Sloan's Lake Park
MASTER PLAN

Denver’s Community Park of Water, Sky, Mountains and City Views
Shore's Lake Park has long served the citizens of Denver as an important recreational amenity. This event was the Lake Junior High-Spring Regatta, circa 1925.
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A Vision for the Park's Future

Sloan's Lake Park is a unique and special place in our city; a ribbon of green surrounding a great sheet of water that opens the park to the sky, with the office towers of downtown Denver rising up on the east and the snow-capped Rocky Mountains spread across the western horizon. The park is a haven for both people and wildlife, an inner city retreat where one can enjoy the expansive views, water, openness and natural beauty of the place.

The Park:

* Is a clean, safe, fun and beautiful place for all Denver's citizens to enjoy. As a regional park, it is funded in a manner commensurate with its value and use to Denver's citizens.

* Is an important "gateway" to the city from points west. Well-defined, attractive entrances are located at appropriate points around the perimeter of the park.

* Has an abundance of trees that define distinct spaces throughout the park; open spaces for playing field sports and enjoying the views, enclosed shady spaces for quiet contemplation, and tree-lined walks. Flower beds provide seasonal color.

* Offers active and passive recreational activities with sufficient space for each activity. The lake provides the opportunity for both non-motorized and motorized boating that is consistent with the character and setting of the park. Docking and mooring facilities are available. Boating activities are managed to provide enjoyment for all types of boaters.

* Has a complete trail system with a major loop trail circling the lake and accessible connections within the park and from surrounding streets. The trail system is shared by walkers, joggers, bicyclists, skaters, the disabled and others. Some trails are designed to meet the needs of specific user groups.

* Has ample seating where one can rest and enjoy the views, and shelters for picnicking. Clean and attractive toilet facilities are available. Trash receptacles are placed conveniently for park users and do not detract from the beauty of the park; people driving through the park do not have access to trash bins. Park uses and regulations are defined by a visually attractive, uniform signage system.

* Has off-street parking facilities that provide convenient access to park uses, blend with the natural landscape, and minimize the impact of parking on surrounding neighborhoods.

* Has roads that provide access to the park but discourage uses not related to the park. The noise and visual distraction of high volume traffic on surrounding streets is buffered from the park.

* Is maintained in a manner consistent with its high visibility and use as a regional park. The disruptive impact of maintenance on park use is minimal.
Thomas F. Sloan filed homestead papers on what is now the southwest corner of Sloan's Lake Park in 1866 and later purchased additional acreage. Legend has it that Sloan struck an aquifer while digging a well on his land and gushing waters soon transformed his fields into the lake that remains today. It was not long before the lake had become a popular local recreation spot. Already in 1874, Sloan's Lake was connected by a canal to the Grandview Hotel, near today's Federal Boulevard. For thirty-five cents, one could take a horse-drawn trolley from downtown Denver to the boat dock near the hotel; board the only steamship in Colorado and cruise around Sloan's Lake.

A View of the Park's Past

In the late 1870s, Denver Mayor Richard Sopris envisioned two large parks connected by a grand parkway. Known as the "hour-glass" plan, the parks were to be today's City and Sloan's Lake Parks, and the parkway, Colfax Avenue. While unsuccessful in obtaining Sloan's Lake and the Colfax Parkway, the plan did result in the purchase of the south half of what is now City Park. The Sloan's Lake parcel continued to be envisioned as a part of the growing system of Denver's parks and parkways, but would remain a dream for nearly 30 years.

Beginning in 1891, the northwestern shore of Sloan's Lake became the site of a series of amusement parks, the most noteworthy being Manhattan Beach. Manhattan Beach featured a dance pavilion, a theater, formal flower gardens, an electric fountain, steamboat rides and a menagerie. The resort came to a tragic end on December 26, 1906, succumbing to fire of unknown origin. It was quickly followed by the development of Luna Park, which didn't go up in smoke but by 1914 had simply faded away.

