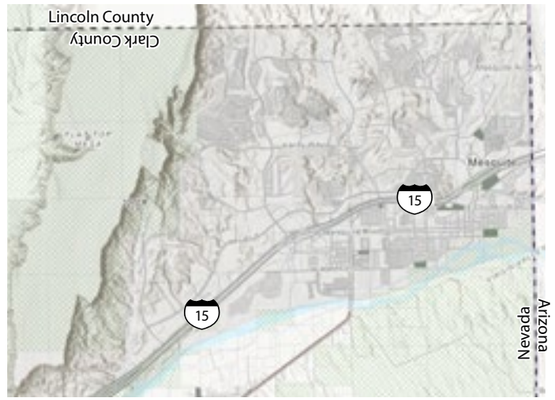


Figure 2: Mesquite Parks and Trails

1" = 2 MI

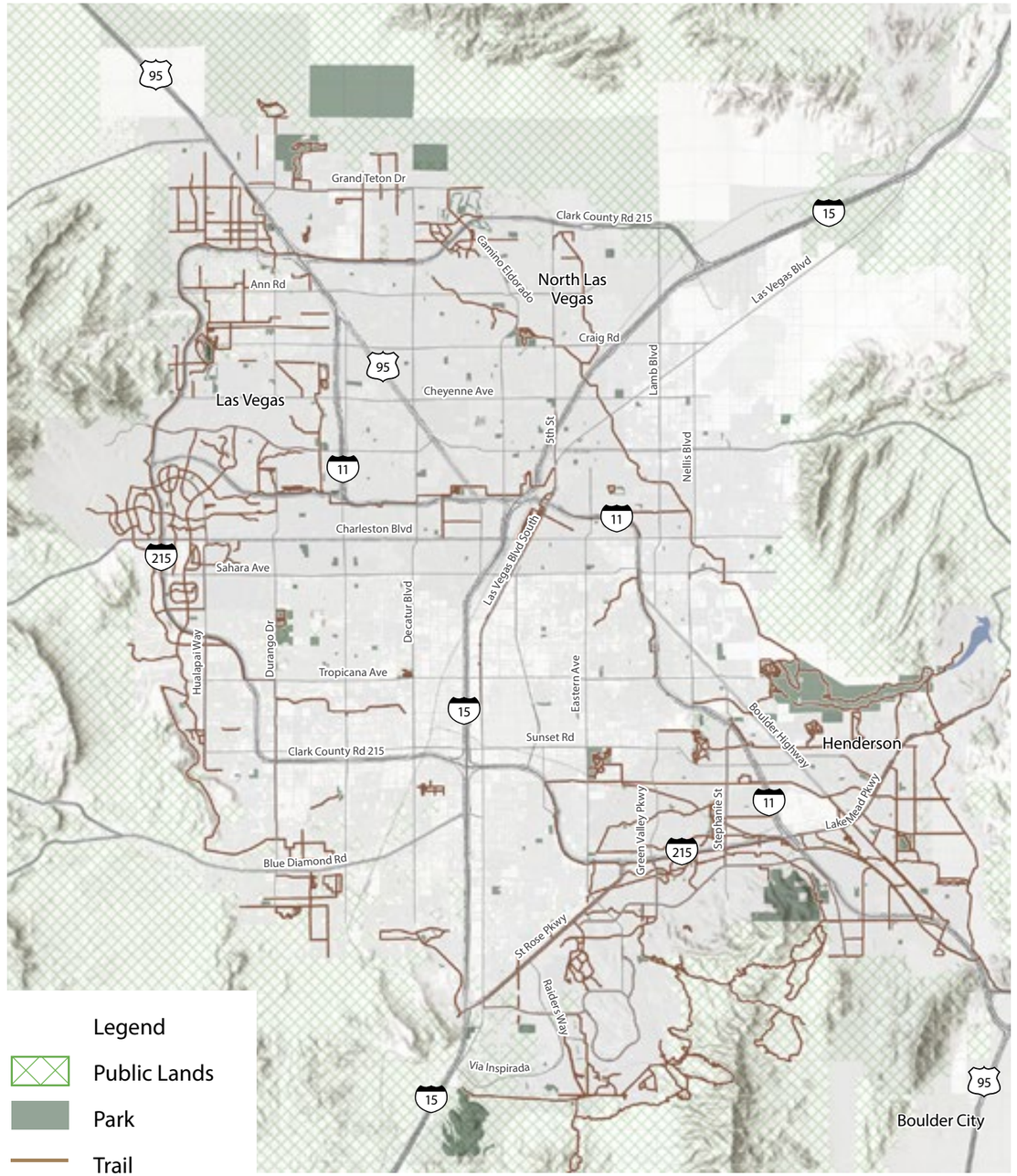
Figure 3: Laughlin Parks and Trails

1" = 1 MI

Figure 4: Boulder City Parks and Trails

1" = 1.5 MI

Figure 6: Parks and Trails

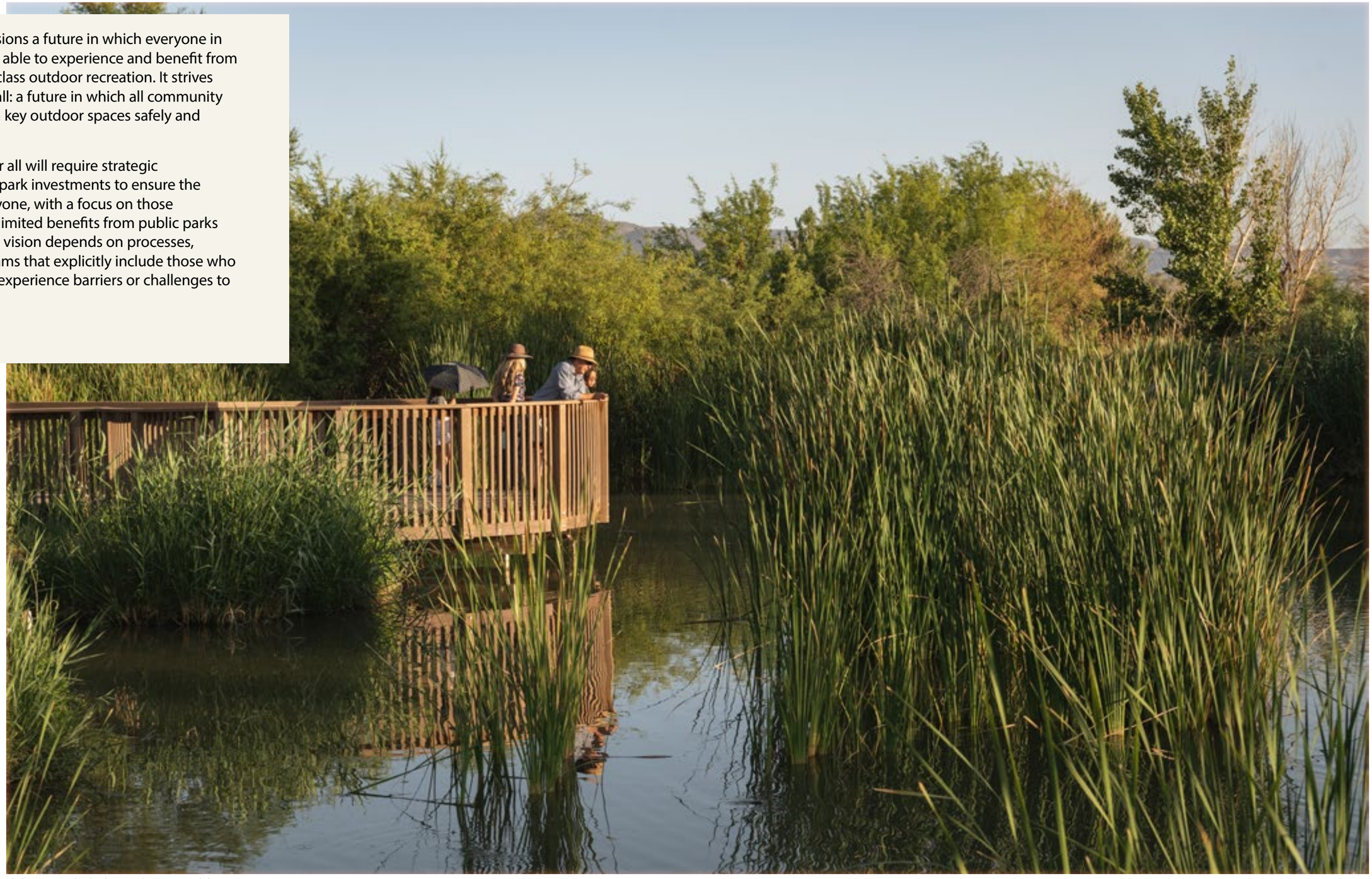


Park maps by jurisdiction, including rural areas of Clark County, are available in the Appendix.

PROJECT VISION

The TAP study envisions a future in which everyone in Southern Nevada is able to experience and benefit from the region's world-class outdoor recreation. It strives towards access for all: a future in which all community members can reach key outdoor spaces safely and comfortably.

Achieving access for all will require strategic transportation and park investments to ensure the system serves everyone, with a focus on those currently receiving limited benefits from public parks and recreation. This vision depends on processes, policies, and programs that explicitly include those who disproportionately experience barriers or challenges to park access.



Clark County Wetlands. Photo Credit: Design Workshop

KEY DEFINITIONS

The team engaged a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) in the early stages of the TAP study process to ensure alignment around key definitions and to develop shared terminology. For more information on the role of the TAC, see page 29.

PRIORITY PARKS

Parks that were included in the TAP Study based on amenity criteria. Encompasses Everyday Parks, Destination Parks, and Outdoor Experience Parks, which are defined in Chapter 3.

PARK GAP AREAS

Communities with limited transportation access to parks. Defined through spatial analysis to identify areas that cannot reach Priority Parks within a reasonable travel time by walking, rolling, biking, or taking transit (see Chapter 3, Figures 26-29).

URBAN TRAILS

Trails that are not within parks and are part of the urban mobility network. They may be located along transportation right-of-ways. These trails currently vary in the type of park experience that they offer.

IMPACTED COMMUNITIES

Communities that have been negatively impacted by or excluded from the existing park and transportation system. Defined through spatial analysis to identify areas with a high concentration of socioeconomic, health, and environmental risk factors. These areas may or may not be Park Gap Areas (see Chapter 3, Figures 9-12).

FREQUENT TRANSIT

A fixed-route transit service with a frequency of at least 3 buses per hour.

ACCESSIBLE CONNECTION

A transit service that is available to people with or without disabilities. In Southern Nevada, it may refer to paratransit or shared demand response service that connects population centers to parks during the days and times of highest park access demand.

ROLL

The act of using a mobility device with wheels such as walkers, wheelchairs, and strollers.

SAFE WALK/ROLL

The experience of walking as a pedestrian or using a mobility device with continuous sidewalks, no known obstructions, and no need to cross arterial roads.

SAFE CYCLE

A bike facility considered “high comfort” according to the Regional Bike and Pedestrian Plan for Southern Nevada (2017). This includes shared-use paths and shared streets with a speed limit of less than 25 mph and fewer than 3 travel lanes.

SAFE MOBILITY

The act of ensuring that all people feel safe existing on their streets and can enjoy full freedom of movement, going beyond transportation to acknowledge harassment and violence, feelings of fear, and other experiences of marginalized people.

STUDY LIMITATIONS

The TAP study was limited by several constraints, described below. Future phases of the study, or initiatives that result from the study’s recommendations, should consider what research is required to validate or strengthen relevant findings.

LACK OF CONSISTENT DATA ON PARK AMENITIES AND QUALITY

The TAP study relied on jurisdictional partners self-reporting their park inventory, including park quality and amenities. Data robustness varied across jurisdictions and, as a result, there may be gaps in the park list that was included in the TAP Study.

LACK OF CONSISTENT DATA ON PARK ENTRANCES

The TAP study approximated park entrance locations by generating points at a consistent distance around the perimeter of park boundaries, then removing points that are along a private property line. This approach may result in minor overestimates or underestimates of the distance between residences or bus stops and parks.

ACCESSIBLE SERVICES CONSIDERED SEPARATELY

RTC’s accessible services are not included in the General Transit Feed Specification (GTFS) data that was used to calculate transit access to parks. These services are included in the TAP study but were analyzed using a more qualitative approach than the fixed-route bus analysis. For that reason, there may be discrepancies in the TAP study’s assessment of accessible routes and the reality of accessing parks for groups using those services. Strategies for more accurately identifying paratransit needs are included in Chapter 4.

NEW METHODOLOGIES

The TAP study methodology is informed by approaches utilized in the Los Angeles County Transit to Parks Strategic Plan (2019) and Connecting People to Parks in King County (2019). The relative newness of these approaches indicates room for improvement as the field of study advances.

DATA DOES NOT PROJECT INTO THE FUTURE

The TAP study relies on static, point-in-time analysis that does not account for changes in the region’s population, parks or transportation infrastructure. Future phases of the study will need to adapt to these changes.

FUNDING AND TIME CONSTRAINTS

Phase I of the TAP study was limited to a one-year timeline. This, in addition to budget constraints, impacted the depth of the analysis. Future phases will progress this analysis further through additional time and funding.

STRATEGIES FOR RURAL AREAS

Park access in Southern Nevada’s rural areas is nuanced and not always well-defined by regional analysis. Pockets of low population density and patterns of land ownership, particularly the process by which land is transferred from the Bureau of Land Management, may cause some areas of high park need not to be flagged as such. Alternatively, a lack of quality data regarding public access points to federal lands may cause some areas to be mistakenly flagged as high park need.

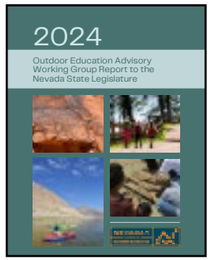
RELEVANT STUDIES AND PLANS

As the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for Southern Nevada, RTC is responsible for maintaining a continuing, cooperative and comprehensive transportation process, including regional planning efforts.[1] The documents included below represent a small portion of RTC and partners' work over the past decade and highlight the key studies and plans that informed the TAP study process and recommendations.

1 Regional Transportation Commission of Southern Nevada, "About the RTC" (n.d.)

TRANSPORTATION HEALTH STUDY (2022)

The Transportation Health Study focuses on the Las Vegas metropolitan area, including the Cities of Las Vegas, North Las Vegas, Henderson, Boulder City, and contiguous urbanized parts of Clark County. The study estimates the health-related impacts, costs, and benefits associated with Southern Nevada's regional transportation infrastructure. The findings of this study informed how health indicators were integrated into the Transportation Access to Parks study, particularly the identification of Impacted Communities.

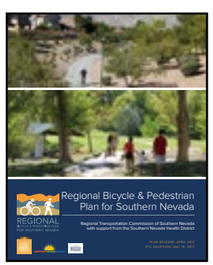


OUTDOOR EDUCATION ADVISORY WORKING GROUP REPORT TO THE NEVADA STATE LEGISLATURE (2024)

This report, published by the Nevada Division of Outdoor Recreation, explores strategies for expanding outdoor education statewide. It offers recommendations across four categories: capacity building, content integration, outdoor learning infrastructure, and policy, all of which are informed by research, case studies, and an advisory group of experts.

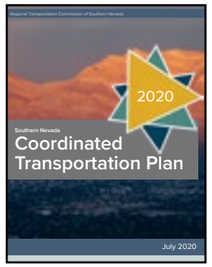
LET'S GO 2050 (2025)

Let's Go 2050 is the most recent update to the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) for Southern Nevada. The RTP is the primary document that outlines RTC's planning priorities and guides transportation investments in the region. The priorities identified in Let's Go 2050 and previous iterations of the RTP were integrated throughout the TAP Study. Most notably, the environmental justice analysis from Access 2050 (the prior update, published in 2021) was used as a starting point for the TAP study's environmental justice analysis.



REGIONAL BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN PLAN FOR SOUTHERN NEVADA (2017)

The Regional Bike and Pedestrian Plan establishes measurable goals to improve bike and pedestrian safety and comfort in the region. One of its central goals is access: improving bicycling and walking access to community destinations across Southern Nevada. The upcoming update to the Bike and Pedestrian Plan will integrate the findings and priorities of the TAP study.



SOUTHERN NEVADA COORDINATED TRANSPORTATION PLAN (2024)

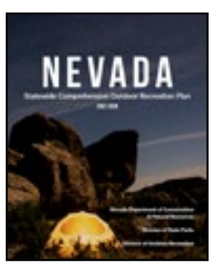
The Coordinated Transportation Plan helps RTC plan for groups with difficulties getting around, including people with low incomes, older adults, and people with disabilities. The findings of this plan were used to develop recommendations in the TAP Study that address transportation obstacles for groups experiencing the most difficulty.

SOUTHERN NEVADA EXTREME HEAT VULNERABILITY ANALYSIS (2022)

The Southern Nevada Extreme Heat Vulnerability Analysis revealed that areas in Southern Nevada where populations are most vulnerable to extreme heat are concentrated in and around the region's urban core and east side. This offered another layer of insight for the TAP Study to target recommendations for mitigating extreme heat to the areas that are most at risk.

SOUTHERN NEVADA STRONG REGIONAL PLAN (2015)

Southern Nevada Strong is a collaborative regional planning initiative. The Regional Plan published in 2015 was developed to address the region's challenges by improving economic competitiveness, fostering vibrant and complete communities, enhancing transportation options, and strengthening regional cooperation. An update to the Regional Plan, Southern Nevada Strong 2050, is underway as of 2025.



CLARK COUNTY SCORP DATA (2022)

The Nevada Division of State Parks (NDSP) is responsible for developing the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) every five years. The most recent SCORP encompasses 2022 to 2026 and was developed in partnership with the Nevada Department of Outdoor Resources (NDOR). Survey findings from this process were incorporated throughout the TAP study.

GOALS

01.

INTEGRATE PARKS INTO EVERYDAY LIFE.

For many people, spending time in outdoor spaces is a luxury: according to the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA), lack of time is the most cited barrier to park access nationally.[1] But even 20 minutes spent outdoors can help reduce stress levels.[2] Travel time can be a considerable barrier in choosing whether to visit a park. The TAP study includes strategies that will make it easier for people to get outdoors in their day-to-day lives. It also provides strategies for raising residents' awareness of available parks and means of traveling to them: people are most likely to enjoy time outdoors when parks are a convenient part of their daily routine.

1 NRPA, 2023
2 NRPA, 2021

02.

CONNECT TO DESTINATION PARKS AND OUTDOOR EXPERIENCE PARKS.

Southern Nevada offers a diverse range of parks, including inclusive playgrounds, adventure play, and natural areas. In fact, the Statewide Outdoor Recreation Plan found that 49% of all state residents are estimated to recreate outdoors one day or more in Southern Nevada in the past year.[1] However, Southern Nevada is large, and many of the most desirable parks are at a distance from where people live. This poses a significant challenge to the 8% of Southern Nevada households that are without a personal vehicle.[2] Youth, seniors, and people experiencing disabilities in particular may require options to visit outdoor attractions without driving themselves. The TAP Study includes strategies for getting more people to the most desirable park locations.

1 Nevada SCORP, 2022
2 2023 Southern Nevada Household Travel Survey Report

03.

IMPROVE THE EXPERIENCE OF TRAVELING TO PARKS.

Southern Nevada has among the hottest climates in the United States, and it has been identified as the fastest-warming region in the country.[1] The TAP Study includes strategies to make all means of travel to parks more desirable, including strategies to protect pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users from heat.

