

## RESPONSES TO PUBLIC CONCERNS AND QUESTIONS

Stations and Summary Questions for Public Meeting #2

June 23, 2015

### General Questions / Concerns:

1. *Is there any way this development can raise revenue for the city of Arvada?*

Revenue generation is not a primary goal of the future improvements. However, there are some opportunities that may provide revenue generation. Leasing the land for the solar array would provide a cost savings in offset from electricity charged.

The development of a future public outdoor shooting range could include funding from Jefferson County, and variety of grants and partnerships. The Jefferson County Public Shooting Range Working Group Report of Findings dated July 2014, notes that this type of facility would be financially self-sustaining with a fee for use. <https://jeffco.us/open-space/meetings-agendas/shooting-range-working-group>

Some special events held at the site could generate revenue or have an economic impact on the surrounding businesses, such as the War Birds show hosted by the Arvada Modelers or a potential bike race or event at the bike park.

2. *Why is only 21 acres (6 acres for the public shooting range and 15 acres for the bike park) out of 300+ acres for public-use land?*

There is approximately 1,600 acres in the entire regional area. Much of the area has steep slopes or has designated uses such as water storage, treatment and distribution, Jefferson Parkway right of way and open space. The remainder of approximately 470 acres includes the Arvada Modelers and 60 acres of prairie dog refuge. This leaves a small area for other recreation. Primary uses include public and private open space, parks, golf courses, public utilities, and public facilities as appropriate. The proposed program elements are compatible with the 2014 Arvada Comprehensive Plan.

3. *Who owns the water rights to wetland areas? Are these wetlands jurisdictional?*

In locations where wetlands are naturally occurring, decreed water rights are not required. In locations where wetlands are not naturally occurring, water rights may be required. Jurisdictional determinations for wetlands are provided by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The Corps confirmed that the wetlands in the northeastern corner of the Pioneer Sand and Gravel lease are non-jurisdictional. Those low-lying areas must be drained as part of the mine reclamation and lease agreement with Pioneer Sand. The wetlands along Ralston Creek and Leyden Gulch will stay and no changes are proposed in those areas as part of the master plan.

4. *Will an environmental impact statement be completed?*

An environmental impact statement is not required for any of the proposed uses. With that being said, there will be several environmental reviews on various aspects of the Jefferson Parkway project.

## Water Resources and Jefferson Parkway

1. *Is there an increase in flood risk with the removal of non-jurisdictional wetlands and site development?*

There should not be an increase in flood risk with the proposed new development surrounding the Blunn Reservoir, regardless of the site conditions prior to any new development that occurs. Any proposed new development within the project area will be required to satisfy requirements based on the design criteria outlined in the Urban Drainage and Flood Control District's Urban Storm Drainage Criteria Manual (UDFCD Manual). The UDFCD Manual provides drainage design criteria for the greater metropolitan Denver area and specifies that flood prevention facilities be provided so that runoff flow rates from new development do not exceed the runoff flow rates from pre-development conditions for a range of storm events.

The refined plan includes drainage improvements west of the Spring Mesa development for water quality and a visual buffer. Potential uses within the watershed have a minimal increase in impervious area with a significant buffer that does not include new development. Thus, flood risk would not increase due to the proposed development of the site.

2. *What impact will there be from lights and noise as a result of the highway construction?*

The Jefferson Parkway has not been fully designed and is part of a separate design process. The easement has been set aside for the roadway and associated improvements. Light and noise mitigation will be part of the future design process.

## Police Training Facility

1. *Is there truly a necessity to consolidate the different types of police training into one facility? Does Arvada have to be its host? Why not the eastern plains?*

There is a facility on the eastern plains that serves Adams County law enforcement. It is a training facility that offers firearms, driving, and defensive tactics training in one centralized location. The eastern location is difficult to share facilities with cities in the west region due to the distance and time required to get there.

Law enforcement officers in the west region have to travel to multiple locations to receive the specialized training needed to succeed on the job. A consolidated facility provides the ability to offer state-of-the-art training in a more cost-effective, centralized location. A new facility would provide the tools officers need to perform their jobs safely and effectively.

2. *If the primary goal of the land is water storage, is a race track in compliance with these water storage and quality goals?*

The area needed for water storage is shown on the Refined Concept. This Master Study is being conducted to show how the remainder of the property could be used. The Emergency Vehicle Operations Course will be used for police training purposes only and is desired to assist our law enforcement personnel in receiving critical training without traveling great distances to do so. As with any development, water quality must be addressed at design. Because the training facility is located on the western side of the Jefferson Parkway, it will most likely not affect water storage.

3. *Concern this use is too noisy for what is now a peaceful environment and neighborhood (lights and sound disturbance, etc)*

The police training facility is located 1 mile from the neighborhood. It would not be immediately visible from any of the houses. Prior to a facility being designed, noise mitigation would be central to decisions on how the facility is built and would operate.