It wasn't until 1906 that the land on the south side of the lake was acquired by Denver for $75,470 for the purpose of developing a park. The land around Cooper's Lake was purchased three years later for $73,220. Several additional purchases enlarged the park to 191 acres by 1936. In 1937, the City purchased the 92-acre site of the former amusement parks for $25,000 for inclusion in the park. Only in 1985 did the park reach its current size of 295 acres when the City purchased land in front of Lake Middle School.

The two main structures in the park have been in existence for many years. The building known today as the "Gun Club" was constructed by the Municipal Trap Club in 1923. The southwest corner of the lake had earlier been developed as a site for trap shooting, ceasing operations in 1969. The Boat House and adjacent stone walls were constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps in 1941. The Boat House was originally used to store racing shells and sailboats and served as the headquarters of the Denver Sea Scouts.

Over the years, Sloan's Lake Park has been the subject of a variety of planning efforts. A plan for the 'Sloan and Cooper Lakes Park' was prepared by the Olmsted Brothers, Landscape Architects, in 1914. The plan featured a roadway connection from Tennyson Street southward along the east edge of the lake to 17th Avenue (a portion of what is now Lakeshore Drive) as well as a bridge between the north and south shores across the island that separates 'Sloan's' and 'Cooper's' Lakes.

Olmsted's plan was further built upon by Denver Landscape Architect S.R. DeBoer who proposed parkway connections to the north, south and east. Although the parkways were never developed, DeBoer's 1948 plan for the park's northeast corner, consisting of a baseball field, tennis courts, playground, picnic area, and parking lot, remains virtually unchanged to this day. A 1967 park plan shows a system of asphalt roads and paths around the lake perimeter linking a series of parking lots. This plan was largely implemented as designed and remained intact until the early 1990s. With continually changing demographics and demands on the park, the current Master Plan is expected to guide park development well into the 21st Century.
The Planning Process

The Master Plan is the result of an intensive 21 month planning process that occurred from January 1998 through September 1999. Project Manager Keith Frenkel led over 20 public meetings with well attended and diverse groups of 80 to 120 hourly individuals attending virtually every evening. In the end, all residents of neighborhood were well represented in the documentation designs.

Early in the process, a "Wedge" was developed to provide "the forum" for strategy as well as develop project goals. A broad meeting focused on understanding the issues and opportunities presented by the park site and many decisions on a wide range of topics, including parking and park program needs, field sports, tennis courts, and park facilities, space quality, and sustainability issues.

Throughout the entire planning and design process, the project team used a "site analysis" approach to define and resolve the most critical issues. The Board's Lake County Planning Board members, tremendous enthusiasm, and commitment from local residents also yielded key projects and solutions. Central tenets of the process included:

- The site analysis approach
- The "Wedge" strategy
- Field sports courts
- Tennis courts
- Park facilities
- Space quality
- Sustainability issues
Nature and Beauty in the Park

Among Denver’s hundreds of parks, Sloan’s Lake Park is unique. The lake itself—fully 176 acres in size—provides an enormous open space that is second to none within the City. Indeed, this is not a case of a “lake within a park,” such as Berkeley Lake or Ferril Lake in City Park, but rather a “lake surrounded by a park.” Across this huge expanse of water one can enjoy spectacular panoramic views, both of the Front Range and also of the City skyline. For all the improvements planned at the park, it is imperative that this essential character be protected and enhanced.

Landscape Features

Trees: The spectacular mountain and city skyline views dictate that careful consideration be given to the placement of new trees in some areas of the park. New trees will be interplanted with the existing mature trees to reinforce the established patterns, while more open meadow areas will remain unplanted. In some cases, young trees will be relocated to ensure that significant views will not be obscured when those trees have matured.

An informal row of large deciduous trees will be planted on a gentle berm along Sheridan Boulevard. The berm and trees will mitigate the impact of the heavy traffic on the park and will direct pedestrians to safe designated walkways across Sheridan. The berm will be between two and three feet in height, thus slowing views into the park for safety reasons.

Poor soil conditions are prevalent in many areas near the lake, with high concentrations of salts and bores. Only those tree species capable of withstanding such conditions will be planted in those areas.