1 RTC Extreme Heat Vulnerability Analysis, 2022

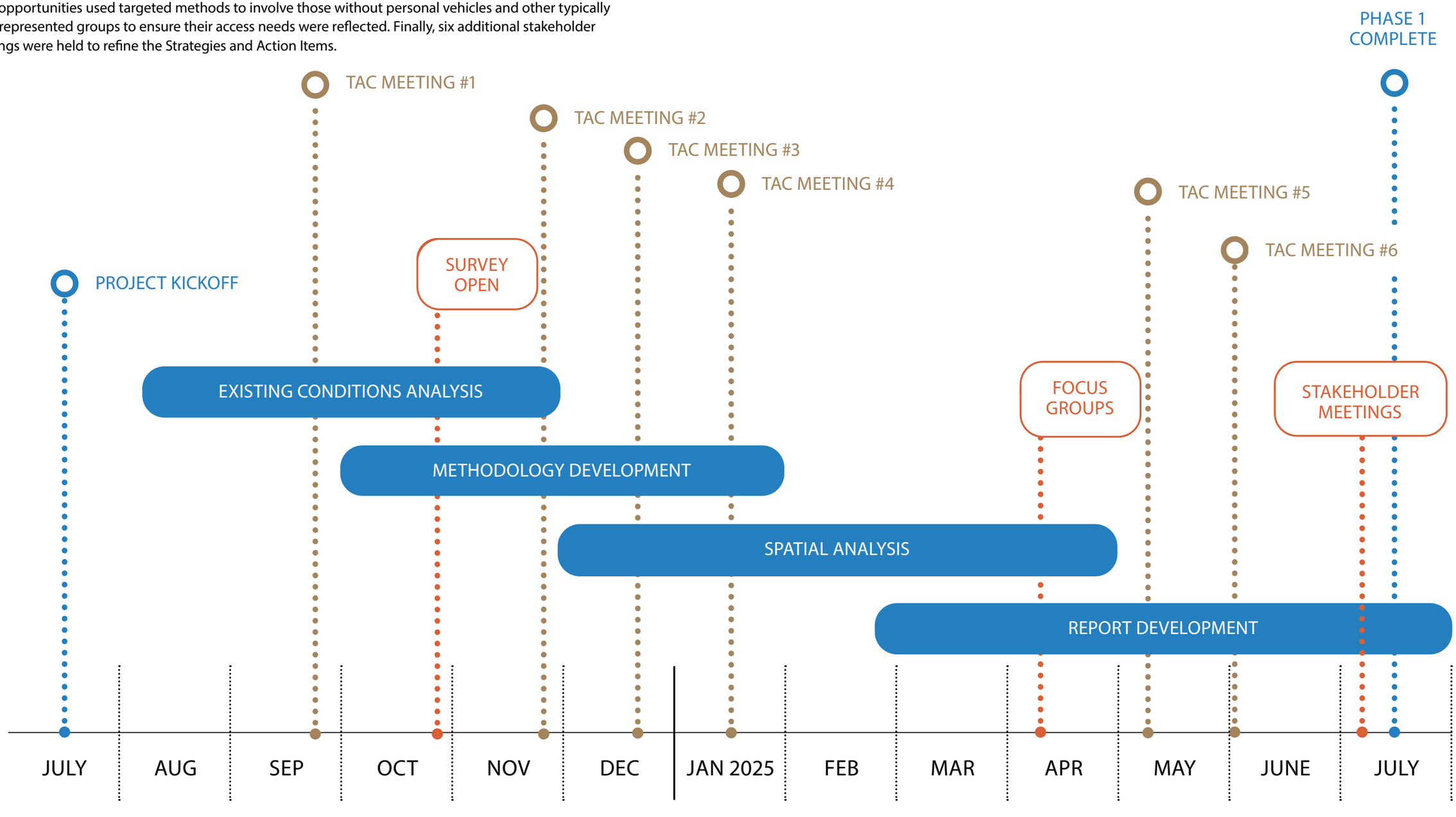
04.

REDUCE BARRIERS TO ACCESSING AND ENJOYING OUTDOOR EXPERIENCES.

The ability to reach outdoor spaces - simply getting people from point A to point B - is just a starting point for understanding access to outdoor experiences. Barriers may include other factors that limit enjoyment or desire to spend time outdoors, which depend on individuals' abilities and experiences. The TAP study identifies barriers that limit people's participation in outdoor experiences and the amount of time they spend enjoying the outdoors. It considers the quality of park amenities, parking availability, feelings of safety and welcome, costs and equipment needs.

PLAN CREATION PROCESS

The Transportation Access to Parks Study was developed through community input, stakeholder visioning, and spatial analysis over the course of one year. This document represents Phase I of the TAP study and includes recommendations for further study in future phases. In addition to six meetings of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) throughout the process to inform the study, two community engagement touchpoints (a survey and focus groups) provided key findings that shaped the study focus. Input opportunities used targeted methods to involve those without personal vehicles and other typically underrepresented groups to ensure their access needs were reflected. Finally, six additional stakeholder meetings were held to refine the Strategies and Action Items.



KEY FINDINGS

SOUTHERN NEVADANS WANT TO SPEND TIME OUTDOORS.

Community members reported a strong interest in visiting parks, with 83% of survey respondents indicating that spending time outdoors is important or very important to them and 89% reporting that they visit parks in Southern Nevada. The most preferred places to spend time outdoors, besides one's backyard, were in large parks with many activities or amenities, in places with cooling amenities like trees and water features, and in state or federal lands like Red Rock or Lake Mead.

89%

of survey respondents visit parks or trails in Southern Nevada

PUBLIC PARK ACCESS IN SOUTHERN NEVADA IS LIMITED BY A LACK OF PEDESTRIAN AND TRANSIT CONNECTIONS TO PRIORITY DESTINATIONS.

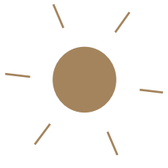
Many of the parks in Southern Nevada, especially larger parks and state and federal lands, are challenging to access for households without a car. Survey respondents reported they would visit parks more often if there were more direct bus service, faster bus service, and safer walking paths.

35%

of Southern Nevadans do not have sufficient park access

NOT ALL BARRIERS TO PARK USE ARE TRANSPORTATION-RELATED.

While ease of walk, bike, and bus access play a key role in park visitation, other, less obvious, factors are equally important. Throughout the process, the impact of extreme heat was continuously emphasized as a reason why people do not travel to or spend time in parks.



HEAT

is the most significant challenge to park access, besides transportation

TRENDS IN PARK USE VARY BASED ON GEOGRAPHIC AND SOCIAL FACTORS

The types of parks and park experiences that people prefer, along with the barriers they experience when accessing parks, vary across communities. Designing a region that offers multimodal access to great parks requires an awareness of different groups' experiences traveling to and spending time in parks. This includes people's preferences for types of activities and amenities and feelings of comfort, welcome, and safety.

Some focus groups had a strong preference for natural areas, while other preferred urban parks.

URBAN AND RURAL ACCESS LOOK DIFFERENT, BUT THERE MAY BE SHARED SOLUTIONS

The pedestrian, bike, and bus network is primarily concentrated in Southern Nevada's urban core. Expanding these modes of travel in the region's rural areas will be more complicated than simply extending service. However, parks are an essential piece of social infrastructure in many rural communities, and creative solutions are necessary to ensure these spaces are accessible to all.

88%

of people living in Park Gaps live in urbanized areas

02.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

CHAPTER CONTENTS

- Engagement Approach
- Survey Participation & Findings
- Focus Groups

ENGAGEMENT APPROACH

Community feedback was an essential part of the TAP study process. The engagement process was designed so the experiences of transit riders, who often lack regular access to cars, informed data analysis, provided information about how parks are accessed in the region and offered insights into how people in Southern Nevada would like to access parks in the future.

The engagement and analysis processes informed one another to create a "back and forth" between the local knowledge of the community and stakeholders and technical knowledge of the project team. As an example, insights gained from the community survey helped determine what types of parks should be prioritized for access.

The following section includes a summary of the community engagement. A complete report of community input is included in the Appendix.

COMMUNITY SURVEY

The TAP Community Survey gathered input from residents on park access across Southern Nevada. The survey was offered online in English and Spanish, providing community members an opportunity to share their experiences, perceptions, and needs related to accessing parks.

To encourage participation, respondents were entered into a raffle for a chance to win one of five $25 Visa gift cards and five 30-day transit passes. Each participant was also given a free 24-hour bus pass. The TAP survey consisted of 20 questions: 14 multiple-choice questions focused on public views on park access, and 6 demographic questions.

This Community Survey was intended to understand the interests of all ages, races, genders, income levels and education groups throughout Southern Nevada. Outreach methods were targeted towards transit riders to ensure a higher response than typical from this group. The response rate of 1,253 exceeded survey sample size goals.

The demographic reporting from the survey informed focus group planning, as this phase of engagement was intended to capture feedback from groups that were underrepresented during the survey phase.

FOCUS GROUPS

The survey was a valuable starting point for the study team to understand the experiences of community members without vehicles when traveling to parks in Southern Nevada. Focus groups supplement this understanding in several ways. First, they allowed the study team to target groups that were underrepresented in the survey, ensuring the voices of Spanish speakers, youth and rural riders were heard. Second, they allowed for more nuanced discussion through which the survey's findings could be contextualized.

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

At the start of the project, RTC worked through the Regional Open Space and Trails (ROST) Collaborative to form a technical advisory committee (TAC). The TAP study team met with the TAC six times throughout the project at key milestone dates to gain insight and feedback on the project's structure and findings.

The TAC included representatives from federal, state, County, and municipal agencies, community based organizations and nonprofits, environmental and outdoor recreation groups, and transportation agencies.

The TAC helped guide the direction of the TAP study and provided feedback based on their own expertise and the interests of their consituents at project milestones. Many members of the TAC will be important partners as the study moves from policy setting to implementation.

STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS

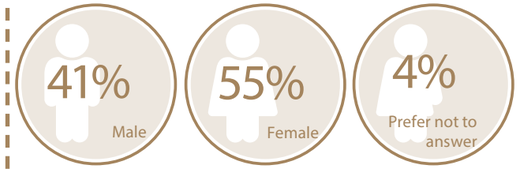
After drafting preliminary strategies, RTC facilitated conversations with subject matter experts in six different areas: extreme heat, rural communities, transit and shared services, outdoor recreation, public health, and capital improvements and maintenance. Through these meetings, the planning team was able to explore key topics in further detail and ensure that the TAP study is aligned with other ongoing work in the region.

SURVEY PARTICIPATION

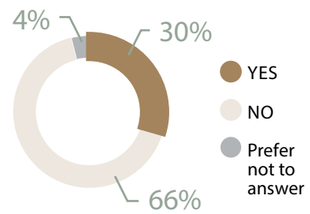
A robust survey response rate and representation was received with 1,253 completed surveys. Participation data indicates this is a useful representation of the Southern Nevada transit users. The demographics of participants represents a sample more typical of transit users than the overall region.

1,253 RESPONSES

GENDER DISTRIBUTION

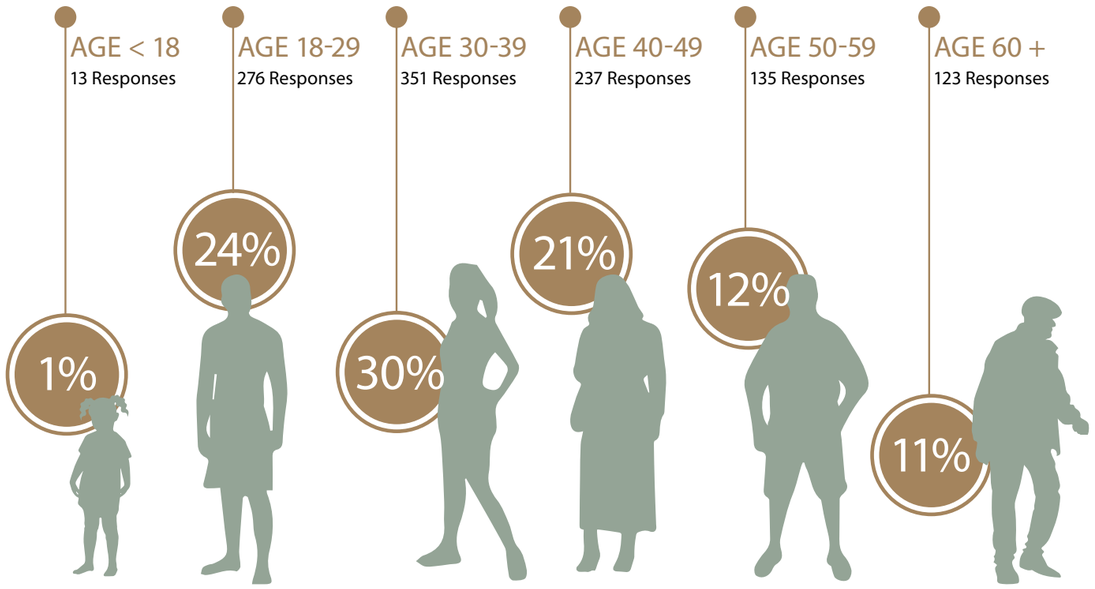


DEPENDENT WITH A DISABILITY



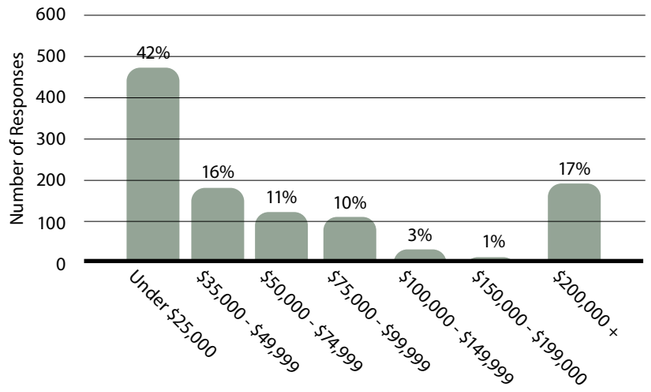
AGE DISTRIBUTION

1,131 (93%) respondents out of 1,212 who completed the survey agreed to share their age. The largest cohort was between the age range of 30-39 years old (31%), followed by 18-29 years old (23%) and 40-49 years old (20%). Youth were underrepresented in this survey, so focus groups were added to hear from those under the age of 18. Seniors were also slightly underrepresented in the survey, but were engaged in focus groups.



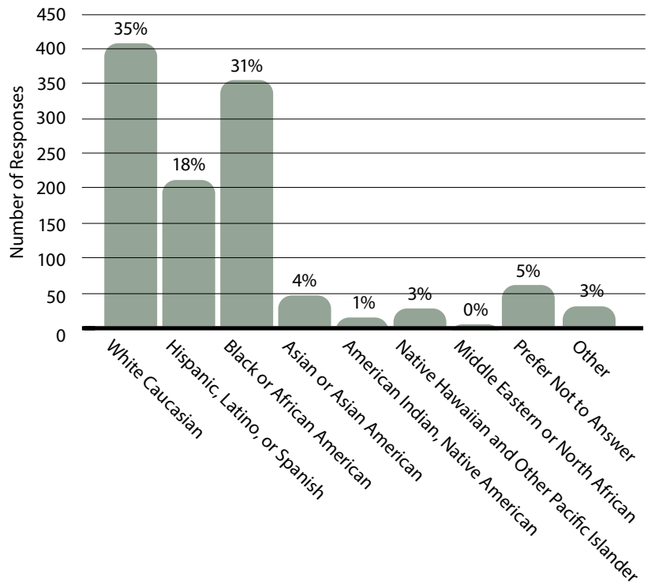
INCOME DISTRIBUTION

The majority of respondents have an annual household income under $25,000 (43%). These results indicate that most of the respondents come from low-income backgrounds, which aligns with the survey's target audience.



RACE DISTRIBUTION

35% of survey respondents identify as white, which closely aligns with the regional population. Black and African American residents were overrepresented in the survey (31% of respondents compared to 12% in the County), while Hispanic/Latino residents were underrepresented (18% of respondents compared to 33% in the County).



MAIN MODE OF TRANSPORTATION TO PARKS, TRAILS, AND RECREATION

47%
PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

20%
A COMBINATION OF WALK, BIKE, AND/OR BUS

16%
DRIVE MY OWN CAR OR SOMEONE IN MY HOUSE DRIVES ME

7%
SOMEONE ELSE DRIVES ME (NEIGHBOR, FRIEND, COACH, RIDESHARE, ETC.)

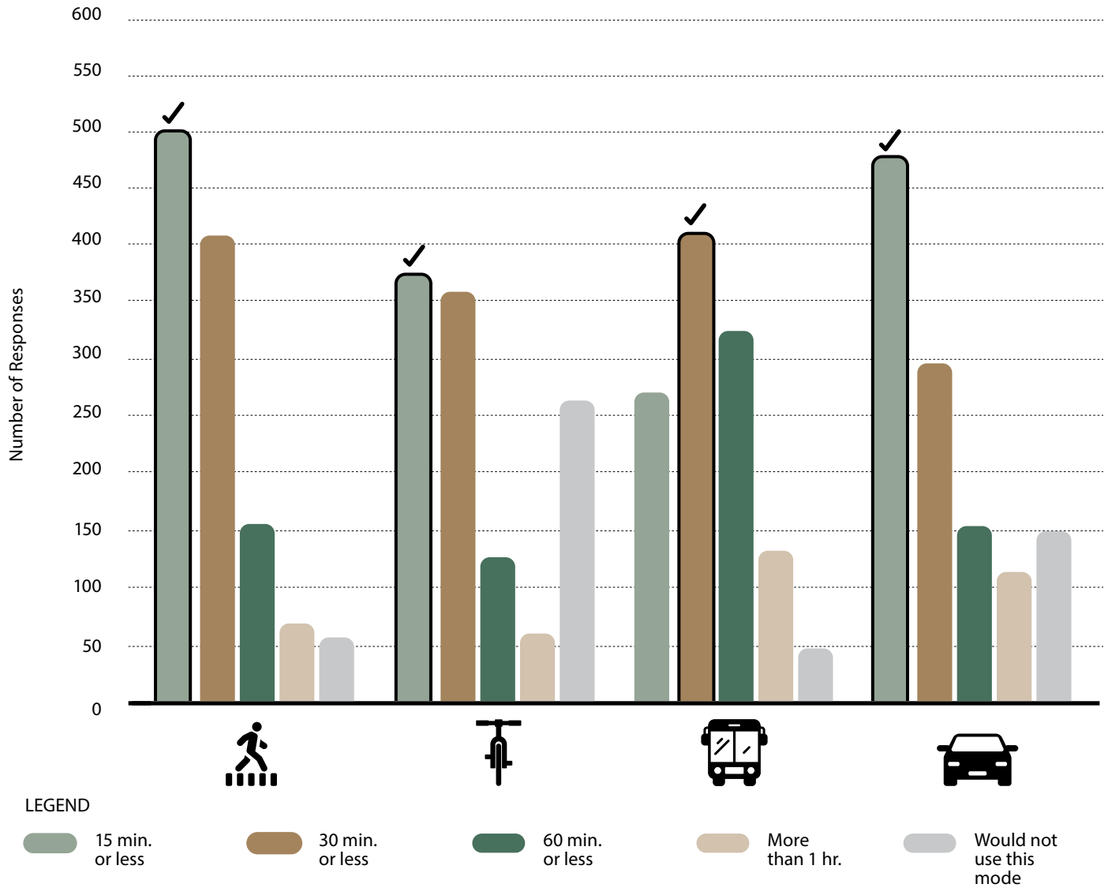
6%
WALK

2%
BIKE

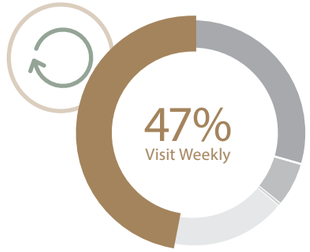
SURVEY FINDINGS

A majority of survey respondents (41%) indicated they rely on public transit, highlighting the critical role of accessible and reliable bus service in supporting access to community recreation. This was followed by 20% who depend on others for a ride, suggesting that many residents—particularly youth, elders, or those without vehicles, may face transportation challenges. Some respondents (15%) combine active modes like walking, biking, and transit, but only 12% reported using their own car, and very few respondents walk (5%), with no respondents biking as their primary method. These patterns reflect a strong dependence on shared and public transportation options, underlining the importance of continued investment in transit infrastructure and community mobility to ensure equitable access to outdoor spaces. See the appendix for additional survey results.

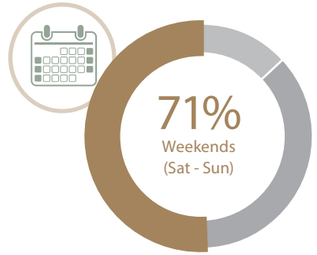
HOW LONG WOULD YOU BE OKAY WITH TRAVELING TO GET TO PARKS, TRAILS, OR OTHER OUTDOOR RECREATIONAL AREAS USING DIFFERENT TYPES OF TRANSPORTATION?



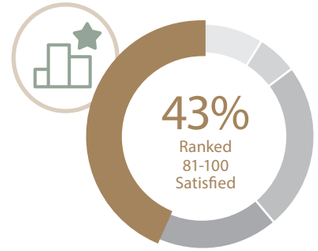
EXISTING PARK USAGE



How often do you visit parks, trails, and outdoor recreational areas?



What days of the week do you most often visit parks, trails, and outdoor recreational areas?



I am satisfied with the outdoor places available to me in Southern Nevada.

What are some reasons why you do not visit parks, trails, or outdoor recreational areas?

391 Responses	300 Responses	234 Responses	228 Responses
#1 I don't have a ride or transportation.	#2 It takes too long to get there.	#3 There are no parks close by.	#4 The weather or environmental conditions are not comfortable while traveling to the park.

What transportation improvements would help you access parks?

617 Responses	559 Responses	332 Responses	319 Responses
#1 More direct bus service.	#2 Faster bus service (shorter travel time).	#3 Safer walking paths.	#4 More shade or cooling amenities to make my trip more comfortable.

Where would you most like to spend your time when you are outdoors?

