

**Citizens' Capital Improvement Plan Committee (CCIPC)**  
**November 20, 2014**  
**FINAL MEETING SUMMARY**

**Attendance**

Melissa Beck	Michelle Glasmann	T.O. Owens
Larry Coates	Lindsay Gomez	Julie Rasmussen
Dan Cupit	Ken Haack	Ron Slinger
Michelle DeLaria	Harriet Hall	Janet Steinkamp
Ascenzo Di Giacomo	Cindi Kreutzer	Bob Wilson
Kelly Eargle	John Malito	Don Wood
Nancy Ford	Kelly Mueldener	

Presenters and Observers: Bill Ray and Gordon Reusink

Facilitation Team: Heather Bergman (Peak Facilitation) and Niki Koszalka

**Welcome**

The facilitator welcomed the Committee and proceeded with introductions. The group discussed and agreed to utilize time at the end of the meeting to consider options for the group moving forward.

**Presentation to Citizens' CIP Committee – Parks, Golf, and Hospitality (Gordon Reusink)**

- **What Attaches People to Their Communities**
  - Gallup and the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation launched the Knight Soul of the Community project in 2008.
  - Over a three-year period, close to 43,000 people in 26 communities were surveyed.
  - The three attachment drivers for creating a community's soul are:
    - Social offerings, such as entertainment venues and places to meet,
    - Open (how welcoming a place is), and
    - Aesthetics (its physical beauty and green spaces).
- **The Benefits of Parks**
  - Community Benefits
    - Parks facilities and open spaces can accommodate and provide community involvement activities and leadership opportunities.
    - Community recreation has the potential to promote social harmony among culturally diverse populations.
    - Recreation can build strong families, which form the foundation for a healthy community.
    - Community facilities, including parks and open spaces, are the source of community pride and identity.
    - Community facilities offer opportunities for community members to be active and visible.
  - Personal Benefits
    - The closer one lives to a park correlates to a happier lifestyle.
    - Parks and park facilities provide important opportunities for regular physical activity, which is one of the best methods of health insurance for individuals.
    - Accessible places for physical activity and leisure are essential to stress management.

- Children’s play is essential to the human development process.
    - Accessible parks and open spaces help improve the quality of life for community members, including people with disabilities.
  - Economic Benefits
    - Investment in recreation constitutes an investment in preventive health measures for the community.
    - Investing in parks and recreation facilities increases the value of nearby and surrounding properties, providing benefit to landowners and tax districts. (Proximity to parks results in 20% higher resale of homes compared to those not close to parks.)
    - Downtown development efforts can benefit from proximity to attractive and enjoyable parks and community spaces.
    - Strong parks and recreation services can motivate business relocation and expansion within the community.
    - Investments in environmental protection as part of parks and open space management pay for themselves.
- **Arvada Parks Historic Milestones**
  - 1919: McIlvay Park, Arvada’s first park was donated to the Town of Arvada (population: 800).
  - 1956: Arvada Parks Department was created (population 10,955).
  - 1964: The first comprehensive plan was adopted (population 33,898).
    - The group held a huge vision for the parks in the community.
    - The original plan was to have Arvada start at Lowell Boulevard and extend west to the foothills, and start at 44<sup>th</sup> Avenue and extend north to the Jefferson/Boulder County Line.
    - The master plan showed roads, parks, and how things were stitched together.
    - This document gave Arvada a work program and envisioned a park within a 10-minute walk from all homes in Arvada.
    - There are currently 85 neighborhood parks.
  - 1974: Voters approved a \$3.4 million bond issue to construct 32 parks (population: 75,909).
  - 1981: The first Park Master Plan was adopted (population: 84,833).
  - 1999: City and Apex Park and Recreation District entered into a new business relationship (population: 89,724).
  - 2001: The Arvada Park Master Plan was adopted (population: 101,095).
  - 2014: Population: 109,157
- **Arvada – Apex Partnership (1999)**
  - The City acknowledged and encouraged the role that Apex Park and Recreation District plays in the management of recreational activities.
  - The City recognized the benefits to the public of the on-going viability of the District.
  - The City acknowledged that it does not intend to be actively involved in recreation management, scheduling, or administration.
  - The District relies on the City’s expertise in maintaining all parks, trails, open space areas, active recreational facility turf areas, and athletic field turf areas owned by the City, owned by the District, or leased to either party.
  - The City entered into full-use leases for facilities it owns (Arvada Tennis Center, Meyers Pool, Lake Arbor Recreation Center) with Apex managing the recreation programming.