Lawn: Bluegrass lawns are important features at Sloan’s Lake Park, with close to 90 acres of irrigated turf provided. Non-irrigated areas consist primarily of various salt grasses, generally in poor condition. Bluegrass will remain the dominant species and establish grounds. However, certain areas will be considered for native prairie grasses and wildflowers, such as the narrow zone between the concrete loop trail and the lake as well as the proposed berm along Sheridan.

The Lake Edge

The lake edge, that boundary between land and water, is an extremely important esthetic element, which in the case of Sloan’s Lake is over two and a half miles in length. Much of the edge consists of unattractive gages (straws encased in wire baskets), which are hazardous to walk on, are notorious trash collectors, and are in a serious state of deterioration.

Another 700 linear feet of shoreline along the north side consists of an eroded sand beach, and the remainder consists of a dense stand of cattails and riparian woody plants such as willows and cottonwoods.

The lake edge will be transformed into one that is not only functional but aesthetically pleasing as well. Improvements will be implemented in relatively small segments over a period of years and will include a variety of treatments:

- In exposed areas, especially along the east shore, the edge will be armored with large stones and other hard materials (but not gabions) to withstand the wave action caused by strong winds and the wake of motorboats. Where feasible, wetlands will be interplanted with the stones, for a softer, more natural treatment that will also enhance water quality and wildlife habitat.

- In more sheltered shoreline zones, the edge will be softened with plantings that will not obscure the view of the lake.

- In well-wooded fishing areas (particularly along the northeast and southwest shores), the edge materials will be fashioned to provide improved seating for fishermen, in the shade of trees where possible.

- The historic marina area will be redeveloped with a hard edge and waterfront promenade.

- The sand beach will be redeveloped as a landscaped area to eliminate the erosion of sand into the lake (which currently conflicts with boating uses).

Water Quality

The lake’s huge size, large number of waterfowl, and the inflow from springs and multiple storm water inlets create unique challenges to its water quality management. The long-range goal is to restore the lake to health as a recreational facility and as a wildlife sanctuary, but the specific means to this end will require a technical engineering solution that is beyond the scope of this master plan.

Although Sloan’s Lake is almost 140 years old, it has never been drained or successfully dredged, yet it has served as the drainage basin for an urban watershed six square miles in size. The current depth of the lake is only about five feet west of the island, and up to eight feet east of the island. Recent testing of the bottom sediment by the U.S. Geological Survey indicates that this muck layer is about three feet deep with almost a centimeter of new sediment accumulating each year. At this rate, the lake will be a foot shallower in another 30 to 40 years and boating will cease.
to be a viable recreational activity unless major steps are taken to dredge or otherwise remove sediment from the lake.

But while Sloan’s Lake would be classified as eutrophic (i.e., dead), it is not necessarily unhealthful for human contact. During the boating season, the lake is tested bi-monthly by the City’s Department of Environmental Health; only on very rare occasions over the past several years has it exceeded allowable limits of harmful bacteria (Fecal coliform and E-coli) that would require water skiing to be restricted. The lake’s murky appearance, caused by the suspended clay particles constantly churned up by wind and power boats, actually inhibits the growth of algae and aquatic weeds due to the scant amount of sunlight that is able to penetrate deep into the water.

Ultimately, the restoration of Sloan’s Lake can be accomplished through a variety of structural and non-structural techniques that will improve water quality and reduce sediment loading. Structural approaches include the creation of wetland forage areas at storm outfalls to filter incoming water, detention of high velocity storm flows for a slow release (to allow heavier solids to settle out before the water enters the lake), and removal of bottom sediment. Non-structural solutions include reducing the waterfowl population and augmenting fish from the Rocky Mountain Ditch to promote flushing of the lake. Again, a comprehensive engineering study will be required to determine the actual means that will be employed to restore the lake.

Fish

Although Sloan’s Lake is fairly shallow and suffers from an accumulation of silt and relative lack of plant life, it nevertheless supports a population of fish and remains popular among fishermen, who can be seen along its northeast and southwest shores. The Colorado Division of Wildlife regularly stocks the lake with additional fish, primarily rainbow trout. The fishing experience will be enhanced by providing better seating areas near the lake edge. The fish habitat itself can be enhanced by digging deep trenches throughout the lake to create a varied aquatic environment (to be incorporated into a general lake restoration proposal). However, because this is Denver’s only boating facility and other good fishing lakes are located in the vicinity, Sloan’s Lake will continue to be managed primarily for the benefit of boaters rather than fishermen.

