Game Plan Task Force Meeting #1
1. Welcome and Introductions

• Your **name** and affiliation

• Name **1 thing you love** and **1 thing you’d change** about the outdoors and/or recreation in Denver

• All in **30 seconds**! Ready, set, go!
Those who could not join us….

Sonrisa Lucero
Mayor’s Office of Sustainability

Love:
I love our mature trees and the many parks in Denver.

Change:
I would change our parks to have more native/drought tolerant vegetation and landscaped “places” for individuals to reflect/rest or for groups to gather.

Ken Schroeppep
University of Colorado Denver, Master of Urban and Regional Planning Program
DenverInfill and DenverUrbanism blogs

Love:
I love the way so many of Denver’s urban parks are beautifully integrated into the urban fabric of the city rather than feeling like “leftover” spaces.

Change:
I urge us to create an Urban Public Spaces Division (note: “Public Spaces” not “Parks”) that focuses exclusively on the diverse hardscaped and softscaped public spaces in the downtown/urban core area that is empowered with their own sets of policies, design standards, operating procedures, etc. unique to these most intensive urban environments to create places with strategic placemaking and economic development opportunities.

Jamie Sarche
Director of Prearranged Funeral Planning at Feldman Mortuary, Commissioner on the DCOA

Love: I love hiking in Colorado! Change: I’d like to see more sustainability – recycling, solar, etc.
Those who could not join us…

Cindy Johnstone

Inter Neighborhood Cooperation (INC) as co-chair of the INC Parks and Recreation Committee. Board Member of the Friends and Neighbors of Washington Park

I love the park system. I believe the strength of Denver’s park system is when the effects of any decision to any part of the system is also weighed as an effect on the whole park system.

I would change the importance of green public open space in the City to the primary position in addressing needs for the City. The City’s zoning codes for development don’t meet the needs for adequate green public open space. It has been researched that City’s economic health, environment health, mental health and physical health all benefit from adequate green open spaces.

Love: Our parks provide a place for respite and relaxation while at the same time a place for us to gather as a community, in celebration and, sometimes, in morning.

Change: The one thing I would change is that I believe every resident deserves access to a close to home high quality park that provides the amenities most relevant to that neighborhood. Denver does a very good job at that (as seen by TPL’s ParkScore rating) but there’s room for improvement. I would like to see the business community truly recognize the economic value of this system and step up in a much bigger way to support the acquisition and creation of new parks and trails and the maintenance of the existing system.

Tim Wohlgenant

Senior Vice-President, Chief Operating Officer, The Trust for Public Land


The Mile High City
2. Overview of Game Plan

- What is the Game Plan?
- How are we doing?
- What has changed?
What is the Game Plan?

The Game Plan is Denver Parks and Recreation’s strategic citywide master plan that provides a guiding framework for system management and development including:

• Policies and management priorities
• Partnerships and provision of services
• Recreational programs and facilities
• Operational structure and organization

The Game Plan is an adopted amendment to the City’s Comprehensive Plan 2000
Game Plan 2003 Core Values

• **Environment**
  *Healthy ecosystem, sustainable management practices*

• **Equity in facilities and services**
  *Access to amenities for all*

• **Engagement of the community**
  *Building partnerships and responding to needs*

• **Sound Economics**
  *Funding to smartly maintain, improve and grow*
Game Plan 2003
Overarching Goal Summary

- Increase park acres and number of recreation centers
- Increase tree canopy and health of the urban forest
- Increase water conservation and green design/build practices
- Improve pedestrian and bike connectivity
- Respond to significant recreational trends
- Increase environmental quality and promote healthy waterways
- Protect Denver’s historic buildings and landscapes
- Protect and enhance Mountain Parks and their facilities
Game Plan 2003
Goal Implementation Highlights

Increase parkland & recreation centers

• 635 acres of parkland and parks have been added totaling 5,957 acres (just under 9 acres per 1,000 residents)

• 4 of the 27 recreation centers were remodeled and expanded

• One new state-of-the-art recreation center completed (2011) & another under construction (2017)

Source: DPR GIS Data
Goal: Increase Denver’s tree canopy

- Tree canopy in 2003 was 18% in residential areas
- Today Denver boasts a 20% tree canopy in residential areas
- In 2006, the Mile High Million Tree Initiative was launched to plant one million trees by 2025. Over 250,000 trees have been planted to date.

