Growing Up Boulder (GUB) is a child- and youth-friendly city initiative founded in 2009. It is a partnership between the City of Boulder, Boulder Valley School District, the University of Colorado Boulder, and local organizations that serve children and youth. GUB is a program of the University of Colorado Boulder's Community Engagement Design and Research (CEDaR) Center.

This report provides an overview of projects, outreach, and capacity-building activities undertaken by GUB during the 2017-2018 school year. For details, visit www.growingboulder.org or email growingupboulder@gmail.com.

Welcome

GUB has had a busy year engaging with children and youth and building our program's capacities. A new, comprehensive record of all GUB projects since 2009 shows that GUB has facilitated 82 projects and worked with more than 3,800 young people since its inception! Our work is shared with audiences far and wide through social media, academic writing, presentations, and popular media. We accomplish all this through a dedicated team of people--GUB staff and university student interns, university students volunteers, faculty, community volunteers, community partners, and former GUB interns. When we recently reconnected with 20 former GUB youth, 3 years after they participated in the seminal GUB Civic Area project, we were delighted to learn that 100% of them agreed that, “It was important for students to be included in the Civic Area planning project and to be asked for their opinions.” They believe that young people's voice matters, and the GUB team couldn’t agree more.
By the Numbers

From July 2017 through June 2018, GUB’s programs involved:

- 339 children and youth through its participatory planning projects
- 13 University of Colorado Environmental Design (CU ENVD) undergraduate volunteers
- 4 undergraduate interns
- 110 adult volunteers and community partners
- 77.25 engagement hours
- 633 non-engagement/GUB office hours

GUB Engagement Models

**Traditional Model:** 6-8 week engagement where GUB staff, interns, and volunteers meet with a group of children or youth 1-2 times per week, often in a classroom setting, to complete a city project.

**Micro-engagement:** 1-3 short-term engagements (2-3 hours each) where GUB staff, interns, and volunteers gather input from children, youth, families, and the general public. Common settings include pop-up stands at community events, libraries, parks, and classrooms.

**Affiliate Model:** Traditional or micro-engagement model project executed by GUB partners familiar with and experienced in GUB methods, with guidance and support from GUB staff.

**Consultant Model:** A consultant trained in GUB methods works on youth engagement projects that are beyond GUB’s current scope of work.

**Metrolab Model:** Traditional or micro-engagement model project executed by GUB staff, interns, and volunteers in coordination with the Metrolab Initiative. Metrolab is a partnership between the City of Boulder and the University of Colorado Boulder’s Community Engagement Design and Research (CEDaR) Center to bring together academics and the City to consider issues at the intersection of technology, analytics solutions, and human services deployment.

“I was deeply moved by the power of [the GUB Universal Access Design Playground] project both as an educator and as a human. I genuinely learned alongside the students. Aside from learning about the importance of inclusive thinking and action, I learned the power of service learning. It has changed me as a teacher.”

-Terri LeRose, teacher at Whittier International Elementary School and GUB affiliate partner
11th Street Corridor Design

**METROLAB PROJECT - FALL 2017**

In the fall of 2017, Cheryl Spear’s fourth-grade class from Flatirons Elementary School participated in the Metrolab University Hill Redevelopment Project. Children joined university students to revitalize the University Hill area (known as “the Hill) through improvements in transportation, alleyway and streetscape enhancements, pedestrian mobility, and creative placemaking. Fourth graders developed creative ideas to make the Hill neighborhood’s 11th Street Corridor, which connects the Hill to downtown, a fun and safe place for all ages. Seven senior citizens from Presbyterian Manor Senior Housing mentored the children as “thought partners,” one retired landscape architect (Ann Moss) volunteered with the GUB team, and undergraduate ENVD students volunteered in the classrooms regularly. During this eight-week process, students completed a site analysis, researched precedents, and presented their final designs for 11th Street to city, school and community experts. Students also shared their findings at a community event on December 15, 2017. It is hoped that the City will incorporate the children’s recommendations for a more artistic, playful and safe 11th Street Corridor into upcoming redevelopment of the Hill in the near future.

