• Plant new trees to repair established or historic patterns, allowing new replacements near mature trees.
• Consider new hardy species as in-kind replacements that are similar in character to significant, notable, or historic trees in form, color, and flower.
  ▪ Follow each vegetation pattern’s mix of species and composition to determine appropriateness of new species.
  ▪ Consider increasing City Park’s number of trees, extent of canopy, and diversity of species.

Repair City Park’s variety of species and patterns that define the park composition, spatial relationships, views, and experiences.
• Replace vegetation where missing or diminished to retain or reestablish openings and enclosures.
• Repair forested groves and tree allees in a holistic manner that considers the nuances of each individual grove or allee, and their role in the park.
  ▪ Manage forested groves as a mixture of evergreen and deciduous shade trees or groupings of individual species that assist in defining park spaces and experiences. Consider individual nuances of each forested grove when planting new trees to retain the pattern and composition.
  ▪ Locate new and infill trees to define meadows, establish views, and to replace missing trees.
  ▪ Manage tree allees as deciduous shade trees within their distinct patterns to preserve their role in defining the character of park roads. Consider individual nuances of each tree allee when planting new, i.e., arrangement, species mix, and relationship to park roads. Ensure modifications to park roads also respect and enhance established and historic tree allees.
  ▪ Consider additional horticultural measures such as use of potable water for irrigation to ensure the longevity of sensitive conifer groves.
  ▪ Evaluate the long-term health of established trees prior to irrigation modifications.
• Add trees in select areas to define spaces and views.
• Consider native grasses and plantings in South Meadow and the space surrounding the Lily Pond.

Retain bluegrass in forested groves under established trees. The lawn and trees have a compatibility that conserves water use and preserves tree canopy.
• Maintain irrigated bluegrass within forested groves as passive park spaces per the City of Denver’s Bluegrass Forested landscape typology.
Meadows

Seven distinct meadows, defined by forested groves and tree allees, assist in creating park character. Meadows will be preserved by protecting significant, notable, and historic trees and topography, by relocating trees, and by planting new trees to reinforce the composition of each meadow. Meadow spaces and views between meadows will be reestablished.

- Protect and preserve established trees that assist in defining meadow spaces.
  - Manage extant trees for longevity following appropriate horticultural practices.
  - Replace trees when they become hazards or die. Infill trees in anticipation of removal of aging trees.
  - Consider time of year and each tree’s role when removing, thinning or pruning, and in replacement.
  - Plant new trees to repair established patterns and reinforce meadows as park spaces.

- Repair the lawns and herbaceous vegetation of each meadow.

- North Meadow:
  - Preserve established trees and topography that reinforce North Meadow as a park space.
  - Consider new tree plantings to define or orient views both into the meadow and towards the Museum.

- Big Meadow:
  - Preserve established trees and topography that reinforce Big Meadow as a park space.
  - Consider new tree plantings to assist in creating a human-scale to the meadow and to better orient views toward the Rocky Mountains.

- West Meadows:
  - Preserve established trees and topography that reinforce each meadow as a park space.
  - Consider new tree plantings to reestablish the spatial quality of each meadow.
South Meadow and Southeast Corner:
The southeast corner of City Park will provide exploratory and experiential park uses and experiences. A naturalistic aesthetic will be developed holistically, and will be integrated with the established park composition.

- Preserve established trees and topography that reinforce South Meadow as a park space.
- Respect South Meadow’s established and historic park composition when adding new features or modifying spaces, trees, or plantings.
  - Preserve established and historic spatial patterns including the meadow, forested groves, tree allees, and living collections.
  - Protect and preserve established, significant, and notable trees.
  - Protect the meadow’s established spatial patterns, form, size, and scale when modifying vegetation.
- Consider integrating new resilient plantings and native plant species.
- Consider modifying the bluegrass lawn into a native grass meadow.
  - Consider adding cool and warm season grasses and wildflowers consisting of native and hardy species in South Meadow.
  - Consider plant species that provide habitat for pollinators, wildlife, and birds.
- Evaluate the long-term health of established trees prior to irrigation modifications and conversion to native meadow.
Ecological Diversity

City Park will be improved to provide a more diverse and ecologically functioning landscape. Modifications or additions will respect park character, provide conservation measures, and improve bird and wildlife habitat.