- **Apex Citizen Committee Priorities**
  - The citizen group adopted a 2020 plan.
  - This plan is currently being updated with a goal to have a certain dollar amount to take to the voters. This would be tied to the bond expiration. The board would like to go to voters, without raising taxes, and keep the increase the same for funding Apex but provide other services outside of the current bond.
  - The following are the priorities outlined by the Apex Citizen Committee.
    - Eastside Arvada Recreation Center
    - Improvements at Long Lake Ranch Regional Park
    - Improvements at Lutz Sports Complex
      - The complex is currently inefficient.
      - The goal is to create a four-plex of fields that operate better.
    - Improvements at the Arvada Tennis Center
      - The Tennis Center opened in 1976 and is located in the area of 66<sup>th</sup> Ave and Miller Street.
      - The goal is to update the courts.
    - Replacement of Meyers Pool
      - The pool facility is located in the northern part of Arvada off of Carr Street.
      - It was built by the City and opened in the early 1980s. The design has almost outlived its usefulness.
      - There was a problem with condensation, which caused wood laminate to unpeel and forced a one-month closure of the facility.
      - The cost of replacing the facility will likely be \$20 million.
    - Hyland Hills Parks and Recreation District
      - Community Park is an 84-acre park located at 58<sup>th</sup>/Tennyson to 72<sup>nd</sup>/Lowell on the Gold Line.
      - The first phase is scheduled to be done by 2016.
- **The Business of Arvada Parks**
  - The City of Arvada's Comprehensive Plan contains the strategic plan, which is heavy on projects and priorities.
    - "The purpose of a comprehensive plan is to set forth the shared goals and policies of a community to help guide development and investment decisions. It sets the stage for development regulations and standards and guides the City in funding programs and capital investments. Such a plan generally creates and works toward a vision of what the community will look like in 20 to 30 years."
    - The Arvada Parks, Trails, and Open Space Master Plan contains map that graphically lays out vision the community has for its parks.
  - Parks, Trails, And Open Space: Creating the Vision
    - The Parks and Open Space Master Plan is part of the Comprehensive Plan. The City will continue to implement the Parks and Open Space Master Plan, as updated periodically.
    - The City will equitably distribute and provide convenient access to parks, outdoor recreational facilities, and trails throughout the City. In addition, the City will address enhancing the provision of parks and open space to underserved areas of the City.
    - The Plan will test the assumptions laid out and see if it valid for today and into Arvada's future.

- The City will maintain parks, trails, and open space areas at a high level of quality that is appropriate for the type of use and nature of the facility.
- The City will work to develop an adequate level of funding for planning, acquiring, developing, enhancing, and maintaining parks, trails, and open space.
- The City will make sure existing parts remain in as good shape as what has been newly built.
- The City will have certain parts of the community preserved as open space. Many of the parcels of land obtained were given in estate plans through which the legacy of Arvada remains available to the future generations.
- The natural and unique features are continued, and there is drought tolerant landscaping. This includes having no turf in medians, as well as the use of xeriscape and low water plants.
- Arvada will have a network of trails connecting residential areas. New developments will provide a connecting trail system that creates easy accessibility to schools, parks, shopping areas, and employment centers in all directions.
- Arvada will improve the safety and connectedness of its bicycle paths.
- The City will encourage new developments to preserve public access to major water bodies.
- Trails will include equestrian opportunities where appropriate. (There is a 58-acre outdoor equestrian center and a 7.5-acre indoor equestrian facility).
- Park, Trail, and Open Space System
  - Neighborhood Parks
    - There are variations to neighborhood parks: some have no playgrounds, while others may contain soft surfaces or unique features such as environmental classrooms including an astronomy pad.
    - There are no general CIP funds put into these projects.
    - These parks are often under the direction of neighborhood groups.
    - Neighborhood parks are generally 5 to 12 acres in size.
    - Arvada has a goal of having a park within a ten-minute walk of every home in Arvada.
  - Community Parks
    - Community parks are generally 30 to 100 acres in size and provide opportunities for community-wide activities and facilities.
    - Community parks provide a balance between programmed sports facilities and other community activities such as gardens, performance areas, festival spaces, and plazas that appeal to the broader community.
    - A parking area is usually featured.
    - They have their own master plans.
  - Historic Parks
    - Arvada boasts four historic parks that are on the national register.
    - The four historic parks are: Churches Ranch National Historic District, Gold Strike Park, Moore Bros. Farm and Agricultural Center, and Ralston Cemetery.
    - Church Ranch has a restored original farm house, which has the largest concentration of Lyme grouting in any building from Santa Fe to Laramie. A grant was obtained to restore the barn.