Wildlife

Sloan’s Lake Park offers a diversity of wildlife, consisting primarily of waterfowl but including mammals such as the inquisitive gray squirrel and an occasional fox or coyote. While Canadian geese are dominant, the park harbors an array of birds, including ducks, gulls, red-tailed blackbirds, and even pelicans. Wildlife habitat areas include the island and those portions of the shoreline dominated by cattails and other riparian vegetation.

The most controversial wildlife species is the Canada goose, due to its sheer numbers. Sloan’s Lake’s goose population continues to increase each winter and many geese have become year-round residents. Geese voraciously feed on the park lawns, which have difficulty recovering in the more heavily impacted areas. And their droppings are not only unsightly but contribute to the high phosphate levels in the lake.

Practical solutions for dealing with the geese are elusive. Canada geese currently are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. The Colorado Division of Wildlife has discontinued its goose relocation program because other municipalities will no longer accept them. In reality, this program had little permanent effect because the geese frequently migrated back. The use of trained dogs could prove to be an effective control, but this method is in conflict with the City’s leash law.

While management solutions will have to be applied on a regional level to be effective over time, certain physical improvements may nevertheless help to make the habitat at Sloan’s Lake less desirable for geese. Geese prefer open areas so they can see approaching predators; therefore, the addition of taller plantings along the shoreline will discourage geese while simultaneously improving habitat for other species. Bluegrass lawns near the lakeshore will be replaced with native grass species, which seem to be less favored by grazing geese. Additional signage will be installed to educate people as to why they should not feed wildlife. Regardless of which solutions are ultimately employed, control of the Canada goose can be expected to be a long-term endeavor.
Activities in the Park

As a regional park with a desirable lake setting, Sloan's Lake Park will continue to accommodate a wide variety of active and passive recreational activities.

Field Sports

Sloan's Lake Park is a highly desirable location for field sports activities, particularly in the spring and fall seasons. Soccer is the most popular organized activity, with several groups participating including Sloan's Lake Soccer Association (Denver Soccer Club) and Denver Power Soccer Club. Football and softball are also popular.

With the growing demand for field sports and the impacts that were occurring at the park, it became evident that some changes had to take place to balance user needs with the park's facilities. Early on, the master planning process brought about the relocation of the soccer fields from the northwest to the northeast area of the park, where one regulation field (220' x 330') and three intermediate fields (150' x 220') are now provided. These fields will need to be regraded for positive drainage and a more uniform surface to enhance playability.

The north side of the park will be able to accommodate two regulation fields (220' x 330') after the south loop road is removed. This area will require regrading to improve drainage. The intermediate field currently located at the southeast corner of the park will become a multi-purpose area for non-permitted play.

In all areas, removable soccer goals will replace permanent posts so fields can be reoriented as desired, minimizing wear and discouraging non-permitted play. Permanent goal post storage facilities will be provided nearby. In all cases, two intermediate fields can be accommodated within each large field simply by reorienting the smaller fields by 90 degrees. Soccer fields on both the north and south sides of the park will continue to be permitted, but use may be periodically restricted for maintenance and rehabilitation as required.

Just as soccer was relocated for improved play, the park's football fields were moved from the northeast area (east of Vrain) to the northwest side (off West Byron Place), where the soccer fields were previously located. Because football is a fall sport, the change from soccer to football fields has reduced parking conflicts and shortages during the spring season, while also allowing the fields to have a longer period of "rest." The northwest site accommodates four 80-yard football fields, used for both practice and scheduled games. Permits will continue, primarily by the Police Activities League (PAL), for practice on weekdays afternoons and weekends in September and October.

The lone permitted softball field is located at the intersection of Vrain St. and West 26th Avenue, and is heavily used in the spring and summer by several groups including the CYRA (Colorado Youth Recreation Association), PAL, Berkeley Recreation Center, and Community Recreation. No changes are proposed.