- 20% At large Community Park with many activities and amenities
- 18% In a place that has cooling amenities like trees and water features
- 14% In my backyard (at home)
- 14% In state or federal lands like Red Rock and Lake Lead
- 13% Close to my house or job on natural trails, pathways, and small parks
- 11% At organized outdoor events like community concerts and festivals, outdoor movies, and volunteer cleanup
- 4% At school (school yard or open areas on school campus)
- 4% At organized activities like sports or nature programs

FOCUS GROUPS

While each focus group was different, several shared takeaways emerged:

- While some focus groups prefer natural spaces over urban parks and vice versa, each group valued a balance between different types of experiences.
- Heat was cited as a key barrier to park access for all focus groups. Participants called for more amenities to make waiting for transit or walking to parks safer during extreme heat events.
- Across focus groups, shared recommendations emerged regarding transit improvements including real-time arrival information, communicating detours more clearly via apps, more frequent and reliable bus service, new routes, and adding shade and cooling features at bus stops.
- Members of multiple focus groups indicated they do not feel safe while biking in the region and discussed the need for improved bike infrastructure. There were also discussions in multiple focus groups regarding the need for parking and storage at parks and on bike transit to support multimodality.
- Walking is also perceived as unsafe, and many groups discussed the need for more designated trails, safety infrastructure, accessibility for those with disabilities and signage in multiple languages.
- There is not a strong public understanding of what parks are available by bus.

HIGH SCHOOL AGED YOUTH

- High school aged youth have a preference for natural spaces, balanced with urban parks closer to home that can be accessed more casually.
- Not many of the focus group participants currently bike, but they may be encouraged to do so if biking felt safer.
- Currently, driving is seen as the best option for transporting sports equipment.
- Teens perceive buses as late and inconsistent. Although some participants would prefer to take the bus, they would like service to be expanded and improved.
- Information about parks comes mostly from social media, friends and family.
- Heat, long waits, lack of shade, and limited seating at bus stops and on buses deter bus use.
- Enclosed shelters with fans/cooling, and better seating would help with heat management while waiting for the bus.
- ADA accommodations, QR codes and language translation (e.g., Tagalog and Ethiopian) are needed on transit, at parks, and online.

UNHOUSED AND RESOURCE-INSECURE HIGH SCHOOL AGED YOUTH

- Teens experiencing housing and resource insecurity prefer natural spaces over urban parks and value experiences of relaxation and peace in parks. Parks are seen as a valuable daytime refuge.
- Participants have experienced park amenity materials that are too hot and ill-suited for the Southern Nevada climate.
- This group is willing to travel for desired facilities (e.g., skate parks), but generally prefer to walk short distances or take the bus for longer trips. Biking is seen as inconvenient, in part due to difficulty taking bikes on the bus.
- Many participants rely on buses to reach parks, especially those that are longer than a 30-minute walk away. This would be made easier if service was more reliable, if there were more shelters, and if real-time arrival information was available on-site.
- Other transit improvements this group would like to see include shade, lighting, seating, charging stations, closer spacing between stops, and clear communication about detours via apps.
- The group reflected on vulnerability due to their reliance on a phone with an Internet connection to access apps, scan passes and get real-time arrival information. Charging stations and offline options should be provided where possible.
- Bus fares are a barrier and the group was not aware. RTC's RIDE ON program or other reduced-fare options for school-aged youth.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ADVOCACY GROUP (SPANISH-SPEAKING)

- Most participants favored urban parks over natural spaces, but many liked both.
- Many participants travel to visit higher-quality urban parks further from home.
- Water features like water fountains and splash pads are valued amenities due to the heat.
- Many participants drive to parks, but some would consider walking or using public transportation if safety and service conditions improve.
- Participants would like to see more educational, cultural and community events along with programming that addresses social issues like stereotypes and inclusion.

RURAL TRANSIT RIDERS (PRIMARILY SENIORS) IN MESQUITE

- Rural transit riders in Mesquite have a strong preference for natural parks, although a balance with urban parks is appreciated.
- This group is generally satisfied with their current transit access to parks, but noted that if there were broader, more frequent transit coverage around Mesquite, they would be able to access more places. Hafen Park is not accessible but a highly desired Park to access by transit.
- Some residents would travel up to an hour or more for premier natural spaces if transportation was available.
- Riders have concerns about getting "stuck" at the park since transit is infrequent.
- This group discussed adding shaded and ventilated bus shelters with seating at key locations.
- Rural transit riders suggested co-locating parks with common destinations to support multi-purpose trips.

ADVOCACY GROUP (SPANISH-SPEAKING)

- This group prefers natural spaces to be balanced with urban parks that have more facilities for kids. Currently, they travel further to access those types of facilities.
- Park visits are most common on days off work and holidays.
- Transit users often face challenges like long travel times, unreliable schedules, missing/removed bus stops and lack of shade.
- The group discussed solutions including shuttle services to major parks, park and ride options and guided park tours.

03.

ANALYSIS

CHAPTER CONTENTS

ANALYSIS

Photo Credit: Design Workshop

Photo Credit: Design Workshop

Photo Credit: Robert Venturi via Artforum

Southern Nevada's landscape is defined by contrast. Vibrant, iconic cities thrive in the heart of the desert; mountains and valleys create unique pockets of habitat for diverse plants and wildlife.[1] Southern Nevada is home to both the Las Vegas Strip, which attracts over 40 million annual visitors[2], and the Lake Mead National Recreation Area, which ranks in the top ten most visited parks in the country.[3] The region's diversity – in landscape, in urban design, and in people – requires a diverse approach to improve transportation access to parks.

Extreme heat is another essential piece of context for understanding the analysis and recommendations in the TAP study: Southern Nevada is one of the hottest and fastest-warming regions of the country.[4] The impacts of extreme heat cut across our understanding of the region's demographics, parks, and transportation.

1 Nevada Center for Biological Diversity (n.d.)
2 Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority
3 SCORP 2022-2026

4 Extreme Heat Vulnerability Report (2022)

39
bus routes operated by RTC

868
miles of paved bike lanes

4.5 million
acres of federal land in Southern Nevada

16,000
acres of non-federal parkland in Southern Nevada

TRIBAL LANDS

Studying access to the outdoors in Southern Nevada requires an acknowledgment of the Indigenous nations who inhabited the area before European settlement, and those who remain today. As of 2025, there are 32 federally recognized tribal lands across the state, covering 1,098,360 acres.[1] In Clark County, tribal lands comprise 80,500 acres.[2] Some tribal lands offer outdoor recreation, including the Scenic Byway to the Valley of Fire State Park, which passes through the Moapa River Indian Reservation.[3]

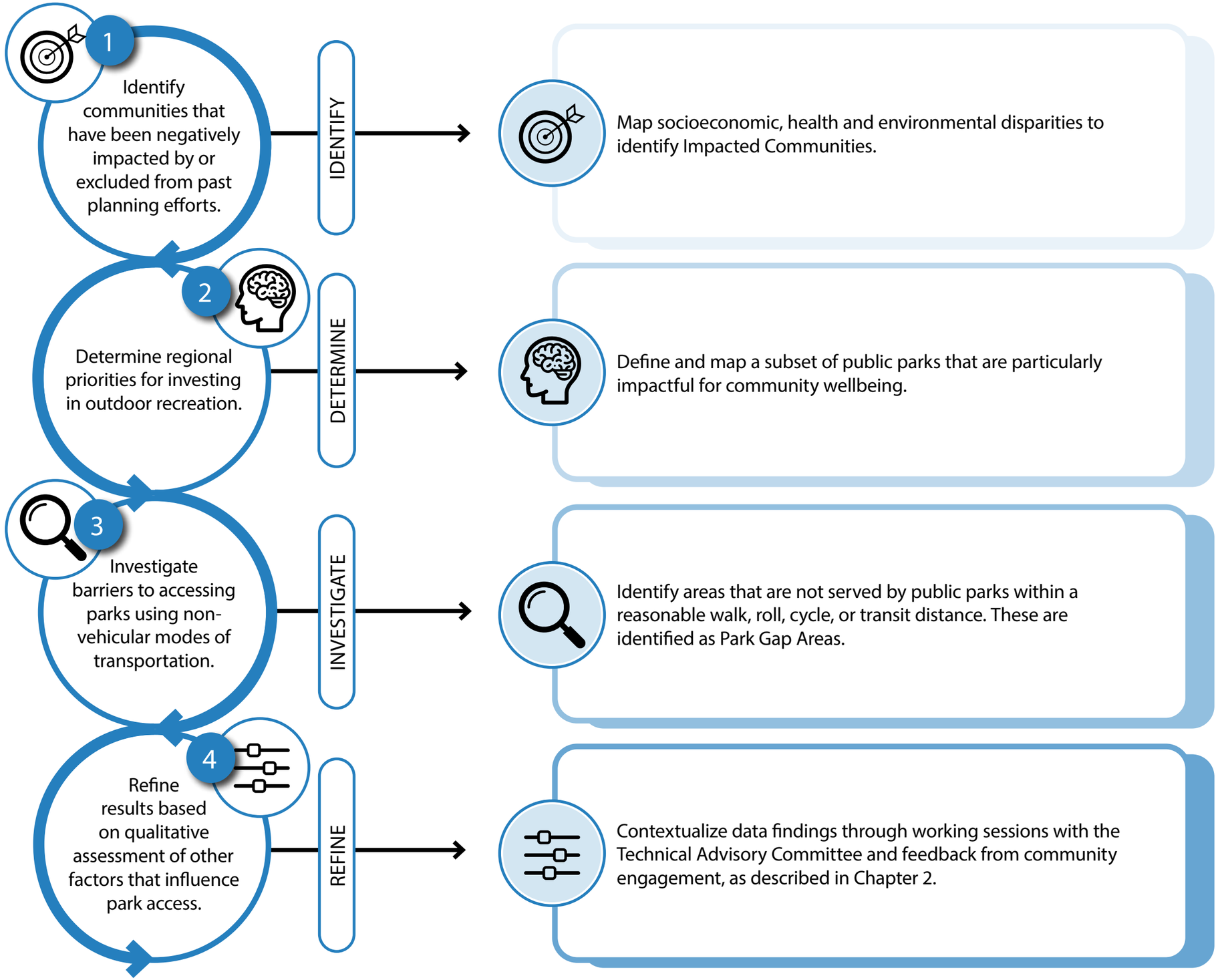
1 2022-2025 SCORP
2 Welcome to Clark County, NV
3 Valley of Fire & Lost City Tour from Vegas | Adventure Tours

METHODOLOGY

As a starting point for developing recommendations, the Transportation Access to Parks Study aims to identify which communities can access which parks and by what means. This requires answering several key questions:

- Who lives in Southern Nevada, and on which communities should RTC focus improvements?
- What types of parks are in Southern Nevada, and which are the most desirable for people to access?
- What means of access are available in Southern Nevada, and how easily can different communities access parks without a car?
- What other factors impact park access in Southern Nevada?

The TAP study methodology was derived by translating these questions into a set of key objectives, each with a corresponding, data-driven approach. The TAP study methodology was designed to rely primarily on data and spatial analysis. However, community and stakeholder engagement was essential for translating these findings to recommendations that consider less measurable dimensions of park access, like the impacts of extreme heat and feelings of comfort and welcome.



PARK TYPES

Outdoor recreation is a key part of Nevadan's identity: it contributes to the state's high quality of life and plays a significant role in its overall economy.[1] In fact, Nevada contains more land under federal ownership than any other state in the continental United States;[2] in Southern Nevada, approximately 88% of land is under federal ownership.[3] That percentage, which translates to more than 4.5 million acres, includes public open spaces like Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area, Spring Mountains National Recreation Area (Mt. Charleston), and the Lake Mead National Recreation Area. In addition to public lands, there are more than 16,000 acres of public parks in Southern Nevada.

The quality of life benefits of park access are well-documented[4], but factors like the condition and availability of different amenities help determine how impactful parks are to the people who use them.[5] The diversity of Southern Nevada's landscape helps illustrate this concept – one household might have access to a small local park with limited amenities, while another might be able to access a large and well-developed state or natural conservation area. The household that can only access the smaller park has different park needs than the household that can access the conservation area.

For a deeper understanding of park access across the region, park types were defined using a set of criteria tailored to the TAP study that can help capture these user experiences. The three types defined for the study -- the Everyday Park, the Destination Park, and the Outdoor Experience Park -- make up the Priority Parks that were analyzed for the study.

1 SCORP 2022-2026
2 SCORP 2022-2026
3 Welcome to Clark County, NV
4 The Power of Parks to Promote Health - Trust for Public Land
5 "Not All Parks Are Created Equal": How Communities Can Ensure Parks Are Accessible for All Residents | Housing Matters

EVERYDAY PARK

Everyday Parks are typically locally owned, man-made parks located close to residences and public institutions such as libraries and schools for ease of frequent use. They are smaller in size and have fewer amenities than Destination Parks and Outoutdoor Experience Parks, but they provide sufficient amenities to support users of all ages.

Examples of Everyday Parks include Laurelwood Park (Spring Valley), Rex Bell Jr. Trail Park (Searchlight), and Estelle Neal Park (Las Vegas).

DESTINATION PARK

Destination Parks are also typically locally owned and man-made. They offer more amenities than Everyday Parks, including options for both active and passive recreation. They attract users from a larger service area and are designed to encourage a longer stay.

Examples of Destination Parks include Desert Breeze Park (Spring Valley), Whitney Park (Whitney), and Heritage Greenway Park (Laughlin).

OUTDOOR EXPERIENCE PARK

Outdoor Experience Parks offer unique opportunities for "day recreation." They are outdoor natural spaces where residents of varying ages and abilities can "get off the bus and go", i.e., the experiences offered do not require heavy equipment or high skill levels. They are incorporated into the Phase I study, but they are also recommended for further analysis in future phases.

For Phase I, a broad definition of Outdoor Experience Parks was used, including public lands that may or may not require a fee.

Examples of Outdoor Experience Parks include Clark County Wetlands Park (Clark County) and Henderson Bird Viewing Preserve (Henderson).

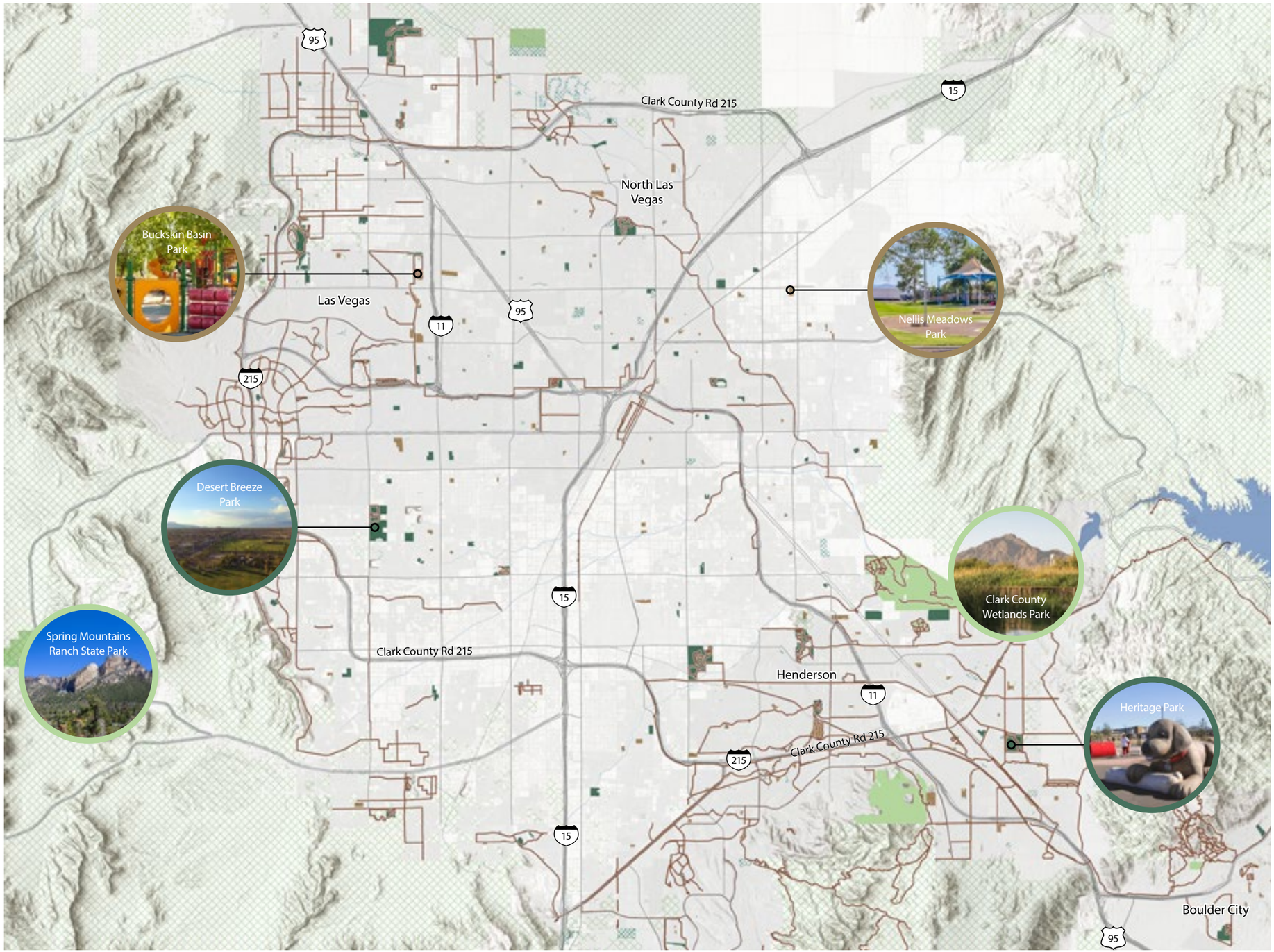
PARK TYPES

Figure 7 demonstrates examples of different Park Types within the urbanized area of Southern Nevada. Park Type maps by jurisdiction, including maps for the City of Mesquite, Laughlin, Boulder City, and rural areas of Clark County are available in the Appendix.

146 parks were not classified and are not considered Priority Parks in the study. Some parks were not classified because they are highly specialized and offer only one type of experience, which should not be considered a regional priority. Other parks were not classified because they require additional amenities to meet the criteria established by the TAP study. Finally, some parks were not classified due to limited data availability.

Park maps by jurisdiction, including rural areas of Clark County, are available in the Appendix.

Figure 7: Park Types



IMPACTED COMMUNITIES

Southern Nevada has experienced enormous growth over the past several decades, both in terms of population and pace of development. The burdens and benefits of that development have not been equally felt across the region: certain communities, defined by their demographics or their geography, are more economically disadvantaged, unhealthy, and exposed to environmental hazards.[1]

The TAP study is designed to ensure future parks and transportation investments are targeted to 'Impacted Communities' that have been negatively impacted by or excluded from the existing park and transportation system. Impacted Communities were defined through spatial analysis to identify areas with a high concentration of socioeconomic, health, and environmental risk factors (see Figure 8). Additional information about the methodology can be found in the Appendix.

1 Clark County Master Plan (2021)

SOCIOECONOMIC INEQUALITY	
Residents of color (%) and Hispanic residents %	Nationally, nonwhite neighborhoods have access to 44% less acreage compared to majority white neighborhoods.[1]
Limited English-speaking households (%)	Limited English speakers experience additional barriers when accessing resources, including parks.[2]
Population over age 64 (%)	Parks are a key tool for supporting older adults by delivering physical and mental health benefits and opportunities for social connection.[3]
Population under age 18 (%)	Access to parks and recreation can address a variety of chronic illnesses among youth and teens, while fostering a lifelong connection to the outdoors and physical activity.[4]
Median household income	Nationally, low-income communities have access to 42% less park acreage than high-income neighborhoods.[5]
Less than high school diploma	Access to green space has been shown to improve educational outcomes.[6]
Households with no access to a vehicle (%)	The Transportation Access to Park study focuses on households with no access to a vehicle.

HEALTH DISPARITIES	
Prevalence of coronary heart disease among adults*	The ability to walk to a park has proven benefits on heart health.[7]
Prevalence of current asthma among adults*	Frequent visits to green spaces reduces the use of prescription drugs for asthma, depression, anxiety, insomnia, and high blood pressure.[8]
Prevalence of physical inactivity among adults*	Physical activity rates are higher among people who have more access to open green spaces.[9]
Prevalence of mental health not good for >=14 days among adults*	Frequent visits to green spaces reduced the use of prescription drugs for asthma, depression, anxiety, insomnia, and high blood pressure.[10]
Disability	People with disabilities experience additional barriers to accessing parks.
Prevalence of diagnosed diabetes among adults*	People exposed to green spaces in their neighborhood have a reduced risk of developing Type 2 diabetes.[11]
Low Life Expectancy	People with more access to green spaces live 2.5 years longer on average.[12]

ENVIRONMENTAL BURDEN	
High incidence of urban heat exposure (afternoon high temp)	Green spaces are important places of refuge from urban heat and they contribute to overall cooling.
PM 2.5 Particulate Matter rates	Green spaces have the potential to significantly decrease PM 2.5 concentration.[13]
Ozone	Vegetation may reduce ozone levels by absorbing and trapping ozone precursors and pollutants.[14]
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO2)	Adding green space and providing alternatives to car travel can reduce NO2 levels.[15]
Diesel particulate matter	Reducing car travel will lead to a reduction in diesel particulate emissions, which have negative impacts on human and environmental health.[16]
Toxic Release to Air	Toxic air pollutants pose serious health risks that disproportionately impact dense urban areas, low-income neighborhoods, Tribal populations, and communities of color.[17]
National Walkability Index	Areas with lower walkability scores will be prioritized for access improvements.

