DENVER PARKS AND RECREATION

STRATEGIC ACQUISITION PLAN

PRAB Meeting 5.12.21
TONIGHT’S PRESENTATION

Introductions
Vision + Purpose
Public Engagement Summary
Plan Toolbox
Focus Areas + Criteria
Wrap Up
Questions

Introductions

- Kathy Leveque - Assistant Director of Parks Planning, SAP Project Manager
- Luke McKay - Acquisition & Asset Manager, SAP Project Manager
- Chris Geddes – Design Workshop, Principal
- Hadley Peterson – Design Workshop, Project Manager
VISION & PURPOSE

Vision

The DPR Strategic Acquisition Plan provides a clear framework for decision-making that identifies priorities, describes strategies, and explains criteria for success associated with completing and funding future acquisitions. This framework will ensure Denver’s urban and mountain parks, open spaces and recreation system will equitably meet the recreational needs of the entire community, while also ensuring that Denver remains a resilient, sustainable and healthy city.

Purpose

» Provide criteria DPR can use to evaluate acquisitions while prioritizing and balancing growth opportunities across the six focus areas.

» Create a framework for how new opportunities provide value and benefit to the parks and recreation system and users.

» Identify specific goals to be used as measures for success associated with each focus area.

» Include a “toolbox” DPR can utilize to expand the parks and recreation system.
**Demographics**

» **Over 3,000 touchpoints** with technical stakeholders and the general public

» **11% of those engaged are Latinx residents and 9% are Black residents**

» **5% of those engaged are under the age of 18**
STRATEGIC ACQUISITION PLAN

The Toolbox

» The toolbox includes diverse funding mechanisms innovatively coupled with proven real estate tools

» Implementation will require coordination with other City agencies and partner organizations

Funding Mechanisms

• Legacy Fund
• Capital Improvement Funds
• Bonds
• Grants

Acquisition Tools

• Fee Acquisitions
• Land Leases and Management Agreements
• Easements
• Purchase Options and Rights of First Offer

Partnership Opportunities

• Corporate, Non-Profit, and Governmental Partners

Development Policies

• Large Development Review
• Parkland Dedication
FOCUS AREA: 10-MINUTE WALK OR ROLL

GOAL: Provide all residents with a quality park within a 10-minute walk or roll (or within a 5-minute walk or roll in Downtown Denver)

FOCUS AREA CRITERIA
The property is:
- Located in an existing 10-minute walk or roll gap, or 5-minute if Downtown.
- Of adequate size/shape/etc. to provide at least three of the following amenities:
  - Play areas
  - Minimum (3) small group gathering areas of 24 people
  - Minimum (6) sport courts
  - Off-leash dog area/run
  - Mobility loop
  - Open lawn area of minimum 2500 sf
  - Tree planting
  - Multi-use plaza minimum 1500 sf
  - Gardens (community, pollinator, etc.)
  - Fitness stations
  - Nature play and access to nature
  - Sports courts and athletic recreation areas (fields, etc.)
  - Picnic areas
- Directly adjacent or connecting to other parks, open spaces and facilities via the mobility network through city or regional trails, bike paths and/or greenways.
**Focus Area 10-Minute Walk or Roll**  
**Example:** Iliff and Bellaire

The property is:

- Located in an existing 10-minute walk or roll gap
- Of adequate size/shape/etc. to provide a variety of neighborhood park amenities
FOCUS AREA: MOUNTAIN PARKS

**GOAL:** Provide accessible destination parks that focus on outdoor recreation, environmental education, and ecological preservation.

**FOCUS AREA CRITERIA**

The property is:
- Conducive to potential future activities and programming for a variety of demographic groups.
- Possesses existing connectivity infrastructure like trails and roads, etc.
- Preserves Denver hydrology and/or protects the watershed.
- Provides continuity for wildlife corridors and/or protects critical or unique species and habitats.
- Preserves rocky outcroppings and/or has unique or diverse topography.
- Possesses historical/cultural assets or advances the protection of them.
Focus Area Mountain Parks Example:
Axton Ranch

The property is:

- Conducive to potential future activities and programming for a variety of demographic groups.
- Possesses existing connectivity infrastructure like trails and roads, etc.
- Preserves Denver hydrology and/or protects the watershed.
- Provides continuity for wildlife corridors and/or protects critical or unique species and habitats.
- Preserves rocky outcroppings and/or has unique or diverse topography.
- Possesses historical/cultural assets or advances the protection of them.
FOCUS AREA: FACILITIES

**GOAL:** Provide land and buildings throughout Denver for diverse recreation opportunities as well as accessible and efficient parks maintenance.