Court Games

Tennis has been a recreational activity at Sloan's Lake for many years, with tennis courts one of the earliest uses indicated on the original Olmsted park plan. The park has four lighted courts adjacent to West 26th Avenue, which are proposed to remain. Two new courts are proposed to be located at the southwest corner of the park where they will be grouped with other hard court activities, while the four courts on the south side opposite St. Anthony's Hospital will eventually be replaced with a parking lot. The reduction in the number of courts reflects the reduced level of tennis playing at Sloan's Lake Park.

Due to poor soils, tennis court surfaces are subject to cracking and must be regularly resurfaced to maintain a good playable surface. In the long term, all courts should be replaced with a post-pressed concrete base that will remain crack-free indefinitely.

The park also has two well-used basketball courts that will remain at or near their current locations.

Roller Hockey

Roller hockey continues to grow in popularity, but without a designated facility, participants currently use the tennis courts. A roller
hockey rink will be provided a the southeast corner of the park to meet the demand while discouraging use of the tennis courts for the same. The roller hockey rink may be constructed to accommodate ice skating/ice hockey during the winter months.

Walking, Running, Bicycling and In-line Skating
While Sloan's Lake Park is a favorite among walkers, joggers, bicyclists and inline skaters who enjoy the 2.5-mile circuit around the lake, pedestrian facilities are deficient in several respects. The Master Plan recommends the following improvements:

- Completion of the 10-foot wide concrete loop trail, designed to minimize conflicts between trail users and vehicular traffic. To encourage a more orderly flow of movement among walkers, bikers and skaters, a line will be painted down the center of the trail.
- Addition of a running trail, approximately 3.2 miles in length around the entire park perimeter, built of a resilient surface such as crusher fines.
- Addition of a series of accessible pedestrian trails to connect the surrounding neighborhood streets directly to the concrete loop trail.
- Addition of paved accessible surfaces at each bus stop in partnership with RTD and Denver Public Works.
- Improvement of the connection between the park and the City of Edgewater to provide a safe crossing for pedestrians across Sheridan Blvd. at West 17th, West 20th, and West 25th Avenues. Each crossing will be enhanced with triangular islands at the corners to separate right turn traffic and long-distance pedestrian signals.
- A one-way bicycle lane sharing the park road, beginning at the intersection of West Byron Place and Vrain Street and continuing south-easterly to connect to the designated bike route at West 17th Avenue.
- Bike racks to be located in strategic locations around the park to encourage users to access the park by bicycle rather than by car.

Picnicking
Picnicking at Sloan's Lake Park is a very celebrated activity, drawing a wide array of users ranging from large multiple family gatherings to small impromptu events. The existing group picnic areas on the north and south sides will remain in their current locations, but will be improved with new trees for shade. Barbecue pits will continue to be provided at both group picnic areas.

To disperse picnicking use, new picnic tables will be added at key locations throughout the park such as adjacent to the soccer fields (separated from the existing group picnic area), adjacent to the football fields on the north side, and east of Lakeshore Drive near West 17th Avenue. All picnic sites will be relatively close to parking, but as far as possible from residences. Picnic tables will be located to blend in with trees and other facilities, where they will not adversely impact open view corridors.

Playgrounds
Sloan's Lake Park currently has two playgrounds, one just south of the parking area off West 26th Avenue and one just north of West 17th Avenue. Both were replaced in recent years and are in good condition.

Boating
From April through September, Sloan's Lake - the only "real" boating lake in the City of Denver - offers a variety of boating experiences including a water ski program for the disabled, motor boating, water skiing, sailing, canoeing, and rowing. The Master Plan recommends that Sloan's Lake be managed to encourage balanced use by both motorized and non-motorized craft.

Management changes may include alternating days for the two boating types to minimize conflicts and adding new uses such as sailboat instruction. Physical improvements will include the reconstruction of the jetty and marina area to provide rental slips or additional moorings, with restricted access onto the jetty to discourage vandalism and theft.