- The Ralston Cemetery is located in the far south area of the Wildflower Ponds development.
- Ralston Cemetery contains 100 burial sites of the White and Green families, who were historical families in Arvada.
- Special Purpose Parks
  - Special purpose parks are established by groups of passionate people who want to see specific types of parks built.
  - These parks include: Indiana Equestrian Center, Arvada West Dog Park, Bird's Nest Disc Golf Course, Arvada Skate Park, and Arvada Gardeners/Rose Roots Garden.
  - The stake park utilized no general funds tax dollars and was funded entirely by grants.
- Sports Complexes
  - Sport complexes provide opportunities for community-wide programmed and non-programmed sports such as baseball, softball, soccer, and tennis, in high-intensity-use facilities that usually have limited areas for passive recreation uses.
  - Arvada, working with Apex over the next 10 years, will add two more fields.
- Trails and Trail Corridors
  - The City has as a primary goal to complete the major trails that primarily lie along City drainages such as Van Bibber Creek, Little Dry Creek, Ralston Creek and Leyden Creek.
  - The current trails are a great system.
  - Arvada will work with the Park Advisory Committee to come up with the priorities of the park trails.
  - By December 31, 2019, all prioritized projects must be completed.
  - More than \$50 million in unbuilt trails has been identified.
- Open Space and Wildlife Refuges
  - The Parks, Trails, and Open Space Master Plan identifies key areas to preserve as open spaces and establishes a classification system that can be used to designate parcels according to their preservation method, environmental sensitivity, and level of facility development for public use.
  - These areas focus on drainage ways, water bodies, prominent ridges, expansions to existing open spaces, and key wildlife habitat.
  - There are two prairie dog refuge areas (95 acres and 53 acres).
- Urban Forest - There are approximately 30,000 trees in the City's urban forest.
- Urban Design Features include: facility landscaping, medians, rights- of-way, and water tank sites.
- Environmental Education
  - Comprising over 80 acres, Majestic View Community Park is located south of West 72nd Avenue, north of West 68th Avenue, west of Carr Street, and east of Kipling Street.
  - Broad ridges, panoramic views of the mountains, and valleys with wetlands are found within the park. Two small lakes, Hayes Lake and Oberon Lake, and pockets of assorted vegetation are also located within the park.
  - This site was a significant acquisition resulting in the creation of a unique park dedicated to environmental education.

