



## **AGENDA**

Parks and Recreation Advisory Board  
April 10, 2014 7:30 a.m.  
1401 Recreation Way

**(Please turn off your cell phone during meeting)**

### **CALL TO ORDER**

### **CITIZEN DISCUSSION**

Time for any individual to bring before the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board any matter of interest they wish to discuss that is not on the agenda. *(Time limit: three minutes or as may be established by the Chair)*

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Minutes from March 13, 2014 meeting  
*(Minutes will be posted after 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday of the week of the meeting.  
Website: [www.springsgov.com](http://www.springsgov.com) -- Your Government -- Parks and Recreation Advisory Board)*

### **CEREMONIAL ITEMS (at 10:00 a.m.)**

- Annual Volunteer Update Tilah Larson, Senior Volunteer Coordinator

### **ACTION ITEMS**

1. Request on Behalf of the Colorado Department of Transportation for Concurrence with a Proposed Midland Trail Realignment and Noise Impacts for the I-25 / Cimarron (US 24) Interchange Project Discussion Chris Lieber, Manager, Park Development and TOPS Program
2. City for Champions - Letter of Support

### **PRESENTATION**

- City's Storm Water Approach Dave Lethbridge, Interim Director, Public Works
- Cemetery Year-End Report Will DeBoer, Cemetery Supervisor
- USL Pro Soccer Proposal at Coleman Community Park Chris Lieber, Manager, Park Development and TOPS Program
- Velodrome Roof Structure Proposal at Memorial Park Chris Lieber, Manager, Park Development and TOPS Program
- Evans Avenue Bridge Replacement at North Cheyenne Cañon Chris Lieber, Manager, Park Development and TOPS Program
- Update on City Procurement Process Chris Lieber, Manager, Park Dev. & TOPS

## **STAFF REPORT**

- TOPS Update Chris Lieber, Manager, Park Dev. & TOPS
- Mountain Shadows Park Renovation Update Chris Lieber, Manager, Park Dev. & TOPS
- Disk Golf Update Chris Lieber, Manager, Park Dev. & TOPS
- Bankers Loop Update Chris Lieber, Manager, Park Dev. & TOPS
- Playgrounds – Update on Public Process Chris Lieber, Manager, Park Dev. & TOPS
- Creekside at America the Beautiful Park Update Chris Lieber, Manager, Park Dev. & TOPS
- Venezia Park Chris Lieber, Manager, Park Dev. & TOPS
  
- No Smoking Ordinance Kim King, Manager, Admin & Rec Services
  
- Pikes Peak Summit House Kim King, Manager, Admin & Rec Services
  
- Water Advisory Group Karen Palus, Director, PR&CS
  
- Upcoming Meetings and Events Karen Palus, Director, PR&CS
  - Earth Day: April 19<sup>th</sup>, 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. at Rock Ledge Ranch and Garden of the Gods Visitors and Nature Center
  - Annual Arbor Day Celebration: April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 11:00 a.m. at Alamo Square Park
  - Joint City Council and Parks Board Meeting: April 29<sup>th</sup>, 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. at the Pioneers Museum
  - Parks Master Plan Public Meeting: April 30<sup>th</sup>, 6:30 p.m. at the City Auditorium
  - Spruce Up the Springs Projects:
    - Monument Valley Park/Greenway: April 26<sup>th</sup>, 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon (Playground Renovation Ribbon Cutting)
    - Palmer Park: May 17<sup>th</sup>, 8:00 a.m.-12:00 noon (National Kids in Parks Day Proclamation)
  - County-Wide Parks Board Meeting: May 14<sup>th</sup>, 12:00 noon at the Fountain Creek Nature Center (320 Peppergrass Lane, Fountain, CO 80817)

## **BOARD BUSINESS**

- Board/Committee Reports and Remarks

## **ADJOURNMENT**

## **COLORADO SPRINGS PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT**

### **PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD**

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**Date:** April 10, 2014

**Item Number:** Action Item #1

**Item Name:** **Request on Behalf of the Colorado Department of Transportation for Concurrence with a Proposed Midland Trail Realignment and Noise Impacts for the I-25 / Cimarron (US24) Interchange Project**

#### **BACKGROUND:**

The Environmental Assessment for improvements to the I-25 Corridor and the I-25 / Cimarron (US 24) Interchange identifies specific improvements that impact America the Beautiful Park and the Midland Trail. In December 2003, the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board evaluated alternatives to address potential noise impacts to America the Beautiful Park. The Board determined that views to and from the park were more important than the need to mitigate noise levels through the construction of sound walls. In December 2002, the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board considered the realignment of the Midland Trail from its current location to a corridor along Fountain Creek and concurred that relocation of the trail was acceptable. In 2006, as part of the US 24 Corridor Environmental Assessment process, the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board also discussed the alignment of the Midland Trail and concurred that a trail along Fountain Creek was desirable.