Source: DPR Forestry Division
Goal: Reduce water used in park irrigation

• Today, DPR uses 850 million gallons less than in 2003

• Hundreds of acres of irrigated bluegrass were replaced with lower water-use grass varieties

• Over 75 parks now utilize centrally controlled irrigation systems providing automatic watering adjustments resulting in lower water use

• Since 2003, DPR has converted 581 park acres from potable water irrigation to treated recycled water irrigation
Goal: Improve pedestrian and bike connectivity

34 miles of paved trails added for a total of 85 miles of paved trails

Completed trail system “missing links”

• Westerly Creek trail
• Extend Wagon Trail via a connection around Marston Lake
• Connecting Lakewood Gulch to Martinez Park
• Sand Creek- Stapleton to Commerce City
Goal: Respond to evolving recreational needs

2003: 0 Disc Golf courses, 0 dog parks
Today: 3 Disc Golf courses, 9 dog parks

DPR is building the **Ruby Hill Bike Skills Course**, the second bike skill area in the city.
**Opening August 2016!**
Game Plan 2003
Implementation Highlights

Goal: Protect and Enhance Natural Areas & Healthy Waterways

- Protecting 1,250 acres of prime natural resource areas
- Completed over **2.5 miles of gulch waterway restoration** throughout the city
- Westerly Creek Restoration from Lowry to Sand Creek.
- On-going **$12M investment in “River Vision”** projects along the South Platte River transforming the shorelines and waterways in these key parks.
Goal: Protect, preserve and rehabilitate historic parks, parkways and structures

- Civic Center - $10M Rehabilitation of Voorhies Memorial and Greek Theater (2010)
- Cheesman - Pavilion Rehabilitation (2011)
- Wash Park - $1M Boat House Rehab (2011)
- City Park - Band Stand Rehab (2009)
- City Park – $2.5M Rehabilitation of Prismatic and Thatcher Fountains (2008/13)
- Sullivan Gateway Restoration (Underway)
- Two designated National Historic Landmarks
Game Plan 2003
Implementation Highlights

- All metro golf courses are **Certified Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary** golf courses, which enhances natural areas and habitats that golf courses provide.

- In 2012, a **drought management plan** was developed for our golf courses – implementing various stages of drought and water restrictions.

- DPR partners with The First Tee of Denver, **bringing golf to underserved youth**.
Goal: Revitalize and Protect Mountain Parks

- Over $4 Million invested in critical repairs and restoration in 35 Mountain Park facilities.
- **Summit Lake and Red Rocks** trail improvements
- **Echo Lake Lodge** renovations and upgrades
- **Genesee Park** trail construction, Bison Overlook, road and parking improvements
- **Lariat Loop Park** parking, fencing, and structural improvements
What has changed since 2003…
What Has Changed Since 2003

- Many Game Plan goals and recommendations have been accomplished/implemented
- Changes in city-wide age and cultural backgrounds leading to different recreational and facility needs
- Role of Denver Parks and Recreation in the quality of the urban environment.

Denver’s Population Change

2000: 556,094 | 2016: 691,400

Source: US Census Bureau
GROWTH IN DENVER – By the Numbers

- 5120 Acres of Parkland in 2000
- 556,094 Population of Denver in 2000
- 9.21 Park Acres / 1,000 in 2000
- 771,000 Projected Denver Population in 2025

- 6220 Acres of Parkland in 2016
- 691,400 Population of Denver in 2016
- 8.9 Park Acres / 1,000 in 2016
- 12% Projected Population Increase by 2025
- 80,000 People Projected to Move to Denver by 2025

*Source: US Census, State of Colorado Demographer, DPR GIS Data*
Climate Change in Denver – By the Numbers

Overall warming of 2°F across the region in the past 30 years

The Palmer Drought Severity Index shows a trend towards more severe soil-moisture drought conditions in Colorado over the past 30 years

Since 2000 Snowpack has been Below Average

Summers in Colorado will be 2 - 5 degrees WARMER by 2050

Source: Climate Change in Colorado, 2014, Cooperative Institute for Research in Environmental Sciences, UC Boulder
Challenges Facing Parks & Recreation

• Aging park infrastructure and lack of accessibility
• Over $100 million Maintenance and Replacement Backlog
• No Sustainable Funding Source for land acquisition and development needed to address growth and increased demand – all general fund
• Water Quality Issues in many parks, park lakes, rivers and creeks
• Park and parkway impacts from surrounding growth and development
• Increased visitor use pressures in popular park, lack of services and activation in other parks
• Aging urban forest and the threat of Emerald Ash Borer (EAB)
• Climate change and environmental impacts on water and air quality
3. Overview of Denveright

- Denveright Citywide Planning
- Process Goals
- Overall Process and Methodology Snapshot
- Engagement Process – Denveright
Why Denverright Citywide Planning?