Special Events
In addition to the day-to-day activities, Sloan's Lake Park hosts a number of special events. In recent years, these have included Colorado Symphony Orchestra concerts, a National Wakeboard competition, the One Sky One World kite festival, and the Dragon Boat Festival. Special events are not to be discouraged, but organizers of the larger events should be required to make parking arrangements at remote locations to minimize the impact of parking on the surrounding neighborhoods.
Automobiles in the Park

Parking

Parking was one of the most contentious issues discussed during the master planning process. Conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians, as well as the noise, litter and occasional unsavory activities associated with certain parking lot users, contribute to the negative attitude toward parking lots in general.

Nevertheless, it is imperative that reasonable accommodation be made for cars within Sloan's Lake Park, either on park roads or in parking lots, and that such parking facilities be located fairly convenient to the activities that they serve.

To keep in scale with the generally narrow band of parkland surrounding the lake, parking will be provided in a series of relatively small parking lots dispersed around the lake. These smaller parking lots will blend easily into the park landscape, and due to their proximity to park activities, they will better serve users while discouraging parking in the neighborhoods.

The need for off-street parking will be accommodated by thirteen lots, most of which currently exist, with approximately 500 spaces.

The park roads - West 24th Ave. (between Veain and Stuart) and Lakeshore Drive (between West 21st and West 17th Avenue) - will provide parallel parking for an additional 114 cars.

To accommodate the boating area, twenty parking spaces will be specifically delineated for boat trailers (which are approximately twice the length of a typical vehicle) in the two northwestern lots.

Finally, the city streets that immediately border the park have historically been used for overflow parking and will continue to be used in this manner; although with some restrictions. Parking signage should reflect what is actually enforced. For instance, the "No Parking on Sat-Sun" signs along the north side of West 17th Avenue should be removed until the full buildup of parking lots on the south side has been achieved, before it will be reasonable to close the street to weekend parking. The City will continue to disallow on-street parking on Sheridan Boulevard, and all parking lot entrances into the park from Sheridan will be removed for safety reasons.

Traffic

Another very contentious issue of discussion during the master planning process was automobile traffic in and around the park. Because the existence of the park itself has disrupted the normal traffic circulation that would otherwise filter uniformly though the neighborhood, the park's perimeter streets have become the conduits for concentrated flows circumventing the park. In particular, West 26th Ave., West 17th Ave. and Meade/Lowell Blvd. are impacted in this way. And Sheridan Boulevard, bordering Sloan's western edge, is a major regional highway – busy and noisy. Furthermore, on summer weekends Sloan's Lake Park is heavily impacted by "cruising", continuously circulating traffic whose entire purpose is to see and be seen. Cruising is highly disruptive to other activities within the park, as well as to residents who live nearby. Since cruising per se is not illegal, it will continue to be an activity at the park. So the goal of the Master Plan is to manage the cruising by maintaining a relatively orderly circular flow of traffic in a clockwise direction on park roads or major streets, and to discourage cruising in the adjacent neighborhoods.

Based on the foregoing considerations, the plan recommends the following specific changes, starting on the north side and moving clockwise:

- An all-way stop at the intersection of Veain and West Byron Place, with a "necked down" entrance into the park as a traffic-calming device.
- One-way traffic flow to remain in effect from Veain Street to West 17th Avenue.
- Introduction of parking along both sides of West 24th Avenue, which will serve as a traffic-calming device.
- Reconstruction of Lakeshore Drive to incorporate various traffic-calming measures, such as curves, on-street parking and bike lane, and raised crosswalks. Also, the connection between Lakeshore Drive and the West 20th/Quinnan intersection will be permanently severed, and the one-half block of West 18th Avenue within the park will be removed. In this way, neighborhood and park-related traffic flows will be separated.
- Removal of the south-loop road. This road has been notorious for the cruising activity that it generates, and has been closed on weekends for many years. The existing parking lot near the south playground will be accessed directly off West 17th Avenue.
Structures in the Park

Boathouse

The Boathouse is the most prestigious structure at the park and is prominently located on the lake's north shore. In recent decades, it has housed the Northwest District Maintenance Headquarters, the boat ranger's office, and the pump for the park's irrigation system.

