

Growing Up Boulder's Report on East Boulder Subcommunity Planning

Summary of Findings, Fall 2019

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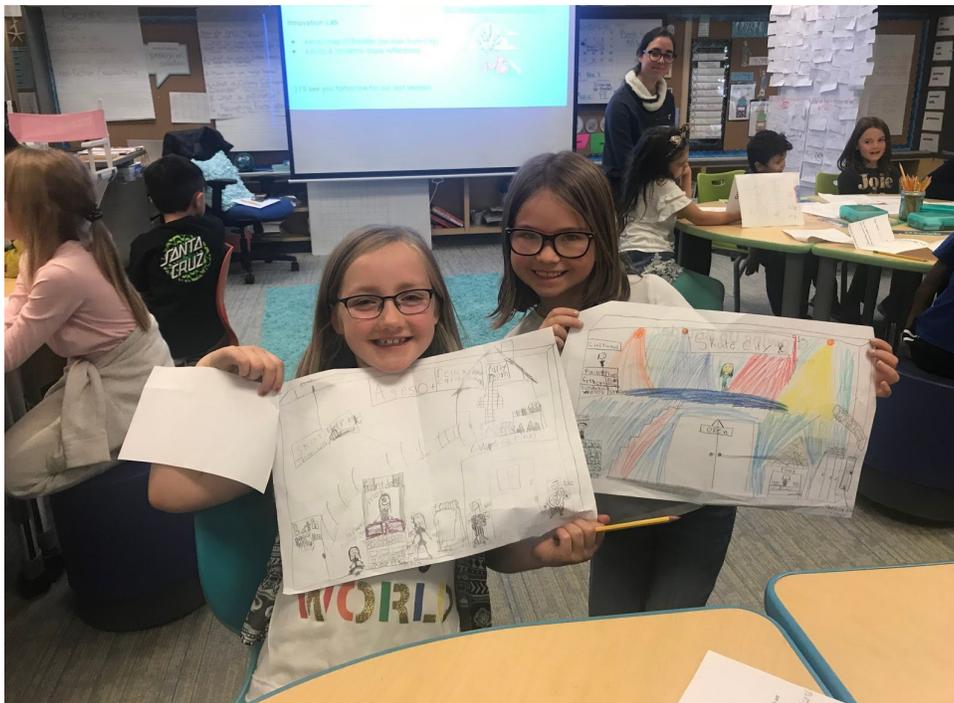


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Overview

About Growing Up Boulder

Growing Up Boulder (GUB) is Boulder's child and youth-friendly city initiative established in 2009 as a formal partnership between the City of Boulder, Boulder Valley School District, and University of Colorado. GUB is a program of the University of Colorado's Community Engagement Design and Research (CEDaR) Center and is housed in the Environmental Design Program. GUB aims to make Boulder an exemplary child and youth-friendly city by empowering Boulder's young people with opportunities for inclusion, influence, and deliberation on local issues that affect their lives.

Subcommunity Planning

The City of Boulder has embarked on developing subcommunity plans for each of Boulder's 10 subcommunities. Plans will describe a future vision for each subcommunity that is based on community goals and values, and will be aligned with the tenets of the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan (BVCP). Each subcommunity planning process will take approximately 18-months, involve multiple stages, and include community outreach. A Working Group, made up of area stakeholders, will support the planning process. Ultimately, subcommunity plans will guide change in each subcommunity into the next several decades.

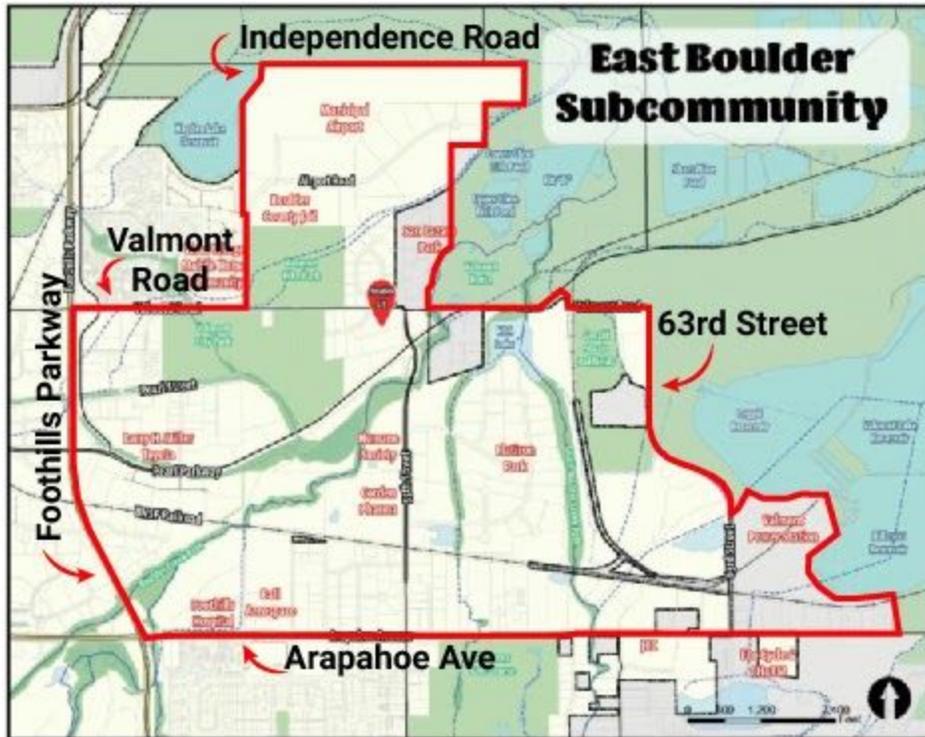
To ensure that citywide goals are achieved, subcommunity plans will feature specific criteria for future change. As part of the process, each plan will look at the following six focus areas from the BVCP:

- Small Local Business
- Arts & Culture
- Design Quality & Placemaking
- Housing Affordability & Diversity
- Resilience & Climate Commitment
- Balance of Future Jobs & Housing

East Boulder Subcommunity Plan

In early 2019, City Council directed city staff to begin subcommunity planning work. The East Boulder subcommunity was selected because of the high rate of change that's currently taking place there. The East Boulder subcommunity area is marked by Foothills Parkway to the west, Boulder Municipal Airport to the north, 63rd Street to the east and Arapahoe Avenue to the south. East Boulder is one of the city's top

employment centers, and is home to many businesses, urban parks, recycling centers, and arts and cultural organizations.