Figure 8: Impacted Communities Data Layers

Figure 8 References

1 The Cities Where People of Color Can Walk to a Park - Bloomberg
2 EJI Indicators: Social Vulnerability Module | Place and Health - Geospatial Research, Analysis, and Services Program (GRASP) | ATSDR
3 Parks and Recreation Supports Older Adults | Research | Parks & Recreation Magazine | NRPA
4 Parks and Healthy Kids | Fact Sheets | Parks and Health | National Recreation and Park Association
5 The Cities Where People of Color Can Walk to a Park - Bloomberg
6 The Science of Concentration: How Green Spaces Can Improve Student Focus – ECOgardener
7 For green spaces to be most beneficial to health, they need to be walkable | American Heart Association
8 Frequent Visits to Green Spaces Linked to Lower Use of Asthma Medication, Study Finds
9 Parks, Recreation and Green Spaces | Active People, Healthy Nation | Physical Activity | CDC
10 Frequent Visits to Green Spaces Linked to Lower Use of Asthma Medication, Study Finds
11 Green Space Exposure Association with Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus, Physical Activity, and Obesity: A Systematic Review - PMC
12 How living near green spaces can extend your lifespan – Deseret News
13 The impact of greenspace on air pollution: Empirical evidence from China - ScienceDirect
14 How effective is 'greening' of urban areas in reducing human exposure to ground-level ozone concentrations, UV exposure and the 'urban heat island effect'? An updated systematic review | Environmental Evidence | Full Text
15 Urban green spaces and Car Free day: can parks help purify our air? | Airscan
16 Learn About Impacts of Diesel Exhaust and the Diesel Emissions Reduction Act (DERA) | US EPA
17 About Urban Air Toxics | US EPA

*Data available at the tract level will be apportioned to census block level, based on block group population weight.

IMPACTED COMMUNITIES

The Impacted Communities map is used throughout the study to focus and prioritize access improvements for communities with the greatest need.

Many Impacted Communities are concentrated in the region's urban core, including neighborhoods on the southeast side of Las Vegas, neighborhoods on the east side of Henderson, and neighborhoods on the south side of North Las Vegas. There are also Impacted Communities in Mesquite south of I-15 and on the northeast side of the Laughlin urbanized area.

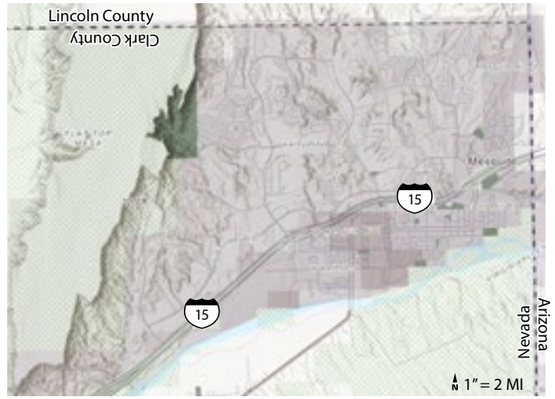
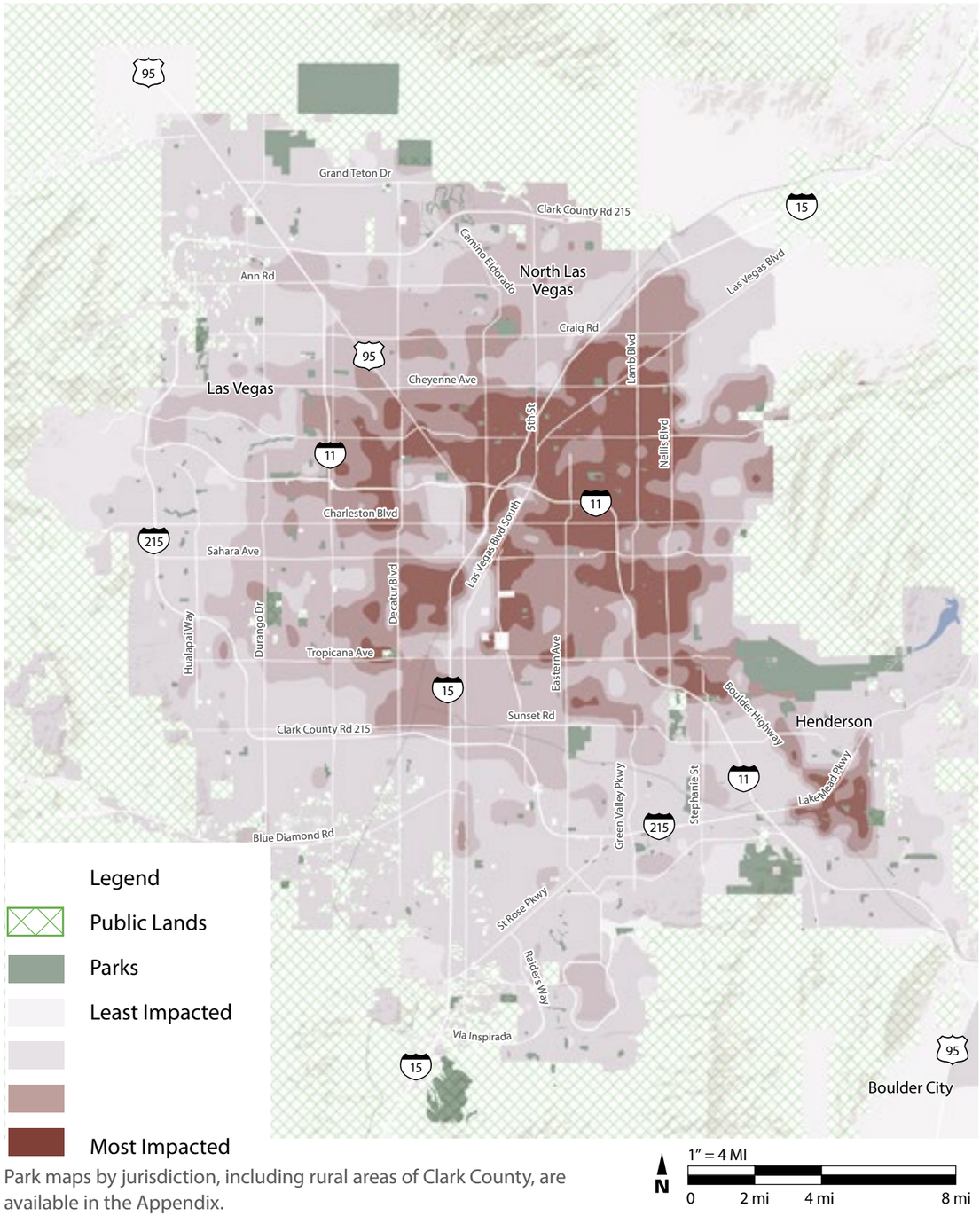


Figure 9: Mesquite Impacted Communities

Figure 10: Laughlin Impacted Communities

Figure 11: Boulder City Impacted Communities

Figure 12: Impacted Communities



Park maps by jurisdiction, including rural areas of Clark County, are available in the Appendix.

ACCESS

"If you create an attraction but don't address safe access, it could lead to more vehicular conflict and hazards for parkgoers."

- TAC Member

Southern Nevada is historically autocentric, with a sprawling development pattern that makes it difficult for people to get around if they don't have access to a car. Thanks to ongoing efforts by RTC and partners, there are more trails, bike lanes, and bus routes than ever before, but the continued reliance on cars poses a challenge for safe, non-vehicular access to parks.

An RTC survey conducted in 2023 found that 8% of households in Southern Nevada do not have access to a vehicle.[1] For those without a car – including many seniors, youth, and people experiencing disabilities – it is imperative that parks are within reach using public transportation, bikes, trails, or sidewalks.

The ability to walk to parks is important for households with cars, too: walking outdoors has numerous physical and mental health benefits.[2] Nationally, car trips under a mile add up to about 10 billion miles per year: reducing these trips by half could reduce CO_2 emissions by 2 million metric tons per year.[3] But as of 2023, just 4.2% of all trips in Southern Nevada were done by walking, representing a significant decline from 11.2% in 2014.[4] Effectively increasing pedestrian activity will require a thorough understanding of the current barriers and challenges that discourage walking.

RTC recently used LiDAR technology to evaluate over 8,000 miles of roadway within the valley to identify gaps, obstructions, and ADA issues that exist in the pedestrian network.[5] Mapping obstruction overlaid with overall walkability (see Figures 16-19) reveals areas in need of pedestrian improvements in downtown Las Vegas, North Las Vegas, and parts of unincorporated Clark County including Sunrise Manor and Spring Valley.

1 2023 Southern Nevada Household Travel Survey Report
2 Central Park Conservancy (2021)
3 EPA (2025)
4 2023 Southern Nevada Household Travel Survey Report
5 Southern Nevada Coordinated Transportation Plan (2024)

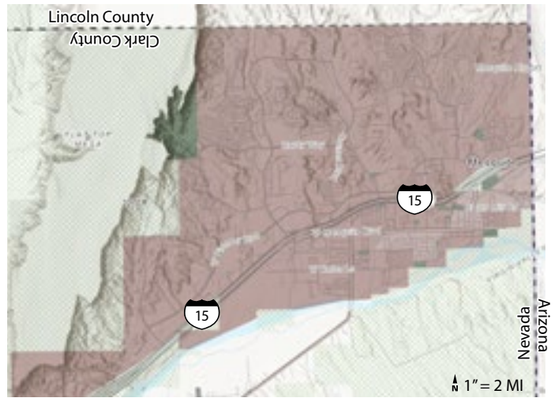


Figure 13: Mesquite Pedestrian Improvements

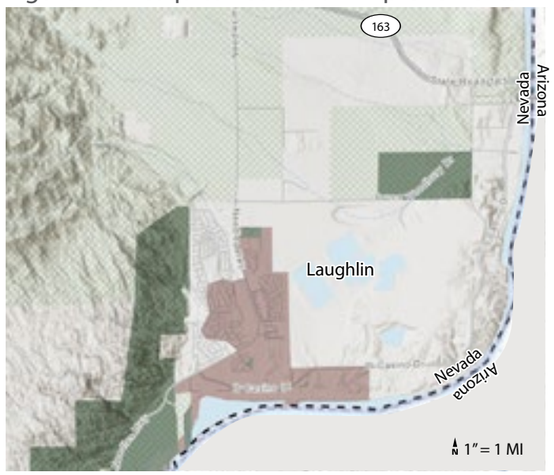


Figure 14: Laughlin Pedestrian Improvements

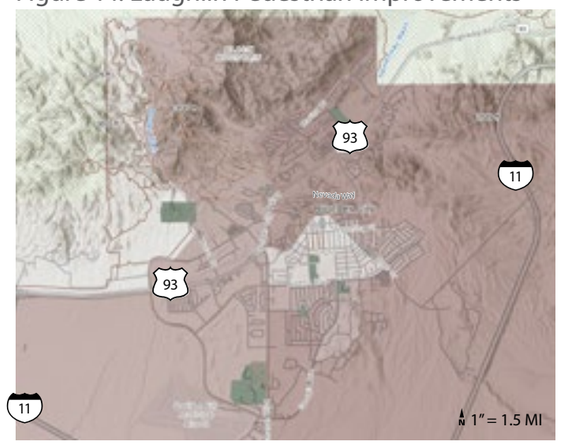
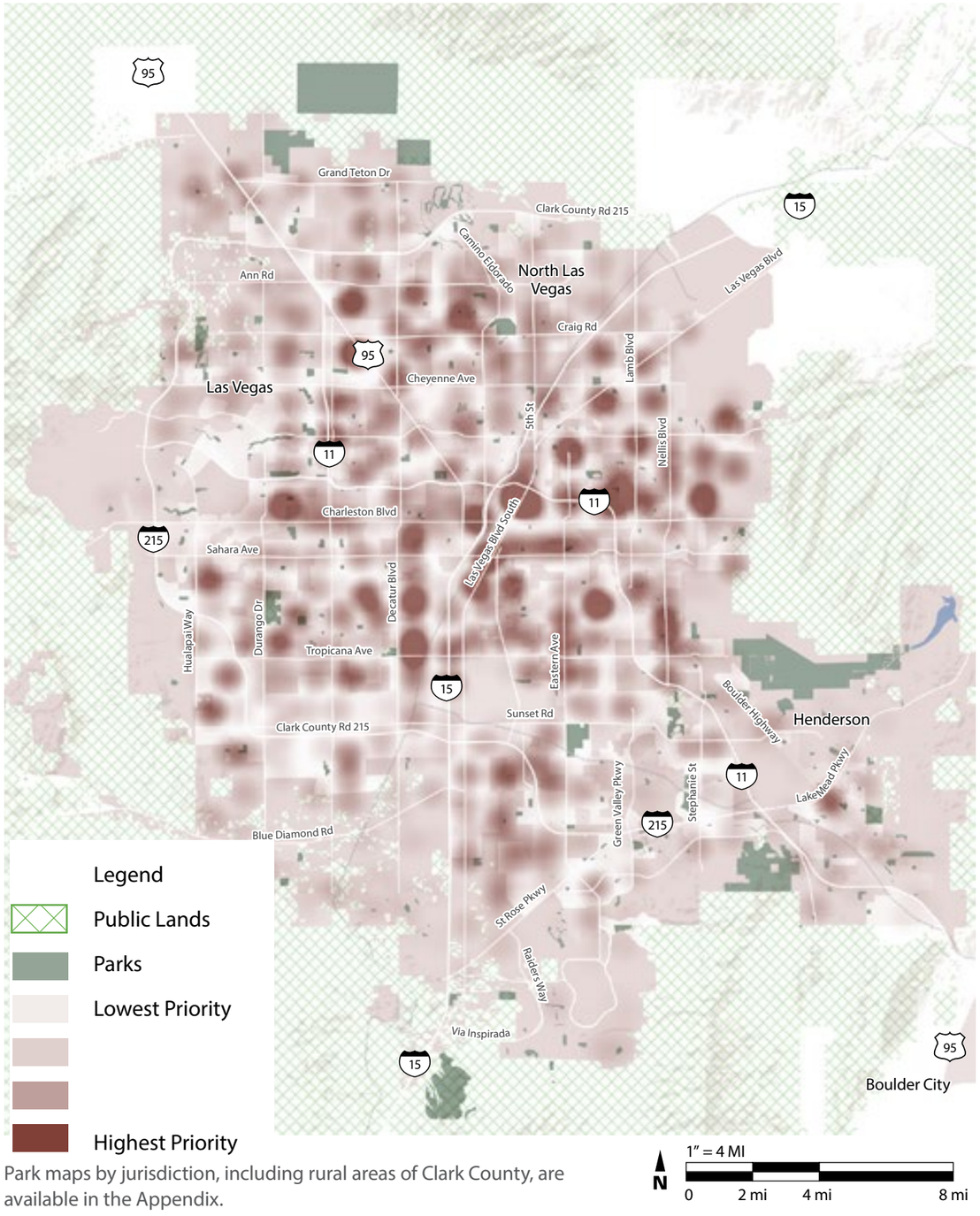


Figure 15: Boulder City Pedestrian Improvements

Figure 16: Priority Areas for Pedestrian Improvements



Park maps by jurisdiction, including rural areas of Clark County, are available in the Appendix.

ACCESS

KEY FINDING

Stakeholders and focus group participants reported that safe bike and pedestrian infrastructure is a major challenge for rural parkgoers. Connecting to parks is very important in rural areas, where gathering places and social infrastructure may be limited. In more dispersed community layouts, physical distance itself can become a barrier to access and engagement.

Priority Areas for Pedestrian Improvements (Figures 13-16) identify areas at a high level where walkability is a concern and should be studied further. Analyzing the trail, bike, and sidewalk network provides more detailed information about walk, roll, and bike access to parks.

Approximately 61% of parks in the region have a direct trail, bike path, or sidewalk connection. Many, but not all, of these parks are in rural areas. However, complete data was not available for many rural areas, including Laughlin and parts of Boulder City and the City of Mesquite.

Throughout engagement, community members reflected a relatively low interest level in biking, in part due to concerns around bike safety and the inability to easily take bikes on buses.

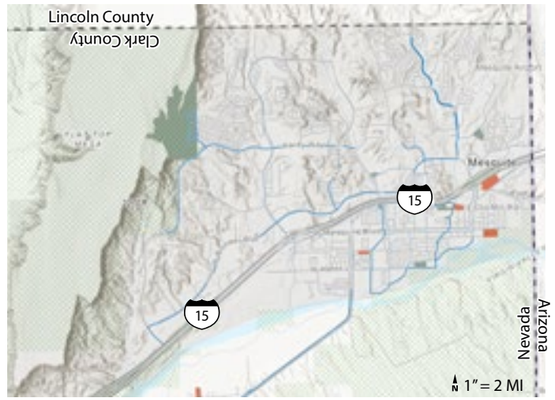


Figure 17: Mesquite Trails, Bike Paths, Sidewalks

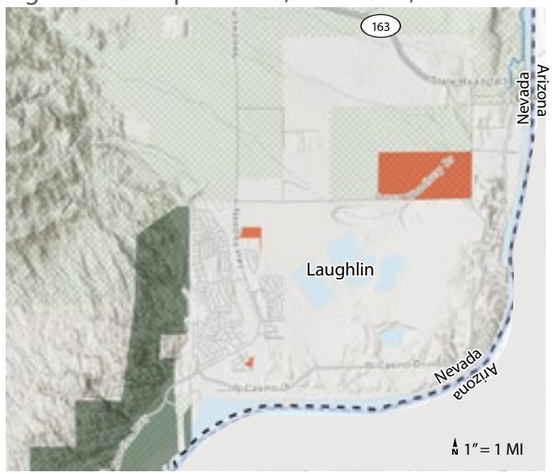
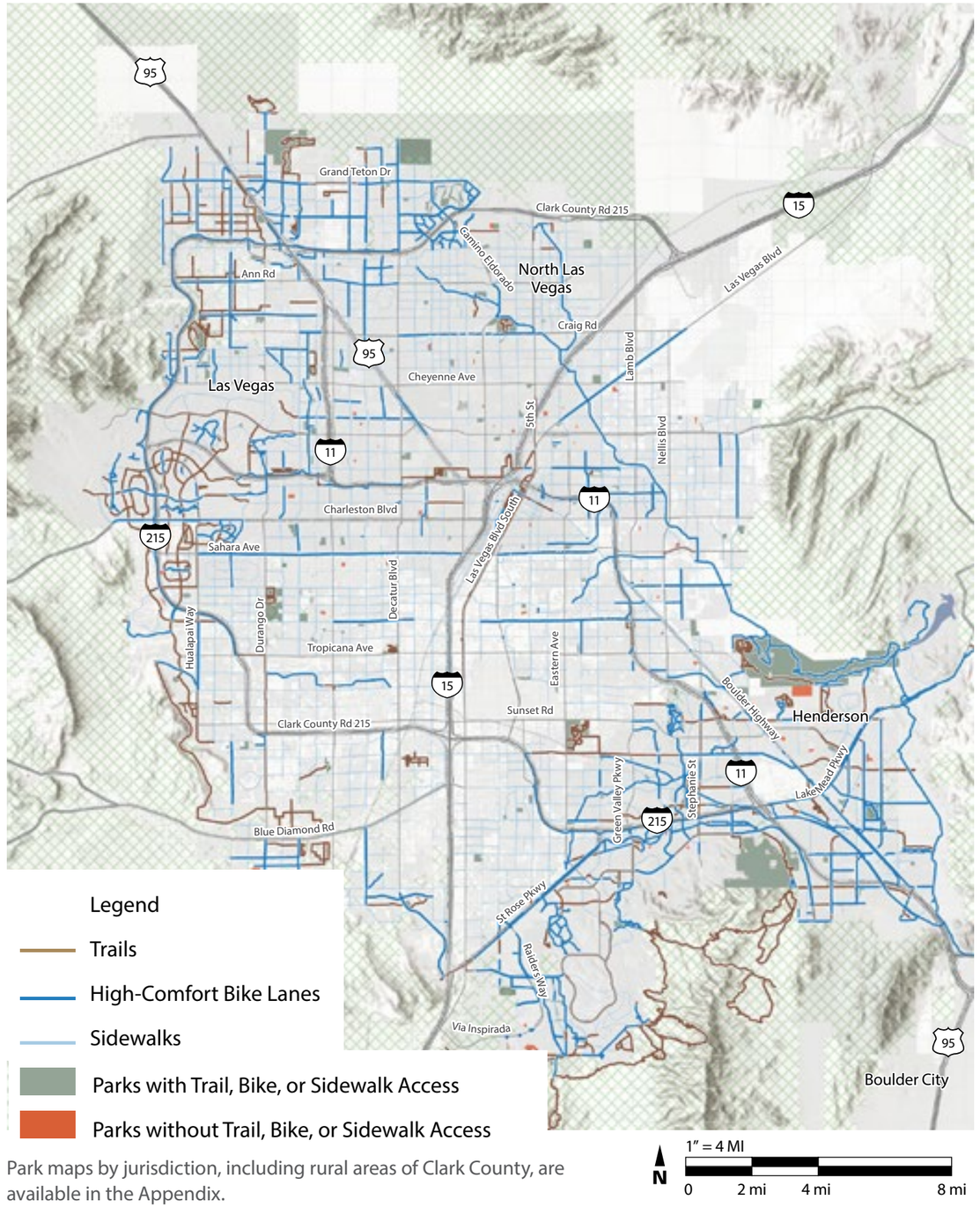


Figure 18: Laughlin Trails, Bike Paths, Sidewalks

Figure 19: Boulder City Trails, Bike Paths, Sidewalks

Figure 20: Trails, Bike Paths, Sidewalks



Park maps by jurisdiction, including rural areas of Clark County, are available in the Appendix.

