Circulation and Connectivity

Vision: City Park’s circulation system of roads and trails provides a hierarchy of movement that orchestrates park experiences. Sinuous, winding park roads provide access to park destinations and a park experience for drivers along alignments established as early as the 1880s. These narrow lanes include parallel parking and bicycling as a shared use. A ‘through’ designated bicycle route extends the length of City Park. Park entrance roads encourage access for all modes. Parking includes surface lots at City Park Pavilion, City Park Greenhouse, and the tennis courts. Surface lots and parking garages provide parking in the park’s northeast quadrant. Pedestrian trails crisscross City Park. Many follow reestablished historic routes to connect with prominent spaces and park destinations. The south park road is repurposed as a pedestrian and bicycle promenade. 5280 Trail remains as a popular walking and running route. Improved trails on the park’s east and west edges connect pedestrians and bicyclists with adjacent neighborhoods.

Principle: Establish a comprehensive circulation system with improved connections and access to, and within, the park for all modes that builds upon City Park’s character.

1. Follow a balanced approach to ensure a safe, quality park experience for all users that is intuitive to navigate.
   a. Improve walking, running, bicycling, and driving experiences, and access to park destinations.
   b. Minimize ‘through’ driving or bicycling routes that would impact park experiences.
   c. Ensure wayfinding improvements at key decision points and park destinations respect park character and minimize sign clutter.

2. Respect City Park’s character when improving experiences, access, and connectivity.
   a. Preserve established and historic circulation patterns that define the park’s hierarchy of movement and orchestration of park experiences.
   b. Ensure new pedestrian trails are integrated with respect to the park’s composition. Use existing established roads or trails for driving and bicycling.

3. Ensure improved connections for pedestrians and bicyclists into City Park.
   a. Encourage connections with existing and proposed bicycle / routes to City Park, and enhanced access at park edges.
      i. Encourage improved pedestrian and bicyclist experiences along East 23rd Avenue, York Street, and Colorado Boulevard.
Park Entrance Roads

4. Ensure modifications to park entrance roads provide better access into City Park for all modes of travel.
   a. McLellan Gateway at East 21st Avenue at York Street:
      i. Retain established road alignment and relationships to McLellan Gateway, vegetation, and park spaces.
      ii. Encourage reduced cross section widths to accommodate two-way vehicular travel and shared bicycle use.
   b. Allow new traffic control gates at park entrances at East 21st Avenue, City Park Esplanade, Steele Street, and near City Park Greenhouse to manage access.
      i. Design new gates to be small inconspicuous features, contemporary in style, and compatible with park character in scale, form, and material.
      ii. Ensure adequate openings with no obstructions to provide safe use by pedestrians and bicyclists when closed to vehicles.
   c. Ensure a consistent aesthetic for park entrance roads.
      i. Acceptable materials include: asphalt surfacing for pavement, minimal concrete paving for drainage, and low rolled curbs.
      ii. Acceptable materials for traffic control gates include: painted steel, aluminum or metal in a color palette compatible with park character.

5. Ensure improvements to East 23rd Avenue, the road and its edges, City Park, and City Park Golf Course are designed as a cohesive space. See East 23rd Avenue section for guidelines.
Park Roads

6. Ensure modifications to park roads to improve circulation, wayfinding, and park experiences are accomplished in a manner that respects park character.
   a. Follow a consistent aesthetic for all park roads and ensure use of a similar scale and materials.
      i. Retain established road alignments and relationships with adjacent vegetation patterns and park spaces.
      ii. Encourage reduced cross section widths to accommodate travel lanes, parallel parking, and shared bicycle use.
      iii. Ensure adjacent vegetation patterns along road edges, i.e., tree allees and meadows, are repaired and enhanced with any modifications.
   b. Acceptable materials include: asphalt surfacing for pavement, minimal concrete paving for drainage, and low rolled curbs.

7. Ensure modifications to North Park Road are consistent with the park road aesthetic and enhance the interface with the Zoo boundary.
   a. Allow modification of the cross section width to be consistent in scale and arrangement with the park roads.
   b. Design modifications to North Park Road and improvements to the Zoo edge as one cohesive space and aesthetic.
   c. Ensure improvements to the intersection west of the Museum entry on East 22nd Avenue better facilitate all modes of travel.
      i. Acceptable modifications include slight realignment of the roads with stop signs or a roundabout.
   d. Ensure improvements to the intersection with west park roads south of Duck Lake better facilitate all modes of travel.
      i. Acceptable modifications include slight realignment of the roads with stop signs or a roundabout.
**Pedestrian Trails and Walkways**