GUB East Boulder Subcommunity Plan Project Description

In Fall 2019, GUB conducted Phase Two participatory planning engagements with three groups within the East Boulder Subcommunity catchment area: second grade students who attend Eisenhower Elementary School, child, teen and parent residents in the San Lazaro Manufactured Home Community, and adolescent members of a bird-banding club at Thorne Nature Experience.

Phase Two engagements provide stakeholders the opportunity and freedom to be visionary about the future of East Boulder; Phase two asks the question, “Who do we want to be?” Students from all three groups, ages 4-18, participated in individualized, GUB-led engagements ranging from one 2-hour session to four 1-hour sessions over the span of one month. All students were introduced to the East Boulder Subcommunity Plan work through the use of local maps. Student and family worksheets then activated participants’ thinking about how they currently use East Boulder. In addition to identifying their favorite places to keep in East Boulder, students and families

considered what aspects of East Boulder they felt could be improved, and what was missing and should be added to make East Boulder an even more vibrant community.

By the Numbers (All Engagements)

- 98 Children and youth
- 40% children/youth from underrepresented backgrounds
- 60 Parents
- 3 BVSD Teachers
- 2 Thorne staff
- 2 GUB staff
- 2 GUB-CU undergraduate interns
- 5 CU undergraduate volunteers
- 12 Adults/Experts
- 3 City of Boulder staff
- 1 Boulder High School student/Youth Advisory Opportunity Board member
- 1 Project Assistant/EcoArts Promotora
- 23 Engagement hours by young people

Summary of Findings

Growing Up Boulder engaged with 158 children, youth, and their parents/caregivers in October and November 2019. Ninety-eight total students were supported by more than 30 adults in three engagement settings. Because we collected a large amount of data, this section focuses on the highlights of data and the story it tells. The data analyzed here originated from:

1. A consistent, two page-worksheet that was completed at each engagement site,
2. Student recommendations from each of the sites, including group discussions, written information and sketches from the Eisenhower students' research "notecatcher" activity, and
3. Feedback about the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan collected at Thorne.

The most important documents and artifacts used in these engagements are in the [Appendix](#) at the end of the report. For a complete collection of engagement documents, contact: growingupboulder@gmail.com.

Most Salient Child, Youth, and Parent/Caregiver Recommendations

Children, youth, and parents/caregivers in all three engagements viewed East Boulder as a community with great potential for improvement. Students developed recommendations based on their personal interests, while keeping in mind people of all

ages. The top 10 most frequently requested *additions* to East Boulder by children, youth, and parents/caregivers were:

1. **Water Park**--It's GUB's experience that children consistently request water parks and water play, so it is no surprise to see water at the top of the list of things that students felt were missing and wanted to add in East Boulder. A water park is more than a pool--it includes more playful elements, splashing, and the opportunity to cool off in the hot sun.
2. **Restaurants**--Children want child- and family-friendly restaurants.
3. **Parks**--More of them, including parks for dog *and* cats and big, open turf fields and sports fields.
4. **Playgrounds**--More of them, with slides, including indoor playgrounds so they can stay active during inclement weather and winter months.
5. **Amusement Park**--with rides and games.
6. **Museums**--Children's Museum, Science, History--even a "Silence" museum.
7. **Pools**--indoor and outdoor.
8. **Open Space**--More Open Space and Mountain Park trails, lakes and ponds, and more open, grassy fields with being in nature as the goal.
9. **Interactions with animals**--Children and teens would like more opportunities to observe and/or play with animals in a wildlife sanctuary or zoo setting.
10. **Mall/Retail shopping**--traditional retail centers and pedestrian malls.

When it came to existing locations, parents and children together listed the following five locations as their favorite places to visit in East Boulder:

1. Arapahoe Ridge "Rock" Park
2. Valmont Bike Park
3. Thorne Nature Experience
4. Boulder Jewish Community Center (Boulder JCC)
5. Snarf's Sandwiches



Arapahoe Ridge "Rock" Park

It is interesting to note that of the 5 locations listed, the only site that is actually located within the boundaries of the subcommunity is Valmont Bike Park. This reveals that children are not spending a lot of time or are not familiar with places in the East Boulder

subcommunity that would be considered a "favorite" destination; they are more familiar with sites that surround the area and are closer to where they live and go to school.

And while we can't be certain about the motivation for these recommendations (this would be a useful question to probe in further investigations), based on our discussions with children and teens, we believe the recommendations were selected for these three reasons:

1. These locations are more *special* or *unusual* than other similar locations. For example, "Rock" Park is mentioned more than any other playground, and its design is more unique than other playgrounds in East Boulder. Similarly, Valmont Bike Park offers opportunities not afforded elsewhere in the city.
2. The locations are physically closer to residents living in East Boulder. Children and parents living in the San Lazaro Manufactured Housing Community live adjacent to Valmont Parks, and cited them as favorite places to visit.
3. The locations are responsive to children and teen's interests. Young people from all three groups listed Thorne as one of their favorite places to visit, as it provides engaging educational nature programming and things to see and do.

When children and their families were asked to rank their favorite *types* of activities, in East Boulder, they responded (listed in order of importance):

1. Nature & Trails
2. Parks & Playgrounds
3. Education/Museums
4. Arts & Culture
5. Restaurants/After School Activities (2 way tie)

This ranking was fairly consistent across the three engagement groups, although when children's recommendations were separated from parent recommendations, "*parks and playgrounds*" rose to the top for children. These East Boulder findings mirror GUB's general findings from working with children and youth in Boulder; young people repeatedly list "parks and playgrounds" as their first choice of activity, followed by "nature and trails."