It is recommended that the maintenance headquarters be relocated to another site in Northwest Denver where a more spacious facility can be built to better accommodate the District's needs. The Boathouse would then be rehabilitated to once again accommodate boating and community related uses to enhance the public's enjoyment of the lake and the park. As a boating-related facility to be operated by a private concessionaire, it might include offices and storage for the boat rangers, the existing pump house, a food concession, and space for boat rental equipment, storage and repair. Community facilities might include classrooms, meeting space, and public restrooms.

Gun Club Building

The Gun Club Building currently serves as a boxing facility operated by "Opportunity is Through Education." The building, which has been in very poor condition in past years, has recently been restored and is slated for any charge of use at this time. A new satellite maintenance facility will be sited adjacent to the Gun Club when the District Headquarters are relocated outside the park. The satellite facility will include a small office, space for maintenance equipment and vehicles, a yard for materials storage, and public restrooms.

Restroom Facilities

A hierarchy of public restroom facilities will be provided. The new facilities will be integrally designed with the park landscape to minimize visual disruptions, and will be located to best serve park users. Desirable locations will be areas of concentrated use such as sports fields, playgrounds, and major picnic areas. All plumbed restrooms will be equipped with exterior drinking fountains. Public restrooms will continue to be provided at the Boathouse, and new facilities will be located at the north tennis courts, at the south playground and soccer fields, and at the satellite maintenance facility near the Gun Club. Smokers will be strategically sited for convenient use by walkers, picnickers, and others.

Pavilions and Other Structures

Shasta Lake Park affords several opportunities for new structures that will tremendously enhance its image as a special place. Proposed structures will include:

- An open pavilion situated at the end of the harbor jetty to serve as an amenity for boaters.
- A picnic shelter that overlooks the lake and mountains beyond to replace the existing restroom near the north playground.
- A pavilion located according to the early Olmsted plan at the end of West 35th Avenue, another excellent opportunity to enjoy the view of the mountains.

- A pavilion at Duck Point to include educational information about local wildlife and to serve as a viewing station to observe the wildlife on the island.
- A pavilion near the tip of the south peninsula, elevated several feet above existing grade for enhanced mountain and city skyline views.
- Entrance features located at critical junctures, such as at the northwest and southwest corners of the park, to serve as symbolic gateways into the city of Denver.

- A new pedestrian bridge (part of the concrete loop trail) over the lake outlet at West 17th and Newton.

Park Amenities

Benches: Benches will be located at regular intervals along the concrete loop trail to serve as rest stops. They will be placed at tennis and basketball courts, at sports fields, and at playgrounds for convenient observation. Benches will also be strategically located around the park to take advantage of the breath-taking views. Wherever possible, benches will be located in shaded areas for protection from the summer sun.

Lighting: New lights will be added as necessary to improve safety/security in the park. Priority locations include Lakeshore Drive between 17th and 20th Avenues and south portions of the park west of Perry Street. The loop trail will be reasonably well lit along its entire length. Standard City and County of Denver fixtures will be used, including the round "hockey puck" fixture with high pressure sodium lamp and 30-foot...
Operations and Management

General

The day-to-day management and operations undertaken by the City & County of Denver will ultimately determine the success of the master planning effort. The park should be managed in consideration of the following priorities: public safety and security; public use and enjoyment of park facilities; appreciation and enjoyment of landscape beauty; and cost-effective maintenance.

Key personnel should include:

- General Manager or Administrator. This new position would be charged with the coordination of all park activities to ensure that the park functions as a whole. Such activities would include permitting, maintenance, construction projects, and enforcement. The position would be the primary point of contact with the general public.

- Northwest District Superintendent. This existing position would continue to have responsibility for all maintenance activities within the park and the district. Since this is already a very demanding position, it is not reasonable to include the responsibilities of general manager in this job description.

- Uniformed Police. Denver police will still patrol the park on bicycles and by car for enforcement purposes and to promote general safety and security.

- Park Rangers. Re-introducing park rangers to Denver parks could greatly assist in the enforcement of park rules and permits, be effective in reducing vandalism and littering, and provide a means of educating the public on wildlife issues.

- Boat Ranger. Boat rangers will still be charged with processing boating permits and enforcing boating rules for public safety.