#### **CURRENT STATUS:**

The Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) is advancing the redevelopment of the I-25 / Cimarron (US 24) Interchange through a Design Build Project. CDOT is currently finalizing the design guidelines for the project with an anticipated construction completion date for the interchange in 2017.

An overview of the proposed interchange project was presented to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board on March 14, 2014. As part of the continued public input process, CDOT is seeking concurrence from the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board regarding noise mitigation at America the Beautiful Park and the realignment of the current Midland Trail underpass at I-25 to a location south along Fountain Creek.

Representatives from CDOT will present the proposed plans for the I-25 / Cimarron (US 24) Interchange project. Meeting minutes from past Park and Recreation Advisory Board discussion related to noise mitigation at America the Beautiful Park and relocation of the Midland Trail are attached for reference.

#### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends approval of the current plan to forego sound walls along I-25 adjacent to America the Beautiful Park to protect views to and from the Park. Staff recommends the approval of the current plan to realign the Midland Trail underpass from its current location to a new location at Fountain Creek.

**ACTION NEEDED BY THE BOARD:**

A motion approving the proposed noise mitigation measures to protect views at America the Beautiful Park and the realignment of the Midland Trail underpass to a new location along Fountain Creek.

**PARTIES NOTIFIED OF THIS MEETING:**

Dave Watt – Colorado Department of Transportation

Lesley Mace – Colorado Department of Transportation

~~Mr. Case reiterated what he said earlier and said that his is concerned about the precedent that the Board may set on the Department's ability to get parks in the future. He said that the Department is purchasing open space and parks all the time and that is not an easy task as it is but to try to add additional component might be difficult for the staff. Mr. Case said that the letter needs to be clarified that the view ordinance should apply only to this particular site and that the Board is not suggesting that this ordinance go beyond that.~~

~~The Board voted and the motion carried unanimously.~~

~~NOTE: Due to several people waiting for the Item #8 and conflicts of meeting with staff, citizens, and Board members, Item #8 was moved as the next item.~~

### **Noise Wall Options Along I-25 and Monument Valley Park (Item #8)**

Paul Butcher, Director of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services, said that this item was presented to the Board as an information item at the November Board meeting. At that time, CDOT's consultant (Wilson and Company) presented various options on noise mitigation measures within Monument Valley Park and staff provided input as well. Included in the Board packet are the minutes from the last Board meeting and the noise mitigation options that are described in detail and the final recommendation from the Parks Department and Colorado Springs Utilities (CSU).

Referring to the Sound Barrier "F", Mr. Butcher said that both the Parks Department and CSU had a considerable concern with closing down and cul-de-sacing Recreation Way and putting approximately 1,500 linear foot of berm in its place. Both departments share Recreation Way to get to their facilities and closing that road would cut off access to their facilities and to north and south roadways, which are vital to operations. The north and south roadways are two access point from Recreation Way to major thoroughfares.

In discussions with Wilson and Company an idea was proposed to protect a trail segment that crosses Mesa Springs Creek. This falls within the 66 decibel contour line. The Department's proposal is to work cooperatively with CDOT and have a pedestrian bridge that would cross that creek farther to the east to take the trail outside of the noise contour line. The Department has started a tree planting program on Recreation Way with evergreen trees that would mirror what we have out in this area and try to build a linear forest to provide a visual barrier. This does not necessarily attenuate the sound as a wall would but it would provide a visual barrier.

Mr. Butcher said approximately 90% of the recommendations or the concerns and comments that the Board has heard at the last meeting are still in valid agreement. The only major change is the agreement that perhaps the best way to handle the trail system at the north end of the project is to build a bridge over the creek and commit over a period of years to planting evergreen trees to provide the visual barrier.