- The park is home to lots of environmental education efforts, including state-mandated programs for elementary school students.
  - Lake Recreation
    - The Arvada/Blunn Reservoir is a 785-acre valuable warm/cool water fishery.
    - In 2013, over 600 annual passes were sold to the fishing public, with over 25,000 anglers assisted by over 90 volunteers.
    - In the future, Welton Reservoir will open for Lake Recreation.
- Funding Arvada Park Operations – Primary Sources
  - Jefferson County Open Space (JCOS). A 0.5% tax is imposed by Jefferson County. Since 2008, all (JCOS) revenue has been used for park maintenance activities.
  - Funds are transfer from the City of Arvada General Fund to the Parks Fund.
  - Earned revenue funds a portion of Environmental Education and Lake Recreation Programs.
- Taking Lasting Care Parks Capital Maintenance and Replacement
  - The program was created in 2008. The Taking Lasting Care Program goal is to ensure that once parks are constructed and maintained, resources are also available for the eventual replacement of Arvada Parks assets.
  - The Taking Lasting Care Program includes replacing irrigation systems, playgrounds, tennis court resurfacing, trail segments, and trees.
  - Funding for this program is through the capital improvement fund.
  - Arvada was given a suggestion to stop calling it “capital maintenance and repair” and call it “taking lasting care” instead in order to garner more support. The renaming resulted in receiving \$700K in the budget.
  - Most irrigation systems only have 25 years of life, especially those using older technology.
  - Of the 54 playgrounds in the City, 17 do not reach ADA standards.
  - The City replaced 6 playgrounds in park systems in 2014.
  - The plan allowed for 45 tennis courts, in deteriorated condition, to be resurfaced.
  - There are 26 miles of hard-surface trails, and the plan recognizes they may deteriorate and there are funds available to fix them.
- Strategic Investments
  - There are numerous sources of funds for Arvada Parks Strategic Investments including: Adams County Open Space Funds, Conservation Trust (lottery and lotto) funds, parks water tap fees, fees in lieu of lands dedicated, park development fees, and grants.
  - The following are neighborhood parks related to Arvada’s strategic Investments.
    - Britton Park (West 69<sup>th</sup> and Eaton Street)
    - Griffith Station Park (West 52<sup>nd</sup> and Carr Street)
    - Whisper Creek Parks (Whisper Creek and Panorama Parks)
  - Neighborhood Parks to Meet the City’s Vision
    - The six parks of Candelas including: Sarah George, Cimarron, Foxtail Pond, Maverick Mesa, Haystack Plateau, and Church’s Crossing Parks.
    - The parks of Leyden Rock including Lookout, Daybreak, and West Ridge.
- **Arvada Parks Strategic Planning Projects**
  - Rocky Mountain Greenway
    - The project received a \$1.7 million grant.

- Great Outdoors of Colorado also approached Arvada with a request to apply for a \$1 million grant.
    - Former Secretary of the Interior Salazar envisioned the greenway to stretch from the Rocky Mountain Arsenal to Rocky Flats and ultimately to Rocky Mountain National Park.
  - Kipling and 56<sup>th</sup> – Underpass
    - This is located east of Kipling and will grant easy access to Grandview Avenue extending past the Arvada Cemetery on the way to the train station.
    - It will provide neighborhood access for the Gold Line.
    - The project will be funded through a City-matched grant through DRCOG.
  - Lake Arbor Master Plan
    - The area has never been designated for use.
    - There are seven neighborhood groups who agreed that the community vision for the site is to keep it as rugged open space with bike jumps and a perimeter trail for greater use.
  - Future themes include updating the Parks, Trails and Open Space Master Plan.
- **City Council’s Strategic Result for Arvada Parks**
  - The City’s “Arterial Beautification Program” was approved by Council, and by December 31, 2016, one key project must be underway.
  - By December 31, 2019, 100% of all identified trail gaps and connection points recognized in the City’s Parks, Trails and Open Space Master Plan and Bicycle Master Plan as identified by the Arvada Park Advisory Committee and as approved by City Council are built/completed.

### Questions/Answers/Comments

- *What is arterial beautification and is it a strategic goal?* Yes, it is one of strategic goals. The program would focus on all arterial streets to meet the beautification standard and scope. The program will include the part of one project being completed by 2016.
- *The beautification project would compete with actual parks projects?* Yes.
- *Can the tax discussed in relationship to APEX be further explained?* 20 years ago, a bond was passed to fund Apex. The Apex board would like to ask voters to leave the levy the same but allocate the funds to do other work.
- *How much of the general fund is used to leverage other funds either in-kind or matching?* In the past, Arvada received \$3 million from Jefferson County Open Space, which was allocated as \$1 million for projects and \$2 million for operations. Those funds are now used only for operations. Usually the general CIP funds the 20% ultimately needed to get other grants. If this group considers decreased funds, it is decreasing more than just the nominal amount, because the decrease also takes the leveraged funds away.
- *Relating to the larger projects, has much effort been made to do private or corporate funding? The City has tried and has had some luck but not a lot. What is the area behind Whisper Creek?* It is a conservation area and will not be built on. It is a conservation easement owned by the HOA.
- *The 5 Apex Citizen Committee priorities listed above, are they in priority order?* No, the list is trying to represent to this Committee the top priorities. The City felt it was important for this group to know the priorities for the Apex Citizen Committee. The City wanted this group to know that there are other parallel discussions happening.
- *Is there a measure for use of Arvada parks, facilities, trails, etc. by non-Arvada residents?* There is not a specific measure. The special use parks do see the most regional use.

