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**Minutes
City of Fort Collins
Futures Committee Meeting
Regular Meeting
CIC Room, City Hall
300 LaPorte Ave
August 22, 2014
4:00–6:00pm**

Committee Members Present:

Wade Troxell, Chair
Gerry Horak
Bruce Hendee
Darin Atteberry
Gino Campana

Committee Members Absent:

None

City Staff:

Dianne Tjalkens, Admin/Board Support
Jeff Mihelich, Deputy City Manager
Marty Heffernan, Director of Community Services
Sam Houghteling, Graduate Management Assistant
Travis Machalek, Graduate Management Assistant

Invited Guests:

Community Members:

Wade Troxell called meeting to order at 3:07pm

Approval of July Minutes:

Gerry moved to approve the July 14 minutes. Gino seconded.
Motion passed unanimously, 4-0-0.

Think Tank Item 17: Parks and Recreation—Marty Heffernan

Marty gave a PowerPoint presentation. Changes coming to Fort Collins include growth in population, the aging population will increase through 2030 then decline, the youth population will be dominant, and there will be more diversity. He discussed demographics of the population including ethnicities, disabilities, affluence/poverty, and education. The median family income in Fort Collins is \$76,000, but 25% of households earn less than \$25,000 per year. The transient

population is on the rise. Other changes that could impact the community include climate change, Emerald Ash Borer infestation, and advances in technology. Addressing these issues means embracing the future. Building out the park system is in current planning and based on the current GMA. They will add 10 neighborhood parks and 30 community parks (southeast and northeast). Staff is looking to build out the trail system, adding 31 more miles of trails, 10 or more underpasses, and greater connectivity to streets, neighborhoods, school and businesses. There are also plans to build more community and recreation centers. This will extend the level of service and quality of life we have now into the community as it grows. He provided a planned trails map. Plans include adding connections to Timnath, Windsor, Greeley and Loveland. In the southeast the Power Trail will connect to Bacon. Staff is currently working on getting the Fossil Creek Trail across College and over to Shields. The department is requesting funds in the 2015/16 budget process and is looking at a 27 year build out. The planned community centers are southeast, Spring Canyon Park, future northeast community park, and completion of the Gardens. He said they have land for the community centers. There is a project in the BOB2 package for a southeast community center, and staff is speaking with Fossil Ridge High School about using land on their property. Another facility that could be implemented is a special events facility for festivals. Old Town plaza is being renovated, which could be helpful, but other communities have designated spaces. We get 5-10 thousand people per event; it would be helpful to be set up with power, signage, etc. There is a lot of interest in a regional dog park; however, that does not fall into the purview of Parks and Recreation. We have to properly fund maintenance, repair, and renovation. We are currently \$300,000 short on lifecycle maintenance annually. Once we build out, we need to update and improve to stay relevant. Infill development will provide funds, but it will not be enough. Staff is working on the Poudre River Plan. The Parks part is the kayak park. Outside the Coy area is Legacy/Martinez. We want shade, picnic areas, and water trails, etc. to be safe, comfortable, well maintained places where people can gather and have fun. It will take a long time to implement. There are issues around in-stream flows, health of river, water use and rights, storage, etc. Water issues will be more pronounced in the future with climate change. Staff is looking at splash parks instead of pools, developing water storage, including more xeriscaping, lining ditches, using artificial turf, etc. In terms of technology, the department will use social media to enhance customer experiences and loyalty, and will upgrade and utilize technology for operational efficiency. There is also the concept of tailoring. You must appeal to distinct groups including aging people, active boomers, single parents and grandparents raising children, minorities, etc. The Recreator has a lot of variety now, but we will need to continue to understand our constituency and meet their needs. The theme for Parks and Recreation is wellness. The department wants to fight obesity, make it easy to be active and engaged, and provide opportunity. It is also important to provide access for low-income individuals. They are focusing on innovation, integrating idea pods, maker spaces, etc. Partnerships include CSU, PSD, Front Range, health providers, the business community, nonprofits, etc. They will identify and develop more partnerships in the future. He believes they must look at outsourcing and utilizing the private sector. One funding challenge is that KFCG is sunseting, however, their donor base is increasing. Over the next 20, 50, 100 years there will be changes we cannot anticipate, but we can embrace changes by staying nimble.

Comments/Q & A:

- Are you trying to **acquire land**? We have been trying to purchase land from Anheuser Busch for many year. The land is east of the high school site. They are looking at 120

acres. The McDowell property is in negotiations. At the 'east side park' on the north side of Horsetooth road, the property owner might donate 40 additional acres that could be used as open space. It is all clay stone and needs fill dirt.