Mr. Butcher said the representatives from CDOT and Wilson and Company are present at the meeting to answer any questions.

Larry Royal asked if the six recommendations are for six different locations. Mr. Butcher said yes.

Steve Harris said that he had a question concerning the process and asked if the recommendation that the Board makes today would be incorporated into the draft of the Environmental Assessment.

Doug Eberhart with Wilson and Company said that in the environmental process, they look at all the different environmental factors with noise being one of them. There are criteria for identifying when there is enough of an impact to consider mitigation, which brought them to this point to look at different mitigation options. In the EA, the various options that were evaluated and considered in different locations will be discussed and that the land owners or those whose properties are effected, such as the Parks Department, have a key say in whether or not something that is reasonable and feasible. There are many cases where mitigation is found to be justifiable, warranted, cost effective, etc. but if the adjacent landowner does not want that in there then it will not happen. For that reason, CDOT/Wilson and Company need to know the Board's position.

Mr. Harris asked that after the Board's recommendation, then there will be EA prepared and then that would still be subject to public comments later if other people want to comment on that?

Mr. Eberhart said yes, and there will be a final public hearing at the end of the process and that is a formal public hearing. In addition, there will be informational public meetings planned for late January/early February and it will be presented at that time.

Mr. Eberhart said that as a point of clarification on the pedestrian bridge that Mr. Butcher mentioned earlier, they have been looking at that since that time to see what it might be and what it might do. In general, compared to designing and constructing something that would actually reduce the noise, that would only be done if they can achieve certain amount of reduction. Looking at this proposal, which they have very carefully, they find that the amount of reduction that can actually get from moving the trail would be less than they usually are able to achieve, therefore, they actually have not reached an agreement that this is something that they could in fact be funded through the Federal Highways process but something that they would be in generally in support of. It needs further exploration but they have not reached an agreement that in fact it is something that Federal Highways would be able to fund.

Mr. Royal asked if they could move the bridge further east and pay for it?

Mr. Eberhart said that at the last meeting, that concept was mentioned instead of a berm on Recreation Way. They have been up to the site and had an engineer to look at it and see what the cost and the benefit would be. They have found one minor benefit but perhaps not commensurate with the cost. They have been exploring it and had not closed the loop on that issue and they have agreed to go look at it which they did but it looks like something that they may not in fact do for noise mitigation. It was an option that was explored.

Randy Case asked to clarify what the Board needs to do today and said there are six different options and he is not fond of the walls because he would like to see the other side but does not like the noise.

Mr. Butcher said that this item comes to the Parks Board as one of the parties of interest since the Board has the advisory role on the park issues. The action needed by the Board is a motion to accept, reject, or otherwise modify the recommendations of the Parks and Recreation staff, which is included in the Board packet, as they relate to noise mitigation measures proposed for the Monument Valley Park.

As a part of the EA process, staff will forward a letter and the Board, as an advisory committee and same as any other parties of interest, will have an opportunity to comment in the EA on this issue.

Mr. Case asked if the City has funds to maintain the berms and asked if there are funds from the State or Federal government for that?

Mr. Eberhart said that those are equally in short supply.

Mr. Case asked when berming is done in other localities if there is another way of dealing with it.

Mr. Eberhart said that they are typically designed at a slope such as they can be maintained by a simple mowing once or twice a year.

Mr. Butcher said that it is a current level of maintenance on I-25, which is mowing twice a year by the State.

Getty Nuhn said that her concern is on the Area "F". She said that the park does not seem to be affected much but the trail path is and wanted to know where on the map is the trail that Mr. Butcher mentioned that will be relocated over to the east. She also asked how important the noise mitigation is on that trail and to the neighborhood.

Mr. Butcher said a concern that was raised at the last Board meeting was that there are a number of trails that run adjacent to the roadways (i.e. State highways, Academy Boulevard, Powers Boulevard, I-25, etc.). The Department was not concerned, particularly for the fact that the area that falls within the noise contour is a very short section ( $\pm$  50 feet). The Board said that if the staff was comfortable with it then the Board was okay with it. Mr. Butcher said that the Department will gladly trade 50 feet of trail with noise exceedance over 1500 feet of berming that would cut off all access to the Department and CSU facilities. Staff felt that option might solve both issues; build a bridge that moves the trail over and out of the noise contour and plant trees off the road way outside the noise area and provide a visual barrier. This was laid out to CDOT and Wilson and Company at the last minute so staff has not had a chance to discuss what Mr. Eberhart said earlier. Staff felt that the cost benefit of the 50 feet of trail versus the 1500 feet of berming, which the Department would have to maintain and have all the access cut off, was unacceptable.

