

South Platte River – Meeting Comments & Responses

#1

I am a huge fan of river areas and would love the Platte and surrounding waterways to improve to allow habitat for wildlife and recreation opportunities for citizens. Recreation, both on water and off, are currently influenced by water quality and the smell of the river. Improvements would make the city more attractive and is something I will be willing to pay higher taxes for.

Response

Thank you for your input on the Urban Waterways Restoration Feasibility Study and indicating the importance of visual appearance, access, habitat, water quality and recreation.

It is good to know that is something you would be willing to pay higher taxes for. The City's Department of Environmental Health is supportive of improvements that create opportunities for active, healthy lifestyles, but does not recommend swimming in any surface water body in Denver (wading, fishing, and boating are ok). Swimming in the lakes and streams in Denver is prohibited by Division 2, Section 24-9 of the Denver Revised Municipal Code. We hope someday it will be safe to swim in the City's streams and lakes, but for now, it is not. This study is a step in the right direction to helping us get closer to achieving that goal.

#2

Urban runoff in my neighborhood (Capitol Hill) is heavy with trash and other debris.

Response

Thank you for your input on the Urban Waterways Restoration Feasibility Study and indicating the importance of water quality.

The City's Department of Environmental Health is partnering with The Greenway Foundation to decrease the challenges of trash in the South Platte River and its tributaries, including outreach and engagement efforts to help Denver's citizens understand that "trash in my neighborhood = trash in my waterways". Efforts are also underway with local colleges and universities to engage students in a competition to create trash removal devices that can be placed in these urban waterways. This effort was inspired by Baltimore's innovative and successful trash wheel.

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#3

i believe healthy riparian areas are crucial for long-term sustainability, and encouraging visitors to these areas is important to build understanding and appreciation. by recreation i don't mean playing fields i mean walking and cycling paths by the way, on Twitter you invited anyone to take this survey however the required answers to where do you live seem to be limited to the specific study areas ("south platte" i understand to NOT mean all areas adjacent to river)... so i had to lie to complete the survey

Response

Thank you for your input on the Urban Waterways Restoration Feasibility Study and indicating the importance of visual appearance, access, habitat, water quality and recreation.

The City's Department of Environmental Health is supportive of improvements that create opportunities for active, healthy lifestyles, but does not recommend swimming in any surface water body in Denver (wading, fishing, and boating are ok). Swimming in the lakes and streams in Denver is prohibited by Division 2, Section 24-9 of the Denver Revised Municipal Code. We hope someday it will be safe to swim in the City's streams and lakes, but for now, it is not. This study is a step in the right direction to helping us get closer to achieving that goal.

Thank you for your comment about the website. We have informed those that are responsible for our webpage design to make adjustments to this.

#4

I live just downstream of an industrial area and I often bike along the river in the summer. I see places for recreation further upstream near Chatfield, but I don't know if I would trust the water quality after it passes through the industrial area and street runoff. Also, I would like to see a safer route to the bike path from the Platt park area.

Response

We want to thank you for your input on the Urban Waterways Restoration Feasibility Study and the importance of visual appearance, access, water quality and recreation to you.

Thank you for sharing your concern about the water quality in such close proximity to an industrial area. The City's Department of Environmental Health is supportive of improvements that create opportunities for active, healthy lifestyles, but does not recommend swimming in any surface water body in Denver (wading, fishing, and boating are ok). Swimming in the lakes and streams in Denver is prohibited by Division 2, Section 24-9 of the Denver Revised Municipal Code. We hope someday it will be safe to swim in the City's streams and lakes, but for now, it is not. This study is a step in the right direction to helping us get closer to achieving that goal.

Currently, there are three projects to mention that connect Platt Park to the SPR trail.

The first is Evans, where we recently rehabilitated the Evans Bridge over Santa Fe. As a part of this work, we incorporated a widened 8' sidewalk on both sides of the bridge and along Evans to the SPR trail.

#5

My primary concern, particularly for the Gulches, is that the resulting channels incorporate natural materials and methods. While I see the primary goal of the gulch projects needs to be flood risk reduction, it would be very disappointing to see them follow the Cherry Creek model with extensive rock and little to no habitat potential.

For the South Platte River I'd like to see the urban riprap reduced, a compound channel with some overflow benching incorporated where possible, and an increase in the native vegetation.

Response

We want to thank you for your input on the Urban Waterways Restoration Feasibility Study and the importance of visual appearance, habitat, water quality and recreation to you.

Our goal for this study is to recommend naturalizing these waterways and create places for habitat to thrive. The study's first priority goal for the South Platte River is ecosystem restoration, then flood risk reduction and then recreation. The other waterways' (Weir Gulch and Harvard Gulch) first priority goal is flood risk reduction, then ecosystem restoration and then recreation.

The City's Department of Environmental Health is supportive of improvements that create opportunities for active, healthy lifestyles, but does not recommend swimming in any surface water body in Denver (wading, fishing, and boating are ok). Swimming in the lakes and streams in Denver is prohibited by Division 2, Section 24-9 of the Denver Revised Municipal Code. We hope someday it will be safe to swim in the City's streams and lakes, but for now, it is not. This study is a step in the right direction to helping us get closer to achieving that goal.