**FOCUS AREA CRITERIA**

The property is:

- A sufficient size to provide both indoor and outdoor recreation, and to support both recreation and maintenance/operations needs when possible.
- Helpful in closing a gap in the facilities network – either recreation or maintenance.
- Of adequate shape/size to advance department needs (such as green building infrastructure like solar panels, etc. and/or maintenance vehicle accommodation).
- Provides reasonable cost/benefit savings for maintenance on travel time to other properties.
Focus Area Facilities Example:
Westwood Rec Center

The property is:

- A sufficient size to provide both indoor and outdoor recreation.
- Helpful in closing a gap in the recreation facilities network.
- Adequate size/shape to advance department needs.
FOCUS AREA: RESILIENCE, HABITAT RESTORATION, & WATERWAYS

GOAL: Cultivate an accessible and resilient network of wildlife habitat corridors, waterway, and recreational and protective areas to prepare for an uncertain future and expand public stewardship.

FOCUS AREA CRITERIA

The property is:

- Along a waterway and/or protects a riparian corridor.
- Located within a floodplain and/or could be used to protect vulnerable areas and existing properties from flooding.
- Helpful in achieving Mile High Flood District or Office of Emergency Management metrics and goals regarding the provision of minimum buffer zones from waterways.
- Reduces the urban heat island effect.
- Provides continuity for wildlife corridors and/or protects critical or unique species and habitats.
Focus Area Resilience, Habitat Restoration & Waterways Example: 39th Avenue Greenway

The property is:

- Located within a floodplain and/or could be used to protect vulnerable areas and existing properties from flooding.
- Reduces the urban heat island effect.
- Provides continuity for wildlife corridors and/or protects critical or unique species and habitats.
FOCUS AREA: DOWNTOWN, HIGH-DENSITY, & GROWTH AREAS

GOAL: Meet the increasing recreational, cultural, and ecological demands on parks and public spaces in downtown, high-density, and growth areas.

FOCUS AREA CRITERIA

The property is:

- Located within an existing 5-minute walk or roll gap if located downtown.
- Located within an existing 10-minute walk or roll gap if in a high-density or growth area as defined by Blueprint Denver.
- Of adequate size/shape/etc. to provide one of the following amenities if Downtown, or three of the following amenities if in a High-Density or Growth Area:
  - Minimum (3) small group gathering areas of eight (8) people
  - Off-leash dog area/run
  - Open lawn area of minimum 1,000 sf
  - Tree planting
  - Multi-use plaza minimum 800 sf
  - Community garden
  - Playgrounds and sports courts
  - Community art piece/installation
  - Adjacent or interior restaurant/retail uses
  - Nature play
  - Gardens (community, pollinator, etc.)
Focus Area Downtown, High-Density and Growth Areas Example: Gateway Landing

The property is:

- Located within an existing 10-minute walk or roll gap if in a high-density or growth area as defined by Blueprint Denver.
- Of adequate size/shape/etc. to provide a variety of amenities
FOCUS AREA: EQUITY

GOAL: Proactively invest in neighborhoods in a flexible manner in coordination with other complete neighborhood needs and community benefits.

FOCUS AREA CRITERIA

The property is:

- Located within or adjacent to a neighborhood with a high equity need according to DPR’s Neighborhood Equity Index.
- Directly adjacent to existing or proposed affordable housing.
- Located within a 10-minute walk or roll of existing or proposed affordable housing.
- Located adjacent to another community benefit (e.g. school, library, grocery, recreation center, medical facility, etc.) and offers the opportunity to partner with another community serving use in a high equity need neighborhood.
**Focus Area Equity Example:**

Platte Farm Open Space

The property is:

- Located within or adjacent to a neighborhood with a high equity need according to DPR’s Neighborhood Equity Index.
The Strategic Acquisition Plan provides:

- **The foundation upon which DPR's Acquisition Program will be built and implemented**
- **Evaluation criteria** to help ensure new acquisition investments add value and benefit to the system and users
- A toolbox by which DPR can couple various funding mechanisms with proven real estate techniques and partners
- **Intentional flexibility to ensure DPR and its Acquisition Program remain strategic and nimble in an ever-changing real estate market** and to keep the door open for potential partnership opportunities

**PRAB Recommendation**

» Anticipated on June 9, 2021