- Are those the only two more community parks being built?
- What are the dashed lines on major streets on the trail map? Some will be off-street bike trails.
- There is a trail through the Paragon Point neighborhood that should be acquired by the City.
- There is no easement in that subdivision to allow acquisition.
- A number of neighborhoods are building private trails. We should note them on the plan. There could be an effort that includes picking up maintenance to add them to the City's trail system.
- If it is private and they don't allow public access, acquiring trails would open them to public. If they leave them open to the public, we get the access without the cost.
- Then they are not on the map and are subject to degradation.
- The section south of Trilby to the Power Trail is currently the most dangerous section of trail.
- The trail on the north side of Trilby to connect to Lemay is being built this fall.
- There is not enough room on the bridge for the trail.
- Bacon will have additional trails to make those connections.
- We should have a policy that we have connectivity around community parks.
- Connectivity to Park and Natural Areas is in the plan.
- What about connectivity at City Park?
- There are ideas for changes there.
- Make sure we don't repeat with the new parks the challenges with trails at City Park.
- The trails in the Natural Areas aren't included on the map.
- There is another map developed with FC Moves that includes more.
- The northwest corner of Fort Collins has no proposed trails, where there is more density. How do you get to Rolland Moore?
- The community centers are changing in focus from pools and ice to more technology focused.
- The human body needs to be moved and challenged and be creative, so these concepts need to be merged.
- Marty's group has taken the concept to more innovative. In regard to the people asking about a pool, there could be a public/private partnership to include that. We will hear more in the BOB2 process, and Darin will brief Council on it more.
- Historically festivals have been out at Hughes parking lot, but it has been driven into a more urban mode. Right now the events are integral to downtown. People want to be in downtown. South College near Trilby or another area that needs to be turned into an attractor is an idea for a location.
- As we theme south College, and innovation being south, there could be corporate headquarters and great buildings in that area.
- Is there is an advocate group for the dog park?
- Yes, and there is a concept in BOB2 that was brought forward by a citizen group.
- Glendale did Infinity Park and became a world class rugby destination.

- We would need to find capital dollars for that.
- We have active and competitive baseball throughout the state, and we only have Rolland Moore Park for baseball.
- Is there a public-private partnership opportunity there?
- It could be at the northeast park, or on our own we could create a sports facility, but they don't cash flow well without selling alcohol. With millennials, baseball and softball are not as popular.
- We have a good idea of what Parks and Recreation is now. It was a way to get nature in the City and get some respite. Other activities got built into it. We have natural areas and Nature in the City now too. Taking a holistic approach, a whole person view, where are we going? There is a wow factor. When we start thinking what is national and international, if it requires infrastructure it must be public-private.
- Listening to the customer and anticipating needs, while being sensitive to Fort Collins character is key. Social, mental, and physical needs have to be met to be a happy community. These will change in some ways, but will fundamentally remain the same. Recreation allows you to be an elemental human being disconnecting from technology. To be active, social, and engaged is building community.
- Winter Park and Mount Evans are part of Denver's parks. We have Natural Areas, but haven't reached out to the mountains. Maybe Pingree Park? We have Gateway already.
- Parks have been constrained by our boundaries.
- Natural Areas has done well with the regional aspect. We've been criticized on being too focused outward. **We can do a better job of helping our citizens get into the mountains.** Our recreation program has been focused on indoor sports.
- **It's great to look beyond our boundaries. If other communities have that mentality as well, then we get truly regional. What would happen if Windsor, Greeley and Loveland start to think outside the corporate boundary for parks and look more at northern Colorado? The innovation center concept is good, but a big take away is breaking out.**
- Pingree Park is pristine and used by CSU. It is off-grid self-sustained. We want access and integration without getting the area overrun.
- As we build out, **we will have regional pressure and have a community using everything we have. Having regional alternatives** could relieve some of that pressure. You can look into a **district format that provides an independent funding source** through property tax. We could also provide more programs and opportunities to use the trails we have.
- The sports seem to have moved to private clubs. Does that free up resources to organize hikes and things like that?
- No, it does not. We are using our resources to focus on introducing kids to sports, and being fun for recreation.
- From a holistic and wellness perspective, high school sports focus the elite few and the rest drop out. Giving a holistic approach is the area for Parks and Recreation.
- Looking inward, how are we thinking about converting what is not popular now into what will be popular in the future? We have allocated resources to things with infrequent use. At Northside people are always using the skateboard park, I never see people playing baseball. Disc golf is also popular.
- How do we provide accessibility and awareness?
- Maybe we need to look more at the highest and best use.