- *In an Ideal world, how many employees per acre are needed to keep the parks maintained?* The needs are being met with the current staff. There is an amazing system listing the 41 things that could happen in a park, and employees have time cards and utilize this list to code their time. The data is used when talking to Council about staffing needs and to show costs on maintenance. This system allows for budgeting of the appropriate amount in the next year's budget.
- *In terms of the southeast area of town, is there an effort to look at where there could be different methods of acquisition? Other areas to use as parks?* Yes. Seeing that area of town, the future addition of 354 units and the proposed TOD area, there will be an increased population base. Urban redevelopment is being utilized to help determine how to deliver parks services that are more urban rather than the suburban model.
- *Are organic fertilizers being used to maintain parks?* Not currently. The City is working with water usage and pesticide application to be as sustainable as possible.
- *Has Arvada considered using goats to mow?* It has not been considered but could be.
- *What is Apex?* It was created in 1956 as a special district to provide recreational services. It has a board of directors with elections to the board occurring every two years. Arvada is served by three such recreation districts: Apex, Highland Hills, and Candelas Metropolitan.
- *Does the City have to do cost sharing on the facilities specific to the Highland Hills District?* Yes, the City cost shares all of their projects.
- *What would the City's share be in the \$20 million for the Meyers pool?* Arvada has not figured that out at this time.
- *Is the Candelas Metropolitan District to exist in perpetuity or will it have to be renewed?* It is as it is forever, in perpetuity.
- *Related to neighborhood park input process, does this same neighborhood process happen with the new parks built by developers as well?* In the suburban areas, the neighborhoods are very involved. The park development fees are collected until there is enough to fund a certain park. Then the design meetings will happen. It will reflect what the community wants.
- *What is the future of the special use parks? Are they dedicated to the special purposes forever? What if the group does not have the funds to continue the park? Does it go back to open space?* The City gauges the plan for keeping areas going. The City will get proposals from groups containing more than an idea. Group who want to manage a special use park have to show a business plan and how management will be maintained and passed on. The City works with them to make sure they continue to have volunteers. Most of the special purpose parks groups listed are very active.
- *If the disc golf park is not being used, what happens to the space?* If all efforts were not producing results, a decision would need to be made for it to come back under the City's management and/ or it would end its usefulness as a disc golf area, but it would remain a park. To change the use of parks to another use can only be done through a vote of the people.
- *Is there extra liability with the skate park?* Skate parks are now common enough that they do not impact insurance rates for the City. There is a specific category within Colorado state law for sports including skiing, horseback riding, skateboarding. It is established that there is a higher risk that comes along with these sports. Governmental immunity goes along with these. If there was a sign that said helmets or knee pads are mandatory, that would require staff to enforce the rule and would increase liability.
- *Related to the skate park and some other special use parks, have there ever been efforts to have them be fee-based?* Many of these parks are funded with grants that do not allow fees. Parks



are part of the public good, so many people enjoy them. These parks are one of the public goods for which the community as a whole shares the costs.

- *Has the maintenance staff increased relative to the number of new parks built?* No, the computerized irrigation has enabled to staff to remain the same.
- *Does the City charge at parks like the recreation centers do?* No. The indoor recreation centers follow a different cost protocol than the outdoor parks.
- *Are all of the open space areas in Arvada on the map that was distributed?* There are some that have been acquired recently that are not on the map.
- *Is the cost per acre to replace irrigation \$50,000?* Yes.
- *Is the park development fee used in the area in which it is collected?* Yes, the City is required to keep geographic proximity between the source of the fee and the location of the park. The maximum distance is ½ a mile.

### **The Future for the CCIPC**

The group briefly discussed the outline of next steps for the Committee that has been posted on the website. One member of the group did not support discussing project prioritization before funding strategies, but agreed that the rest of the schedule could be pursued in the meantime and this question revisited at a later time.

The group agreed that, starting on January 8, 2015, Committee meetings will start at 5:30 and end at or before 8:30. Dinner will be provided, but the Committee will work through dinner starting promptly at 5:30. Ice-breaker questions will either be eliminated entirely or tailored to the meeting topic with a small sub-set of Committee members answering the question at each meeting. The Committee will also move to meeting every other week, starting on January 8<sup>th</sup>.