**CHILDREN’S FINDINGS AND SOLUTIONS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Children’s Likes</th>
<th>Children’s Dislikes</th>
<th>Children’s Solutions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Children’s Likes</strong></td>
<td><strong>Children’s Dislikes</strong></td>
<td><strong>Children’s Solutions</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People to interact with</td>
<td>It felt unsafe to cross the street</td>
<td>Bike paths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shaded areas when it’s hot and sunny</td>
<td>Few benches or places to sit</td>
<td>Crosswalks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lots of room to play or build something</td>
<td>Bus stops are boring</td>
<td>Fun and artistic benches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animals: birds, squirrels, dogs</td>
<td>Lots of trash laying around</td>
<td>Colorful and interactive bus stops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colors from trees, plants, and houses</td>
<td>Nothing fun to do or see</td>
<td>Artistic trash cans on every block</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peace and quiet</td>
<td>Grass is dying</td>
<td>Art: sculptures, murals, sidewalk chalk</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Children’s Solutions**

- More plants, flowers, bushes, and grass
- Painted fences

“**My favorite part of working with GUB was when I got to share my ideas with some super important people.**”

- Flatirons 4th grader

Photo by Erika Chavarria
Ponderosa Mobile Home Community Design

METROLAB PROJECT - SPRING 2018
A second Metrolab project focused on the Ponderosa Mobile Home Community in North Boulder, recently purchased by the City of Boulder in order to update the infrastructure of the site, support resiliency, and maintain long-term affordability. In February 2018, GUB conducted an on-site outreach event with 15 Ponderosa children, ages 3-12, and 7 Ponderosa parents. Children and their parents designed their ideal outdoor and/or community spaces for the community using “City as Play,” where participants use everyday objects to model spaces they would like to see in their community. Their recommendations have been used to inform the design of the concept plan, and were publicized at the Metrolab share-out event in April 2018.

CHILDREN’S RECOMMENDATIONS
- **Green Space:** Outdoor green spaces with flower and fruit gardens, landscaping, and more trees.
- **Engagement with the Creek:** Increased interaction and nature play with the creek.
- **Play:** Play equipment directly outside where they live; suggestions included a sandbox, skating area, and a gym.
- **Safety:** Improved lighting and roads, an enclosed space for playing, and a bridge to safely cross the creek.
- **Community Amenities:** A variety of community gathering spaces, including a park, basketball court, soccer field, or gym that could host community and family gatherings.

“...This organization [GUB] does a fantastic job in supporting and engaging youth in community urban planning. I believe that to confront the challenges our communities face, we need to help them define issues and develop strategies for action and transformation. To foster leadership, literacy and language development among its youngest residents and to provide them with enriching experiences that help empower them to be an integral part of community planning, vision and advocacy is a must. A great evening with great people of all ages!”

-Marina La Grave, Ponderosa Cultural Liaison, Trestle Strategy Group
Foothills & Colorado Underpass Study

AFFILIATE PROJECT - SPRING 2018

In January 2018, four young people from Boulder Housing Partners’ Madison Housing Community, ages 10-13, participated in a 4-day GUB workshop to share their ideas about the design and location of a new underpass at the junction of Foothills Parkway and Colorado Avenue. The youth walked to the proposed project sites, discussed pros and cons of each location, photographed liked and disliked elements of the environment, and made drawings of potential underpass designs. Their recommendations include:

- Underpass connections directly to Park East (a nearby park)
- Cleaner waterways flowing through the area and features that highlight nature, such as a viewing portal for fish
- Separated bike and walking paths
- Safety and beauty in the underpass though good lighting and community art

The City displayed the young people’s ideas at a public participation event; and, although the youth’s favorite underpass design was not chosen, their ideas for art, safety and nature experiences will be considered in the design.

TRB Award for Whittier HOP Study

AFFILIATE PROJECT - SPRING 2018

GUB was selected as a runner-up for the Transportation Research Board (TRB) Public Involvement Award for its collaboration between 2nd grade English Language Learners at Whittier International Elementary School and the City of Boulder’s GO Boulder program to make the HOP bus route more child-friendly. Boulder Senior Transportation Planner, Natalie Stiffler, presented the award-winning collaboration at TRB’s annual conference in January 2018.
Barriers to Young People Taking Public Buses

AFFILIATE PROJECT - WINTER 2018

WTS Colorado, a professional organization for women working in the field of transportation, launched its first Transportation YOU project in Boulder in collaboration with GUB during January 2018. Transportation YOU is a hands-on, interactive, mentoring program that offers young girls, ages 13-18, an introduction to a wide variety of transportation careers. Through GUB, WTS members and transportation planners Morgan Huber and Aileen Carrigan partnered with Centennial Middle School’s sixth grade mathematics teacher, Sophie Ramus and her eight students. They designed a 6-week curriculum which asked young people to identify ways to make public buses more attractive, convenient, and enjoyable for themselves and their peers. City and regional transportation planners in attendance at the shareout event report that they intend to implement some of the young people’s ideas in the near future.