Lynn Londry asked if the Area "F" was the only rejection from the Department.

Mr. Butcher said that the Department also had a major concern with the Area "C" Option 1, which took the noise barrier right around the Demonstration Garden. The Department rejected that option because it poses safety concern for park users.

Mr. Londry asked if staff accepts the Areas "A" through "E", with the exception of a couple of concerns in the Area "C". Mr. Butcher said yes, but this is a part of the process that will still continue and that staff does not have to select any particular option at this time

Mr. Londry asked if the Board would have the opportunity to hear further discussions on this subject even if the Board makes a decision today. Mr. Butcher said that Mr. Eberhart mentioned that there will be another process with the Environmental Assessment. After that, this process will be similar to the sound barrier that was put in near the pavilion at the Monument Valley Park where the Board saw the design phase, colors, wall design, etc. Mr. Butcher explained again the actions that the Board could take on the staff recommendation (i.e. accept, reject or modify).

Mr. Royal asked who might be affected on the 50 feet trail other than the walker and runners. Mr. Butcher said that from the noise contour line, trail users who are on the 50 feet of trail are exposed to greater than 66 decibels.

Mr. Eberhart made a comment that the relocation of the trail with a pedestrian bridge is something that could be accomplished under other programs such as the enhancement funding so if it is not done here for the noise mitigation it does not mean that it is something that could not happen and that CDOT would participate in supporting that sort of project.

Mr. Butcher said that is appropriate because the Department did not say that they had to pay for it. The Department found a bridge, any type of bridge and movement on the trail, much more acceptable than the 1500 foot earth berm, maintenance, and the closure of the road.

Chair Rooks Nauer asked for public input.

Allison Jones with the Horticultural Arts Society (HAS) said that they maintain the Demonstration Garden in the Monument Valley Park and they support the choice of the option C.3 for the sound barrier. They are glad that is being considered because they currently have difficulties carrying conversations with the people who are only ten feet away in that garden.

Ms. Jones said another concern was that when the infrastructure work was done along the railroad right-of-way, there was a fence that separated the tracks from the Glen Avenue. The fence has now been down for eighteen to twenty month, since the work has been completed. Ms. Jones asked if CDOT would consider working with the railroad to replace the fence or perhaps replace it with a berm. She said that top of a berm would alleviate the noise and that would be an abatement issue.

Ms. Jones reiterated that HAS endorses option C.3 and would like the fence replaced as a safety issue.

Ralph Spory said that he lives adjacent to the park and he is a park user.

Mr. Spory said that in regards to the 67 decibel contour line that interferes with the 50 feet of the trail described earlier, he said that although the 67 decibel contour touches a small portion of the park the noise level is still loud and intolerable throughout the remainder of the park. It is 67decibels on that contour line but the noise decreases gradually, from 66, 65, and so on to probably 55 decibels, to the east side of the park and anyone that uses the park can say that the park is noisy. It may not be at 67 decibels but it is close that.

Mr. Spory mentioned that he is speaking from the notes that he prepared from what he knew about this issue earlier and it is based on what he thought the proposal was at that time so he may be off a little.

Mr. Spory said that neither the City nor the Parks Department should have an obligation to give up any real estate to mitigate the noise from the freeway. He said that Mr. Butcher has stated in the past that he saw no requirements for the park to give up land to mitigate noise coming from the freeway.

Mr. Spory said that looking at the history, if a proper environmental analysis have been performed prior to the construction and realignment of I-25 that is there now for safety improvements, they would have identified the need for noise mitigation and provided for effective solution at that time. However, that was not done because CDOT used the "Categorical Exclusion" provisions of the Federal regulations and as a part of that process both CDOT and Wilson and Company stated that there was no impact to Monument Valley Park by the improvements to the freeway.

CDOT now has determined that there is a small impact because of their 67 decibel contour line adjacent to the park and proposes some mitigation in the form of walls and berms. However, they claim that there is not sufficient space to construct the walls or berm on CDOT property because of the slope. Mr. Spory said that there are other options besides what they are proposing in the form of walls adjacent and closer to the freeway.