#6

Very difficult to access the platte river trail from baker neighborhood. There is no access between 8th Ave and alameda. Alameda ramp is very difficult/ unsafe to get to by bike.

Response

Thank you for your input on the Urban Waterways Restoration Feasibility Study and indicating the importance of access.

There does seem to be relatively easy access on the west side of the river through Frog Hollow Park, near Valverde Park, and Johnson Habitat . However you are correct that there is limited access from the east side from the Baker neighborhood. We will pass this along to the S. Platte River teams as they develop their alternatives. The SPR study does end at 6th Avenue for scoping reasons, but this comment will be passed along to the UDFCD PM that is managing all improvements within the S. Platte River, and we may be able to incorporate connections from the Baker neighborhood in a future study.

South Platte – Map Comments & Responses

Recreation/Trails | (C: Comment / R: Response)

C: Link to Platte/Downtown (@ Weir Gulch)

R: This is one of the primary goals of the study.

C: Creating canoe routes along the river (SPR in general)

R: All options will be initially considered, including improving boating conditions

C: How do people navigate to the Platte from Barnum on foot/bike safely? (@ 8th Ave.)

R: This is one of the primary goals of the study.

C: More Access; Connect to Lincoln Park (@ 13th St. & 8th Ave.)

R: This is one of the primary goals of the study.

C: Amphitheater (@ eastern bank of Weir Gulch Marina Park)

R: All options will be initially considered

C: Barrier (6th Ave. between Valverde and Sun Valley Neighborhoods)

R: This is one of the primary goals of the study.

C: Discontinuous / feels unsafe, add natural transition, add trails (@1205+00 >>1210+00)

R: This is one of the primary goals of the study.

C: Wider trails! (Northern portion of SPR Trail)

R: This is one of the primary goals of the study.

C: Bike/Ped connectivity (@ Sun Valley)

R: This is one of the primary goals of the study.

C: Better signage to share the trail with others (typ. Everywhere / SPR Trail in general)

R: This is one of the primary goals of the study.

C: Separate trails - bike / walkway (SPR Trail in general)

R: This is one of the primary goals of the study.

C: Put-in / Take-out Boat ramps (@ SPR Trail North Riverside Cemetery)

R: All options will be initially considered, including better river access

C: Trail connection needed here (@ Heron Pond Open Space / Northside Park)

R: This is one of the primary goals of the study.

C: Access for canoes, etc, ramps, removal of impediments - clearance/headway (SPR in general)

R: All options will be initially considered, including better river access

C: Think overall access to water now while planning for environmental/water quality. Make time to create biking/walking paths. Plus, try to have development next to ROW face/connect to the river and path ROWs. Try to prevent a separation of river to development. Many sections feel unsafe since river path ROWs don't merge with city.

R: All options will be initially considered, including better river access

Miscellaneous | (C: Comment / R: Response)

C: Parking or Building ? (@ south end of NWC Plan & Globeville Landing Park)

C: Homeless Population - How to deal with the population that lives by this waterway? (SPR in general)

R: We are aware of this as an issue and we are working with upper level management at the City and County of Denver to try to address this

C: Implement Confluence Park Master Plan

R: This will be taken into consideration for the outcome of this feasibility study.

C: Cover for Platte Valley Trolley (@REI trolley stop)

R: The City and County of Denver is aware of the trolley tracks roughly between Speer and Colfax, and is looking into increasing the safety surrounding these trolley tracks.

C: Building summer 2015 Metro State (@ Auraria Campus 7th St.& Auraria Pkwy.)

R: Thank you for this information

C: Would like to remove! (@ 3 industrial storage tanks south on substation on western bank near Fairview Elementary)

R: These are not within this study's scope. It is within the DHA Sun Valley Master Plan's scope and the latest plan shows that these are removed.

C: Community garden (@ Fairview Elementary)

R: This is a great idea, we hope that the recommendations that come out of the study will help facilitate more community gardens.

C: Where are community gardens? (@ Lincoln Park & Sun Valley in general)

Flooding | (C: Comment / R: Response)

C: Possibly flooding area (@ Lakewood Gulch & SPR confluence)

R: This is one of the primary goals of the study.

Ecological Restoration (C: Comment / R: Response)

C: RiNo community expressed support for returning river / riparian zone to original condition and laying back banks to provide access to the river. I.E. Making the river an amenity for the community without changing floodplain boundaries

R: This is one of the primary goals of the study.

C: We need more living infrastructure like this (@ Extended Detention Basin with a Constructed Wetland in Frog Hollow Park)

R: This is one of the primary goals of the study.

C: Opportunity on east side of the river (@ Sun Valley)

C: Design bank to accommodate redevelopment (@ Weir Gulch Marina Park > 13th St.)

R: We are coordinating with ongoing redevelopment in the area

C: Better river access (@ north of City of Cuernavaca Park on western bank)

R: All options will be initially considered, including better river access

C: Add more river benches, terraces (@31st / RiNo in general)

R: All options will be initially considered, including better river access

C: Can we remove the streets? Move back banks? Less channelized? (@ Washington St.)

R: All options will be initially considered, including moving back the banks

C: Create/restore functional riparian buffers along the river. (@ 34th St. / Taxi Freight Redevelopment)

R: This is one of the primary goals of the study.