ACCESS

KEY FINDING

Weekday mornings offer the most fixed-route bus service to parks.

Weekend evenings offer the least fixed-route bus service to parks.

The most preferred time of day to visit parks is in the evening (between 5-8 p.m.), and the most preferred days of the week to visit parks are the weekends.

Current fixed-route bus service to parks schedules are incompatible with the most preferred times to visit parks.

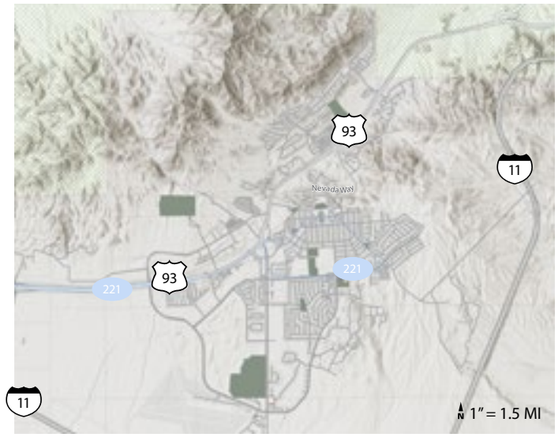


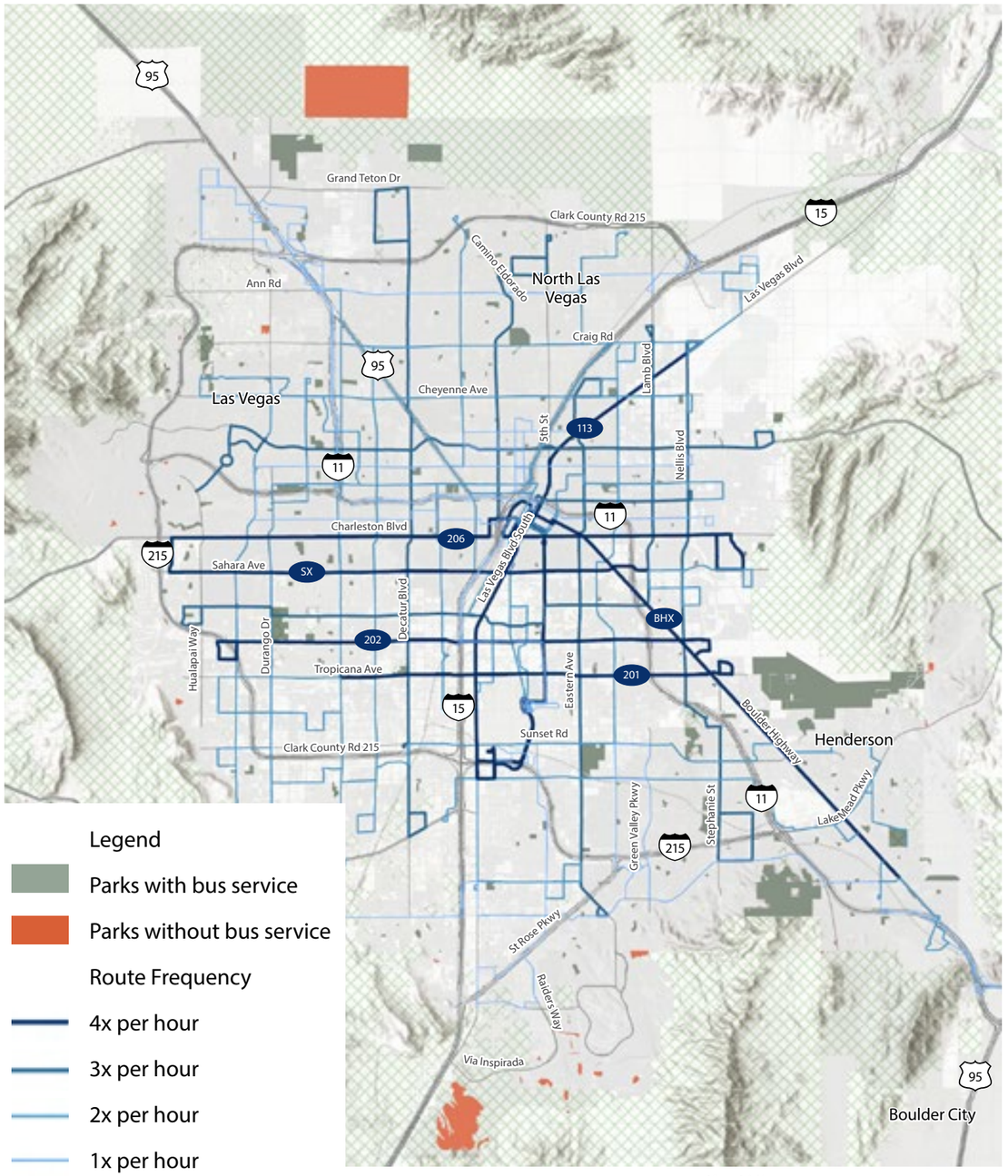
Figure 21: Boulder City RTC Fixed-Route Bus Service

Fixed-route bus service to parks was analyzed for a weekday morning, weekday evening, weekend morning and weekend evening condition. The analysis revealed that the highest percentage of residents can reach Destination Parks or Outdoor Experience Parks within a 30-minute bus ride on weekday mornings, followed by weekend mornings and weekday evenings. Weekend evenings have the least service (see Figures 21-22).

Feedback from the community survey and focus groups indicates a preference for visiting parks in the evenings (between 5-8 p.m.) and on weekends.

NOTE: Service area is defined based on 2025 data and may be revised in future updates.

Figure 22: RTC Fixed-Route Bus Service



Park maps by jurisdiction, including rural areas of Clark County, are available in the Appendix.

ACCESS

OTHER TRANSIT SERVICES

In addition to fixed-route bus service, RTC offers ADA paratransit service within a 0.75-mile radius of fixed-route bus stops, Silver STAR fixed-route bus service for senior residents, Silver Rider fixed-route bus service for rural communities, and Flexible Demand Response (FDR) services.

Paratransit services are available for those who are unable to safely and independently use RTC's fixed-route services. Riders must meet eligibility criteria to use the paratransit service, which is supported by a combination of funding sources. Federal Section 5310 funding generally covers capital costs, such as purchasing vehicles, while operations and maintenance are supported through additional funding streams. This program allows riders to request door-to-door transportation within RTC's service area by shuttle or a partner organization's vehicle. RTC has partnered with rideshare companies to provide non-dedicated service options where contractor drivers are matched with paratransit riders, increasing the number of available vehicles and routes within the existing paratransit system. Lastly, RTC offers mobility training to educate and empower people with disabilities and senior citizens to use RTC's transit services independently.

Certain rural areas of Southern Nevada are served by the Southern Nevada Transit Coalition (SNTC). This includes Silver Rider Transit services in Boulder City, Laughlin, and the City of Mesquite as well as individual express routes to other rural locations in the region. Silver Rider provides fixed route, paratransit, and express routes.

Most parks in the urbanized areas are within the paratransit boundary. Some key exceptions include Floyd Lamb Park, which is just outside the boundary, Buckskin/Cliff Shadows Park, and Montagna Park. These parks are also currently not included in the RTC On Demand microtransit zone, which offers point-to-point service in the Southwest part of the valley.

NOTE: Service area is defined based on 2025 data and may be revised in future updates.

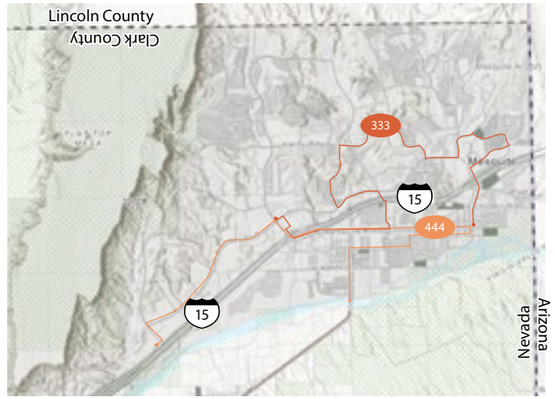


Figure 23: Mesquite Silver Rider

Silver Rider Route 333

Silver Rider Route 444

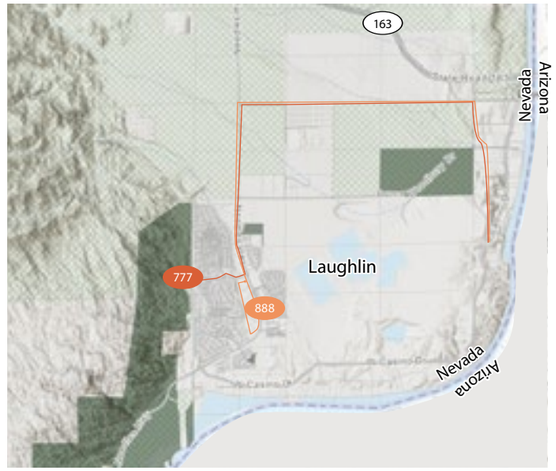
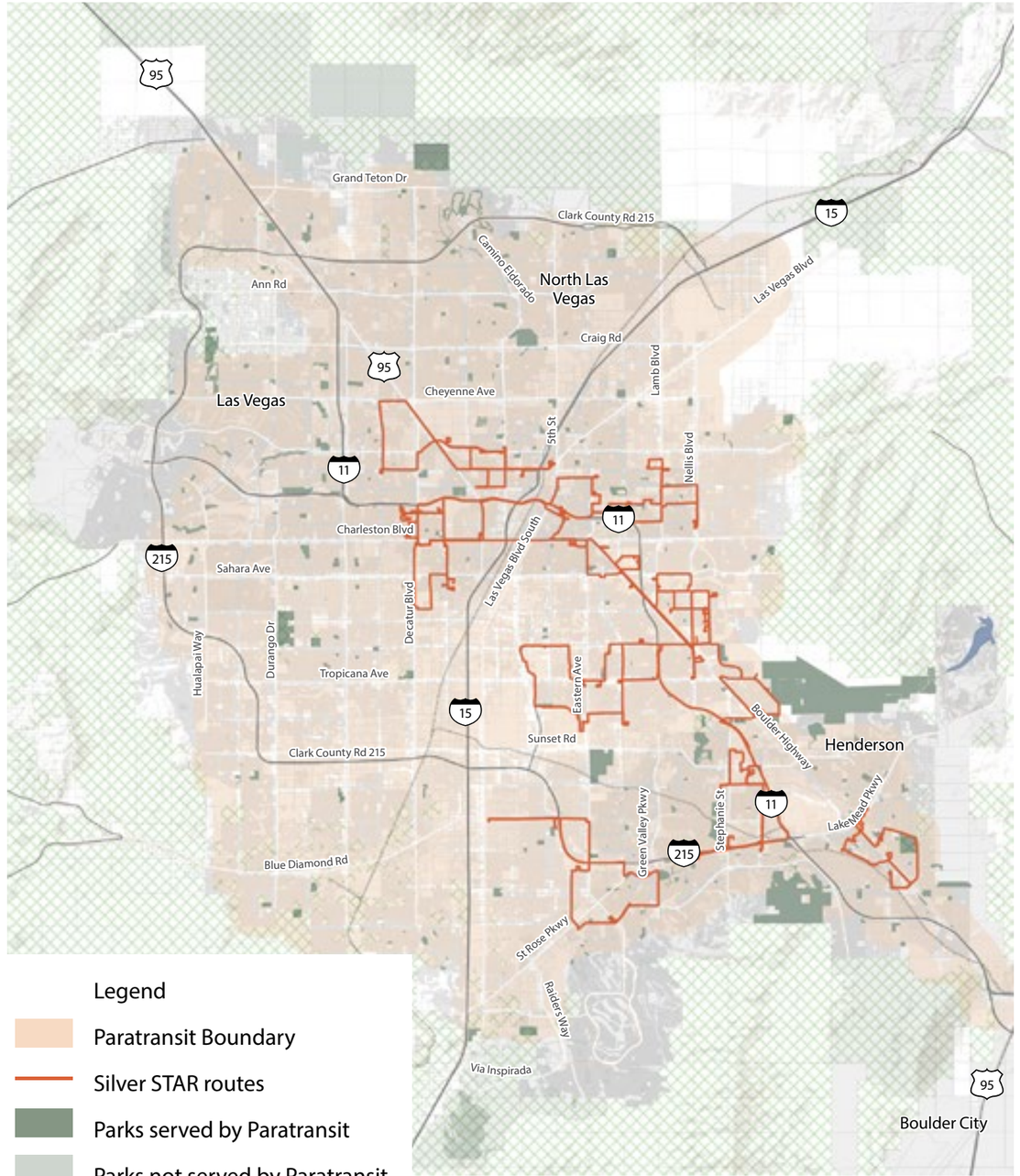


Figure 24: Laughlin Silver Rider

Silver Rider Route 777

Silver Rider Route 888

Figure 25: Other Transit Services



Park maps by jurisdiction, including rural areas of Clark County, are available in the Appendix.

ACCESS

GOAL: INTEGRATE PARKS INTO EVERYDAY LIFE.

Every resident should be able to reach an Everyday Park, Destination Park or Outdoor Experience Park within a 10-minute safe walk/roll.

CURRENTLY: About 66% of residents are not within a 10-minute walk of an Everyday Park, Destination Park, or an Outdoor Experience Park.

GOAL: CONNECT TO DESTINATION PARKS AND OUTDOOR EXPERIENCES.

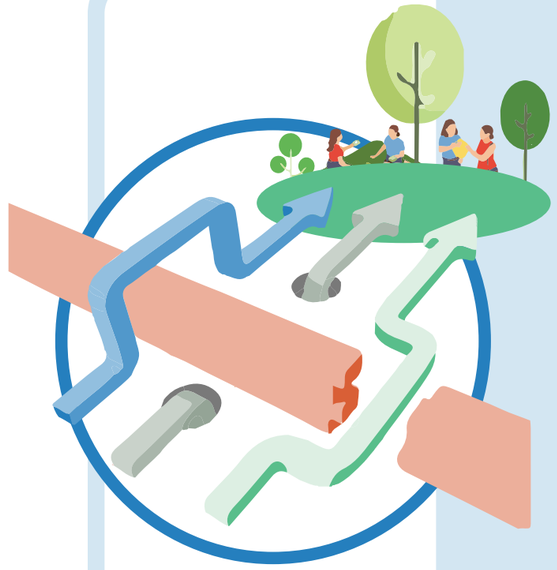
Every resident should be able to reach a Destination Park or an Outdoor Experience Park within a 30-minute transit ride.

CURRENTLY: About 31% of residents cannot access a Destination Park or an Outdoor Experience Park within a 30-minute bus ride.

GOAL: IMPROVE THE EXPERIENCE OF TRAVELING TO PARKS.

Residents should be able to safely and easily access parks by walking, rolling, biking, or taking transit, and they should not be limited in their access by ability, temperature, or feelings of safety and welcome.

CURRENTLY: The top three reasons given by survey respondents for not visiting parks were transportation-related. 33% do not visit parks due to lack of transportation, 25% do not visit parks because of travel time, and 18% do not visit parks because there are none nearby.



GOAL: REDUCE BARRIERS TO ACCESSING AND ENJOYING OUTDOOR EXPERIENCE PARK.

Every resident should be able to reach an Outdoor Experience Park within a one-hour transit ride and they should feel comfortable and welcome in Outdoor Experience Parks once they arrive.

CURRENTLY: About 60% of residents cannot reach an Outdoor Experience Park within a 10-minute walk or a one-hour transit ride.

PARK GAPS

DEFINITION

Residents in Park Gaps do not have adequate park access. Some may have a park close to home, but they do not have sufficient access to the unique experiences offered by Everyday Parks within a 10-minute safe walk or roll or to Destination or Outdoor Experience Parks within a 30-minute transit ride.

42% of Southern Nevadans live in a Park Gap area.

There are one or more people with a disability living in 27% of households.

91% of residents in park gap areas live in the urbanized area, distributed across both cities and unincorporated areas.

9% of residents in Park Gap areas live in rural areas, including areas in the Mt. Charleston, Kyle Canyon, Goodsprings, Sandy Valley, Searchlight, Laughlin, and Mesquite communities.

2% of owner households do not have access to a vehicle. This number may be higher when renter households are considered.

To view Park Gap maps for each jurisdiction, including rural areas of Clark County, and for more detail on where Park Gaps are located, reference the Appendix.