The area on the west side of the freeway south of Fontanero the wall is no more than one lane from the freeway for several hundred yards. He said that it was stated at a meeting that CDOT could not put a wall on the east side of the freeway because of snow removal problem but they have constructed a wall down south at Harrison School. CDOT put a noise wall on the east side of the freeway for noise protection and they were not concerned about snow removal for the slope of the terrain and they were able to do it.

Mr. Spory made a comment that he could not believe that with proper engineering that CDOT cannot find noise solutions adjacent to the freeway and insists that it has to be on the east of the railroad or on park property or city property.

Another issue that Mr. Spory mentioned was the effectiveness of the noise wall that is near the pavilion that is constructed on the east side of the railroad and not adjacent to the freeway. Mr.

Spory said that he attended a numerous events that were held in the pavilion where they used microphones but the audiences still could not hear the speakers even with the noise walls.

Mr. Spory said that he would like to see other options looked at to mitigate the noise in the park. CDOT is only obligated to look at 67 decibels but he thinks that morally they have an issue to look at noise levels less than 67 decibels that affect the rest of the park and with proper engineering, they can find solutions adjacent to the freeway as they did on the west side, which are very effective.

Mr. Spory asked that the Board not approve what is being requested by the CDOT and Wilson and Company but to have them look at other options that do not use city or park land to provide mitigation.

Chesley Miller said that she is with the Friends of Monument Valley Park and is on its Administrative Team. The Friends of Monument Valley Park has been looking at this issue for some time now and they are pleased to see that CDOT has come up with some recommendations for mitigation.

Ms. Miller said that Judith Rice-Jones delivered a letter to the Board this morning with a recommendation that the Board should wait and hold its assessment and opinions until the EA is out in January 2003 to see what recommendations there are according to them concerning the mitigation.

Ms. Miller reminded the Board that it was said at the last Board meeting that the standards would be higher for mitigation if the park is on the National Historic Register. She said that the Friends group has been informed, though it is not official yet and it will come with the EA, that this park will be qualified to be on the National Historic Register. In the meantime, the Friends group is pursuing and doing whatever research they need to do at this time to establish that status.

Ms. Miller said that Wilson and Company said that they do not believe that there is any point in mitigating certain parts of the park because it is not going to do much good. She said that the Friends group is a small group compared to Wilson and Company who has many more resources but the Friends group has had help from Dr. Richard Blade, a physics professor from the University of Colorado, who has done far-field noise calculations. The group feels that Dr. Blade's studies are most appropriate and that his findings are different from the CDOT's findings. Dr. Blade said that the mitigation will achieve reduction much farther back into the park than the noise mitigation according to what CDOT will do. Also, if the park has a National Historic Register status, it is not talking about just a trail but the entire park.

Ms. Miller said she goes to rivers or parks on rivers whenever she is in a new town and people who come to this town will seek a walk in a park. This community has a great asset with a park and a river in the middle of the town and she would like to see this park in a different category than from any other parks because it is a centerpiece in the heart of Colorado Springs. This park started to take a shape in 1904 with a donation of land by General Palmer and this is very special, it is the gateway, it is the showcase and it is the heart of the city that needs more attention. The Board should take a special note of this and give a special attention to the status that this park should have in this community.

Also, the Friends group has a different perspective than CDOT concerning the park. Governor Owens has dedicated significant resources towards transportation and CDOT has done a great job with the highways but they did not plan for the park with regards to the noise. Ms. Miller had the opportunity to speak with Governor Owens concerning the impact of I-25 on Monument Valley Park and he said that he was aware that there was very little buffer between the interstate and the park. He believed that it should be a joint city, state and county effort to buffer the park from the interstate. Ms. Miller believes that most mitigation should come from CDOT because they are the ones who put the highway right through the middle of the city. The interstate was built in 1960 when the population was fewer than 60,000 but now there are approximately 500,000 people and there has been nothing done to protect the heart and center of the city and park to this time and the situation is deteriorated.

Ms. Miller said that as a friend of the Monument Valley Park and as a user of the park, she asks that the Board give a full consideration to the absolute highest and best mitigation between the interstate and the park and do everything possible to make the heart of Colorado Springs the most beautiful and most protected place in the park system. She also recommended that the Board consider not making a recommendation today and wait until the EA is in and hear the ultimate status of the National Historic Register eligibility for the Monument Valley Park.