- Provide a naturalistic setting for selected lake edges and specific park spaces for improved habitat for birds, aquatic species, and urban wildlife.
  - Improve lake edges through topographic modifications and new native and/or hardy plant species that provide habitat and angler access points.
  - Retain existing dead trees as habitat and remove invasive or noxious vegetation species.
  - Improve rookeries in Ferril Lake and Duck Lake through successional plantings. Consider establishing man-made elements that are naturalized in appearance to provide nesting habitat as vegetation matures.
  - Consider man-made fish habitat structures to improve aquatic habitat.

- Continue the park’s role in the city-wide stormwater system in which stormwater flows through Little Lake (Sediment Pond) and Ferril Lake.

- Provide measures to assist in regulating local temperature, managing stormwater runoff from park spaces, and providing water conservation.
  - Manage the urban forest to provide shade for roads, trails, and impervious surfaces.
  - Direct stormwater runoff to vegetated areas to improve the quality of runoff.
  - Reduce impervious surfaces where possible by narrowing park roads and allowing pervious surfaces where appropriate.

- Enhance water quality and environmental benefits of Ferril Lake, Duck Lake, and Little Lake.

- Consider enhancing City Park’s southeast corner to include naturalized meadow and landscape.

- Preserve ecologically functional vegetation.

- Provide renewed biological diversity for both plant and wildlife habitat at lake edges and within the park’s southeast corner.
Gardens and Living Collections

City Park will continue to be a garden showcase. Established and historic gardens and living collections will be repaired and new gardens added. Individualized setting, spatial arrangements, features, and plantings of each garden and living collection will be preserved and repaired. A successional approach will preserve significant and notable trees and shrubs and new plantings of hardy species. The diversity of existing species will be preserved and additional species of interest provided.

City Park’s gardens were designed as commemorative installations, formal flowerbeds, or picturesque settings. They include Box Canyon Waterway, Kessler Plaza / Benedict Garden, Burns Garden, Sopris Garden, and City Park Esplanade. The city’s first Botanic Garden was built in the 1950s and remains in City Park on the park’s east side.

Living collections are groupings of plants that showcase a single species or several similar species. Most are vestiges of the 1950s Botanic Garden or are features of park gateways. They include the Pinetum, Lilac Hedge, Sopris Gateway, and the Cottonwood Grove.

- Protect and preserve significant and notable trees and manage them for longevity according to appropriate horticultural practices.

- Provide additional horticultural measures, i.e., potable water supply for irrigation of conifer trees or other salt sensitive species to ensure the health and longevity of gardens and living collections.

- Preserve extant features of the 1950s Botanic Garden including trees and shrubs, garden spaces and relationships, and topography.
  - Manage plantings to preserve longevity and add new plantings of compatible species.
  - Create a detailed plan of individual plantings documenting existing conditions, species, variety, size, and form.

- Plant new trees to repair established or historic patterns, allowing new replacements near mature trees.
  - Allow new hardy and experimental species as in-kind replacements that are similar in character in form, color, and flower to established or historic trees and shrubs.
  - Consider new trees or shrubs of horticultural interest integrated with established patterns.

Gardens are commemorative installations, formal flowerbeds, or picturesque settings.

Burns Garden (1896)
City Park Esplanade (1907 / 1918)
Kessler Plaza & Benedict Garden (1909 / 1911)
Sopris Garden (1925)
Botanic Garden (1952 to 1960)
Box Canyon Waterway (1957)
Rock Garden (1990s)

Living collections are groupings of plants that showcase a single species or several similar species.