Detailed “Keep, Improve, Add” Responses Across All Engagements¹

All engagement groups completed the same worksheet, then held verbal discussions, to answer the question, “what should we keep, improve, and add in East Boulder?” Below is a *summary* of answers across all groups. Note that some of this information was included in the previous section, but here it is displayed side-by-side.

| Keep | Improve | Add |
|--|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Valmont Bike Park ● Open Space (trails, open fields in nature) ● Arapahoe Ridge “Rock” Park ● Parks in general ● East Boulder Recreation Center ● Thorne Nature Experience & Sombrero Marsh ● Eisenhower Elementary ● Boulder Humane Society ● Boulder Creek & Paths ● Snarf’s Sandwiches | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Safety and greater amount of bike paths ● Cleaner, updated parks and playgrounds with more choices ● More restaurants ● Transportation; more buses & reliable schedules | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Water parks and water play areas ● Indoor & outdoor pools ● More playgrounds; indoor and outdoor ● Museums for children; history and science ● Amusement parks ● More parks ● Restaurants; more and better ones |

Infographics of Child and Youth Recommendations

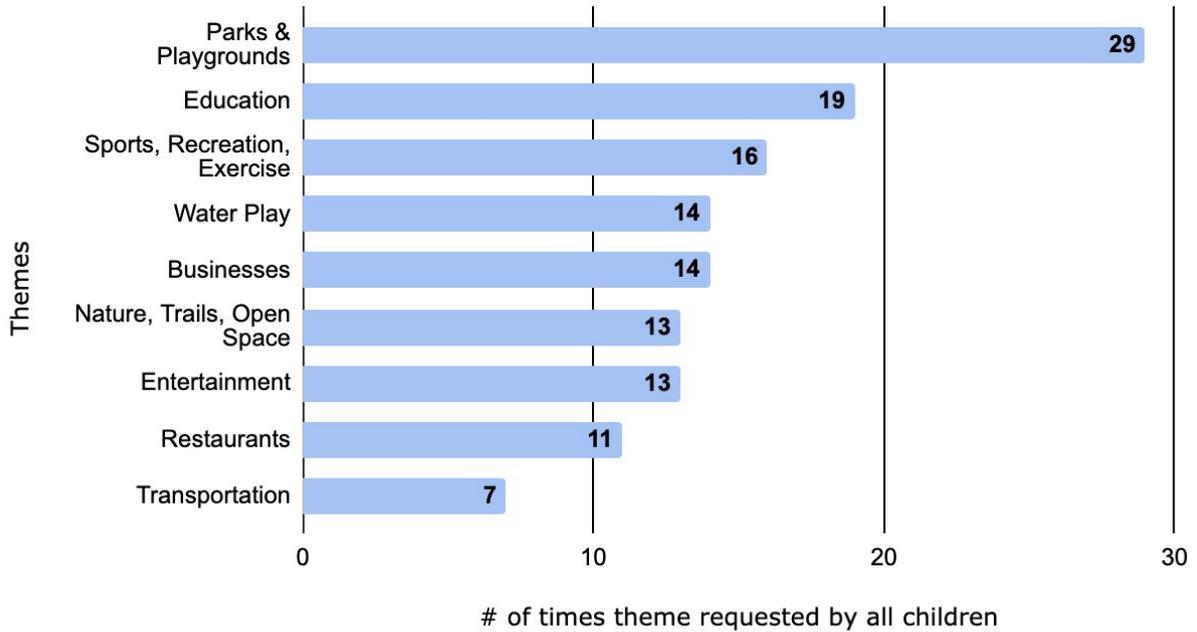
Information collected from the “keep, improve, add” exercise is further visualized in the following infographics. The word clouds include *all* of the responses received from young people (as opposed to the summary responses above). The bar graphs show the *themes* into which the requests fall.

¹ Most frequently requested recommendations for the East Boulder Subcommunity Plan

What We Think is Missing in East Boulder & Want to Add



What to ADD in East Boulder



For a better understanding of GUB’s engagement partners and process, please continue on to the next section.

GUB's Engagement Partners and Engagement Process

Eisenhower Elementary School

As part of their annual “Communities” unit, 2nd grade teachers and students at Eisenhower Elementary School integrated the EBSP work into their content learning standards for Civic, Social Studies, Reading, and Language Arts. For four consecutive weeks, students learned about East Boulder, considered what they liked about it that they wanted to keep and improve, and what they felt was missing that could make it an even better place to live. Students researched ideas and developed final recommendations, and then shared their ideas with city staff, East Boulder Working Group members, and interested community residents during a Round Table Discussion share out event.

By the Numbers for Eisenhower Elementary

- 71 Eisenhower Elementary 2nd grade students
- 55 Parents (via the Family Homework; 78% return rate)
- 3 Eisenhower Elementary teachers
- 2 GUB staff
- 2 GUB-CU undergraduate interns
- 5 CU undergraduate volunteers (4 School of Education, 1 Environmental Design)
- 12 Adults/Community Experts²

² City planners, East Boulder Working Group members, parent volunteer, CU students, and other invested community members participated in the engagements with the students. Additionally, as part of a growing partnership between GUB and CU's School of Education, four teacher candidates volunteered a total of eight hours in classrooms to witness and support GUB's project-based learning model in action.

Eisenhower Engagement Description

Session 1: GUB and Project Introduction & Pre-Project Survey

October 8 & 9, 2019



Photo by Donna Patterson

Students completed a six-question survey related to their pre-existing knowledge about city projects and the extent to which they feel they are included in city planning decisions. An introductory powerpoint presentation about GUB and the East Boulder Subcommunity Plan project was then presented. Afterwards, 2nd graders used GUB's Child-Friendly City Map to explore Boulder in general and then the East Boulder Subcommunity specifically.