In response to Larry Royal's question, Ms. Miller said that as a part of the EA, they did studies on different aspects of expansion of the interstate. A part of that study revealed by historians is that this park is eligible for Historic Register status. She said that some features go back to General Palmer's time and some features are WPA which is 1950's.

Mr. Royal rephrased his question and asked what affect does the application for the historical recognition have to do with what the Board is going to do today or the EA.

Ms. Miller said that it would be the different standards, higher standards, for mitigation for the park if it is on the Historic Register.

Cindy Cohen said that she is a citizen who has been using the park almost on a daily basis for the past thirteen years, mostly for running and walking. Her children use the park as well.

Over the last several years, since the highway has been expanded and changed, the noise has increased significantly so that Ms. Cohen cannot walk and run without headphones because of the distracting noise and she cannot relax. Ms. Cohen said that it is important that something needs to be done about the noise in the park.

Daisy Chun Rhodes asked if in the EA there be a recommendation for Monument Valley Park to go on the Historic Register? Would a determination be based on the national level? And then once it is on the historic registry, the significance in terms of decibel levels that would make a difference here between our recommendation and what might transpire because of the EA for which seems to be directed towards the historical registration?

Wynetta Massey, Senior Attorney, said she does not know. Ms. Massey is not sure if the EA is done and then the historic designation comes after that, if the EA has to be done over again or it has to be amended.

Mr. Eberhart said that he mentioned earlier that a number of resources will be looked at and how proposed actions would affect to them. One of those is noise and adjacent land use regardless of what that use is. If it is subdivision, noise mitigation may be needed there. If it is the pavilion in the park, studies were done years ago and working with the Parks Board it was determined that was the resource that needed to be protected. The noise studies were done, Categorical Exclusion was pursued and noise mitigation was provided as a result of that. Another resource looked at included historical properties. What is the impact of this action on historical property?

In response to Mr. Royal's question, the process of designating the park as on the Historic Register really has nothing to do with the EA process. That process happens whenever it happens. Generally for most things they are not considered until they are closer to 50 years old, then the State will look at the unique aspects of that resource to determine if it is worthy of being on that list depending on the condition and other things.

Ms. Chun Rhodes asked if there was a difference between the Federal historical and the local noise levels where the decibels are actually counted and determined in terms of its stand from east to west and west to east? Being on Historic Register would either make it possible for a determination as a Board or any recommendation for noise mitigation. She wanted to know what the potential would be if the Board makes a mistake.

Mr. Eberhart said the mitigation proposed is for the purpose of protecting those portions that would be subjected to noise levels about the threshold. It does not change the way that you measure the noise of the threshold. What you look to there is whether or not you are actually making that property unusable for its original intended purpose.

Chair Rooks Nauer asked if there are not two different kinds of standards; one for the historical property and one for the non-historical. Mr. Eberhart said no.

Paula Pearl asked what the advantage was for the Board to wait on the EA for this proposal.

Mr. Eberhart said what the EA will do is to describe the existing environment (what is out there), what is proposed as action, what the expected impacts would be and what is proposed mitigation for those impacts. The decisions along this nature need to be in the EA for the EA to make any conclusions about what the bottom line overall impacts would be. He actively needs to be able to propose mitigation in order to write the EA so you cannot wait for an EA, it would say no decision has been made on what to do about this so it would not be helpful.

Terry Putman, Manager of Park Planning and TOPS, said that there would not be a historical designation by January.

Mr. Eberhart said that was correct. He said that as a part of that process you look to see if there is anything that can be in the future would qualify it and that they are the ones who went through the process to determine that this is an eligible property and be very careful with it.

Steve Harris said that he is not in a very good position to evaluate the different recommendations because he is not an expert in this matter. Also, he does not feel that the Board has been provided with sufficient information to understand what the best alternative is but for that purpose the Board relies on staff and he is comfortable with the staff as they do a good job in evaluating these things.