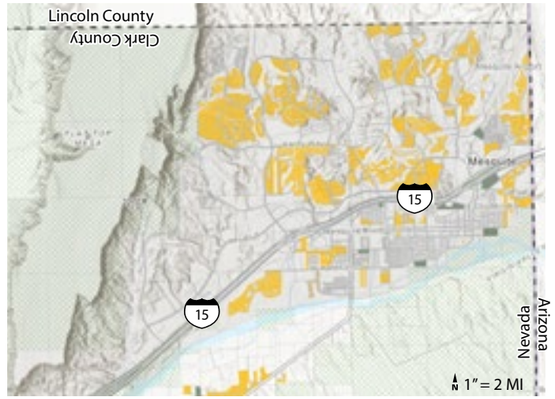


Figure 26: Mesquite Park Gaps

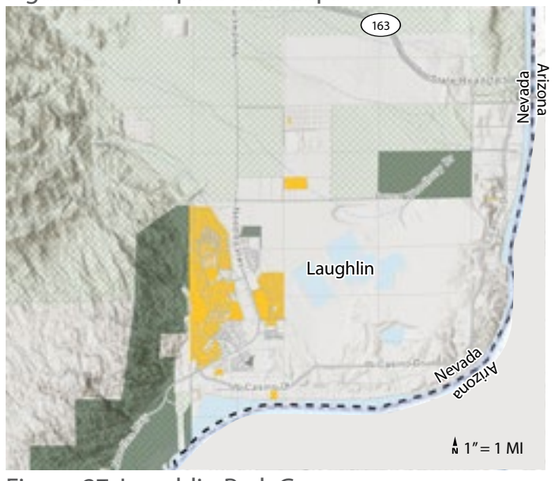


Figure 27: Laughlin Park Gaps

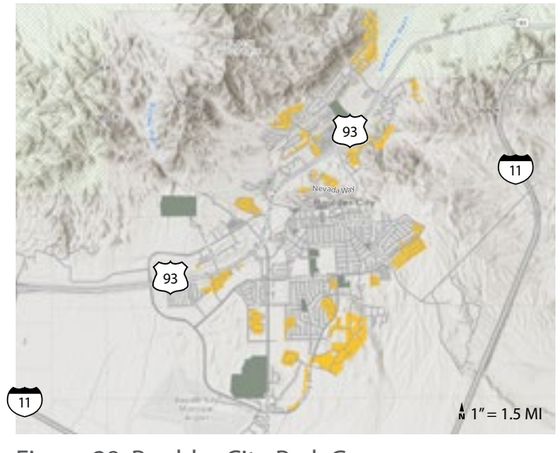
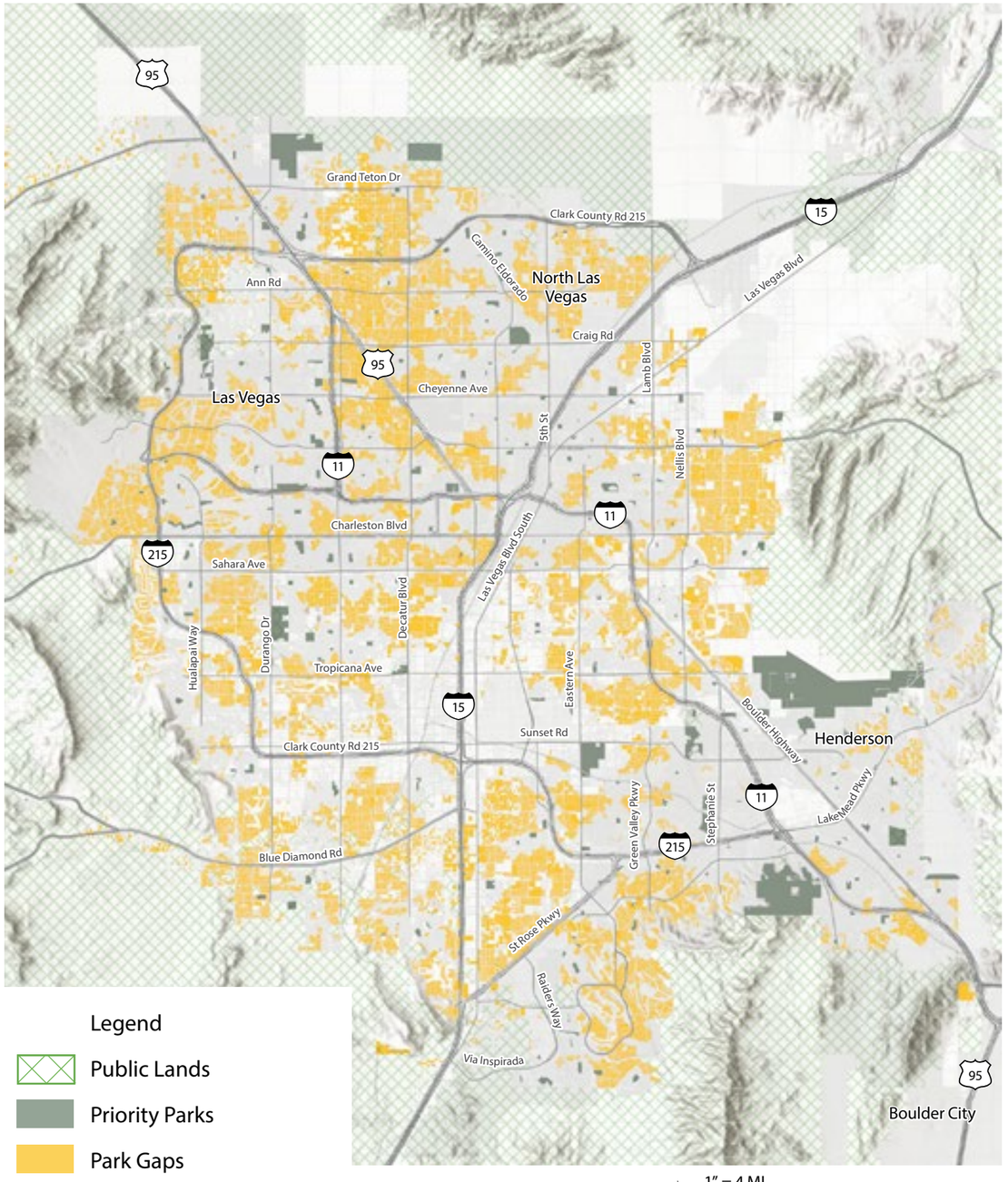


Figure 28: Boulder City Park Gaps

Figure 29: Park Gaps



Park maps by jurisdiction, including rural areas of Clark County, are available in the Appendix.

URBAN TRAILS

DEFINITION

Urban Trails are located along roadways. They vary in the type of park experience they offer: some provide safe and comfortable places to walk, roll, bike, and enjoy the benefits of green space, while others require additional amenities to be considered parks.

KEY FINDING

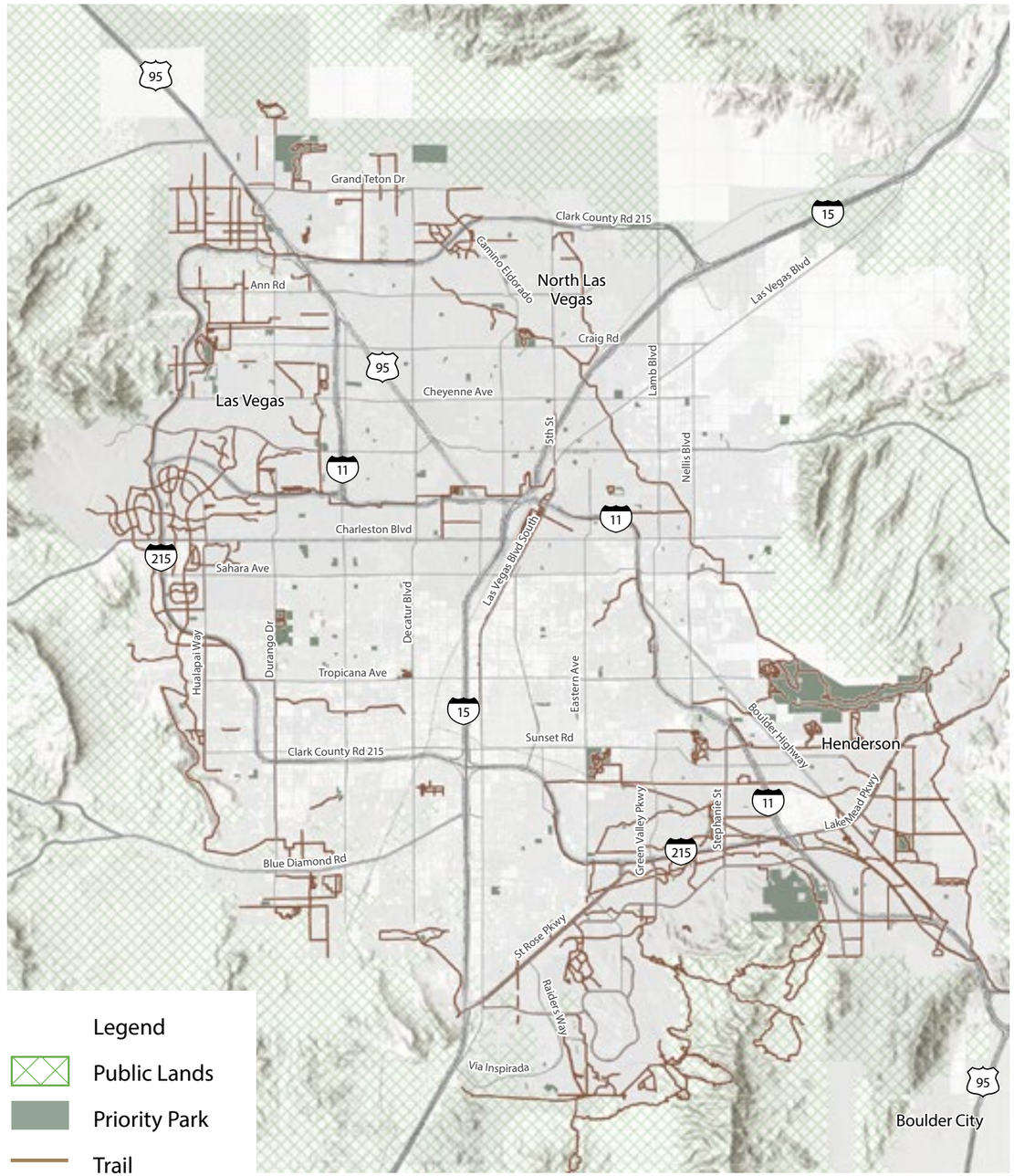
If all Urban Trails were upgraded to offer a high-quality park experience, an additional 22% of residents would be within a 10-minute walk of a Priority Park.

The Lake Mead Parkway Trail is an example of an Urban Trail that offers a high-quality park experience.
Photo Credit: Design Workshop

The type of experience offered by trails varies across Southern Nevada. Some trails function as Outdoor Experience Parks, with opportunities for hiking, biking, birdwatching, and more. Others provide safe and comfortable places to walk within parks. Some trails, defined as "Urban Trails" within the TAP study, are along roadways and may require more investment to truly be considered parks.

The TAP study did not consider Urban Trails as Priority Parks for identifying Park Gap areas. However, some Urban Trails offer high-quality park experiences. If trails were upgraded across the region to meet shared standards, the benefits of parks could be integrated in the street network.

Figure 30: Urban Trails



Park maps by jurisdiction, including rural areas of Clark County, are available in the Appendix.

HIGH-NEEDS NEIGHBORHOODS

High-Needs Neighborhoods are areas where Park Gaps overlap with Impacted Communities. They are a tool for prioritizing funding for transportation access to parks.

Opportunity Zones identified by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) were also overlaid to ensure congruency between federal funding priorities and areas identified through the TAP study process.

High-Needs Neighborhoods are distributed across the region, with several notable clusters:

- Neighborhoods southwest of I-95 and northeast of I-11 in Las Vegas, including portions of the Twin Lakes neighborhood.
- Neighborhoods south of SR 574/W Cheyenne, northwest of I-95, north of I-11, and west of I-15, including portions of West Las Vegas.
- Portions of Sunrise Manor.
- Portions of Spring Valley.
- Portions of Paradise.
- Portions of Whitney.
- Neighborhoods south of Adams Blvd and east of Buchanan Blvd in Boulder City.

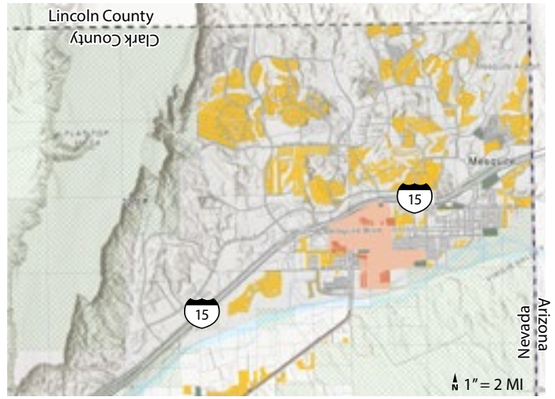


Figure 31: Mesquite High-Needs Neighborhoods

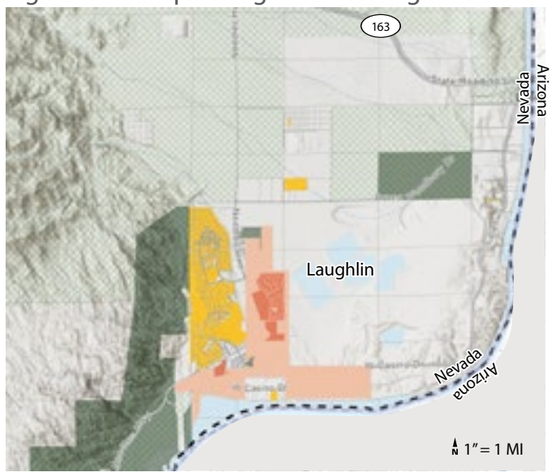


Figure 32: Laughlin High-Needs Neighborhoods

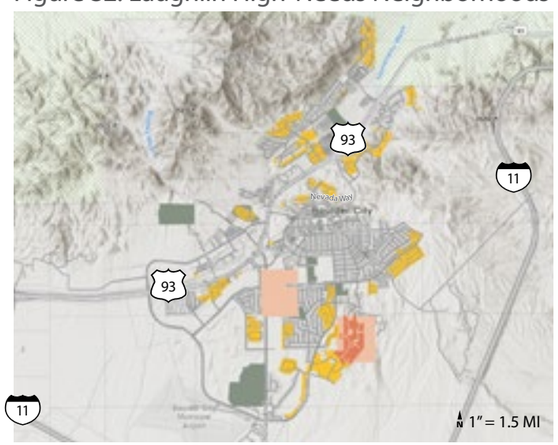
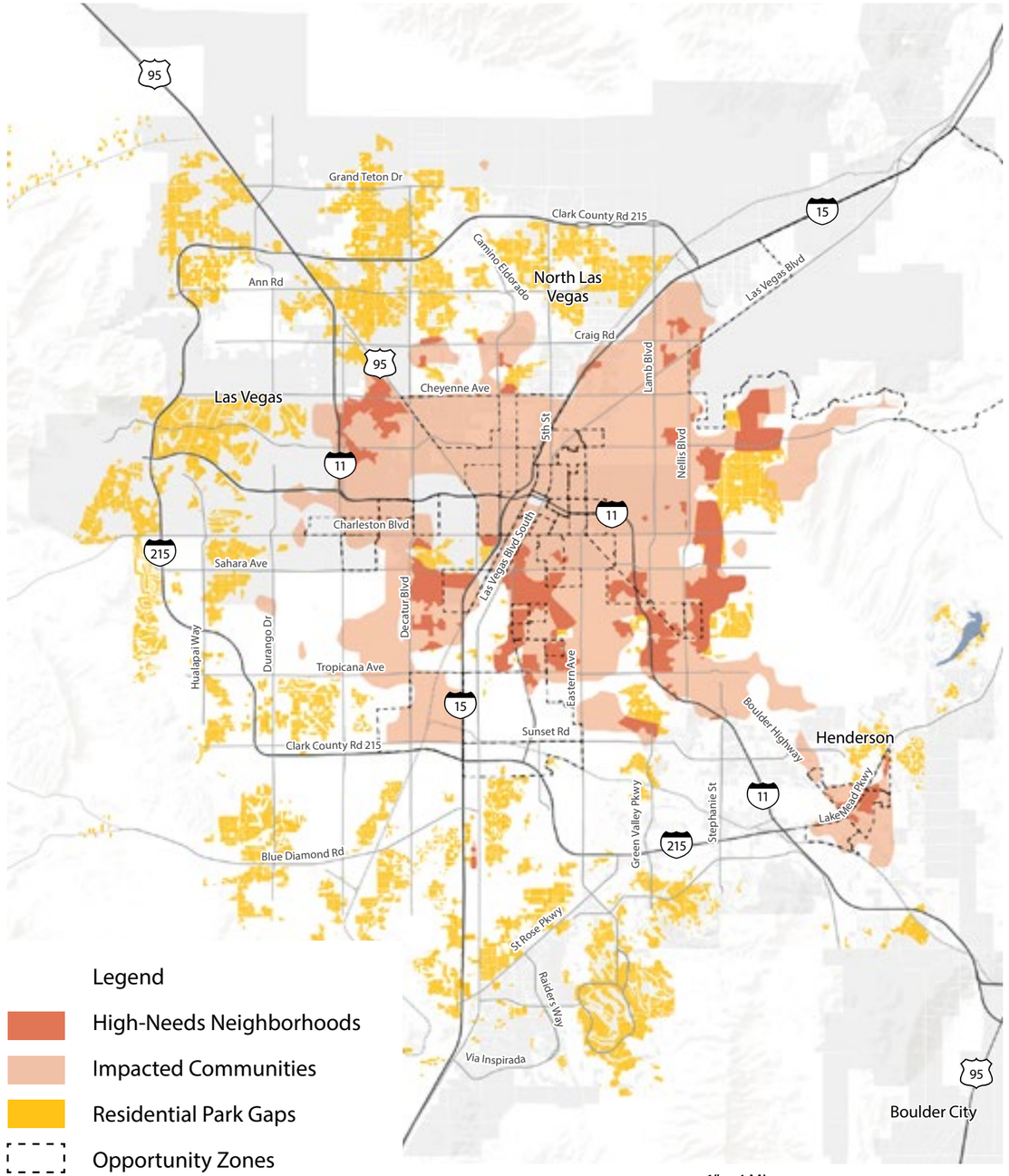


Figure 33: Boulder City High-Needs Neighborhoods

Figure 34: High-Needs Neighborhoods



Park maps by jurisdiction, including rural areas of Clark County, are available in the Appendix.

04.

STRATEGIES

CHAPTER CONTENTS

- Strategic Framework
- Integrate Parks into Everyday Life
- Connect to Destination Parks and Outdoor Experience Parks
- Reduce Barriers to Accessing and Enjoying Outdoor Experiences
- Improve the Experience of Traveling to Parks

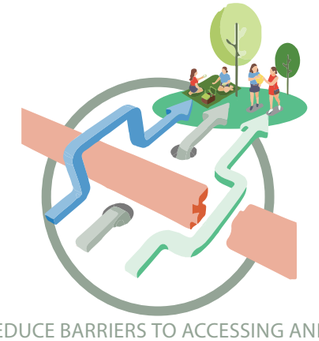
STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

GOALS

INTEGRATE PARKS INTO EVERYDAY LIFE

CONNECT TO DESTINATION PARKS AND OUTDOOR EXPERIENCE PARKS

IMPROVE THE EXPERIENCE OF TRAVELING TO PARKS



REDUCE BARRIERS TO ACCESSING AND ENJOYING OUTDOOR EXPERIENCE PARKS

The Strategies outlined in this plan are based on the study's findings and best practices for advancing park access for all. The Strategies are not in order of priority and do not have associated funding resources committed at this stage.

RTC will continue to promote park access for all and will lead future planning and implementation efforts to achieve the study's goals. Many strategies will require leadership from municipal and County governments, as well as state, federal, non-profit and other partners.

HOW ARE STRATEGIES ORGANIZED?

Each Strategy is listed under the Goal that it most directly advances. Many strategies advance one or more of the Goals, but they are listed just once, where they fit best.

HOW ARE ACTION ITEMS ORGANIZED?

Each Strategy is associated with several Action Items that offer more specific methods for advancing the Goals. Each Action Item has a general time frame. Short-Term Action Items include "low-hanging fruit" that could be implemented within the next 18 months. Mid-Term Action Items are not immediate priorities, but they could be achieved in the next five years. Long-Term Action Items will require more conceptual development, partnership building and buy-in, and may take up to ten years to implement. This section also identifies Priority Actions, which can occur immediately following this phase of the study (see page 70). Priority Actions will allow RTC to make progress towards achieving Long-Term Action Items.

HOW WILL ACTION ITEMS BE FUNDED?

The Action Items do not have associated funding resources at this stage. Next steps following this phase of the study will include developing a funding strategy for the next three years.

POLICIES, PROGRAMS & INITIATIVES

Action Items shown with this icon represent changes to RTC and partners' operational efforts. They may include changes to organizational guidelines or formal regulations, pilot projects, campaigns or targeted efforts to promote innovative solutions.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

Action Items shown with this icon represent physical improvements to be made across Southern Nevada that will require committed funding resources for design and construction.

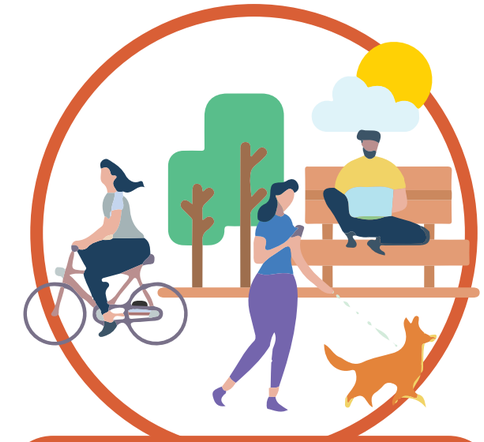
PARTNERSHIPS

Action Items shown with this icon represent efforts that rely on nongovernmental cooperation to enact, like a pilot project run by a nonprofit organization. While many, if not all, of the TAP study strategies will require partnerships, action Items associated with this icon will likely require the least amount of partnership responsibility by RTC once implemented.

SERVICE CHANGES

Action Items shown with this icon represent changes to RTC transit service. This may include extending a route or adding more stops, increasing the frequency of a route, or adding specialized services that run at peak times or on-demand.

STRATEGIES



INTEGRATE PARKS INTO EVERYDAY LIFE.

01. MAKE IT EASIER TO SAFELY WALK OR ROLL TO A PARK.

Improve walking access to parks by removing physical barriers and adding pedestrian infrastructure.

02. BRING PARKS CLOSER TO PEOPLE.

Incorporate green space into transportation routes, increase awareness of existing parks with multi-modal connections, advertise and encourage diverse park and recreation experiences.

03. IMPROVE PARK ACCESS WHERE IT IS MOST NEEDED.

Develop regional priorities for investments in parks and transportation in High-Needs Neighborhoods, including specific project lists.

CONNECT TO DESTINATION PARKS AND OUTDOOR EXPERIENCE PARKS.

04. ADD TRANSPORTATION CONNECTIONS TO PRIORITY PARKS.

Develop a prioritized project list for transportation investments that will improve access to Destination Parks and Outdoor Experience Parks.

