

March 19, 2008

Citizens Capital Improvement Committee
8101 Ralston Road
Arvada, Colorado 80002

Dear Members of the Citizens Capital Improvement Committee:

The Arvada City Council created the Arvada Park Advisory Committee in 1996 to advise and make recommendations to the City Council and staff on short and long term park projects, land acquisitions, modifications to recreational facilities, park and trails development, and capital maintenance and capital improvement projects.

For the past 12 years we have played a major role in pursuing the City of Arvada's Vision Statement --"Continuing to Build a Great Community"-- and in championing the community's parks and recreation goal, which was established by the Arvada City Council, and, which describes what we want Arvada to be in our future, what our community building will ultimately lead to: "Arvada will be a community where everyone will benefit from a well-planned, exciting, and diverse system of parks, open space and recreational opportunities."

We have followed the work of your committee and wanted to take this opportunity to share with you our thoughts and priorities to consider as you evaluate our community's park needs.

Priority 1: Implement and Resource the 2009-2018 Parks Fund Capital Maintenance and Replacement Plan – TLC: Taking Lasting Care Plan.

This plan outlines a well-designed approach for the planned replacement of the city's aging major parks infrastructure. The plan is premised on a "Taking Lasting Care" philosophy, to ensure that once constructed resources are also available for the eventual replacement of the City's park system amenities. At this time, an additional \$500,000 to \$1,000,000 per year is needed to fund the recommended capital maintenance and replacement plan.

As proposed, a new fund of the city would be created to account for maintenance and replacement of five major park system areas: irrigation systems, the computerized irrigation system (hardware), tennis court resurfacing, playground replacements, and trail replacements. As presented, two sources of funding for the plan have been identified: an increase in the amount currently funded from conservation trust fund (lottery) dollars; and, maintaining the existing 3 cents per 1,000 monies (water fund) funding for computerized irrigation equipment. It is clear, however, that these two sources are insufficient to fully fund the new parks capital maintenance and replacement program.

Taking care of what we have already is, in our collective opinion, our highest priority; and, towards that end, a question was included in the City's 2007 Citizen Attitude Survey to gauge our citizen's attitudes on potential programs the city might pursue, as reflected in the chart below, this TLC: Taking Lasting Care emphasis garners a great deal of support:

Support for or Opposition to the City of Arvada Pursuing New Programs						
Programs	Strongly Support	Somewhat Support	Somewhat Oppose	Strongly Oppose	Total	Percent Picking as #1, #2 or #3
Fund ongoing maintenance of roads	46%	49%	3%	2%	100%	71%
Improve existing neighborhood parks, resurfacing tennis courts, and replacing deteriorated trails and playground equipment	38%	51%	7%	4%	100%	59%
Fund day-to-day maintenance of parks, trails, open space, and medians	35%	52%	9%	4%	100%	58%
Purchase additional land for open space	31%	43%	16%	10%	100%	38%
Build new neighborhood parks	17%	57%	17%	8%	100%	15%
Build large community and regional parks	19%	53%	18%	10%	100%	19%
Construct new trails	15%	56%	20%	9%	100%	8%
Fund expansion of existing roads or build additional roads	18%	48%	25%	9%	100%	28%

Priority 2: Honor commitments made by the City, as reflected in annexation, sub-dividers or development agreements, by providing the financial resources needed to complete these city's neighborhood park system improvements.

Neighborhood parks are the backbone of the city's park system and for the past four decades our goal has been to have a neighborhood park within a 10 minute walk of every home in Arvada.

The city’s comprehensive land use plan, re-adopted in 2005, and land development code outline the parkland dedication requirements to be followed in new developments in order to meet this goal. Annexation and subdividers agreements establish where each new park will be constructed and park development fees, collected from each new development based on the number of single or multi-family homes constructed, are the major source of funding neighborhood parks.