Students used symbols in the key to “read” the map, and enjoyed finding their school and places they like to go with their families. It was significant that *students in all groups noticed that there were not many favorite locations within the East Boulder Subcommunity area*. This suggested that there was room for the East Boulder area to become more child-friendly! Session one ended by introducing the [Family Worksheet](#) that students would complete that night with their families.

Session 2: Family Worksheet Analysis

October 15 & 16, 2019



Photo by Cathy Hill

After a brief review of the East Boulder Subcommunity project and our work from the previous week, students formed groups and shared their family worksheet “answers” with an adult. One the front side of the homework sheet, families identified whether they spent time in East Boulder, noted which places they frequented, and named their 5 favorite places. They also identified their favorite type of activity. On the back side of the sheet, families shared their

vision of East Boulder, captured by sketching a picture of the things about East Boulder that they wanted to keep, improve, and add. “Keep, Improve, and Add” flip charts were then compiled from the homework, analyzed, and students were encouraged to look for themes using the same terms from the child-friendly city map key (Parks and Play, Nature Play, Water Play, etc.) to describe what they observed. At the end of the session, the group shared observations and students listed three East Boulder Subcommunity ideas that they wanted to research during the following week.

“After doing the family worksheet and hearing about GUB from our daughter, we think this has been the best project our child has done since she’s been in school.”

~2nd grade parents, Eisenhower Elementary

Session 3: Research, Written Recommendations and Sketches on Research Notecatchers



Photo by Donna Patterson

Week of October 21, 2019

Using Chromebooks, 2nd graders completed research in order to narrow down their ideas to one final recommendation. Students then completed a “note-catcher” paper, showing their thinking related to three questions: 1) Why do we need this? 2) How will this help the community? and 3) Other interesting information. Students also completed idea sketches on the back of their note-catcher papers. Students practiced reading their recommendations so they would be prepared for sharing out the following week.

“Something I want Growing Up Boulder to know is that projects like this bring the idea of ‘community’ to life. My hope is that this leads to more student buy-in to what goes on in our community as they grow up.”

~2nd grade teacher, Eisenhower Elementary

Session 4: Round Table Discussions with Adult Guests

October 29 & November 6, 2019

After a brief introduction on GUB and slides depicting the students’ East Boulder learning progression, students and invited guests formed round table discussion groups.

Each student presented their recommendations for East Boulder (via written details and a sketch), and adults and peers



Photo by Federica Merola

provided feedback and asked clarifying questions. When students finished presenting, adults rotated clockwise to a new, second group, thereby hearing recommendations from half of the students in the room. At the end of the session, the class and guests went to the school's Innovation Lab where a large (approximately 30' x 40') aerial map of Boulder was displayed. Students and guests sat around the perimeter of the map. The East Boulder subcommunity area

was highlighted and approximately 35 current locations were labeled on it (businesses, parks and playgrounds, nature, etc.). Students noted their final recommendations on to the map via a colored star. Each student restated their primary recommendation for the EBSP so that all of the ideas could be heard at once by the group. To close the session, adults and students offered final comments to the whole group. After students left the Lab, adult guests completed written reflections about the experience.

“Something I want to remember about today is how important designing cities for families is!”

~Transportation Planner, City of Boulder

“Having the community partners come and hear their presentations was such a wonderful experience for our students. This was a real opportunity for them to share their ideas with city staff and community members who were involved in planning for East Boulder. The students really got an understanding of how to advocate for their ideas.”

~2nd grade teacher, Eisenhower Elementary

Session 5: Reflection, Post-Project Survey, & Next Steps

October 31 & November 7, 2019



Photo by Federica Merola

The final session began by acknowledging the learning the students had accomplished throughout the four week inquiry. A compilation of adult reflections from Session 4 were shared to provide students with concrete feedback. Then, students completed post-project surveys. GUB staff discussed next steps and encouraged students to stay connected with the project via the project website. A City Leader certificate for each participant, as well as a parent letter updating families about the project, was sent home in each

students' Friday Folder. As part of GUB process, teachers completed GUB partner evaluation forms.

Family Worksheet Data

High level analysis of returned family worksheet by students and their parents revealed that the vast majority spend time in East Boulder (96%), and that there is much that families like about East Boulder and the subcommunity in which they live. They selected these top five favorite places to visit in East Boulder:

1. Arapahoe Ridge "Rock" Park
2. Boulder JCC
3. Boulder Creek/South Boulder Creek Paths
4. Thorne Nature Experience
5. Valmont Bike Park

Families identified their top five favorite types of activities as:

1. Nature & Trails
2. Parks and Playgrounds
3. Arts & Culture
4. Education & Museums
5. After School Activities

Further discussion can be found in the [Summary of Findings](#) section, and further analysis can be found in the [Appendix](#).

Eisenhower Student Recommendations (Across the Engagement)

Student recommendations represented a wide range of improvements and additions to the East Boulder subcommunity. The children requested improvements to bike paths, parks, and playgrounds often. Students suggested additions related to the physical environment in general, like planting more trees and gardens and having more organic farms in the community. They also expressed specific recommendations, like reducing train noise. They recommended a more inclusive community by suggesting to increase the number of wheelchair-friendly paths and equipment in parks and other areas, like at rec centers.

Students felt that the East Boulder Subcommunity was missing many things, and they had plenty of ideas to make it a more vibrant community. Ideas focused on indoor and outdoor play (in parks, playgrounds, nature, and water!), adding new facilities for learning (like a museum, library, an aquarium), and being able to interact with animals (such as pet-friendly stores, cat and dog parks, wildlife preserves, and zoos).

Parent Recommendations (Based on Family Worksheet)

GUB staff tried to identify which comments were made by adults and which comments were made by children on the family “worksheet” homework assigned to all Eisenhower families. While determining adult versus child responses is not an exact science, we found notable differences in the kind of language and topics described by children and adults (more sophisticated language and ideas). We named these “parent recommendations.”