05. PROMOTE MICROTRANSIT WHERE TRANSPORTATION IS NOT AVAILABLE.

Explore and adopt alternative mobility solutions outside of RTC's service area to address gaps in park access, particularly in rural areas.

06. INCORPORATE PARK ACCESS AS A PRIORITY IN TRANSIT SERVICE PLANNING.

Adapt current approaches to transit service planning so park access is considered among other priorities.

IMPROVE THE EXPERIENCE OF TRAVELING TO PARKS.

07. INCORPORATE COOLING INFRASTRUCTURE ALONG TRANSPORTATION ROUTES.

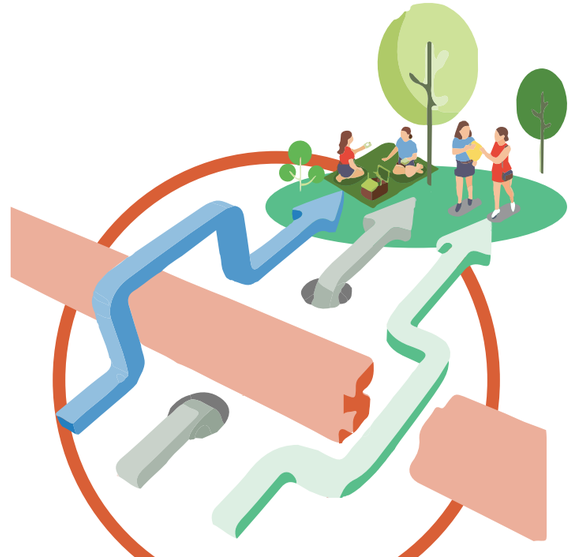
Distribute the cooling benefits of parks along transportation routes by incorporating essential infrastructure like water fountains, shade, and trees.

08. MAKE BIKING AND WALKING TO PARKS SAFER AND MORE COMFORTABLE.

Address pedestrian and bike safety along transportation routes to parks. Incorporate amenities within parks and along routes that support multi-modal travel.

09. IMPROVE ACCESS TO INFORMATION.

Ensure that important information related to accessing parks is centralized, updated regularly, and accessible to a wide audience.



REDUCE BARRIERS TO ACCESSING AND ENJOYING OUTDOOR EXPERIENCES.

10. ADD FEATURES TO RTC ROUTES THAT ARE "TRANSIT-TO-PARKS" FRIENDLY.

Where transit-to-parks connections exist, identify and address factors that dissuade transit use.

11. PROVIDE COMPLEMENTARY SERVICES WHERE TRANSPORTATION CONNECTS TO PARKS.

Build awareness about the benefits and opportunities offered by parks and co-locate complementary services, like those related to public health.

PRIORITY ACTIONS

Achieving the TAP study's goals will require long-term investment and regional coordination. These recommended Priority Actions can kick off immediately following this phase of the study, ensuring RTC can work through the Regional Open Space and Trails (ROST) collaborative to make strides towards implementation. To view all Action Items organized by time frame, reference the Appendix.

1. IDENTIFY SUSTAINABLE FUNDING STRATEGIES

The Strategies and Action Items proposed in this study do not have dedicated funding and in most cases, lack of funding will be the most significant barrier to implementation. However, upcoming legislation may provide additional opportunities in coming years. As a next step, RTC can identify costs, funding strategies, and partnership opportunities for each Capital Improvement Project. This will allow RTC to move from the current environment of policy setting to implementation.

2. DEVELOP A REGIONAL TRIP PLANNING TOOL

RELATED ACTION ITEMS: 2.1, 7.2, 8.2, 8.4
RELATED CONCEPTS: 03

For people to access the outdoors, they need to understand what parks are available to them and how they can get there. There is currently no centralized tool for planning travel to parks in Southern Nevada, and there are gaps in information between jurisdictions and transit providers.

To develop a complete inventory of park amenities in the region and integrate this inventory with travel planning tools, RTC can work through the Regional Open Space and Trails (ROST) collaborative to update and consolidate existing tools. This could include a digital tool and a physical wayfinding and signage system.

The digital tool should include information about key park features, like restrooms and walking trails. Park features that help with extreme heat, like water fountains, are especially important. The tool should also include information on ADA accessibility, like the presence of curb cuts or ramps, both along routes and within parks. When the tool is complete, instructions for accessing the tool can be included in wayfinding signage and posted at bus stops, on buses, and in parks.

3. CONDUCT ADDITIONAL COMMUNITY OUTREACH

RELATED ACTION ITEMS: 3.5, 6.7

To better understand park needs, RTC can conduct additional outreach with the community at large. This can include targeted outreach with transit users to understand where park access falls within their service priorities. This can also include targeted outreach in rural areas. One of the study's key findings was the importance of park access in rural communities and the specific challenges that rural residents face in accessing parks. To build upon these findings and develop more specific recommendations for rural areas, RTC can conduct targeted outreach and identify partners for expanding transit options in rural areas.

4. PILOT NATURE SHUTTLE PROGRAM

RELATED ACTION ITEMS: 4.4, 5.4
RELATED CONCEPTS: 02

The study proposes multiple pick-up and drop-off locations for a pilot nature shuttle program in Southern Nevada. To advance this initiative, RTC can convene a working group of partners in this initiative, including representation from outdoor recreation nonprofits, potential drop-off points like libraries and community centers, and for-profit sponsors like outdoor outfitters.

5. CONTINUE TO IDENTIFY AND SHARE BEST PRACTICES

RELATED ACTION ITEMS: 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 3.2, 9.1, 9.3, 9.4, 9.5, 9.9
RELATED CONCEPTS: 01

As a regional organization, RTC can help coordinate knowledge-sharing across jurisdictions and publish regional best practices in topics related to transportation access to parks.

The study proposes topics that the Regional Open Space and Trails (ROST) Collaborative can convene around in the short- or mid-term. Priority topics identified through this study include: barriers to walkability, building safe routes to parks, design standards for heat refuge spaces in the right-of-way, park design and programming in Impacted Communities, and integrating heat mitigation for park access into Master Plans.

6. AUDIT EXISTING PLANS AND DEVELOP PRIORITY PROJECT LISTS

RELATED ACTION ITEMS: 1.1, 1.4, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.6, 4.1, 4.2, 6.8, 8.2, 8.5

Implementating the TAP study will require coordination with many important planning and policy documents that guide transportation and park investment across Southern Nevada. To ensure the study's findings are considered alongside other local and regional priorities, RTC can audit existing City and County Master Plans, Parks and Recreation Plans, CIPs, and the Coordinated Transportation Plan to identify what policies are in place and what is missing. Where gaps exist in implementation, RTC can use the findings from the TAP study to identify specific local priorities for improving park access.

INTEGRATE PARKS INTO EVERYDAY LIFE

INTEGRATE PARKS INTO EVERYDAY LIFE

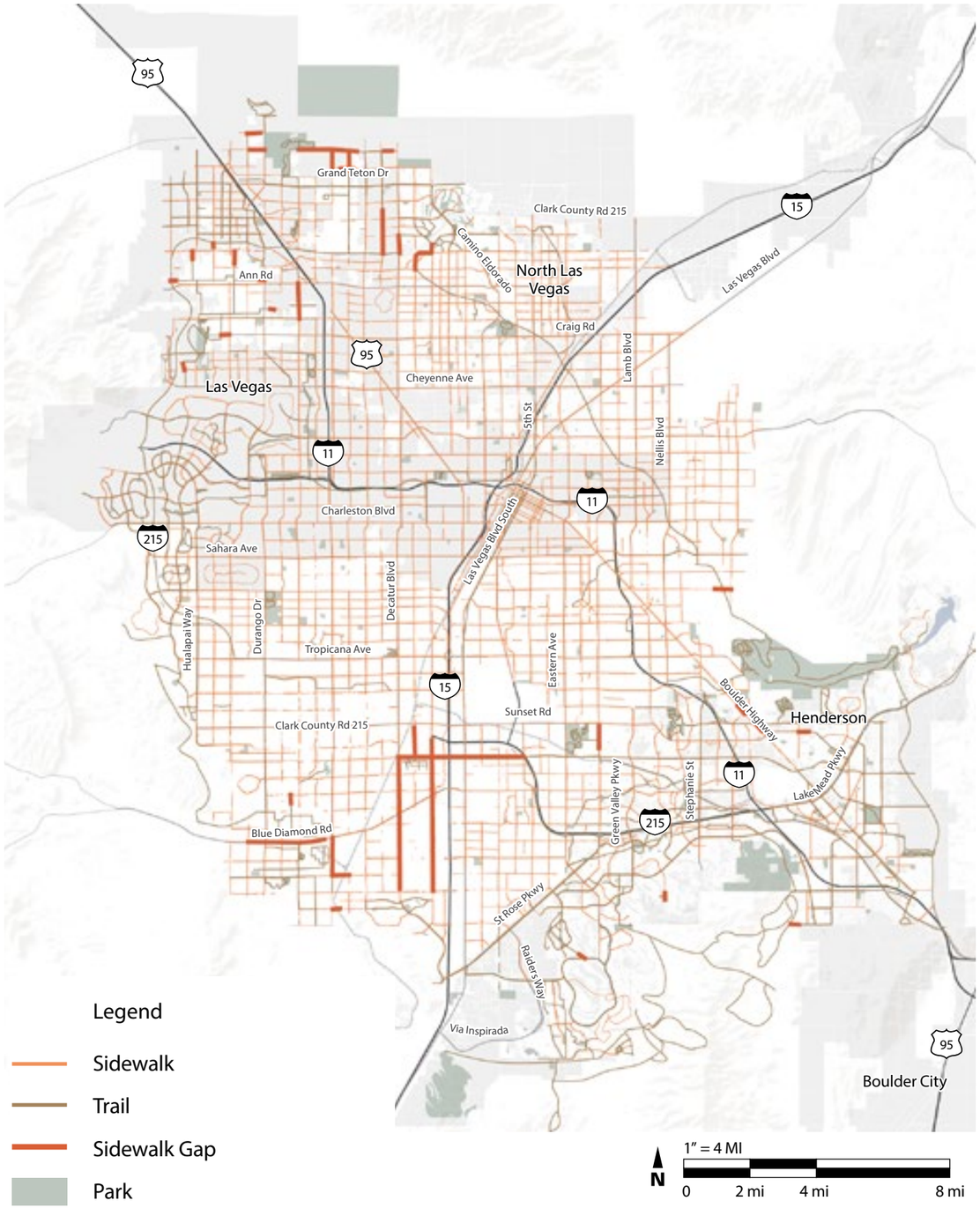
Integrating parks into everyday life will make it easier for people to get outdoors on a consistent basis as part of their daily routine. Achieving this goal will require strategies that make it easier and safer to walk or roll to parks. It will also require strategies to bring parks closer to people by adding park spaces to the existing built environment.

Figure 37 illustrates several gaps in the sidewalk and trail network. These gaps were identified through sidewalk and trail data shared by the County, supplemented by Open Street Map data. They are illustrative and do not consider feasibility.

There are gaps throughout Las Vegas and North Las Vegas, but the longest stretches of missing sidewalk are in the unincorporated areas.

Complete sidewalk data was not available for many rural areas, including Laughlin and parts of Boulder City. Compiling this data is recommended in Action Item 1.5.

Figure 35: High-Needs Neighborhoods



INTEGRATE PARKS INTO EVERYDAY LIFE

01. MAKE IT EASIER TO SAFELY WALK OR ROLL TO A PARK.

Policies, Programs, Initiatives	1.1	Audit municipal development codes to identify opportunities to increase walkability and provide technical assistance for updating codes or securing resources to address gaps (see Case Study 01).	Long-Term
Policies, Programs, Initiatives	1.2	Collaborate with the Southern Nevada Walk Audit Initiative to prioritize walk audits within Park Gaps. Review and update the existing walk audit plan to include park access as a priority criteria, formalizing its importance at the state level.	Short-Term
Capital Improvement Projects	1.3	Work through the Regional Open Space and Trails (ROST) collaborative to develop design guidelines for refuge spaces that provide resting areas and shade along sidewalks and trails.	Long-Term
Capital Improvement Projects	1.4	Audit jurisdictional CIPs to identify gaps in improving the sidewalk network. Work with the administrators of jurisdictional CIPs to develop a project list for improved sidewalks and street crossings, using the gaps highlighted in Figure 43 as a starting point.	Long-Term
Policies, Programs, Initiatives	1.5	Offer technical assistance for rural communities to create sidewalk data. Include data related to the availability and quality of sidewalks.	Mid-Term

CASE STUDY 01

WALKABLE URBAN CODE

As an extension of the City of Phoenix's Transit Oriented Policy Plans, the Walkable Urban Code includes guidelines on sidewalk design and safety considerations, shading structures, and drought resilient landscaping along transit corridors.

02. BRING PARKS CLOSER TO PEOPLE.

Policies, Programs, Initiatives	2.1	Introduce a regional signage and wayfinding system to increase residents' comfort levels in navigating to and using parks, including strategies to make first-mile/last-mile connections more navigable.	Long-Term
Policies, Programs, Initiatives	2.2	Ensure park and trail proximity are included in prioritization criteria when identifying new bus stop locations.	Short-Term
Capital Improvement Projects	2.3	Dedicate grant funding towards small pedestrian walk loops in parks to make walking more approachable.	Long-Term
Partnerships	2.4	Identify sources of discomfort for individuals who are not interested in walking and biking and promote walk and bike clubs to increase comfort levels.	Mid-Term
Capital Improvement Projects	2.5	Convert underutilized public rights-of-way to linear parks (see Case Study 02). Prioritize this strategy in dense urban areas.	Long-Term

CASE STUDY 02

RICARDO LARA PARK

The 5.25-acre Ricardo Lara Linear Park replaced an underutilized transit right-of-way in Lynwood, California. The completed park includes a playground and dog park, exercise machines, and public art.

INTEGRATE PARKS INTO EVERYDAY LIFE

KEY FINDING 01

TRAIL CONNECTIONS

Park Gaps and Walk Gaps in Southern Nevada are dramatically reduced when urban trails are included as Priority Parks. However, not all urban trails offer the same quality of experience. Establishing design standards for urban trails will help bring park-like experiences and recreation closer to people.

Policies, Programs, Initiatives	2.6	Support targeted outreach in Impacted Communities to ensure future park projects are culturally relevant.	Short-Term
Policies, Programs, Initiatives	2.7	Support park programs that encourage recreational use by diverse groups.	Short-Term
Programs, Policies, Initiatives	2.8	Develop roadway and urban trail design standards that integrate green infrastructure, drought-tolerant planting and adapted tree species to create multimodal urban trails that are more desirable to use and provide additional recreation and green space benefits (see Key Finding 01).	Long-Term

03. IMPROVE PARK ACCESS WHERE IT IS MOST NEEDED.

Programs, Policies, Initiatives	3.1	Audit jurisdictional CIPs to identify gaps in improving park access. Work with the administrators of jurisdictional CIPs to develop a park project list to encourage the siting of new parks within Park Gap areas and locations with multi-modal access and prioritize improvements to existing parks and multi-modal connections to parks within High-Needs Neighborhoods.	Short-Term

CONCEPT 01

PARK MOBILITY HUBS

Common challenges when traveling to parks include far distances between crosswalks and long headways from buses. Refuge spaces in the right-of-way could be designed to offer a place to rest, access information, and find reprieve from the heat. Additional amenities for parkgoers can be integrated into mobility hubs, which typically offer a variety of transportation options, services, and features that can make travel easier and more comfortable.

Capital Improvement Projects	3.2	Integrate TAP study priorities as RTC explores the potential for Mobility Hubs where a variety of transportation and mobility options are co-located. Hubs located near parks can include shade and places to rest, bike parking and bike share locations, maps, and bus connections (See Concept 01).	Long-Term
Policies, Programs, Initiatives	3.3	Update the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) to align with the priorities of the TAP study.	Mid-Term
Policies, Programs, Initiatives	3.4	Identify metrics for tracking outcomes of the TAP Study and commit to a regular schedule for updating the Study.	Short-Term
Policies, Programs, Initiatives	3.5	Work with rural Regional Open Space and Trails (ROST) partners to explore transportation-to-parks strategies for rural areas. Through this process, identify partners for increasing transit service through vehicle-sharing or microtransit solutions.	Short-Term
Partnerships	3.6	Audit the Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) to identify projects that expand transit services for rural communities. Advocate for park access to be a funding priority.	Long-Term
Partnerships	3.7	Support efforts to establish shared-use agreements with other park and open space providers, including schools.	Long-Term

CONNECT TO PARKS

CONNECT TO DESTINATION PARKS AND OUTDOOR EXPERIENCE PARKS

Southern Nevadans are willing to travel further to reach certain types of parks, including those classified as Destination Parks and Outdoor Experience Parks. While not everyone can live within a 10-minute walk of those park types, transit connections can help bridge the gap.

Connecting people to Destination Parks and Outdoor Experience Parks will require strategies that extend transit routes to capture key places within RTC's service area that are not currently close to a bus stop. In areas outside of RTC's service area, microtransit strategies and partner mobility providers can help people reach the places they most want to visit.

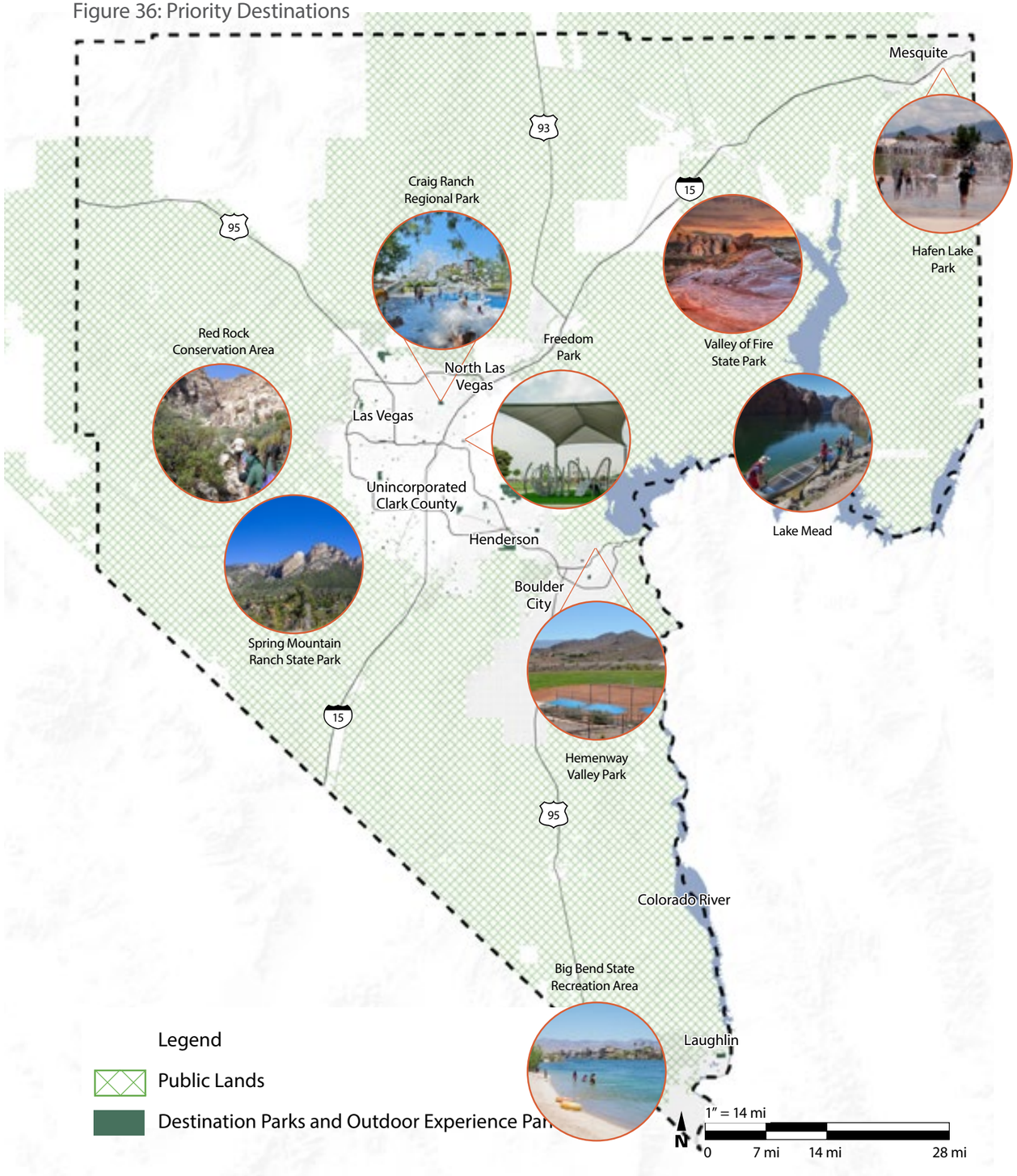
Figure 44 illustrates several priority destinations identified through the community engagement process. A full list of destinations is included in the Appendix.