8. Provide a comprehensive pedestrian experience that enriches the park character.
   a. Preserve established and historic trails and walkways including alignments, and where feasible, trail surfaces.
   b. Allow repair to existing trails and provide new trails for better access to park destinations and for improved pedestrian movement.
      i. Allow new trails along alignments of missing historic routes, particularly routes visible in established tree allees and forested groves.
      ii. Design new trails with surfacing and widths that address use, i.e., soft surfacing with a narrow width for running trails.
      iii. Acceptable materials for pedestrian trails include:
          - Soft surfaces for running trails (<3’ wide) and for secondary pedestrian routes (6’ +/- wide);
          - Hardscape paving for primary pedestrian routes (6’ to 8’ wide), universally accessible routes, shared pedestrian and bicycling routes, and park promenades;
          - Follow the City Park hardscape paving mixes for color and finish. Meet Parks and Recreation standards.
   c. Allow repair to existing walkways and provide new pedestrian walkways for access to park buildings and structures.
      i. Design walkways in respect to the architectural character of adjacent buildings or structures.
         - Orthogonal formal arrangements are appropriate at City Park Pavilion and Elephant House;
         - Organic flowing routes are appropriate at Graham / Bible House and Barn.
      ii. Acceptable materials for walkways to buildings and structures include:
          - Hardscape paving for primary pedestrian routes (6’ to 8’ wide) and for park promenades;
          - Follow the City Park hardscape paving mixes.
   d. Allow enhancement of the Ferril Lake promenade.
      i. Allow a wider pedestrian walkway with additional amenities including lighting and seating.
      ii. Allow a broad terrace of seating or a pedestrian walkway on the lake’s north edge to connect to Elephant House.
9. Ensure pedestrian connections are improved to access the park from adjacent neighborhoods.
   
a. Ensure improvements for pedestrian / bicycle trails along York Street and Colorado Boulevard are compatible with park character.
   
i. Design new trails with surfacing and widths that address the shared use.
   
   ii. Acceptable materials include:
       - Soft surfaces for running trails (<3’ wide);
       - Hardscape paving for shared pedestrian and bicycling routes with a maximum width of 8’;
       - Follow the City Park hardscape paving mixes for color and finish. Meet Parks and Recreation standards.
   
b. Allow a through pedestrian route along East 17th Avenue.
   
i. Preserve and repair the sandstone trail where feasible, and design improvements to be compatible.
   
   ii. Allow connections to City Park along East 17th Avenue at select locations.
   
c. Allow a pedestrian connection from Skyland Neighborhood to City Park through City Park Golf Course.
10. Ensure park promenades accommodate runners, walkers, bicyclists, and provides a respite for park users.
   a. Ensure improvements provide a cohesive park space that offers a balanced park experience.
   b. Preserve the established alignments of routes designated as park promenades. Allow modifications to the route and surfacing to accommodate pedestrians, bicyclists, and park users.
      i. Allow a maximum 24-foot cross section width, narrowing where needed.
      ii. Ensure a cohesive aesthetic with a range of surface materials that support intended uses.
      iii. Acceptable materials include:
           • Soft surfaces for running trails (<3’ wide);
           • Hardscape paving for shared pedestrian and bicycle use and for universally accessible routes;
           • Follow the City Park hardscape paving mixes for color and finish. Meet Parks and Recreation standards.
   c. Ensure pedestrian-scaled lighting, benches, and trash receptacles are placed for function and enjoyment, in locations compatible with park character.
      i. Design new amenities to be compatible with park character in a compatible color palette, and to assist in creating a cohesive park space.
Bicycling

11. Provide a shared experience for bicyclists traveling to, through, and within the park that respects park character and composition.
   a. Ensure modifications to select trails to provide recreational bicycling as a shared use with pedestrians.
   b. Retain the designated bicycle route (D-8) as the park’s through bicycle route.

12. Encourage shared bicycle use with vehicular travel on park roads.
   a. Ensure travel lanes are adequate for shared vehicular use and two-way bicycle travel.

Parking

   a. Allow parallel parking along park roads.
   b. Exclude parking at roundabouts, in areas of key views, and where pedestrian and bicycle routes connect to park roads.
   c. Remove parking from views into park spaces and from views towards prominent features.

14. Allow modifications to parking in the park’s northeast quadrant (the Zoo, Museum, and North Meadow).
   a. Ensure modifications to existing parking structures and lots respect the urban forest, living collections, and tree patterns.
   b. Allow underground parking structures in already disturbed locations where these can be designed compatible with park character in mass, scale, and form.
   c. Ensure improvements to park roads and parking are designed holistically to ensure a park experience is maintained.
Vegetation and Ecology

Vision: City Park’s urban forest will be managed to protect significant and notable trees for historic integrity, and to continue its legacy as an important urban forest. The park’s arrangement of trees, meadows, and gardens creates spaces that offer a variety of experiences.