Largely practical in nature, parents ideas centered on safety and improved quality of life; for example, adults requested bigger, wider, and separated bike paths and lanes, increased numbers of public bathrooms and water fountains, expanded post offices and libraries, updated sports facilities (tennis, basketball, soccer), and more shade at parks and playgrounds. Children’s requests, on the other hand, centered around play, amusement, and interaction with animals, nature, and educational centers.

*“Something that I want to remember...is to not forget **FUN**
when thinking about land use.”*

~East Boulder Working Group Member

“This was a wonderful experience as you helped make our study of Boulder become relevant and current to our 2nd graders.”

~2nd grade teacher, Eisenhower Elementary

Aerial Map of Boulder Highlights Student Recommendations



Photos by Cathy Hill

Residents of the San Lazaro Manufactured Housing Community

Growing Up Boulder worked with a promotora³ from EcoArts Connections (an organization that works closely with the San Lazaro community) and with promotoras associated with the City of Boulder to recruit children and parents to attend a one-time engagement session regarding the EBSP. Families in attendance live in the San Lazaro Manufactured Home Community and were contacted via phone calls and personal interactions. All participants over the age of 5 were promised and received a \$5 “thank you stipend” for their time and recommendations.

By the Numbers for San Lazaro Engagement

- 12 children and youth from the San Lazaro community, ages 4-15
- 5 parents from the San Lazaro community
- 1 GUB staff member
- 1 GUB/CU undergraduate intern
- 1 Boulder High School student/member of the Youth Advisory Opportunity Board (YOAB)
- 1 Project Assistant/EcoArts Promotora
- 1 City of Boulder staff member

San Lazaro Resident Engagement Description

Wednesday, October 23, 2019 from 5:30-7:30 pm



Photo by Sarah Huntley

GUB’s engagement with residents in San Lazaro’s community began with dinner and social time. Next, GUB staff introduced GUB and the East Boulder Subcommunity Planning work. Each family examined a child-friendly city map in order to study the East Boulder Subcommunity area. The family “worksheet” was then introduced and individuals recorded how they currently use the East Boulder area. Adults and children discussed and

³ a community member who provides outreach in his or her own community

selected their family's favorite places to visit in East Boulder, then ranked their favorite East Boulder activities by category (such as parks and playgrounds, nature and trails, retail, after school activities, etc.). Children and adults engaged in a lively discussion about how they would like to see East Boulder develop and grow in the future.

Many adults were concerned about the lack of clean water they feel they experience in their community, despite water tests showing no toxicity. Parents expressed that the water in their homes smells and is discolored, especially during the summer months, and families felt that they suffer from medical problems, such as infections, sickness, and discomfort, due to the water quality.

Older children/youth expressed a desire for an improved transportation system. They requested more frequent bus service and better connectivity in their community.



Photo by Sarah Huntley

Finally, both children and adults suggested adding new parks and improving existing parks within or near the San Lazaro community. The consensus was that new and improved parks and playgrounds would offer beneficial after school activities for all.

An interesting observation was that while child and youth participants were bilingual, they preferred to complete their worksheets and discussions in English. The adults, on the other hand, preferred to speak in Spanish. This important distinction will help GUB plan for future engagements.

Student Worksheet Data

Worksheets that children/youth completed showed that 75% of them currently spend time in East Boulder. Only one of the students gave a response as to why not: "I don't have anything to do there." They selected these top five favorite places to visit in East Boulder:

1. Valmont Bike Park
2. Valmont Dog Park
3. Boulder Creek/South Boulder Creek Paths
4. Boulder Community Hospital
5. Parkway Cafe

Students identified their top five favorite types of activities as:

1. Parks and Playgrounds
2. Sports
3. Arts & Culture
4. Restaurants

A relevant implication of these findings is that should Valmont City Park eventually include a splash park and adventure play area, as proposed in the Valmont City Park Concept plan, young people living in San Lazaro Manufactured Home Community will eagerly use the space. Not only is Valmont City Park easily accessible to the residents of San Lazaro, but it would include active play as requested by children and parents (see below) alike.

Parent Worksheet Data

Worksheets that parents completed showed that only 66% of them currently spend time in East Boulder. When asked why not, only one parent gave us insight: “I like to go (to) places or cities where there is more cultural diversity.” Parents’ top five favorite places to visit in East Boulder were:

1. Avalon Ballroom
2. Boulder Creek and Paths
3. Valmont City Park
4. Valmont Bike Park

Parents identified their top five favorite types of activities as:

1. Parks and Playgrounds
2. Nature & Trails
3. Restaurants
4. After School Activities, Education, and Art & Culture (3 way tie)

While the number of parents who participated in the engagement was small (5 mothers), their input suggests some important themes. First, the Avalon Ballroom offers proximal Latinx communities valuable programming, such as zumba, salsa, and bachata classes and celebrations. Additional more culturally relevant activities would be beneficial to East Boulder. Second, parents value parks, playgrounds and trails, and they would like to see even more of them close to home.

Thorne Nature Experience

Thorne and GUB staff collaborated to create an event at Thorne Nature Experience whereby students engaged in a special bird-banding session for the first half of the two hour event and a work session with GUB on the East Boulder Subcommunity Planning process during the second half. GUB staff facilitated the engagement, and GUB interns and city planners interacted with students during the engagement.

By the Numbers for Thorne Nature Experience Engagement

- 15 Thorne Nature Experience/Bird Banding students, ages 11-18
- 2 Thorne staff members
- 1 GUB staff member
- 2 GUB/CU undergraduate interns
- 2 City planners

Engagement Description

Wednesday, October 16, 2019, from 4:00-6:00 pm



Photos by Holly Opansky

After GUB provided participants a brief overview of GUB and the East Boulder Subcommunity Planning process, students explored East Boulder using a variety of maps. Time was given for students to complete both sides of the student “worksheet,” indicating how they used East Boulder currently and how they recommended East Boulder grow and change in the future. Adults then utilized a “conveyor belt” activity format and discussed student ideas. Facilitators rotated through four table groups with Keep, Improve, and Add charts, as well as a posterboard with the six focus areas from the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan. Discussions were robust. Generally, students felt that East Boulder needs to be a more lively, “happening” community with more

things to do. Many student recommendations had that primary goal in mind. At the end of the session, students were served pizza and salad. Several parents, who arrived to pick up their student, joined in eating and socializing.

