

Land Use and Parks and Trails

Existing Conditions

Expansion of District Boundaries

To allow for additional population growth, along with the inclusion of unincorporated lands into the District, acquisition of new parklands and trail corridors needs to occur. The District is considering the possibility of inclusions to the south and west of its existing boundaries to include areas along the US 85 corridor and west towards the foothills. Staff received several inquiries about inclusion into the District from residents within and surrounding the Roxborough area. The land development and demographic patterns of this area, which crosses the Jefferson and Douglas County boundaries, is compatible with existing characteristics of the Foothills District.

Land Acquisition

The District works closely with the Jefferson County Open Space Committee to identify future acquisitions. The following are the District's current acquisition priorities presented to Jefferson County Open Space staff for consideration as part of the Master Plan update:

- Bergen Reservoir #1 and #2; approximately 85 acres located at the northwest intersection of C-470 and Bowles Avenue
- Dutch Creek Regional Trail Corridor; approximately 40 acres of land located adjacent to Dutch Creek from Wadsworth Avenue westward to C-470
- C-470/Centennial Trail; +/- 5 acres at C-470 and Dakota Ridge High School
- County Blosser Parcel; 22 acres east of Kipling Parkway at Meadow Drive
- County Parcel; 4 acres south of the Dutch Ridge Townhomes
- Englewood Federal Prison Surplus Land; approximately 25 acres south of and adjacent to the Schaefer Athletic Complex
- Meadowbrook Heights; approximately 45 acres located southwest of Chatfield Avenue and Carr Street





Regional and Neighborhood Park Development

The District's park inventory is divided into several categories; regional parks, community parks, neighborhood parks and trail corridors. Recommendations for development occur in accord with the four planning areas identified in this plan and for new construction as well as improvements or renovation to existing facilities. In addition, the following are specific needs within the four planning areas:

Planning Area #1 — Areas north of US 285

Subdivisions served by this area include Sixth Avenue West Estates, Sixth Avenue West, Lochwood and Bear Creek Ranchettes. Major facilities in this area include the Sixth Avenue Pool and Park, Bear Creek Reservoir and Fox Hollow Golf Course.

REGIONAL PARKS The City of Lakewood maintains these sites.

COMMUNITY PARKS The Sixth Avenue West Pool and Park site have no room for expansion. Staff is completing improvements to the parking and drainage areas.

NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS This area is adequately served by The City of Lakewood.

TRAILS Natural trail surfaces are best for connection of all Lakewood gulch greenbelt spaces and a trail system to connect greenbelts is recommended.

Planning Area #2 — Areas south of US 285 and north of Bowles Avenue

Major facilities in this area include Schaefer Athletic Complex, Foothills Golf Course, Harriman Lake Park, Bergen Reservoir, Weaver Hollow Park and Pool and Blue Heron Park.

REGIONAL PARKS Staff is completing construction plans and County process work on the proposed indoor multi-use facility at Schaefer Athletic Complex to open in September 2005. The Schaefer Athletic Complex Master Plan needs updating in accord with recent site changes and new facilities. Negotiations are occurring to acquire water rights for use at the Fehringer Ranch property.

COMMUNITY PARKS Development plans (including a baseball field and skate park) should be prepared for Phase 2 improvements at the Weaver Hollow Park in Friendly Hills subdivision. Complete trail improvements and add shelter/restroom at Harriman Lake Park.

NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS Completion of trails connections at the Mount Carbon Estates Park site trails, Weaver Creek and Belleview Acres school site. Develop existing park sites at Mount Carbon Estates, Bobby Hyatt Jr. Memorial Park and Weaver Creek.

TRAILS Several connections must occur including Weaver Creek Trail to C-470 on the west and to Fehringer Ranch and Harriman Lake Park on the east; connections from Mossbrucker Park to Bowles Avenue; connections are planned for Belleview Acres, Country West and Sunrise Creek parks along Raccoon Creek from Simms to

C-470; develop the trail system from Trapper's Glen north to Weaver Gulch trail, including trail easements from Marlowe to Temple.

Planning Area #3 —

Areas south of Bowles Avenue and north of Ken Caryl Avenue

Major facilities in this area include Clement Park and Johnston Reservoir, Lilley Gulch Recreation Center and Park, Columbine West Pool, the Meadows Golf Club and Easton Regional Park (which includes The Ridge Recreation Center, The Edge Ice Arena, The Peak Community and Wellness Center, Administrative offices, The Peak and Ridge Athletic Fields and Hine Lake).

REGIONAL PARKS Design and construction of Phase 5 athletic fields at the Easton Regional Park will occur in 2005. Design development of the remaining parking areas, pavilions, open space and internal trails, in accord with the adopted site master plan, should occur within the next five years. It is important to create a three-year capital repair program at Clement Park for replacement of the Phase One irrigation system and replacement of ball field fencing and sidewalk repair.

COMMUNITY PARKS Completion of the Lilley Gulch park site requires future improvements to existing ball fields, tennis courts, tot lot and playground areas.

NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS Develop 20 acre site, purchased by Jefferson County Open Space and leased to Foothills, as an extension to Chief Colorow Park. It is important to work with the community to develop a site plan for this area; complete a design and fund construction of sledding hill improvements at Kipling and Ken Caryl. Develop the Alpers Park site.

TRAILS Completion of the Dutch Creek Trail from Wadsworth west to C-470 is underway; completion of the trail corridor is expected to occur by 2007.

Planning Area #4 —

Areas south of Ken Caryl and north of C-470

Major facilities in this area include the Columbine Hills Park and Columbine Hills Sports Park, Deer Creek Pool and Massey Draw Trail System.

REGIONAL PARKS No development is needed due to the proximity of regional parks and facilities located in planning area #3.

COMMUNITY PARKS With assistance from the neighborhood, design work and improvements should occur to the Columbine Hills Sports and Community Park including replacement of the existing concession stand, renovation of the existing baseball fields and backstops, reconstruction of the concession stand located adjacent to Pierce Street, and specific discussion about repair or removal of the existing tennis courts. Acquisition and development of 40+ acre community park in Meadowbrook Heights

NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS None recommended.

Issues that affect Parks include:

- **Need to upgrade and repair irrigation systems**
- **Capital repair and replacement for structures and facilities at all sites**
- **Lack of an effective forestry/horticulture program**
- **Need for a maintenance center at Easton Regional Park**
- **Replace internal asphalt trails with new eight foot wide concrete surface**
- **Ongoing maintenance of native/passive open space**
- **Water resources**

Issues that affect Trail Development include:

- **Lack of District funding for new construction**
- **Ongoing maintenance of aging asphalt trails**
- **Creek and waterway drainage areas**
- **Connection of District trails to existing regional trails in South Jefferson County**

TRAILS Improvements must occur to the Wingate South Trail and connection within and adjacent to the Deer Creek Pool and Park site; existing asphalt trails must be replaced with eight-foot concrete trail surface.

Trails

Trails provide numerous benefits to the community. Based upon informal customer surveys, community and user input, we were able to identify that trail development is a high priority within our District and in South Jefferson County. Following are needs within the trails program.

- A comprehensive approach for design, construction and maintenance to ensure regional trail connections occur.
- Identify and survey users to determine multi-use concepts (equestrian, paved and active, gravel and passive).
- Provide written and graphic trail rules and regulations for posting.
- Develop trail design and maintenance standards to ensure consistency throughout the District.
- Qualify trail amenities such as benches/rest stops, interpretive sign program, trash receptacles, mileage markers, warning signs, etc.
- Implement trails development as outlined in park development section (pages 12 and 13).

Future Needs

Consideration for a wide range of funding alternatives including a mill levy increase, general obligation funds, refinancing of existing resources, revenue bonds, private sector funding, corporate partnerships, lease purchase and the use of existing reserves to finance development of needed facilities and equipment.

Pursue additional park acquisition and development with an emphasis on planning and funding for completion of neighborhood parks, particularly in those areas where partially completed or undeveloped sites exist.

Create an inventory and develop a strategic plan to address capital repair needs.

Consider inclusions to the south and west of the existing District boundaries to include areas along the US 85 corridor and west towards the foothills. Staff received several inquiries about inclusion into the District from residents within and surrounding the Roxborough area. The land development and demographic patterns of this area, which crosses the Jefferson and Douglas County boundaries, is compatible with existing characteristics of the Foothills District.

Parks and Programs

Complete development at Easton Regional Park, as funds are available.

Drought and overuse of multipurpose fields affect long-term field maintenance. Construction of multipurpose synthetic fields would lessen this impact. Synthetic fields should occupy 20% of our field inventory by 2010.

Update the Clement Park Master Plan to address recent improvements and incorporate plans for the Columbine Memorial site.

Design and construct at least one disc golf course at one of the regional parks or an appropriate open space location with adequate parking and infrastructure. Plans should include construction of additional “non-supervised” courses within neighborhood parks including, but not limited to Columbine Hills, Deer Creek, Harriman Lake Park, Lilley Gulch, Mossbrucker and Weaver Hollow.

Continue discussions with Developmental Disabilities Resource Center (DDRC) to define future use of the Weiland School property.

Continue discussions and create a written agreement with R-1 Schools regarding shared use of facilities and play fields.

Complete pending development of neighborhood parks including Mount Carbon Estates, Weaver Creek Park site, Bobby Hyatt Jr. Memorial Park, Weaver Hollow Park and Pool site, and Alpers Park.

Complete pending design and construction of Dutch Creek Trail westward to C-470, complete the trail connection from Mossbrucker Park to Bowles Avenue, complete trail connection from Belleview Acres, Country West, Sunrise Creek parks along Raccoon Creek from Simms to C-470 and develop the trail from Trapper’s Glen north to Weaver Gulch trail including all necessary easements.

Adopt and complete a capital repair program for irrigation renovation, parking lots, trails, fencing and other facilities at Clement Park by 2008.

Pursue an “Art in the Park” program with a minimum of three acres for public art, sculptures, gardens, paths and seating areas. The District should expand the program to provide one piece of public sculpture at all District facilities. An art in the park program with commissioned sculptors to enhance the beauty of parks or specified locations would enhance cultural art within the District.