Park development fees, however, do not cover the entire cost of constructing a park and there is a back-log of neighborhood park projects to be constructed if every Arvada home is to have access to a neighborhood park – at this time, there are approximately 15 neighborhoods in the city where a park has been ‘promised’ but which, at this time, sufficient funds are not available for their construction, as outlined in the following chart

Neighborhood Parks that could be Completed in 2 Years Pending Sufficient Funding

Park	Acres	Total Funds Available	Estimated Cost	Surplus/ Deficit
Beeman Park (partially complete)	3	\$192,215	\$450,950	\$-258,735
Spring Mesa Park	11	\$400,000	\$1,750,000	\$-1,350,000
Arvada Channel Trail	3.5	\$550,000	\$550,000	\$0
Sunrise Ridge Park (partially complete)	6	\$785,600	\$785,600	\$0
Double E Park	5	\$110,996	\$750,000	\$-639,004
Broad Lake Park	4	\$204,982	\$950,000	\$-745,018
Saddlebrook Park	6	\$320,000	\$900,000	\$-580,000
Skyline Estates Park	16	\$1,845,781	\$1,845,781	\$0
		To be Completed by Developer	To be Completed by Developer	
Whisper Creek Park	8			\$0
Total		\$4,465,989	\$8,482,331	\$-4,016,342

Neighborhood Parks that could be Completed in 5 Years Pending Sufficient Funding

Forest Springs Park	12	\$1,131,808	\$1,131,808	\$0
Quaker Acres Park Expansion	3.5	\$0	\$420,000	\$-420,000
Hills at Standley Lake Park	15	\$412,351	\$1,800,351	\$-1,388,000
East Arvada Park	10	\$450,000	\$2,800,000	\$-2,350,000
South Central Arvada Park	10	\$700,000	\$2,800,000	\$-2,100,000
Total		\$2,694,159	\$8,952,159	\$-6,258,000

Neighborhood Parks that could be Completed in 10 years Pending Sufficient Funding

Candelas East Park	5.67	To be Completed by Developer	To be Completed by Developer	\$0
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		Developer To be Completed by	To be Completed by Developer	\$0
Candelas East Community Center	2.66	Developer To be Completed by	To be Completed by Developer	\$0
Candelas East- Central Park	5.62	Developer To be Completed by	To be Completed by Developer	\$0
Candelas Central Community Center	5.67	Developer To be Completed by	To be Completed by Developer	\$0
Candelas Central Park	18	Developer To be Completed by	To be Completed by Developer	\$0
Candelas West Community Center	7.24	Developer To be Completed by	To be Completed by Developer	\$0
Leyden Rock East Park	TBD	Developer To be Completed by	To be Completed by Developer	\$0
Leyden Rock Central Community Center	TBD	Developer To be Completed by	To be Completed by Developer	\$0
Leyden Rock West Park	TBD	Developer To be Completed by	To be Completed by Developer	\$0

Based on YE 2007 Estimates

Priority 3: Take a long-term view, implement the city’s parks, trail and open space masterplan, which is part of the city’s comprehensive plan, in phases; and, continue to prioritize the projects and phases identified in the plan with a sustainable revenue source.

The city has been here for over 100 years and will be here for hundreds more and, while the parks, trails and open space masterplan, along with various master plans developed for our community parks, envision a time when the city is completely built out, this will not occur within our lifetimes.

The good news is that the Arvada City Council has done an excellent job in planning where future park improvements should occur and there has been much progress made in acquiring land on which these improvements are to be built. Our challenge remains to find sustainable and on-going financial resources to implement our vision. We should use master plans, such as those created for the O’Kane Community Park, Long Lake Regional Park, Majestic View Community Park and Gold Strike Park, and the phasing plans that each plan contains, to guide or priority setting.

Because we have planned well, we have the luxury of time – to implement phases of various master plans, or, if possible, the entire plan. What is most important at this point though are securing the financial resources necessary to implement the master plans. And, to let generations of future Arvadans have the opportunity to develop a park system on land acquired by far-seeing Arvadans.

Thank you for your kind consideration in reviewing our priorities. Should you ever wish to contact us for additional input, please feel free to do so.

Sincerely yours,

Members of the Arvada Park Advisory Committee
Department of Parks, Golf and Hospitality Staff