Student Worksheet Data

Seventy-one percent of Thorne youth spend time in East Boulder. When asked, “why not?” the one reply we gathered was, “I don’t live near here, but come every once in awhile.” They selected these top five favorite places to visit in East Boulder:

1. Boulder Creek/South Boulder Creek Paths
2. Thorne Nature Experience
3. Coffee (Ozo and Baby Goat)
4. Snarf’s Sandwiches
5. Valmont Bike Park

Students identified their five favorite activity themes as:

1. Nature & Trails
2. Education & Museums
3. Other (Studying/being with animals and history)
4. Parks and Playgrounds
5. After School Activities

Student Recommendations for What to Add to East Boulder

Student recommendations for what East Boulder should add varied widely and expressed youth’s growing interests and passions. They included:

1. Build a Teen Hangout Space
2. Create a Wildlife Preserve
3. Add more Public Art
4. Add a Progress Store (indoor sports)
5. Make East Boulder more lively to walk through
6. Expand Snarf’s Sandwiches
7. Put money towards conservation of creeks, rivers, lakes, and ponds
8. Add a store specializing in reptiles
9. Improve bike trails
10. Allocate more money for historical site preservation
11. Include more interactive gaming locations, such as Time Warm Video and Comic store
12. Add a Young Eagles program
(<https://www.eaa.org/eea/youth/free-ye-flights/become-a-young-eagle>)

Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan Feedback

Students added suggestions for how to improve East Boulder through the lens of six focus areas in the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan.

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| <p>Small Local Businesses:</p> | <p>Housing Affordability and Diversity:</p> | <p>Arts & Culture:</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Have a Young Eagles Program at the airport ● More medical resources around the city ● More pet shops ● Sweet Cow-- more variety of flavors | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Energy- and water-efficient homes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Showcase East Boulder artists on busy streets & plazas, like Pearl Street does ● Have “First Friday” events like in Denver’s Art District, with food trucks, music, and lots of people |
| <p>Resilience & Climate Commitment:</p> | <p>Design Quality & Placemaking:</p> | <p>Balance of Future Jobs Housing:</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Trip Tracker ● Nature museums ● History museums ● Kruger Cup ● Try out wind, solar, and hydroelectric energy ● More water resources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Trampoline parks ● Skate parks ● Indoor skiing ● Amusement parks ● Street and public art ● Mixed media ● Murals ● Sculptures and ceramics ● Provide tours at Valmont Butte | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Electric scooters ● Housing above stores ● More and wider bike paths |

“It was amazing to be involved with the students during this engagement. I believe it’s really important to let youth know that their voice matters. I am certain the students now realize the opportunity they have to improve their city.”

