Spring Mesa Neighborhood Park
Summary of the Neighborhood Design Process

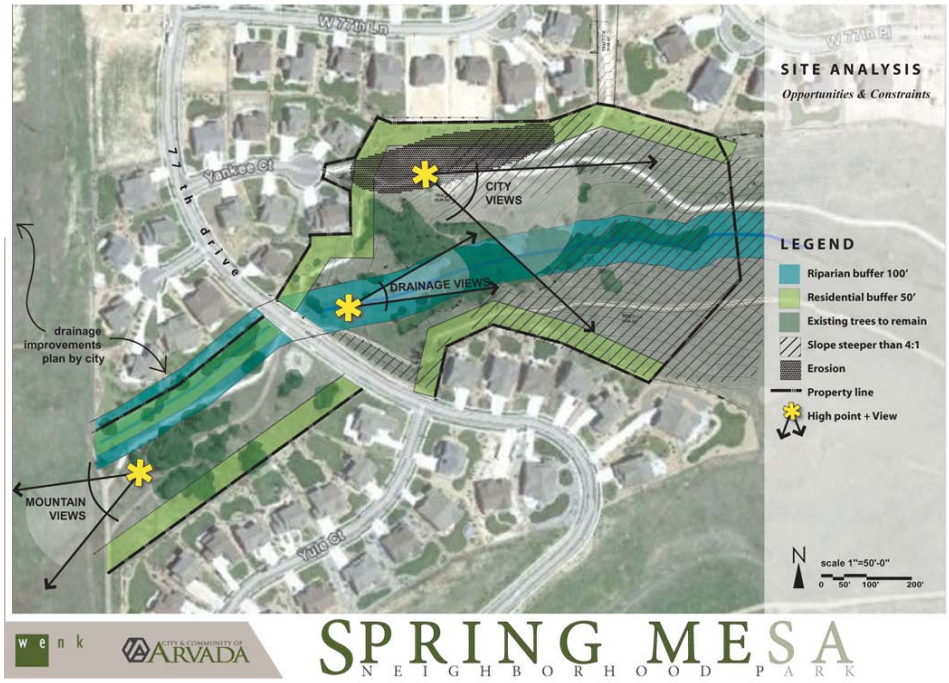
Background – As basic information for the neighbors, Wenk Associates provided a Q&A summary (addressing anticipated questions), the subdivision plat, and a Benefits of Park handout at the first and second meetings. These documents are attached.

Site Analysis – Spring Mesa is a newer subdivision with a large commitment to paved and soft trails throughout an extensive network of public and private open spaces. Trails extend from Spring Mesa Park down slope along Moon Gulch Drainage, east to Saddlebrook Park and the Equestrian Center at 75th and Indiana. Trail connections also extend south to the Tucker Lake Trailhead, southeast to Quaker Acres Park, northeast to Pattridge Open Space and southwest to Ralston Creek Trail around the Blunn Reservoir.

Spring Mesa Park is uniquely sited at the source of Moon Gulch drainage where springs surface near a grove of trees. The park collects spring water and precipitation into a flow line headed east (ultimately draining into Ralston Creek east of Eldridge Street.) As a result, the park is wrapped around the existing trees with great views to the east overlooking Quaker Acres Park.

The site has great city views to the east, mountain views to the west, and views overlooking the existing drainage and mature cottonwood trees.

The west side of 77th Drive is fairly flat with mature trees. There is a large riprap drainage structure at the street that outlets to Moon Gulch on the east side. The east side of the site has fairly steep slopes with a walkway connection down the hill. Poor soil and erosion control issues exist on the steep slopes on the east side that need to be addressed with the project.



Above: Site analysis board presented at public meeting #2.

Park Design Process (With input from the neighbors at 3 separate meetings)

Public Meeting #1:

For the first public meeting, the designers prepared image boards of potential activities and elements that could be in the park. The citizens expressed their preferences by placing dots and comments on sticky notes next to the elements and images that they liked or disliked. High priorities were: Perserve/Enhance Natural Area, soft trail through the woodland, benches, trail crossing, picnic tables, and play areas.

Comments addressed desires for the play area on the on west side of 77th drive, providing places for kids to play and not having bright play equipment. There were concerns about limiting parking on the street. The existing trees, wildlife, and views were very important elements to maintain. There were also desires to provide erosion control on the east side north of the walk where existing mud and water cross the path and addressing the water and ice problems at the drainage crossing the walk. In general, an overall theme of the neighborhood comments was to preserve the existing trees and the natural character of the park, both east and west of 77th Drive.