CHILDREN’S RECOMMENDATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Student Brainstormed Ideas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fare payment:</td>
<td>• Daily pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Student bus pass and fare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal safety:</td>
<td>• Bus security guards (especially during peak hours)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Visible, accessible first aid kits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Seat belts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Donation box at bus stops with warm clothing, hats, mittens etc. people could use while waiting for the bus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Bigger (longer) buses that provide more standing room and less crowding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• More information (posted on bus or via app) about the bus driver (i.e. their name, interests, experience driving a bus)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fun transit journey:</td>
<td>• Tray tables at seats (like on an airplane)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Bus shelters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Interactive screens at bus shelters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Lending Library on buses or at shelters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Free WiFi on board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Vending machines on buses or at bus stops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Art supplies or chalkboards at bus stops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Music or disco ball on the bus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Double decker bus with spinning top level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Ice rink on top of the bus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Social media alert when a friend is riding transit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transit information:</td>
<td>• Trip planner app</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• GUB bus elective to learn how to ride the bus</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“I think [digital screens] is a fantastic idea. It is something we have thought about before, for major stops … with sponsorship money from advertisement.”
-Paul DesRocher, Planning Coordination Manager, RTD

“If I had a bus pass, I would take the bus home because I have a long walk right now. If I had a free pass, this would increase my use of the bus.”
-Sixth grade student in Boulder
OSMP Master Plan

MICROENGAGEMENTS - SPRING 2018
The City of Boulder’s Open Space and Mountain Parks (OSMP) department is engaging in a multi-year master planning process. In 2016 and 2017, GUB and OSMP researched how young people wished to participate in the master planning process. From 2017 to 2018, GUB partnered with the City again to operationalize young people’s recommendations for engagement. GUB helped OSMP create an engagement toolkit that captured all ages of the community’s values, hopes, and concerns about OSMP - with the intention of making OSMP’s future one that is guided by responsible stewardship and diverse community input. GUB staff, interns, and undergraduate volunteers then used the toolkits to lead or assist in engagements with the following groups:

- General community members at the OSMP Master Plan Open House
- 4 Youth Opportunity Advisory Board (YOAB) members (high school students); GUB trained the students in the use of the toolkit with their peers
- 15 Casey Middle School I Have a Dream (IHAD) students
- 100+ Children and parents at an OSMP Master Plan event at the Civic Area
- 11 Parents of children with disabilities who participate in the City’s EXPAND program

Feedback regarding GUB’s contribution to the outreach process has been positive. GUB’s “Kid-friendly Snapshot book,” a photo guide defining OSMP’s Snapshot tool, proved helpful not only in conversations with children, but with adults as well. In addition, GUB’s suggestion that OSMP hold “micro-engagements” (small, one-time outreach events) in a variety of non-traditional settings throughout the city led to one of the city’s most successful community engagement processes ever.

"City councilman Aaron Brockett wrote, “with regards to community engagement, this is the best we have seen the City do.” City councilwoman Mary Young agreed, “Yes, it could be a model for the City!”"
Whittier International Elementary School
Universal Access Design (UAD) Playgrounds

AFFILIATE PROJECT - FALL 2017
The City of Boulder’s Parks and Recreation department partnered with GUB and 11 English Language Learners (ELL) 2nd graders at Whittier International Elementary School to gather their ideas about whether the concept of Universal Access Design (UAD) playgrounds were important to them and, if so, what UAD features the students would most recommend to the City for future installations.

After learning about the importance of accessibility from guest speakers who use wheelchairs, have sight impairment, and live with Sensory Processing Disorder (SPD), the children designed an accessible 3D playground model. Their play area design included quiet spaces and nature in order to reduce stimulation for those with SPD and accommodating structures and textures for those with mobility limitations. They also used soft surfaces, low basketball hoops, ramps, and spin cups in their model. Whittier students enthusiastically endorse the concept of UAD playgrounds for the City of Boulder.

PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD (PRAB) MEETING
Several children from the Whittier ELL class presented their recommendations for UAD Playgrounds at a City of Boulder Parks and Recreation Advisory Board (PRAB) meeting in April 2018. The children and park planners hope that PRAB will honor the children’s enthusiasm for Universal Access Design by considering future playground proposals which include a UAD lens.