--Environmental Design student, GUB Fall 2019 intern

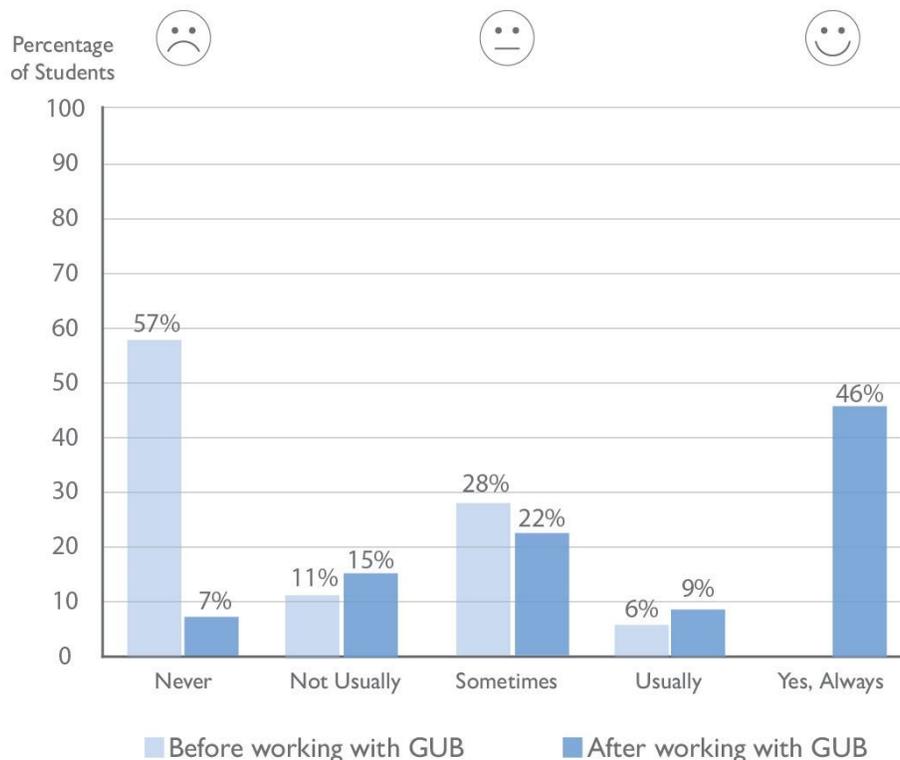
Engagement Reflections

Pre- and Post-Project Student Questionnaires

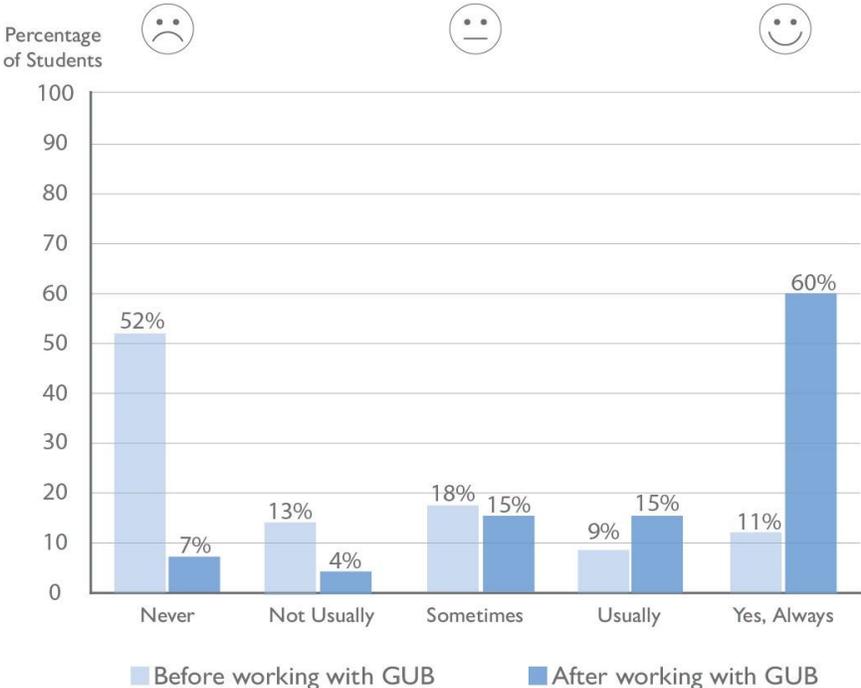
Before and after our sessions, Eisenhower Elementary School students participated in pre- and post-project surveys about their perceptions of city issues and the role of children in the community. We limited these questionnaires to the Eisenhower students, as they were the only group with whom we met for more than one session. Students showed strong positive shifts in every category after being involved in the GUB sessions.

Students' understanding of the role that the East Boulder Subcommunity Plan plays in their community increased greatly, as did their general attitudes towards child involvement in city decisions. Students were very positive about sharing their ideas, especially for stated community goals. The students especially felt that they had a voice in city issues that matter to them. In fact, according to their final reflections, one of the students' favorite parts of the whole process was that adults really listened to what they had to say. Finally, a majority of students felt they understood what happens to the ideas they shared with the city. The three graphs below illustrate these statements:

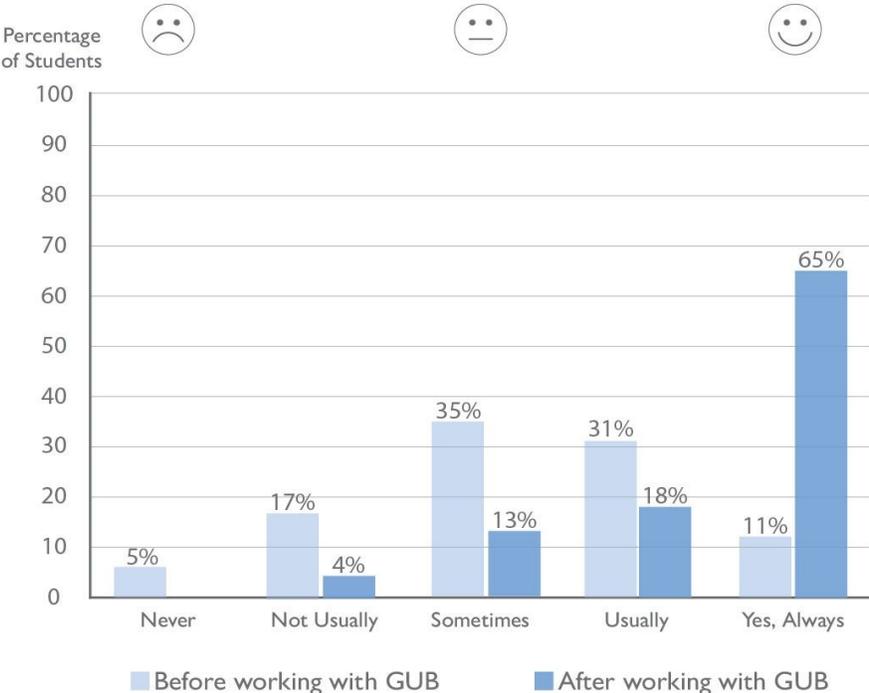
“I have a voice in city issues that matter to me.”



“After working with GUB, I understand what happens to my ideas that I share with the city”



“After working with GUB, I know that adults listen to what kids have to say.”



Creating a Template for Future Subcommunity Work

After GUB completes engagements, we reflect upon successes and opportunities for growth. This is particularly important for the Subcommunity Planning process, as the process and materials we used in East Boulder will be used in future subcommunity planning processes in Boulder over the next 20 years. We recommend using the following participatory planning tools and methodologies for future, similar projects.

Importance of building relationships: The Eisenhower Elementary Round Table Discussion sessions were successful for several reasons. First, GUB, students, and teachers developed a well-established learning community. With a series of five engagements, GUB staff and CU volunteers met and talked with children repeatedly and were able to build positive rapport over time. Students felt respected and appreciated, which leads to effective teaching, learning, and the creation of meaningful outcomes for everyone involved. The social components of the San Lazaro and Thorne engagements, which included sharing a meal (both locations) and banding birds together (for Thorne), were also key elements to building rapport and offering an inviting space in which to share ideas.

Variety of learning modes: Children, youth, and families were offered multiple ways to engage in the East Boulder Subcommunity Planning work. This variety was created intentionally in order to allow participants to express themselves comfortably. Methods included: class discussions, digital presentations, small group lessons, whole group lessons, drawing activities, research sessions, and use of a graphic organizer. The specific tools, such as the worksheet used across locations, proved to be a useful framework to engage children and parents of all ages.

