

2007 Parks Trails & Recreation Commission

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It is the position of the Parks, Trails and Recreation Commission (PTRC) that our role is to facilitate the use, appreciation, management and enhancement of our rural parks, trails and recreation resources.

We see the endeavors of Cherry Hills Village Parks, Trails and Recreation Commission taking two forms:

- *Active* - the pursuit of park, trail and open space lands to enhance, enlarge and connect existing resources; the pursuit and development of pocket parks and neighborhood parks that are in keeping with and meet the needs of neighborhood personalities and histories within Cherry Hills Village's unique districts; and the development and promotion of recreation and citizen gatherings and events.
- *Passive* – promote the use and enjoyment of our arenas, trails, open space and natural resource parks with low impact activities that are defined as places people can use and enjoy for bird/wildlife watching, walking a perimeter path so as not to disturb the interior, enjoying view corridors and other peaceful, quiet, no or low impact activities.

The following outlines recommendations for the following activities or actions, to be pursued as described in their corresponding sections.

Open Space

Definition: Those lands being intentionally left free from future development and in which it has been determined that it is, or may in the future be, within the public interest to acquire an interest in order to secure their protection-undeveloped land or "empty space."

- The PTRC has expressed an interest in preservation of open space and appropriate (carefully assessed) acquisition of additional open space; the acquisition of more property to be protected and preserved is to be encouraged, as is maintenance and preservation of current City owned existing open space.

- The preservation of natural resources and natural beauty of undeveloped land left free from development and protected from future development is a critical goal.

PRIORITY: List what open spaces the Village already has and create plans to preserve those locations in perpetuity through conservation easements.

PRIORITY: Set up a dedicated permanent funding stream to generate funds to secure properties of interest if/as they become available; include public/private partnerships, educate the community about land donations (see FUNDING section of this paper).

PRIORITY: The PTRC wants to be a better civic partner with large tract owners/private property owners who offer recreational opportunities and conservation opportunities (i.e. Kent, St Mary's).

PRIORITY: Encourage the use of conservation easements by land owners to secure open space land in perpetuity.

Parks

Passive Recreation Parks

Outdoor activities that create opportunities for a degree of interaction with the natural environment and which require no organization, rules of play, facilities or the installation of equipment other than those which may be necessary to protect the natural environment including solely trail based equestrian and pedestrian activities such as hiking, horseback riding as well as wildlife viewing and nature study.

Village Owned Parks

Preservation Park- a park that is dedicated to the preservation of view opportunities, wildlife corridors, water habitats and other unique, historical or sensitive features that allow limited wildlife viewing and nature study.

Criteria for Preservation Park Designation:

- Citywide appeal
- Acquisition and development cost
- Significant natural features
- Existing wildlife habitat or potential for restoration for wildlife habitat
- Viewing opportunities
- Proximity to trails
- Parking may be required
- Sense of openness
- Urgency
- A portion of Three Pond Park could be a preservation park

Active Recreation Parks

Community Park- a park that provides opportunities for many different kinds of recreational activities.

Criteria for Active Recreation Park Designation:

- Uses such as, but not limited to, playgrounds, recreational (not organized) soccer, outdoor skating rink and practice fields
- Citywide appeal
- Acquisition costs and development cost
- Sized according to use and neighborhood setting
- Proximity to trails and open spaces
- Availability of parking
- Availability of utilities for restroom and irrigation
- Neighborhood impact
- Accessible location
- Cost and ease of maintenance

Equestrian Park

A park that provides opportunities for but is not limited to equestrian recreational activities and equestrian equipment.

Neighborhood Parks

Small pocket parks in existing or new neighborhoods.

Criteria for a Neighborhood Park Designation:

- Appropriate use as determined by need
- Local/neighborhood appeal
- Acquisition and development cost
- Sized according to use and neighborhood setting
- Accessibility
- Availability of water and electricity may be required
- Neighborhood impact
- Sense of openness
- Cost and ease of maintenance
- Viewing opportunities
- Urgency

John Meade Park

The Parks, Trails and Recreation Commission's position on the future purpose, use and development of John Meade Park includes the following items:

Vision:

- To act as a community host for outdoor organized events
- Active Meeting Place/Community Recreational Park/centerpiece to our parks and trails system.
- A park that provides opportunities for many different kinds of recreational activities that also utilizes "build green" technology and plantings.
- To be labeled an 'active park' to differentiate it from passive use parks in CHV; this indicates the park could be used for multiple uses such as a playgrounds, as a gathering spot, large grassy play area, fishing pond with pier, the centerpiece to our parks and trails system- the recreational part of the City.

Play equipment

- Beefed up play structure
- Sport court – a couple of basketball hoops/backboard areas

Special Events

- Winter ice rink – grade park area sloping down for drainage for winter rink
- Summer Movie night
- Gathering place for many potential events (concerts, Saturday coffee cart, Race for Open Space, etc.)

Features

- Equestrian ring
- Small playing field/grassy area (maintained/manicured) - for concerts, gatherings, Frisbee, play area, where children can throw/kick a ball with friends
- Pond area – dock, stocked with fish, sloped "beach area"
- Xeriscaped Area - low maintenance/water use (garden club, example area)
- Seating – For seniors and others –shaded, relaxing
- Trail connections – places to walk/ride bike/use a stroller

These are all examples of what citizens cannot or may not choose to provide for themselves at home.