- PSD fields are all fenced off. PSD staff has said the issue is that when the community uses the fields, they have wear. One proposition is opening them to the community and having the City help pay for maintenance. That would allow the City parks to use the space they have differently.
- After school during league season, all the fields are busy.
- Think about the high schools that have really nice tracks that are fenced in. How do you respect the high school sports and allow the neighborhoods to use them?
- The university track is available to the City, but our school ones aren't.
- The school district is open to it, but it comes down to resources. If we are willing to commit resources for maintenance, there are possibilities.
- We can throw CSU into the mix. There could be more integration.
- We have integration of use for PSD indoor facilities. Outdoor facilities use has been based on the current faculty of the schools. Do we not build a field, and then have the use of the school's field go away?
- When we build a park, does that mean we already have the funds to build it?
- Yes.
- The water innovation cluster could help with innovation for the water use and treatment.
- Max tech features don't beat you over the head.
- Wi-Fi could be offered at the parks. Then people can choose.
- QR codes are interactive. If someone is interested in horticulture, trees, or history, people can scan the code and get more information.
- Currently there are brochures.
- How do you form partnerships? Is that part of your model?
- Yes, we are always working on that.
- We are missing the marketing piece. If we want to push the wellness perspective, a marketing push is important. We have a marketing staff but there is more to be done.
- When we have a community of a quarter million people, do the facilities look different? What does marketing look like 25 years from now? How do we leverage the facilities?
- We do a good job now. We are busy and that is reflected in our numbers and revenue. Anticipating new marketing tools is big. 85% of our registration is now done online.
- Where it is going to change is that individuals will do the marketing to each other through social media.
- If there is an individualized app that notifies people of activities that would be positive.
- Have you thought about how parks and facilities could be part of energy generation model with solar arrays, geo-thermal, etc.? Have we talked about leveraging park spaces that way?
- Northside is one of the first facilities to do that.
- Geothermal is interesting because it doesn't impact use.
- We use parks for stormwater purposes, so we do try to partner.
- What about agricultural uses in the parks?
- For education, yes. The Natural Areas plan addresses local food and agriculture. It can be an adjunct to what we do.
- We have CSAs that people bike to, but they are not necessarily connected to trails. The education component is the right idea: food forests and food farms where kids can come to learn.

- We looked at an urban forest. There are community gardens that are outstanding and we can learn from them.
- If there is a desire to get more into community gardens we could provide land and education, but will not be creating a CSA. You have to determine what you are about and stick to it. If you keep crossing over you lose focus.
- The City can be a catalyst and incubate, then spin off. If we use our resources to leverage, that would be good.
- If we aren't putting enough money in for children, we need to know that. I am not as concerned about adults.
- We aren't turning away any kids, but if there is more funding, we could provide more programming for them.
- We are gun-shy about corporate level sponsorships and advertising.
- Donations, grants, and sponsorships, can all be given to City organizations.
- That private funding could be increased and open doors.
- If we had a City foundation we could do more promotion. You could get end of life donations and other large donation to the City foundation and make significant changes. Foundations have more flexibility in use of dollars than the City does.
- We are starting to mature as a community and we need to dial in to the people who love the community and have the resources. We can be more strategic and offer recognition.
- We are currently very conservative about the recognition piece.
- The Gardens are fundraising and have naming opportunities. It must be managed.
- We need to resolve the issues to get structures into place.
- We don't have clear policy on advertising in the City.
- Greening or sustainability emphasis is missing from this. How do we have less of a footprint? How do we ensure the sustainable nature of these things so they are not resource intensive?
- We are doing that now. We have a sustainability best practices manual. The staff is intrinsically interested in that. We will stay on the cutting edge. The interest and structure to keep it moving forward are there.
- We had a discussion around irrigation systems. We have a lot of investment and assets in that area in the community. How do we use this beyond water rights? Is the irrigation system part of the Parks and Recreation portfolio?
- Parks has water rights. We work with the water utility and have meetings with water providers. We need to do a ditch study in conjunction with the water utility. Can we manage shrink?

DO 17: Next Steps

- Bruce will work with Dianne on actionable items and bring them back to the group at next month's meeting.

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- Bruce said the September meeting is on build out, what it looks like, etc.
 - That is about what the demographers and models are saying. Once we get acceptance, it is about how you get ahead of the issues. How do we make sure we are a place that is clean, fun, and where people like each other? This can help set

the direction for the City to engage in certain conversations and stay away from others. You have 155,000 population now, static GMA, as the county grows how much of the new growth is there already and how much will change before it is inherited/annexed.

- Bruce will have data on housing at the next meeting.
- Aging infrastructure will be discussed at the October meeting, and Mike Beckstead will apply a finance model to that concept in the November meeting.

Meeting adjourned by Wade Troxell at 5:04pm.