Cottonwood Grove (1890s)
Sopris Gateway (1911)
Lilac Hedge (1953)
Pinetum (1953)
### 1950s Botanic Garden
Denver’s first Botanic Garden was built in the early 1950s on City Park’s east side. S.R. DeBoer created early planning documents from which several designs were implemented—the Pinetum, Box Canyon Waterway, Lilac Hedge, and Rainbow Iris Garden. Miscellaneous plantings including cherry and crabapple trees and nearly 180 trees remain from these original plantings. Exceptions are the Iris Garden and tulip plantings.

- Preserve extant features of the 1950s Botanic Garden including trees, shrubs, garden spaces, relationships, and topography.
- Manage plantings to preserve longevity. Add new plantings of compatible species.
  - Create a detailed plan of individual plantings documenting existing condition, species, variety, size, and form.
  - Provide additional field work and research to determine the extent of the 1950s Botanic Garden and remaining features. Ensure proper documentation, management, and care.
  - Consider increased or specialized arborist and horticulturist care to better manage gardens as specialized plant collections.
  - Consider a potable water source / supply for all gardens.

### Box Canyon Waterway
The 1957 Box Canyon Waterway, designed by S.R. DeBoer will be repaired. The design is an interpretation of a mountain stream cascading over large boulders and smaller stone drops. It is bordered by native plants and grasses and terminates at the Lily Pond.

- Replace missing boulder outcrops, repair stone drop structures, and add new hardy and native plantings.
  - Repair stone drop structures by removing excessive and inappropriate mortar and replace missing stones.
  - Repair the form, grade, and topography of water basins of each drop structure.
  - Add new plantings of hardy or native species similar in character to original plantings.
  - Continue the water quality role of the waterway in filtering sediment and debris.
- Consider integrating an interactive nature play element as a hardscape surface and recirculating water.
- Provide new pedestrian trails to access and interact with Box Canyon Waterway.

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Many trees, shrubs and spaces remain from the 1950s Botanic Garden set on the park’s east side including lilacs, cherries, and the pines of the Pinetum.
Sopris Garden
The 1925 Sopris Garden is west of City Park Pavilion. It consists of Elizabeth Ellen Sopris Memorial, formal flower beds, Colonial Dames sundial (1906), a Civil War Memorial short column, and Sons of Colorado Flagpole (1906). Japanese Tree Lilacs, added in 1990, assist in defining the space. The garden and features will be repaired.

- Repair the pool and replace the missing bronze drinking fountains with new, in-kind fountains.
- Retain the Japanese Tree Lilacs enclosing the garden on the west side. Replace the trees as needed for longevity.

City Park Esplanade
City Park Esplanade is one of the park’s primary entrances and connects the park with East High School. The 1907 design by George Kessler is a French-inspired grand promenade with a grand monument at each end. A broad central lawn is lined by tree allees on the Esplanade's east and west road edges. This ceremonial entrance to City Park includes Sullivan Gateway on the south and Thatcher Memorial at its terminus on the north. City Park Esplanade will be repaired.

- Repair the backdrop of juniper trees north of Thatcher Memorial with new plantings of the same or in-kind species.
- Repair Thatcher Memorial. Consider a comprehensive study to evaluate and recommend a preservation / rehabilitation approach to repairing the formal composition and materials of City Park Esplanade, including vegetation.
- Add new traffic control gates at East 17th Avenue.
- Repair the tree allee and tree patterns of City Park Esplanade. Allow new replacement trees near mature trees.

Kessler Plaza and Benedict Garden
The 1907 / 1908 Kessler Plaza occupies the vista point as designed in Meryweather's 1882 plan. This grand space was built as a viewing plaza for both pedestrians and vehicles to enjoy breathtaking views of the Rocky Mountains and, later downtown Denver. Below Kessler Plaza is the 1911 Benedict Garden designed by the Olmsted Brothers. It has been altered but retains its historic form of 1911 with a central fountain and symmetrical gardens. The vista point will be preserved, and the gardens repaired to more fully reflect the original space and design.

- Consider modifying or replacing the existing 1999 H2Odssey water feature that reflects the scale, character, and intent of the original reflecting pool.
- Add evergreen trees or other compatible trees on the north and south hillsides to better define Benedict Garden. Enhance the garden with additional plantings.
- Protect and preserve the topographic landform of Kessler Plaza and Benedict Garden.