“After hearing Tina (a planner from City Parks and Recreation) speak, it made me think about me being like Tina.”
-8 year old Whittier ELL student

Photos by Tamar van Vliet and Terri LeRose
Civic Area’s Central Park West Opening Celebration

Microengagement After 2012-2015 Traditional Project - Spring 2018

In 2012, the City of Boulder began a visioning process to improve the City’s downtown Civic Area, a 26-acre space next to Boulder Creek in downtown Boulder. From 2012 to 2014, GUB worked with 225 children and youth to gather their ideas for the redesign of the Civic Area. Many of the students’ ideas were implemented in the Central Park West section of the Civic Area. Upon completion of this section of the park, the City’s Parks and Recreation Department hosted an opening celebration. GUB invited the former 2012-2014 students to participate in the celebration and provide feedback about the park’s new design. Twenty-one sixth graders (former Whittier Elementary School students), who engaged with the GUB Civic Area project in 2014, attended a “GUB reunion.” An additional 28 children, ages three through nine, interacted with GUB at our Welcoming Table. Finally, another 95 park visitors (of all ages) completed a verbal survey with GUB staff.

The overwhelming feedback from the nearly 150 individuals with whom GUB engaged was that they felt positively about the new space. In addition, the former GUB children valued their inclusion in the design process. Of the twenty GUB students surveyed, 100% agreed or strongly agreed that, “It was important for students to be included in the Civic Area project and to be asked for their opinions.” Seventy-one percent of these same students agreed or strongly agreed that, “Working on the Civic Area project has inspired me to be more involved in my community (i.e. civic, school, family).” Participating in the GUB-Civic Area project led to long-term changes in attitude about civic engagement for many young people.

TEDxMileHigh Talk and Adventure

In November 2017, one of GUB’s founders and current program director, Mara Mintzer, delivered a TEDx Talk entitled “We Let Kids Design Our City - Here’s What Happened” at TEDxMileHigh at the Denver Convention Center. The TEDx Talk showcased the Civic Area Redevelopment project and GUB’s role in ensuring that young people’s ideas were reflected in its final design. In July of 2018, Mara Mintzer, Boulder Parks and Planning Manager Jeff Haley, and two local youth who worked with GUB in 2014 to provide input for the Civic Area Redesign, led a TEDx Adventure tour of the newly renovated Civic Area Central Park West. The team shared their perspectives on the process of moving from ideation to implementation, and led participants in some of the experiential exercises used by young people during the multi-year engagement.
Cumbre Latinx Conference for Women & Youth

MICROENGAGEMENT - FALL 2017

GUB hosted a table at the 11th Annual Cumbre Juvenil in September 2017. Cumbre is a social justice conference for Latinx women and children that aims to strengthen the Boulder community by addressing social justice issues and promoting intergenerational community building. GUB designed a prize wheel and an extra-large twister board to engage youth about how to improve the City of Boulder. Youth provided the following feedback:

The Hill: The majority of the youth do not spend time on the Hill. It does not feel safe at night, and there’s a lot of trash. The Hill needs places for younger children to hangout.

OSMP: Being surrounded by the sounds and smells of nature relieves stress. The youth value open space and mountain parks. Popular outdoor activities among participants included camping, fishing, and hiking. Youth suggested taking away electronic devices during nature excursions so people are less distracted.

Skateboarding Opinions: Most children spend their time skateboarding at parks and in their neighborhoods instead of going to the skate park. If the city built safer designated areas for skateboarding and roller skating, then more kids would use the spaces.

Public Transit: Children said they use the public bus system to get to school, but don’t feel safe traveling alone because of strangers. The bus also gets overcrowded and can be confusing to navigate. Young people recommended more bus stops and clearer route directions.

“I skateboard in my neighborhood. I used to go to the skate park, but I lost interest.”