Mr. Harris said that he would like to include the following in the motion:

1. Include a statement that would reflect "the mitigation to the fullest extent possible." Monument Valley Park is the linear park that is the heart of the city and the Board, as stewards of all parks, has to make it very clear to any decision makers who are looking at these options along the way that the Board want the fullest mitigation that is possible.
2. Even though Mr. Harris agrees that the Board needs to make a recommendation in order for the EA process to go forward and that has to be considered, he would like to see a statement in the motion that states that "to qualify these recommendations that once the EA is out and there is another public comment period that the Board reserves the right to change its opinions after the Board sees what other information there may be included in the EA." The Board/Parks Department, certainly as a group and a concerned stakeholder in this process, needs to have the ability to comment during that public process that would occur after the issuance of the draft EA. Mr. Harris wanted to make it clear that the recommendation of the Board could change after the Board receives more information when the draft document is available.
3. If there will be a process and whatever process there is for registering this site as an historic site, one of the things that Mr. Eberhart mentioned is that one of the consideration would be the condition of the resource. So to the extent that there is increased mitigation that could actually impair the city's ability to list something on the historic register and even though there may not be a difference in the decibel levels or subjective standards that apply, this is a historic site and it dates back more than 50 years and it is a legacy of our founder General Palmer that Mr. Harris urges to keep an eye on this to the extent that we do not preclude the listing of this site as a historic site because of some impacts that later on would deem to prevent that listing.

Randy Case asked if the Confluence Park would be dealt in the same manner.

Mr. Eberhart said that his understanding of Confluence Park is that there is a desire to not have a visual obstruction there. The noise level has been looked at and at the current time there is no mitigation for the noise in the Confluence Park area.

Mr. Case asked if there is going to be mitigation on the highway right-of-way itself.

Mr. Eberhart said to his knowledge, no, and he does not have mitigation proposed for the Confluence Park area.

Mr. Case asked if Gossage Park, up north as the highway continues to be expanded beyond Fillmore, is impacted by highway noise.

Mr. Butcher said when CDOT gets to that point, the Department will look at it.

Mr. Case said that in the proposal in Area C, the height of the walls are identified as 10 feet and 20 feet and asked if the 20 foot wall is going to reduce more sound than the 10 foot wall.

Mr. Eberhart said that depends on the topography and where you are. Generally speaking, the higher wall will block the sound because it does bend over. What that barrier does is protecting the first use beyond it and that provides the maximum benefit. In the case where 20 feet is recommended is because it would be necessary to be that high in order to get a five decibel reduction behind it for the first affected use.

Mr. Case asked what the CDOT is doing in terms of the road surface and asked if they have discussed putting a rubber-based material in the surface of the road to reduce the noise.

Mr. Eberhart said that every aspect of the entire project is a trade off of a number of different things and when it comes to the road surface itself that has a very big impact into that decision as the durability of the surface. The pavement of the surface is based on the life cycle, cost and durability and the noise issue is a minor issue and it is not the primary determining factor in what pavements there would be. CDOT has spent significant time and money looking at the surfacing techniques and different surfaces and he expects to see a concrete surface on I-25.

Mr. Royal said the Sound Barrier "A" (berm) is from 5 feet to 25 feet high and it does not explain how long it is or what dimension.

Mr. Eberhart said it is at the south end of the entire situation, on Bijou Street. Tim Rugg explained that it is the triangular-shaped area in the south part of the map.

Mr. Royal asked how far from the CDOT right-of-way is the base or the eastern edge of the earth berm, the land CDOT is taking from the Park.

Mr. Rugg said the earth berm on Area "A" will be within the CDOT property.

Mr. Royal asked the cost of the earth versus concrete. Mr. Eberhart said that depends on what is being done and it is not a straight equation.

Mr. Royal asked what impact there is on the Areas "B". Mr. Eberhart explained the impacts on the map but the impact is mainly just behind the wall. There is less impact further away from the wall.

In response to Mr. Royal's question concerning the Area "E", Mr. Eberhart said that area is for the neighborhood and not the park.

In response Mr. Harris' question concerning a possible reduction of the speed limit and its impact, Mr. Eberhart said the speed reduction does reduce the noise level but the intended speed limit will remain at the current level of 55 miles per hour. Also, there had been some work done to eliminate some curves and safety-related issues.

Mr. Case is not in favor of the walls since they block the views and prefers to see the greenery and asked if CDOT has consider different alternatives such as the transparent-type walls.