The 157 tree species that compose City Park’s urban forest are arranged as tree allees, forested groves, and living collections with many important individual trees. Historic gardens—the 1950 Botanic Garden with the Pinetum, Lily Pond, Kessler Plaza along with Burns and Sopris Gardens—are equally characteristic features. Rookeries, trees, and lakes provide habitat for bird and water fowl species, aquatic species, and urban wildlife.

These vegetation patterns and species contribute to City Park’s significance and are valuable for horticultural qualities, aesthetics, and ecological benefits.

Principle: Protect and preserve City Park’s established tree and vegetation patterns, plant species, and significant and notable trees to preserve character, enhance the urban tree canopy, provide wildlife and bird habitat or other ecological benefits, and to enhance biological diversity.

Guidelines for Vegetation and Ecology include:
- Urban Forest
- Ecological Diversity
- Meadows
- Gardens and Living Collections
Urban Forest

Vision: Forested groves and tree allees contain some of the park’s oldest trees. Trees remain from each period of the park’s development—original 1890s cottonwoods, shade trees along park roads, evergreens and deciduous trees in forested groves along major streets, and botanical collections. Forested groves include evergreens and understory trees such as crabapples or hawthorns providing buffers along park edges. Tree allees line park roads with many remaining from the park’s earliest plantings, i.e., the 1880s into the 1920s.

1. Ensure the renewal of City Park’s urban forest and tree canopy is designed holistically to consider aesthetics, historic integrity, ecological benefits, environmental performance, and tree health.
   a. Follow a successional approach that preserves significant and notable trees and respects historic patterns.
      i. Protect and preserve significant and notable trees for longevity through sound horticultural practices.
      ii. Allow replacement where trees are missing or diminished to retain or reestablish openings and enclosures. Replace trees when they become hazards or die.
      iii. Allow new infill trees in anticipation of removal of aging trees.
   b. Allow new hardy and experimental species for horticultural and environmental benefits while ensuring a similarity in form, color, and flower to historic species.
      i. Ensure each vegetation pattern’s mix of species and composition is preserved when determining the appropriateness of new species.
2. Protect and expand City Park’s trees for longevity and health, to strengthen historic patterns, and to enhance park use and environmental performance.
   a. Protect and preserve established, significant, and notable trees while allowing replacement of aging or hazard trees.
   b. When replacement is required, use the same or similar species or new hardy species where appropriate.
   c. Consider the individual nuances of each forested grove and tree allee when planting new trees to protect significant and notable trees. Retain the species mix, pattern, arrangement, and relationships to park spaces and park roads.
      i. Manage forested groves as a mixture of evergreen and deciduous shade trees, or groupings of individual species that assist in defining the park’s spatial character and experiences.
      ii. Consider additional horticultural measures such as use of potable water as an irrigation source to ensure longevity of sensitive species.
      iii. Manage tree allees as deciduous shade trees within distinct patterns to preserve their role in defining the character of park roads and park edges along York Street and Colorado Boulevard.

3. Ensure established and historic tree allees and forested groves are preserved and enhanced when modifying park roads or park spaces.

4. Allow irrigated bluegrass as understory vegetation in forested groves and tree allees to ensure protection and preservation of significant and notable trees.
Ecological Diversity

Vision: City Park is envisioned as a diverse and ecologically functioning landscape that provides conservation measures and improves habitat. Improvements to park spaces or lake edges will enhance habitat for bird and water fowl species such as black-crowned night herons and double crested cormorants, aquatic species, and urban wildlife, while respecting park character.

5. Allow specific areas of City Park to be managed and modified as more ecologically diverse landscapes while respecting park character.
   a. Allow modifications to lake edges and select areas of vegetation to provide improved habitat for birds, water fowl, aquatic species, and wildlife in a naturalized aesthetic.
      i. Allow selected lake edges to be improved with topographic changes and plantings of native and hardy plant species.
      ii. Retain existing dead trees as wildlife habitat.
      iii. Allow removal of invasive or noxious vegetation species.
      iv. Allow improvements and additions to the rookeries in Ferril and Duck Lakes including:
         • Vegetation replacement or enhancement, or other measures to provide long-lasting habitat.
         • Man-made elements, naturalized in appearance, to provide nesting habitat as vegetation matures.
   b. Allow vegetation modifications in selected areas of South Meadow as a naturalized landscape.
      i. Respect the established and historic park composition while allowing modifications to grasses and understory plantings within select park spaces.
      ii. Encourage use of native and hardy plant species that provide habitat for pollinators, wildlife, and birds.

6. Allow modifications to Ferril Lake, Duck Lake, and Little Lake (the Sediment Pond) to enhance water quality and improve ecological health.
   a. Acceptable modifications may include aeration, dredging, algae control, or erosion control.
LEGEND

- Naturalized Area / Ecological Opportunity

Ecological Diversity