Maintenance

The most public-sensitive maintenance issues involve irrigation, lawns, trash pickup, and toilet facilities.

Irrigation

An effective irrigation system is absolutely critical to the successful operation of this regional park. Certain upgrades to the current system will maximize the efficiency of maintenance personnel, save water and enhance the experience of park users. Recommendations include:

- Automate those portions of the system that are currently manually operated. These areas include the east end between West 17th Avenue and West 20th Avenue, and the west edge along Sheridan Boulevard.

- Install new systems in those areas that are currently without irrigation, including the southwest corner of the park.

- Retrofit the pump system to ensure reliable irrigation in those areas currently irrigated by lake water.

- Over time convert the entire irrigation system from the use of potable water to lake water to conserve resources and to minimize costs. Replace existing irrigation valves with "dirty water" valves to accommodate the use of lake water.

- Design new irrigation systems that avoid watering across paved trails.

Lawns

Maintaining 90 acres of green grass is a challenging endeavor that can be improved through the following recommendations:

- Upgrading the irrigation system as described under Irrigation is the foremost requirement for improved lawn maintenance.

- Converting from the use of potable to lake water, which is rich in nitrates and phosphates, will reduce the chemical load for regular fertilization.

- The elimination of the permanent soccer goal posts will allow for the rotation of fields in areas of heavy use. In addition, all athletic fields must be regularly aerated, top-dressed, and overseeded to maintain lawns in a healthy condition.
• Because grazing areas appear to prefer bluegrass to other grass species, alternative seed mixes will be tried in those areas most heavily impacted by grass.

Trash

An enormous volume of trash overflows the existing trash receptacles on the weekends and general litter cleanup requires the attention of the entire maintenance crew on Mondays. Recommendations to improve trash pick-up include:

• Provide additional trash receptacles conveniently located in heavily used areas.

• Provide additional dumpsters in areas where they can be easily serviced by large dump trucks (but not in cemented drive-by locations).

• Provide weekend trash pickup during periods of heavy park use.

• Improve public education regarding the ethic of keeping parks clean.

• Aggressively enforce the City & County of Denver littering ordinance.

Restrooms

Recommendations for improved maintenance of restrooms include:

• Design restroom facilities to incorporate heavy-duty fixtures and easy-to-clean fixtures.

• Increase monitoring of restroom facilities and keep restrooms locked at night.

• Provide more frequent pumping of septic tanks.

Permits

Permits for the use of the parks' athletic fields and two large group picnic areas can be obtained through the Parks and Recreation Permit Office. While the primary purpose of a permit is to ensure the use of a particular facility for the permitted party, the permit can also be a management tool in that it gives the Department more control of park activities. Recommended permitting procedures include:

• Issue permits on a limited or rotating basis to avoid the overuse of athletic fields.

• Carefully coordinate maintenance activities with permitted events. In particular, athletic fields should not be irrigated within several hours prior to a permitted event, since playing on the wet ground results in compaction and other damage to the fields.

• Make the issuance of permits conditional upon permitted parties obeying park rules and respecting the facilities. A handout listing key park rules should be issued with each permit.

• Require permit holders to put up a damage deposit refundable if facilities are left in good condition.

• Regularly adjust permit fees to reflect current administrative and maintenance costs.

One issue that permitting does not address is the abuse caused by the non-permitted use of park facilities. Abuses include using athletic fields when they are too wet, refusing to yield facilities to legitimate permitted groups, general littering, use of foul language, and dumping of hot coals on the lawn by picnickers. While it is not illegal to use park facilities without a permit, park rangers should be able to eliminate the most abusive practices.

Other Management Recommendations

For other management recommendations, refer to individual sections above, including Parking, Traffic, Wildlife, and Boating.

Priorities and Funding

Implementation of the master plan will cost nearly $12 million, so it is important to prioritize the needs to ensure that the most critical projects are completed first. Smaller projects under $500,000 can generally be paid for through the use of the city's Capital Improvement Program and supplemental grants. Larger projects usually can only be implemented through a general bond issue. The attached list of prioritized projects assumes that Sloan's Lake Park will be consistently funded at approximately $500,000 each year until the total buildout of the Master Plan has been accomplished.