CASE STUDY 03

LOS ANGELES-SAN GABRIEL MOUNTAINS URBAN SHUTTLE SYSTEM AND MOUNT WILSON EXPRESS SHUTTLE

Sponsored by the non-profit Nature for All, various shuttle systems connect LA Metro stops to nearby outdoor experiences and cultural centers by providing free shuttle service.

Figure 36: Priority Destinations



CONNECT TO PARKS

04. ADD TRANSPORTATION CONNECTIONS TO PRIORITY PARKS.

Policies, Programs, Initiatives	4.1	Work with the ROST collaborative to develop a project list for transportation projects that improve connections between Impacted Communities and the priority destinations identified in Figure 44.	Mid-Term
Policies, Programs, Initiatives	4.2	Audit the projects identified through the Federal Lands Access Connectivity Study to prioritize recommendations that overlap with park access needs identified through the TAP study.	Short-Term
Partnerships	4.3	Explore the feasibility of a pilot program to provide public transportation options and programming that connect High-Needs Neighborhoods to Accessible Outdoor Experience Parks (see Case Study 03 and Concept 02).	Short-Term

CONCEPT 02

NATURE SHUTTLE PILOT

RTC can partner with the Transit to Trails legislative working group for a pilot program exploring the feasibility of a nature shuttle. The nature shuttle can connect to an Outdoor Experience Park that is relatively small and navigable by foot, to reduce the need for a car on arrival. It can also include recreation options that are free and do not require extensive equipment or experience. The shuttle can explore multiple options for pick-up locations, including libraries, community centers, and CSN campuses. The pilot program can double as a public service campaign to make Southern Nevadans aware of the outdoor recreation opportunities available to them that are free and do not require equipment or experience. The state parks pass provided by the public library is an existing program that the nature shuttle pilot can make use of.

PROPOSED DROP OFF LOCATIONS:

- Sloan Canyon
- Calico Basin
- Tule Springs

PROPOSED PICK UP LOCATIONS:

- Libraries
- Community Centers
- CSN campuses

05. PROMOTE MICROTRANSIT WHERE OTHER TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS ARE NOT AVAILABLE.

Partnerships	5.1	Support pilot programs to help people use ride-sharing services to reduce gaps in park access.	Mid-Term
Policies, Programs, Initiatives	5.2	Audit micromobility programs to ensure they support residents without cell phones and residents who require ADA-compliant vehicles.	Short-Term
Partnerships	5.3	Work with the Transit to Trails legislative group to provide technical and financial support for guided trips to Outdoor Experience Parks, led by outdoor recreation organizations and targeted towards groups who do not typically benefit from access to the outdoors (see Concept 02).	Mid-Term
Policies, Programs, Initiatives	5.4	Explore the feasiblity of expanding the Community Mobility Project (see Project Spotlight 01) to offer grant funding to outdoor recreation nonprofits that connect eligible residents to the outdoors.	Mid-Term

PROJECT SPOTLIGHT 01

COMMUNITY MOBILITY PROJECT

In an effort to increase transportation and mobility options for eligible seniors, persons with disabilities, and low-income residents, RTC developed the Community Mobility Project as a reimbursement program to match eligible transportation expenses for non-profit organizations.

CONNECT TO PARKS

06. INCORPORATE PARK ACCESS AS A PRIORITY IN TRANSIT SERVICE PLANNING.

Service Changes	6.1	Review the best practices and guidelines that RTC Transit uses when making transit service decisions to ensure that access to parks and outdoor recreation is prioritized in areas that serve High-Needs Neighborhoods.	Mid-Term
Service Changes	6.2	Assess the feasibility of extending RTC's existing transit services or partnering with outside agencies to expand access to Outdoor Experience Parks in the northwest, such as Floyd Lamb Park and Ice Age Fossils State Park.	Mid-Term
Service Changes	6.3	Assess the feasibility of extending transit service east on RTC Route 201 to add direct access to Clark County Wetlands Park.	Mid-Term
Service Changes	6.4	Assess the feasibility and consider alternative service hours along RTC routes identified in Key Finding 02 to ensure transit service is sufficient during times of high park demand: mornings, evenings, weekends, and holidays.	Short-Term
Service Changes	6.5	Assess the feasibility of adding or relocating transit stops along existing RTC routes to serve Destination Parks and Outdoor Experience Parks that are less than one mile but greater than 0.5 miles from existing transit stops.	Mid-Term
Partnerships	6.6	Work with the Transit to Trails Task Group, recently established by SB 405 in the 2025 Nevada State Legislature, to identify new funding sources that can support the expansion of public transit to parks.	Mid-Term
Partnerships	6.7	Facilitate and strengthen partnerships with rural communities, transit providers, and community organizations to increase internal connections to parks in addition to the existing Silver Rider service within rural communities.	Mid-Term
Policies, Programs, Initiatives	6.8	Work with the administrators of jurisdictional CIPs to develop a park project list that prioritizes park projects within RTC's existing service routes.	Short-Term
Policies, Programs, Initiatives	6.9	Continue outreach to transit riders to learn how community members prioritize park access compared to other priority destinations.	Short-Term

KEY FINDING 02

PRIORITY BUS ROUTES

The following routes were identified as transportation to parks priorities based on the connections they provide between Impacted Communities and Priority Parks.

- Route 115: Connects Impacted Communities to Outdoor Experience Parks.
- Route 201: Connects Impacted Communities to Outdoor Experience Parks.
- Route 206: Connects Impacted Communities to Outdoor Experience Parks.
- Route 210: Connects Impacted Communities to Outdoor Experience Parks.
- Route 212: Offers direct connections to numerous parks.
- Route 221: Connects to Outdoor Experience Parks.
- BHX/Route 503: Connects downtown Las Vegas to Outdoor Experience Parks in and around Boulder City.

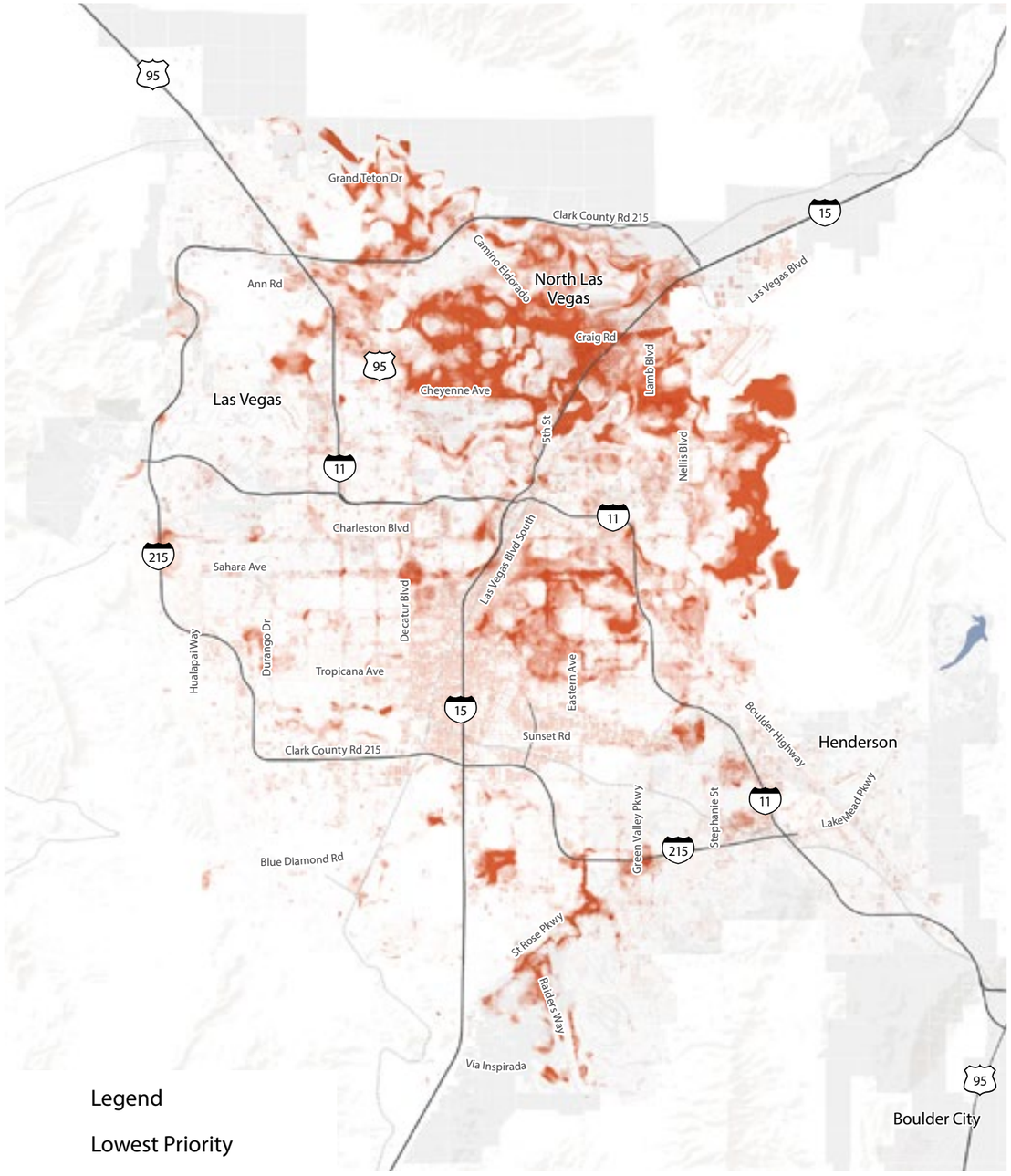
IMPROVE THE TRAVEL EXPERIENCE

IMPROVE THE EXPERIENCE OF TRAVELING TO PARKS

These strategies are intended to make traveling to parks safer, easier and more comfortable, including strategies to protect pedestrians, bicyclists and transit users from heat.

Figure 39 identifies priority areas for cooling based on the Southern Nevada Extreme Heat Vulnerability Map.

Figure 37: Priority Areas for Cooling



IMPROVE THE TRAVEL EXPERIENCE

07. INCORPORATE COOLING INFRASTRUCTURE ALONG TRANSPORTATION ROUTES.

Capital Improvement Projects	7.1	Create design guidelines for parklet-style refuge spaces for resting, shade, and waiting for the bus that integrate natural elements (see Concept 01).	Long-Term
Capital Improvement Projects	7.2	Increase the number of hydration stations at transit stops, with a focus on transit stops that connect to parks or trails.	Long-Term
Policies, Programs, Initiatives	7.3	Continue to explore design options for bus stops to ensure they include shade, drinking fountains/hydration stations, materials to withstand high temperatures, and information about what to do in a climate-related emergency, and update standards regularly to reflect best practices and technology advancements. This could be completed in partnership with local universities (see Case Study 04).	Mid-Term
Policies, Programs, Initiatives	7.4	Engage the Bus Shelter and Bench Advisory Committee to develop strategies for bus stops that do not have the necessary right-of-way to offer more heat protection.	Mid-Term
Partnerships	7.5	Support the efforts of the tree canopy working group and align efforts to prioritize tree canopy improvements along transportation routes to parks (see Project Spotlight 02).	Long-Term
Partnerships	7.6	Ensure that park access is a criteria for identifying coolling center locations, so neighborhoods with fewer outdoor shaded spaces are prioritized for indoor cooling interventions.	Short-Term
Partnerships	7.7	Conduct a regional inventory of cooling infrastructure, like shade structures and hydration stations, within parks and trails.	Mid-Term
Partnerships	7.8	Work through ROST to develop strategies for jurisdictions updating their Master Plans that connect park access with state requirements related to heat mitigation.	Short-Term

CASE STUDY 04

BUS SHELTER DESIGN COMPETITION

In 2016, the Phoenix Public Transit Department worked with the Arizona State University School of Industrial Design to develop alternative bus shelter designs that were appropriate for Phoenix's unique urban context and challenges, with a particular emphasis on heat resilience. RTC could lead a similar partnership with local universities, including CSN and UNLV, to produce innovative ideas for bus shelter design.

PROJECT SPOTLIGHT 02

TREES FOR SOUTHERN NEVADA

The Las Vegas Valley Urban Tree Canopy Opportunity Assessment, published in December 2023, identifies opportunities to develop a larger, resilient, and fairly distributed tree canopy in the Las Vegas Valley. The findings from this group can be applied across the region to identify best practices for tree planting and maintenance. The Southern Nevada Water Authority and Southern Nevada Regional Planning Coalition publish a regional plant list, which can be used as a starting point for species selection.

IMPROVE THE TRAVEL EXPERIENCE

08. MAKE BIKING AND WALKING TO PARKS SAFER AND MORE COMFORTABLE.

Partnerships	8.1	Create an inventory of existing youth programs such as Safe Routes to Schools programs and other youth learn-to-ride bike programs and clubs. Reduce barriers for participation in these programs and expand programming to fill gaps.	Mid-Term
Capital Improvement Projects	8.2	Develop a project list for shared-use paths and bike paths where appropriate safety mechanisms should be added at crossings.	Mid-Term
Capital Improvement Projects	8.3	Prioritize pedestrian safety improvements at intersections and corridors within RTC's high injury network.	Short-Term
Capital Improvement Projects	8.4	Add bike amenities at parks that are connected to trails or high-comfort bike routes.	Mid-Term
Policies, Programs, Initiatives	8.5	Align the RTP, TIP, and jurisdictional CIPs with regional Vision Zero initiatives (see Project Spotlight 03).	Long-Term
Policies, Programs, Initiatives	8.6	Seek opportunities to integrate Complete Streets principles as part of infrastructure projects, including technical assistance to identify funding sources and appropriate small-scale strategies for local projects and identify funding sources.	Long-Term
Policies, Programs, Initiatives	8.7	Ensure people have an easy way to report unsafe or inaccessible sidewalks, bike lanes and bus stops.	Mid-Term
Policies, Programs, Initiatives	8.8	Include a focused study of bike access to parks, including a detailed bike lane gap analysis near parks, as part of the upcoming update to the Bike and Pedestrian Plan.	Mid-Term
Policies, Programs, Initiatives	8.9	Add shareable umbrella stations at transit shelters without shade and intersections along routes to parks that serve safety, cooling, and public service functions (see Concept 04).	Short-Term
Capital Improvement Projects	8.10	Increase shade structures and tree canopy coverage along pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure adjacent to parks.	Long-Term

PROJECT SPOTLIGHT 03

VISION ZERO

Vision Zero is a strategy to eliminate all traffic fatalities and severe injuries, while increasing mobility for all. The Safe Streets for All (SS4A) Action Plan, the regional Vision Zero plan, is in the early stages of development.

CONCEPT 04

SHAREABLE UMBRELLA STATIONS

Some communities offer flags for pedestrians to use while crossing at intersections with a high crash volume. RTC can adapt this technique by installing shareable umbrella stations at transit shelters without shade and intersections along routes to parks. This playful approach will serve the same safety function as pedestrian flags, but will also offer a cooling function. The design of the stations and the umbrellas themselves can be used to share information about staying cool during extreme heat events.

IMPROVE THE TRAVEL EXPERIENCE

09. IMPROVE ACCESS TO INFORMATION.

Capital Improvement Projects	9.1	Add real-time arrival information to all bus stops.	Long-Term
Policies, Programs, Initiatives	9.2	Develop best practice guidelines for increasing equity in communication methods and increase digital and non-digital methods to share information about route changes or disruptions.	Mid-Term
Capital Improvement Projects	9.3	Add charging stations and wi-fi to select bus stops.	Long-Term
Policies, Programs, Initiatives	9.4	Conduct additional outreach with mobility advocates and paratransit users to identify additional barriers to accesing parks and outdoor recreation.	Short-Term
Policies, Programs, Initiatives	9.5	Provide detailed, up-to-date information for trip planning through digital methods, including information around accessibility and heat mitigation features. This could include information about the availability of ramps, cutouts, water fountains, seating, and more.	Mid-Term
Partnerships	9.6	Collaborate with other transit providers in the region to support integrated trip planning services (see Concept 03).	Short-Term
Partnerships	9.7	Partner with culturally trusted organizations, such as Latino Outdoors and Blacks in Nature, to coordinate information sharing and contribute to the development of the Regional Trip Planner (see Concept 03).	Mid-Term
Partnerships	9.8	Translate all materials into Spanish, including the Neon to Nature map and information from the Regional Trip Planner (see Concept 03).	Mid-Term
Partnerships	9.9	Partner with social service providers, including the County CARE Homeless Outreach Team, to identify opportunities for connecting unhoused individuals to parks, cooling centers, and other social service needs.	Mid-Term

CONCEPT 03

REGIONAL TRIP PLANNER

The Regional Trip Planner can consolidate essential information about traveling to parks in one convenient online location, also referenced in physical signage and wayfinding. This can be developed and managed through the Regional Open Space and Trails (ROST) collaborative, but funding for staff capacity needs to be identified. The tool can allow Southern Nevadans to view detailed information about parks in the region, including details about accessibility and heat mitigation, and plan for how to get there. Developing this tool will require long-term collaboration across jurisdictions and transit providers.

REDUCE BARRIERS

REDUCE BARRIERS TO
ACCESSING AND ENJOYING
OUTDOOR EXPERIENCE PARKS

To achieve access for all, methods for connecting people to Outdoor Experience Parks must consider challenges that bus service alone cannot solve.

Reducing barriers to accessing and enjoying the outdoors will require improved infrastructure on buses and around transit stops. It will also require strategies that promote feelings of safety, comfort and welcome and that limit costs and equipment needs.

Lake Mead Parkway Trail. Photo Credit: Design Workshop

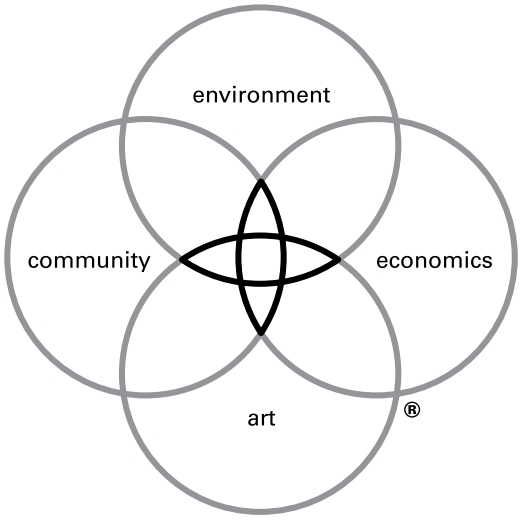
REDUCE BARRIERS

10. ADD FEATURES TO RTC ROUTES THAT ARE 'TRANSIT-TO-PARKS' FRIENDLY.

Policies, Programs, Initiatives	10.1	Audit prohibited items on transit to make sure items that support outdoor recreation are allowed.	Short-Term
Capital Improvement Projects	10.2	Add signage at transit access points including a map of the park and any other relevant information about how to navigate and use the park.	Mid-Term
Partnerships	10.3	Expand and advertise the Ride-On CCSD program to offer free or reduced transit for students enrolled in school to access outdoor experiences.	Short-Term
Service Changes	10.4	Develop standards for new buses to maximize secure storage for other forms of transport, such as appropriately sized bike racks.	Long-Term

11. PROVIDE COMPLEMENTARY SERVICES WHERE TRANSPORTATION CONNECTS TO PARKS.

Policies, Programs, Initiatives	11.1	Offer system maps on RTC buses highlighting parks and walk and bike paths that are reachable by public transportation.	Short-Term
Policies, Programs, Initiatives	11.2	Audit existing online tools like Nevada Trail Finder and Neon to Nature to identify what additional features might be useful for trip planning. Develop a consolidated tool that clarifies how to use outdoor spaces, the elevation profile and difficulty rankings of hiking trails (see Concept 03).	Long-Term
Capital Improvement Projects	11.3	Add signage at transportation connections to outdoor experience parks, including information about norms and accepted uses, to make people feel more comfortable accessing public lands.	Long-Term
Partnerships	11.4	Building upon the Neon to Nature and Places to Play tools, identify resources for maintaining centralized information about park amenities, including details about accessibility and heat resilience (see Concept 03).	Short-Term
Policies, Programs, Initiatives	11.5	Explore options for a public service campaign on RTC buses related to the health benefits of park access, paired with information about the parks that are reachable on transit. This could feature advertisements for ongoing initiatives, including the Move Your Way campaign by Southern Nevada Health District and the Walk with a Doc program sponsored by UNLV Health.	Short-Term
Partnerships	11.6	Work with health partners to promote collaboration and resource-sharing by establishing a Park Prescription (ParkRx) program.	Mid-Term
Partnerships	11.7	Partner with social service providers to ensure information about parks that provide shade, cooling features, and extended access hours is readily available for at-risk communities during periods of intense heat.	Mid-Term



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