Special Facilities

The District constructed a skate park at Clement Park in 2002 using bond funds. There are however other needs in the community which have not been met. Issues that require additional study include:

SCULPTURE GARDEN/BOTANICAL GARDEN Art in parks, gardening and flower displays are all items that assist with defining open space and enhancing the park experience for user groups. Construction of a sculpture and community garden needs to occur at one of the three





regional parks in the District. A highly visible site of approximately three acres should be set aside for artwork and flower display.

BICYCLE MOTOR CROSS AND RECREATIONAL USE FACILITY

Bike riding is a popular local activity. Bicyclists use local trails, skate parks and park amenities for racing, trick riding and recreational use. A facility designed to meet the needs of the BMX rider and recreation rider would be an asset to the District. The cost to construct a formal BMX track is minimal, especially if community resources and expertise assist with design, construction and ongoing maintenance. A BMX track at Clement Park or a mountain bike “free riding” course at Easton Regional Park, or another undeveloped park site with appropriate auto and trail access would be ideal.

DISC GOLF COURSES Disc golf continues to grow in popularity among all age groups. Several properties possess the necessary infrastructure, such as parking and restrooms, to construct a disc golf course. The District is considering locating facilities at Clement, Schaefer or Easton Regional Parks within the next two to five years.

OUTDOOR SKATE PARK/IN-LINE FACILITIES The success of Clement Skate Park generated formal requests to GOCO and Jefferson County for funding to construct a similar facility at Easton Regional Park. It is important that the District also consider smaller scale, surface mounted skate park facilities distributed equally around the District and located within neighborhood parks.

OFF-LEASH DOG PARK A small parcel of land, one to three acres, fenced in for use as an off-leash dog park, along with other canine related uses such as obedience classes or dog shows.

OTHER SPECIAL USE FACILITIES The District entered into a 20 year site lease with the Rocky Mountain Roller Hockey League to permit construction of a 45,000 square foot indoor facility at the Schaefer Athletic Complex. The District will operate batting cages at Clement Park and Schaefer Athletic Complex. The Board of Directors approved funding to construct a 50,000 square foot indoor facility that includes a synthetic surface play field for use by soccer, lacrosse, football and other such users. As funding permits, the District should construct at least three synthetic field surfaces at each regional park.

Fehringer Ranch Regional Park

Existing Conditions

In 2004, the Board of Directors approved a master plan concept for future development of the Fehringer Ranch property to establish a quantified plan for future development. There are numerous opportunities to fulfill existing sports and programming issues at Fehringer Ranch.

Future Needs

- Construction of play fields will help address the existing field deficit in South Jefferson County. Items identified in the Board approved master plan include a 50,000 square foot fieldhouse with four courts for year round training (basketball, soccer, etc.), 23 multipurpose, synthetic turf fields, volleyball courts, three outdoor in-line hockey courts and a skate park.
- Development of a fieldhouse/gymnasium center will allow staff to program indoor camps and clinics for basketball, volleyball, etc.
- The proposed community center will allow staff to program indoor rentals, cultural events, wood shop, stained glass classes and art classrooms for drawing, painting, art camps, science camps and photography lab. A dance/aerobics studio and music classroom will accommodate group or individual music programming. Daytime programming will meet the interest of senior citizens.
- An amphitheater will increase programming opportunities such as concerts, naturalist classes, church and various social group rentals, and the Foothills summer youth performing arts series and jazz camp.



Issues that affect Fehringer Ranch include:

- **Funding and priority of development schedule. Discussion must first occur to determine the appropriateness of a bond election to fund, in phases, the approximately 46 million dollars of site improvements.**



Issues that affect Water Resources include:

- **Reliance on public agencies for water distribution**
- **Reliance on ditch water companies for water distribution**
- **Water restrictions in front range communities**
- **Overuse of athletic play field locations**
- **Need for new facilities and turf covered play fields**
- **Need to find alternative water sources**
- **Ongoing water conservation practices**

Water Resources

Existing Conditions

Water resources are the key to growth within and outside of the existing District boundaries. The District must take the following steps to ensure proper management of water resources:

- Complete a detailed assessment of all phases of park and recreation operations focused on preserving water resources
- Continue to update the existing drought preparedness plan annually and seek out new water resources through purchase of water rights and land acquisitions with senior water rights
- Purchase Harriman Lake water rights to serve the Foothills Golf Course, Schaefer Athletic Complex and to ensure future development of Fehringer Ranch
- Acquire additional water rights in the Bergen system and improve the delivery system (lake pumps and ditch piping) for Meadows Golf Club and Easton Regional Park

Future Needs

Water resources are a critical component of existing services and future development within the District. There are several specific items for review.

- Ditch water operations and acquisition
- Drought planning
- Water conservation policies
- Costs imposed by water providers such as Denver Water
- Use of automated systems to monitor and program water use at golf courses and park sites
- Preservation of existing ponds and lakes
- Ongoing maintenance of lakes, ponds, dams, drainage corridors
- Provide clear policies on three specific areas; water conservation, long range planning and acquisitions, preparedness for emergencies such as drought, shutdowns, and mandated watering restrictions