### **Outdoor Public Shooting Range**

1. *What will the noise impacts be? Will it be too noisy or close to the neighborhood? What types of sound buffering are possible?*

- There will undoubtedly be some level of noise associated with an outdoor shooting range. Effective noise mitigation is possible and there are a variety of examples of how this has been done effectively in a number of locations around the country. The National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF) elaborates on effective techniques including vegetation, berms, baffles and barriers. Please see this link for more information:  
<https://www.nssf.org/ranges/rangeresources/library/NSRS/04PolicyTrack/SoundAttenuation.pdf>
- The hours of operation for this type of facility can also assist in mitigating noise impacts. This would be studied further during the planning and design of this facility.
- Within the Blunn/Pioneer Master Plan the outdoor public shooting range is proposed to be located 1.3 miles from the residential subdivision to the east, which is two and one-half times the recommended minimum distance identified by the Jeffco Shooting Range Working Group: <https://jeffco.us/open-space/meetings-agendas/shooting-range-working-group/>. This location is the furthest west possible from the existing neighborhood and is also located west of the Jefferson Parkway. The Northern Front Range Sport Shooting Partnership (<http://www.sportshootingpartners.org>) has also used the same ½ mile distance from residential development in their site criteria as part of the search for appropriate locations for a public outdoor shooting range in that area.
- A separate planning and design process, which will include opportunities for public involvement and comments, will be conducted for this facility. The planning and design process will study noise and noise mitigation techniques and address how noise will be mitigated in the design of the facility.

2. *Why is a Public Shooting Range needed?*

There is a demand for a safe, public, outdoor shooting range facility that safely and efficiently serves the needs of a variety of shooters – young and old, individuals and families, novice and experts. A map of shooting ranges available to the public in the Denver Metro Area can be found in the presentation to the Board of County Commissioners on an outdoor public shooting range in Jefferson County: <https://jeffco.us/open-space/meetings-agendas/shooting-range-working-group/>

According to the 2003-2009 Center for Disease Control & Prevention Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Survey and the 2012 National Rifle Association study, approximately 32% or 173,000 people own firearms in Jefferson County.

Firearm safety would be a key focus of this facility. As such, there is an opportunity for education and training that would aide in reducing existing dispersed shooting areas scattered across Jefferson County, which are unsafe and create environmental damage on local, state, and federal lands.

3. *What percentage of residents would use the shooting range; who supports the idea?*

As noted above in the period of 2003-2009, there were approximately 173,000 people in Jefferson County or 32% who own firearms. It is important to note that this is a similar percentage of people who responded in support of the public shooting range, 35%, with the recent City of Arvada survey. The opportunity to partner with a police training facility, which would also have both local and regional support, would help emphasize the focus of safety, training and education.

4. *If the primary goal of the land is water storage, is a shooting range in compliance with these water storage and quality goals?*

One of the primary goals of the property is to provide water storage. This use will require approximately 110 acres of land within the 1,600 acre master plan area. A public shooting range is considered a compatible public use. Best Management Practices developed by the National Rifle Association (NRA) will be employed (<http://rangeservices.nra.org>) to address any environmental aspects with the planning and design of a public outdoor shooting range facility.

### **Recreation & Trails**

#### **Dog Park, Arvada Modelers, Bike Park, Golf Course Expansion, Teepee site, Prairie Dog Preserve and Natural Areas**

1. *There is a strong interest/demand for an outdoor pool.*

It is difficult to make a case for a regional swimming pool on the edge of the City. Typically, they are more centrally located with easy access from neighborhoods. The Gibbs West Community Park Master Plan that was completed in 2004 identifies a future outdoor pool behind the Apex Recreation Center on West 72nd Avenue. This location is more ideal due to accessibility for Arvada's western residents and the association of this facility with a community park and recreation center. The Apex Park and Recreation District should be contacted by any interested parties concerning a future pool development project.

2. *In the development and expansion of additional facilities and holes at Westwoods Golf Course, will trails and habitat be protected and maintained for local users and wildlife?*

The trail connection in this area will be relocated to the edge of the golf course and will provide a wildlife corridor with native vegetation. In fact, a large portion of the Ralston Creek Trail already shares space, and wildlife corridors, with the Westwoods Golf Course.

3. *Can there be more natural buffers and trail alignments through the proposed programs?*

The current graphic plan is a concept diagram to identify the locations of proposed programs. There will be natural buffers and trails connecting the proposed programs.

4. *The Modelers take up too much space and are too close to residents. What are noise impacts from this?*

The Arvada Modelers have had a location on site for many years. The relocation of their site will be required as part of the Jefferson Parkway alignment. The proposed site and facilities are the same size as the current site and facilities that exist today. It is required to be this large to meet fly zone safety requirements. The noise

impacts should be less than or equal to what exists today. Based on community feedback, the proposed, new location has shifted to the west and is further away from the adjacent neighborhood than the current, existing site.