Infrastructure

- Bathrooms – we suggest adding them to the city center building but attached to it, with access from the outside only to ensure the building interior security is not compromised. This suggestion might help to avoid building another exterior structure which reduces open space and adds to building costs.
- Lights – low key lighting for safety and ambience
- Parking – enough for park users and special events - a lot can double as venue for special events

Other

- Park's neighbors – solicit their input and City wide input.
- We think it's important to do things incrementally – start with the fundamentals, simple, daytime, don't need to be extravagant.

Trails

It is the vision of the PTRC that we create a consistently well maintained and well designed trail system while pursuing opportunities to enhance and expand the trail system. In order to accomplish these goals, the PTRC believes these items to be important:

- Increasing the trail system within the confines of Cherry Hills Village in a sensitive manner to facilitate usage by all populations- walkers/runners, hikers, equine, bicyclists and so on while honoring the trail's relationship with its surroundings- neighborhoods, individual homeowners, streets and so on.
- 100% completion of the trail system around our City's perimeter.
- Increasing and completing the existing trail connections to communities that surround our City.
- The trails system should have a natural way of connecting to the City center to facilitate citizen gatherings at John Meade Park or at the City Center facility.
- The Parks, Trails and Recreation Division should have budgetary and other resources available to support the parks and trails systems, including but not restricted to equipment, manpower and technology to monitor and maintain the physical and fiscal health of our resources.
- The trails system should have a consistently recognizable design and functional design standards for its trail markers, signage, bridges and installed (manmade) elements (trash cans, bollards, benches), to identify the City and maintain a low-key presence for the City.
- Recognizing the Village trail system is comprised of differing uses and materials such as on street trails (asphalt), crusher fines, grass and other natural materials.

Recreation

It is the position of the Parks, Trails and Recreation Commission that our citizens have access to and substantial choice of established recreational facilities throughout the surrounding

communities. Therefore, we do not recommend the construction of a facility within Cherry Hills Village that would be dedicated to recreation and fitness opportunities.

However, we do believe that a part of the City Center building in its future form should have within it a room or space that could be used for meetings or large community gatherings. We do not recommend the formation of a recreational district to facilitate organized sports activities such as baseball diamonds, basketball floors, and soccer fields and so on.

We do believe we need to provide for, communicate and encourage opportunities to use our parks and trails resources for the recreational use of our citizens.

We need to work with Parks and Trails and Public Works staff and Cherry Hills Village citizen volunteers to develop events and opportunities for citizens to gather (i.e. wildlife walks, bird watching hikes, bike hikes, children's activities, perhaps ice rink/annual celebration or holiday or New Year kick off week, Earth Week or recycling/resource appreciation week).

We foresee creating and maintaining an annual celebratory event(s) to spotlight our resources and encourage community gatherings.

We foresee providing recreational opportunities and/or events for the enjoyment of our resources and honor our various citizen populations: equestrians, children, walkers/runners, bikers, wildlife/bird watching, and flora/fauna.

We foresee that any Special Events planned have profits directed specifically to the Village Open Space Fund.

Communications

We believe it is important to communicate with Cherry Hills Village citizens to share information about the opportunities available to them and how to access them. We would like the PTRC to have the opportunity to communicate infrequently to illustrate:

- Special Events
- News regarding new trails and or parks
- The Gift Fund
- Bench donations
- Land donations for parks or trails or open space

We envision the PTRC could communicate in the following ways:

- The City web site
- Periodic email bulletins to citizens who have signed up to receive this service
- The Crier
- A semi-permanent sign on Quincy or near the new City Center building that can also be used to display information about upcoming council and commission meetings
- Mailings sent directly to home addresses (this in particular is important as we develop interest in various Special Events which are timely and may not be suitable in the Crier due to time restrictions)

Funding

In conjunction with the Parks , Trails and Recreation Division, we recommend pursuing funds through various mechanisms for the purpose of bettering our existing parks and trails systems, developing citizen gatherings and events and purchasing park, trail and open space lands. We are interested in funding sources that are a constant revenue stream and wish to avoid costly and labor intensive annual bond issues.

Funding Ideas include but are not restricted to:

- Matching Funds
- Grants
- A real estate transfer tax
- Any Special Events proceeds (all profits go to Village Open Space Fund)
- Recreational Reimbursement- funds can be redirected by homeowner to be included in Open Space Fund
- Arapahoe County share back funds
- Funds left after litigation with South Suburban is settled could be allocated on a regular basis to the Village Land Donation Fund.
- Landscaping permit fees
- Building permits- add a small percentage fee to current permit costs

Land Acquisition Position Statement

We recommend Council review and take into consideration the following criteria when considering land and trail acquisition decisions.

1. Is the property adjacent to or does it directly enhance existing Village parks, trails or open space property?
2. Does the property enhance critical trail connectivity within CHV, and/or externally with our neighboring communities?
3. Does the property possess intrinsic value because of its scenic or historic features, location in the Village or recreation potential, such as the scenic treasures identified by the Blue Ribbon panel, Cherry Hills Land Preserve and former Parks and Trails Committee?
4. Does the property have natural features of value such as historic drainages, wetland areas, native vegetation, or wildlife habitat?
5. Is the property located in a neighborhood or area of the Village that is underserved by parks, trails and/or open spaces?
6. Does the property assists in the preservation of open space by preventing additional density?
7. Does the property help to preserve or enhance scenic mountain view corridors and or special views of natural areas?
8. Are there opportunities for public/private partnerships?