Above: One of the image boards with dot preferences and comment notes from public meeting #1.

Public Meeting #2

The design team prepared a site analysis board and three concepts for the second public meeting based on the feedback from the first meeting. Neighbors were given a comment card to express their preferences for different elements within the concepts. Preferences were expressed for soft trails with a crossing on the east side, two playground locations (east and west), landscape restoration, tree plantings, and bench overlooks. Preferences were expressed against basketball courts and exercise stations.

In general, the neighborhood comments were positive for preserving the trees and the natural qualities of the site as shown in all three of the options.

Above: Options presented at public meeting #2.

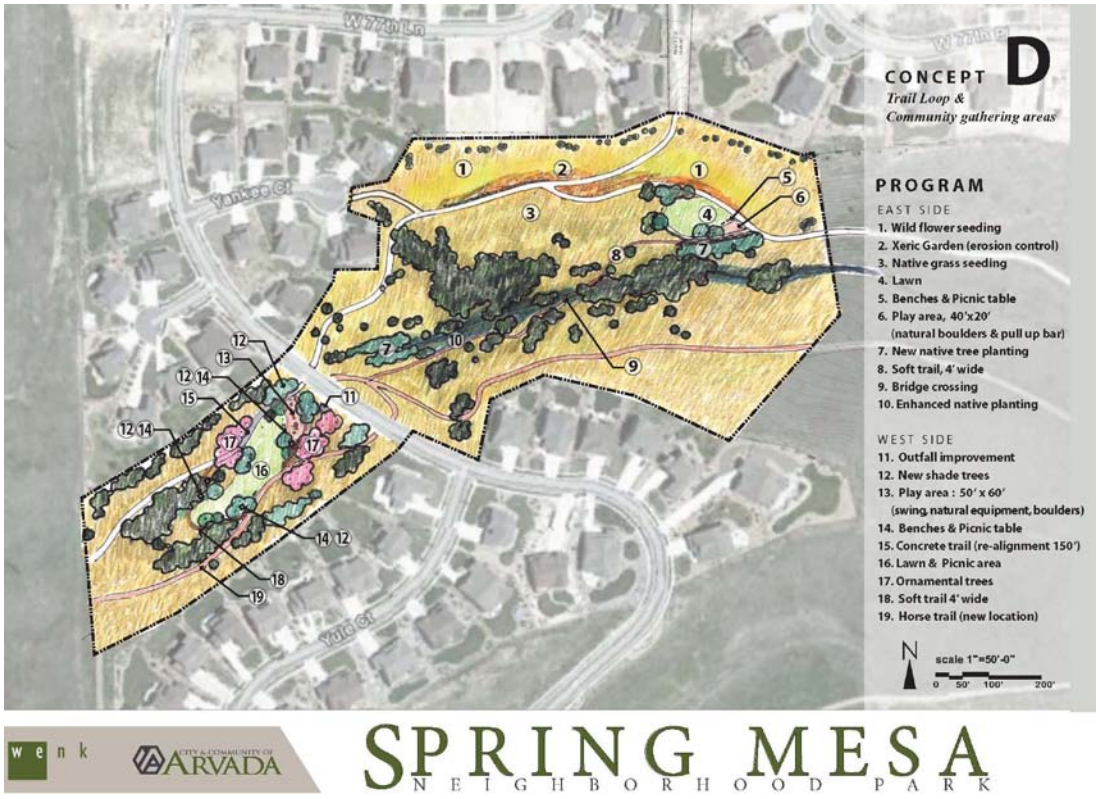
Public Meeting #3

The overall master plan for the park was presented at the third meeting. The master plan incorporated the elements that the neighborhood expressed desires for. There are varying opinions amongst the neighborhood and the master plan represents an attempt to provide a balance between these differences - an open space and a neighborhood park (Goal 3 and 4 of the City's Park Master Plan Goals).

The Master Plan presented had mixed support by the neighborhood due to the proximity of the west playground to a homeowner. The design team is working on a minor modification to the Preferred Plan to provide a greater buffer between the play area on the west side and adjacent houses.

After the master plan modifications, Wenk will begin detailed design for the park elements. As the detailed construction documents are prepared for bidding the projects, park design and maintenance staff will review plans and documents for additional input into the final bid documents.

Staff expects the project to be bid producing a contractor recommendation for approval at the July 11 City Council meeting. Subject to that approval, staff expects construction of Spring Mesa Park to begin in August for construction through November 2011.



Above: Final Master Plan presented at public meeting #3.