- Establish vision and policy for the entire city
- Community buy-in: citizens of Denver help shape their future
- Identify and integrate overlapping policy issues that impact the entire city
What is Denveright?

- A community-driven planning process to reflect our community values & desires
- An opportunity to plan the next 20 years of land use, mobility, parks and recreation
- It’s about what made Denver great, what we love about Denver today and what we need to make our future even brighter
- It will establish a long-term vision with near-term action
Four Plans Working Together to Make One City

1. Land Use & Transportation
   Neighborhood Character and Quality of Life

2. Parks & Recreation
   Fun Activities in Beautiful Surroundings

3. Pedestrians & Trails
   Connecting People and Neighborhoods

4. Transit
   Creating an Easily Traversable City
Denver’s Citywide Plans

- Goals & policies
- Longer time horizon
- Adopted by City Council
- General implementation

- Work program/funding priorities
- Shorter time horizon
- Not always adopted by Council
- Implementation strategy
Coordinated Community Engagement

Public Engagement: All Denver residents

Community Think Tank

Blueprint Task Force
Game Plan Task Force
Transit Plan Task Force
Ped/Trails Task Force

Relevant Boards/Commissions

City Council
High Touch Engagement

Game Plan Task Force
Community Think Tank
Statistically-Valid Survey Instrument (mail)
Community Workshops/Open Houses
Intercept Events
High Tech Engagement

Website Content and Social Media

Online Surveys
• Survey #1: Vision and Goals
Your Voice. Our Future.

Our community is undertaking an effort that builds upon our successes and proud traditions to design the future of this great city. Denveright is a community-driven planning process that challenges you to shape how we want to evolve in four key areas: land use, mobility, parks, and recreational resources.

Share Your Voice
4. Role of Game Plan Task Force

• Roles and Responsibilities
• Co-Chairs
• Media and Communications
The Charge of the Task Force is to help guide the advancement of the update to the Game Plan and the overall process.
Task Force Roles and Responsibilities

• Task Force members are expected to:
  • **Invest** in the process and provide constructive insight
  • Bring personal, professional, and community **expertise**
  • **Share and gather information** to peer group(s) at regular intervals
  • Be **champions** of the plan and the process
Task Force Roles and Responsibilities

- **Task Force provides a continuous feedback loop**
  - Meet 6 times at strategic times in the planning process
  - Every 3-4 months or as needed

- **Flexibility on Task Force utilization**
  - Information gathering
  - Work sessions and small group breakouts
  - Shape community outreach efforts
  - Vetting and refinement of plan principles and policy recommendations
  - Safe space to explore ideas – this is a working group
Task Force Roles and Responsibilities

• Task Force Co-chairs:
  • Conduct meeting agendas
  • Ensure group stays on topic and task
  • Guide conversation
  • Clarify Task Force direction to staff
  • Apply good meeting decorum
Task Force Roles and Responsibilities

Communications Protocol

• Discuss all media communications requests with the DPR Communications Director, 720.913.0664 Yolanda.Quesada@denvergov.org to ensure consistent and relevant messaging

• Task Force members should not interview or provide comment on behalf of the Task Force, but may do so as individuals or on behalf of organizations/agencies, as appropriate.
5. Consultant Intro

• Selection Process
• Consultant Team
• Notable Projects
Consultant Selection Process

• Request For Proposal
• Selection panel included Co-Chair Watson
• Interviewed 3 teams
A multi-disciplinary team of trusted and frequent collaborators...
...who excel at engaging and meaningful public outreach...
...with proven leadership in park and recreation planning.
6. Discussion

• Thoughts or questions on what you’ve heard so far?

• Community Engagement and Outreach
7. Next Steps

• Take (and encourage others to take) new Denveright online survey next week

• 2nd Task Force meeting – October 27th

• Community Think Tank planned for August

• Community Visioning planned for October 11th and 12th (please attend!)
Thank you for your participation!