Burns Garden
The 1896 Burns Garden by Reinhardt Schuetze dates to the park’s early development. Designed in the French broderie manner with elaborate flowerbeds, it is a small formal garden encircled by evergreen and deciduous trees. Three Naval cannons are west, north, and southeast of the flowerbeds. The bronze statue of Robert Burns, added in 1904 in the center of the garden, replaced an earlier Spanish-American memorial. Burns Garden will be preserved and repaired to reflect its original design.

- Restore the three canons and bronze statue of Robert Burns.
- Repair the garden plantings and garden bed forms to reflect the original design.
Rock Garden
The 1990s Rock Garden is an informal flower bed of ornamental grasses and perennials adjacent to South Meadow and Lily Pond.

- Enhance Rock Garden with additional planting.
- Consider integrating new resilient plantings and native plant species complementary to other plantings within South Meadow.
- Consider plant species that provide habitat for pollinators, wildlife, and birds.

New Gardens
New gardens will be added in select locations to continue the legacy of City Park as the city’s garden showcase.

- Expand and enhance gardens at City Park Greenhouse.
  - Expand the garden to the west to include plants with rich horticultural interest.
  - Open views into the gardens and the Work Progress Administration portion of City Park Greenhouse.
  - Remove portions of the chain link fence and evergreen shrubs on the west side.
  - Remove the portable toilet / trash enclosure on the north side along East 23rd Avenue.
- Add a new garden at the East 22nd Avenue pedestrian trail near York Street.
- Add a new garden south of Graham / Bible House in the location of the non-extant greenhouse.
  - Add a pedestrian trail along the missing historic route to access the garden.
  - Consider integrating the new garden and new picnic site as one park space.
Pinetum
The 1953 Pinetum will be repaired and enhanced. Set on the south side of the Museum, the Pinetum is a mature grove of conifer trees set on sloping terrain. The tree plantings and grading were laid out in a hilly labyrinth as part of the 1950s Botanic Garden designed by S.R. DeBoer. Planting design was by Robert E. More and grading was designed by Ed Wallace.

- Repair the Pinetum to improve its physical and visual connection with the Museum, South Meadow, and Lily Pond.
- Preserve the original features of the Pinetum including topography and trees.
- Plant new trees to reestablish missing patterns. Allow new conifer species to expand the diversity, educational value, and aesthetics of the collection.
- Remove the crabapples at the perimeter of the Pinetum. These recent additions are not compatible with the conifer planting.

Lilac Hedge
The Lilac Hedge that defines the north edge of Big Meadow will be repaired. Originally planted in 1953 as part of the Botanic Garden, it is a series of parallel rows with a pedestrian trail at the center.

- Preserve original features of the Lilac Hedge including shrubs and topography.
- Manage plantings to preserve longevity. Add new plantings of lilacs of the same, similar, or in-kind species as older shrubs die to maintain the diversity and aesthetics of the collection.

Cottonwood Grove
The cottonwood tree grove in the northwest corner of City Park near McLellan Gateway will be preserved and enhanced. Many trees date from the early development of the park between 1886 and 1890.

- Follow a successional approach to preserve mature trees and facilitate infill and new tree plantings.
- Protect significant and notable trees and manage them for longevity according to appropriate horticultural practices.
- Plant new cottonwood trees to retain the unique identity of the grove, allowing new replacements to be planted near mature trees.

Sopris Gateway
The 1911 / 1912 Sopris Gateway was built as a trolley stop and pedestrian gateway into City Park. The gateway is framed by a mass planting of Austrian and Ponderosa pine, juniper, catalpa, and crabapple trees. The trees frame the view into the park and provide a backdrop for the monument. The trees will be maintained and replanted when needed.