Paired partner events can lead to better engagements: The Thorne engagement was a great example of how pairing an exciting partner activity with a public engagement process can lead to successful public engagements. Teens participated in a bird banding session for the first half of the evening, then participated in the GUB East Boulder work during the second half of the evening. This format allowed GUB and city staff to mingle with and learn alongside Thorne staff and students during the bird banding session and then transition smoothly into the city engagement process work.

Extended classroom inquiry leads to more thorough solutions: GUB staff noticed a contrast in the richness of responses from children based on the amount of time GUB worked with them. The most thorough design solutions to challenges in East Boulder

came from the Eisenhower children, who spent one month working repeatedly on the EBSP. For example, 2nd graders suggested a playground with a connected coffee shop for parents, a family hotel with an attached water park, volleyball courts with an adult spa next door, and an indoor playground for the winter months. These blended ideas demonstrated that children understand the importance of having spaces that meet the needs of a variety of ages, but that it might take multiple, relationship-rich engagements to realize these more complete solutions.

“This (project) was very valuable to the students and also to myself as a teacher. This is the first time in over ten years of being a 2nd grade teacher that I was able to bring in city planners and planning discussions thanks to the GUB connections and efforts”
~2nd grade teacher, Eisenhower Elementary

Conclusion

Engaging children is an important part of public participation as children are active members of the community. Community sessions with relevant and current projects like ours play a key role in helping students understand the dynamics of city decision-making in addition to contributing valuable ideas to the city from key users. GUB consistently finds that children, youth and their families are willing and able participants in community projects if the projects are presented in a sensitive and engaging manner.

In the case of the East Boulder Subcommunity Planning process, young people and their families shared a wealth of ideas and opinions that will serve the City well as it plans the next few decades of change and development in East Boulder. In order for the community to thrive from a young person’s point of view, it should include exciting and challenging playgrounds, located within children’s neighborhoods. It should include safe, relaxing, and nature-filled biking and walking paths that offer opportunities for recreation and connectivity to favorite nearby restaurants, parks, and activity centers. And it should include spaces that encourage multigenerational mixing, such as playgrounds with attached coffee shops. Building upon the key findings in this report, the community will be well-positioned to include the voices of children, teens, and their parents, in future Subcommunity Planning processes over the next 20 years.

“Something I want students to remember is that kids really can make changes in and impact their city!”
~Member, East Boulder Working Group

“My favorite part of this project was sharing my ideas. Adults really listened and they didn’t interrupt. I was able to say everything I wanted to.”

~2nd grade student, Eisenhower Elementary

Partners and Appreciation

This project was the result of a collaborative process. Several institutional partners made this possible including City of Boulder staff, Eisenhower Elementary School, EcoArts Connections, and members from the East Boulder Subcommunity Working Group. GUB would like to especially thank the partners who directly gave time and energy to make this engagement possible, and including the 2nd grade students at Eisenhower Elementary School, Thorne Bird Banding Club, and the residents from San Lazaro Manufactured Home Community for sharing their recommendations for the East Boulder Subcommunity Plan.

- City/Community Experts (for Eisenhower Round Table Discussions)
 - Louise Chawla, Founder GUB, CU Professor Emerita
 - Lucy Conklin, East Boulder Working Group member
 - Julie Dullien, East Boulder Working Group member
 - Alice Huang, City of Boulder, Planning Dept
 - Sarah Huntley, City of Boulder, Engagement Manager
 - Kathleen King, City of Boulder, Planning Department
 - Adam Kroll, East Boulder Working Group member
 - Kenneth MacClune, East Boulder Working Group member
 - Jean Sanson, City of Boulder, Transportation Department
- City of Boulder
 - Ryan Hanschen, Engagement Specialist
 - Alice Huang, Planning Department
 - Sarah Huntley, Community Engagement Manager
 - Kathleen King, Planning Department
 - Holly Opansky, Administrative Specialist
 - Jean Sanson, Transportation Department
- EcoArts Connections
 - Ariana Garcia, Project Assistant and Promotora
 - Marda Kim, Executive Director
- Eisenhower Elementary School, Boulder Valley School District
 - Ashley Novak, 2nd grade teacher
 - Miriam Parker, 2nd grade teacher
 - Donna Patterson, 2nd grade teacher

- Brady Stroup, Principal Eisenhower Elementary
- Growing Up Boulder Staff/Team
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 - Federica Merola Brewer, ENVD Undergraduate GUB Intern
 - Mara Mintzer, GUB, Program Director
- Thorne Nature Experience
 - Dr. Oakleigh Thorne, Founder
 - Gwenn Tenney, Program Manager--Field trips and Volunteers
- University of Colorado
 - ENVD Undergraduate Volunteers
 - Leandre Mills, Former GUB Intern, CU Environmental Design student
 - Lauren Oertel, CU Environmental Design student
 - School of Education Undergraduate Volunteers
 - Ava Deangelis
 - Jenna Dove
 - Eliza Engelsher
 - Elizabeth Karzak
 - School of Education Staff
 - Ashley Cartun, Director of School Partnerships and Accreditation
 - Erin Kurtz, PhD Student
- Youth Opportunities Advisory Board (YOAB) Member
 - Paola Garcia Barron, Boulder High School student

Appendix

If you would like more detailed data, please email growingupboulder@gmail.com.

- A. [Be Heard Boulder](#) website
- B. [Blank notecatcher for research and presentations](#)
- C. [Blank student/community/family worksheet \(English and Spanish\)](#)
- D. [EBSP City web page](#)
- E. [Eisenhower Elementary, Ms. Novak's class data](#)
- F. [Eisenhower Elementary, Ms. Parker's class data](#)
- G. [Eisenhower Elementary, Ms. Patterson's class data](#)
- H. [Cumulative answers across engagements to "worksheet" page 1 questions](#)
- I. [Final Recommendations by all 2nd grade Eisenhower student for the East Boulder Subcommunity Plan data](#)
- J. [Keep Add Improve Summary Across Engagements for East Boulder SCP](#)