-Boulder middle school student

Photos by Mara Mintzer
Based on input from GUB partners at the April 2017 GUB Strategic Planning Retreat, and with direction from the GUB Executive Committee, this past year GUB staff:

- Drafted a logic model, goals and a strategic plan
- Updated and completed a comprehensive project record to include all GUB project names, dates, and descriptions; number of GUB participants, ages of participants, and names of partner organizations; and links to each project’s relevant photographs, videos, and reports
- Started an electronic toolkit of GUB forms, evaluations, graphics, and procedures
- Drafted a communications strategy
- Developed a more coordinated strategy for working with YOAB, whereby GUB and YOAB address similar topics from different age perspectives (YOAB high school, GUB younger)
- Strengthened organizational connections with existing partners, such as BVSD, and established new connections with partners such as Amistad

2nd grade students at Whittier International Elementary School designed and built a model for a UAD playground. Photo by Lynn M. Lickteig.
**Academic/Professional Presentations and Conferences**

  - Presented to 5,000 people
  - 363,000 views on Youtube (as of 7/30/18)
  - Social media: retweeted by Orton Family Foundation, Bernard van Leer’s 8 80 cities initiative and Urban95, Kaboom!, Child in the City, BVSD, and ARUP.

**University Classes**

City Boards and Groups


Academic Writing

Thank you to GUB’s staff, university students, funders, community partners, volunteers, and of course, Boulder’s children and youth. This report was prepared in July 2018 by Mara Mintzer, Cathy Hill, Aria Dellepiane, Nia Efeoglu, and Elese Huspeni.

**GUB Staff**
- Mara Mintzer, GUB Program Director
- Cathy Hill, GUB Education Coordinator
- Aria Dellepiane, GUB Program Associate
- Winter Roybal, GUB Undergraduate Summer 2017 Intern
- Erika Chavarria, GUB Undergraduate Fall 2017 Intern
- Jason Green, GUB Undergraduate Fall 2017 Intern
- Nihan Efeoglu, GUB Undergraduate Spring 2018 Intern
- Sara Taketatsu, GUB Undergraduate Spring 2018 Intern
- Elese Huspeni, GUB Undergraduate Summer 2018 Intern

**GUB Consultant**
- Darcy Kitching, Collaborative Storyteller

**GUB Executive Committee**
- Leslie Arnold, BVSD Assistant Superintendent for Strategic Initiatives, 2017
- Kathleen Bracke, City of Boulder, Public Works, GO Boulder Manager
- Louise Chawla, University of Colorado, Professor Emerita
- Leslie Ellis, City of Boulder, Planning, Housing and Sustainability, Comprehensive Planning Manager
- Jeff Haley, City of Boulder, Parks and Recreation, Planning, Design and Community Engagement Manager
- Jennifer Korbelik, City of Boulder, City Manager’s Office, City-University Liaison
- Sam Messier, BVSD Assistant Superintendent of Instructional Services and Equity, 2018
- Brian Muller, University of Colorado, CEDaR Faculty Director and ENVD professor
- Willem Van Vliet, University of Colorado, Professor Emeritus
- Tracy Winfree, City of Boulder, Open Space and Mountain Parks, Director

**GUB Steering Committee**
- Bespoke Transit Solutions
- Boulder County Head Start
- Boulder County Sustainability Office
- Boulder Housing Partners
- Boulder Journey School
- City of Boulder
- City Manager’s Office
- Open Space and Mountain Parks
- Parks and Recreation
- Planning, Housing, and Sustainability
- Transportation/GO Boulder
- Youth Opportunities Advisory Board (YOAB)
- I Have a Dream Foundation
- Trestle Strategy Group
- University of Colorado
  - Community Engagement Design and Research Center (CEDaR)
  - CU Engage
  - CU Law School
  - ENVD faculty
  - ENVD student advisors
  - Office of Outreach and Engagement
  - Theater and Dance
- Walk2Connect
GUB Volunteers
• Aileen Carrigan, WTS and Bespoke Transit Solutions
• Ann Moss, landscape architect
• Morgan Huber, WTS and transportation planner
• Presbyterian Manor Senior Housing Residents: Leslee Barker, Jackie Cohn, Margarita Delgado, Clara Hendricks, Jacqueline Louise, Ann Mescall, and Carol Warner
• Andrea Rossi

GUB Partner Teachers
• Terri LeRose, Whittier International Elementary School
• Lisa O’Brien, Whittier International Elementary School
• Sophie Ramus, Centennial Middle School
• Cheryl Spear, Flatirons Elementary School
• Tamar van Vliet, Whittier International Elementary School

GUB thanks the following organizations for funding its work:
• City of Boulder: City Manager’s Office; Planning, Housing and Sustainability; Parks and Recreation; Transportation/GO Boulder; and Open Space and Mountain Parks
• In-kind support from the University of Colorado Boulder
• University of Colorado Boulder, Office of Outreach and Engagement
• Triptracker Program BVSD
• Anonymous foundation donation