- Follow a successional approach to preserve significant and notable trees and facilitate infill and new tree plantings.
  - Protect established trees and manage them for longevity according to appropriate horticultural practices.
  - Plant new trees of the same or similar species to retain the unique identity of the living collections, allowing new replacements to be planted near mature trees.
  - Consider additional horticultural measures such as use of potable water for irrigation to ensure the longevity of sensitive conifer trees.
Water

City Park’s constructed water features are important historic features, and key components of the park’s ecosystem. As such, they will be improved and managed for historic integrity, aesthetics, and biological diversity. Views to and across the lakes and water features will be repaired. Improvements to topography and vegetation will provide naturalized areas and improved bird and wildlife habitat.

**Principle: Protect constructed water features to preserve park character and to enhance water quality and ecological function.**

**Ferril Lake**

Ferril Lake will be preserved and enhanced as a more ecologically diverse water body. Designed by Reinhard Schuetze in 1896, it was envisioned as a significant component of City Park in Meryweather’s 1882 park plan. Schuetze sited the lake and designed its form, topography, and size to offer prominent views of the mountains beyond. The lake’s open mirror of water reflecting the sky provides open vistas, recreation, and entertainment.

- Enhance lake edges with topographic modifications and planting improvements using native and adaptive riparian plantings to create a naturalized appearance and habitat for wildlife and birds.

- Continue to provide angler access and to stock the lake for fishing.
  - Provide areas at select locations near the lake edge.
  - Provide areas for universally accessible fishing.

- Improve rookeries in Ferril Lake through vegetation replacement or other measures to provide habitat.

- Consider man-made fish habitat structures to improve aquatic habitat.

- Continue to allow non-motorized public uses on Ferril Lake.

Three man-made lakes with mature trees and rookeries provide habitat for a wide variety of birds and wildlife including black-crowned night herons, double-crested cormorants, and many duck species.
**City Ditch**

City Ditch predates the development of City Park. It flows into City Park from East 17th Avenue where it joins the City’s stormwater sewer system, and the combined flow enters the park. Ferril Lake, Duck Lake, and Little Lake are fed from City Ditch.

- Preserve City Ditch’s flow of water into City Park as a water source for the lakes.

**Duck Lake**

Duck Lake, built in 1887 and featured in Meryweather’s 1882 plan, will be preserved and enhanced. Duck Lake will continue as a bird refuge with the central island and lake improved to provide breeding and nesting areas.

- Enhance lake edges with topographic modifications and plantings of native and adaptive riparian species to create a naturalized edge.
- Improve rookeries in Duck Lake through vegetation replacement or other measures to provide habitat.
- Consider man-made fish habitat structures to improve aquatic habitat.

**H2Odyssey**

The 1999 H2Odyssey fountain is the center of Kessler Plaza, west of the original reflecting pool that was removed many years ago. The water feature is a series of shooting fountainheads set in a circular plaza.

Consider modifying or replacing the existing water feature with an interactive water feature that reflects the scale, character, and intent of the original reflecting pool.

**Little Lake (Sediment Pond)**

Featured in Meryweather’s 1882 plan, Little Lake was known as Lilly Lake early in the park’s history. The lake’s original design, a series of water bodies along the line of natural drainage within the park, was reminiscent of Monet’s paintings of Giverny of still water, weeping willows, and lilies.

- Maintain Little Lake’s function in the stormwater management system including water quality.
- Enhance lake edges with topographic modifications and plantings of native and adaptive riparian species to create a naturalized area.
- Consider improvements to the plantings to reflect the original design intent.
- Continue to provide angler access, and to stock the lake for fishing.
  - Provide areas at select locations near the lake edge.
  - Provide areas for universally accessible fishing.

**Lily Pond**

S.R. DeBoer’s Lily Pond of 1925 is circular in form. It is built of rustic sandstone walls that divide the larger outer pool into a series of smaller pools to hold water lilies. A rustic stone headwall on the east provides an overlook. Lily Pond will be repaired, and new plantings added.

- Repair the water delivery system and stone walls, and add new plantings.
- Repair rustic stone walls and stone headwall using compatible mortar, replace stones to match the original, and repair pond liner.
- Replace missing features including the wall cap and parapet wall.