5. *Is there adequate separation between the Arvada Modelers use areas and equestrian use areas?*

Yes, no trails or equestrian use should be within the fly zone of the Arvada Modelers, similar to how it functions currently. The trail connections and roadways will be outside of the fly zone used by the Modelers.

6. *What will be done for preservation of natural beauty?*

The site has been heavily mined and mitigation/reclamation efforts will take several years. As part of the master plan, open areas will be restored with native grasses. Water quality improvements and buffer zones will be implemented to beautify the area. View corridors to the Front Range from the neighborhoods will remain in place. All proposed program elements are at least a third of a mile from residents.

7. *If the wetland areas are removed, where will the water go? They provide habitat for animals and runoff control.*

Most of the wetlands that would be impacted were created as part of the mining operations. The historic drainage is in Moon Gulch, which will be restored with proper grading. The refined plan does include drainage improvements to the west of Spring Mesa to improve water quality, as well as an enhanced natural buffer between the site improvements and neighboring community. A majority of areas with wetlands and riparian habitat or other sensitive habitat will be protected.

8. *Why do we need the prairie dogs to stay/be preserved?*

The prairie dogs preserve is one of only two refuge sites in Arvada. The adopted City of Arvada Prairie Dog Habitat Plan designates 60 acres at this site that is required to stay as a preserve. Fencing is planned to assist in managing the prairie dog preserve.

9. *Will wildlife leave and be displaced by development?*

The site will remain a wildlife corridor and the drainages, which provide a significant amount of habitat, will not be developed. The proposed drainage improvements and restoration of native landscape areas will also improve wildlife habitat. Wildlife will likely avoid those areas that are developed, but will likely still use the drainages and remaining open space areas.

### **Sustainability: Solar Array and Compost Transfer Site**

1. *Will solar arrays reflect onto homes?*

The chances of any glare from the solar panels effecting homes in the neighborhood is very low. Actually, it has been stated that solar panels reflect less light than a white energy efficient rooftop. Solar panel glare could occur when the sun is low in the sky. However, there are several design considerations that can reduce or eliminate the chances of solar panel glare reaching a home. Proper panel design and proper solar system design, such as using solar systems that track the sun, can virtually eliminate any chances of reflected light reaching the neighborhood. In the refined plan, the proposed location of the solar array will be a mile from the nearest subdivision.

2. *What is driving the need for solar panels?*

The community solar garden program with Xcel Energy was created to allow for residents and businesses to benefit from solar without having to construct it on their roof or property. Someone with lots of trees or living in multi-family are good examples. The City would also like to have an allotment to power city facilities where we do not have enough roof area to offset power loads. For more info, go to:

[http://www.xcelenergy.com/Energy\\_Solutions/Residential\\_Solutions/Renewable\\_Energy\\_Solutions/Solar\\*Rewards%2%AE\\_Community%2%AE\\_-\\_CO](http://www.xcelenergy.com/Energy_Solutions/Residential_Solutions/Renewable_Energy_Solutions/Solar*Rewards%2%AE_Community%2%AE_-_CO)

3. *Is there another location adjacent to reservoir or highway for the solar panels?*

Based on community feedback, the refined master plan has relocated the solar array between the new reservoir and the Jefferson Parkway.

4. *What type of communication has there been between the City of Arvada, a solar power professional, and Xcel about the feasibility of building a solar array in this location?*

The City will put out a request for proposal for a solar developer to lease land from the City to install the solar and manage the subscriptions to the power. Ideal locations would be along one of the overhead power lines to minimize new infrastructure needs. With the development of the lakes, the overhead lines will likely be relocated. If a location is identified for the solar array as part of the master plan, conversations will continue with the solar provider.

5. *Will the solar arrays conflict with preservation of views to the Front Range?*

Solar panels are no more than 5 feet high when ground mounted, no views would be obstructed. Based on community feedback, the refined master plan has relocated the solar array between the reservoir and Jefferson Parkway. This allows a greater buffer to the neighborhood.

6. *Can the solar panels be placed atop any proposed buildings to combine/overlap uses?*

This array would be ground mounted. There may be potential in the future should there be any buildings constructed to mount additional solar arrays on a building.

7. *Can the solar gardens be placed away from existing trees and the drainage?*

An open area is ideal so there is not shading from the trees. The refined master plan has relocated the solar array close to Jefferson Parkway to respond to feedback from the public.

8. *Will the compost transfer site produce foul odors?*

The compost site is proposed to be located one mile from the nearest subdivision. This site will be a transfer station where composting companies, landscapers and the public can bring food and yard waste for collection in large roll off dumpsters before it is transferred to a location about 30 miles east of Denver for processing. Processing of materials will not take place on site. Odors would be the same as a commercial dumpster. Any visual impacts will need to be accommodated through fencing or other design elements. The City would put out a Request for Proposal (RFP) for a company to manage the site.