Mr. Eberhart said the wall design that they have in town have been based upon interactive collaborative approach with the community looking at different types of designs, etc. That portion of the work remains to be done to the side exactly as to what these walls would look like.

Chair Rooks Nauer said they looked at berming and tree boundaries but to get the same amount of noise mitigation, there would have to be 200 feet of densely planted trees and but they would have to take a lot of the space from the park. Ms. Rooks Nauer also mentioned that there had been community input at that time that people literally could not hear themselves talk at the pavilion before the walls were built. Even though Ms. Rooks Nauer does not favor the walls but she feels that the walls are a part of the future just because of the mitigation.

Mr. Case said that he is not sure if he will advocate for berming completely and he is concern about the wall, thought that alternative seems to satisfy the neighborhood. He asked if the Parks Department could encourage advising the Board if there is some type of a transparent wall.

Ms. Ryan mentioned a possibility of having the artists' community help with the designing of the walls. Ms. Nuhn agreed.

Mr. Harris said that there should be a barrier between the Railroad property and the Park property.

Mr. Harris thanked the Friends of Monument Valley Park and especially Chesley Miller who represented the Friends group. Mr. Harris encouraged that the Friends group, which plays a large role in advocacy for the park, to submit comments on their own as a non-profit organization and stay with the process until the EA is completely done.

**Randy Case made a motion to accept the staff's recommendation as follows:**

**Area "A" - Accept**

**Area "B" - Accept**

**Area "C" - Accept, but clarifying that C has option C.3 identified at two different locations and believes they are intended for both C.3s to be dealt with.**

**Area "D" - Suggested to state, with emphasis, that the Board has much concern about "crowding" of the park on "D.2" but object to "D.2" being acceptable at all.**

**Area "E" - This is not a park issue.**

**Area "F" - Proposed that the Board does not advocate in anyway and harshly object to the closing of the Recreation Way.**

**The motion should also include the three issues that Mr. Harris mentioned earlier:**

- 1. Mitigation of the fullest extent possible.**
- 2. At public comment, Parks Board reserves right to change its input on the EA.**
- 3. If the mitigation measures adversely impact the park's listing of the historic registry then that be brought back.**

**Motion seconded by Larry Royal and carried unanimously.**

For the purpose of the record, the final recommendations by the Parks Department and CSU, concerning the proposed noise mitigation measures at I-25 and Monument Valley Park, has been attached below.

**Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services**  
**Colorado Springs Utilities**  
**Final Recommendations**  
**I-25 and Monument Valley Park**  
**- Proposed Noise Mitigation Measures -**

**NOTE:** These recommendations pertaining only to the draft Noise Mitigation Plan for the above project may not represent the entirety of the City's official position.

**Recommendations: (heading South to North along the park)**

**Area "A" Sound Barrier**

**Proposed Design:** An earth berm from 5' to 25' high.

**Location:** In CDOT right-of-way between I-25 and railroad.

**Area of the Park Receiving Benefit:** Southern part of the ballfield and the trails and gardens south of the ballfield.

**Position of Park Staff:** No objection to earth berm, but at this time the City has no funds for landscape maintenance.

**Area "B" Visual Barrier**

**Proposed Design:** Additional trees planted between existing large cottonwood trees.

**Location:** In the park, along the west property line, just south of the existing sound barrier.

**Area of the Park Receiving Benefit:** This is a visual barrier only (in-fill with lower growing trees blocking the view of highway), no sound benefit.

**Position of Park Staff:** No objections.

**Area "C" Sound Barrier**

**Proposed Design:** (Wall Options)

Option C.1: 10' high x 300' long sound barrier (east side of Glen Avenue).

Option C.2: 20' high x 470' long sound barrier (west side of Glen Avenue).

Option C.3: 20' high x 625' long sound barrier (east edge of CDOT ROW).

**Location:** Option C.1: Between Demonstration Garden and Glen Avenue.

Option C.2: Between Glen Avenue and the railroad ROW.

Option C.3: Between the fence line between the railroad corridor and the highway.

**Area of the Park Receiving Benefit:** Demonstration Garden.

**Position of Park Staff:** Eliminate Option C.1 as it poses park-user safety concerns. Option C.3 is preferable, Option C.2 is a consideration.

**Comments by Wilson & Co.:** C.2 will take away the illegal parking that is currently occurring in the railroad right-of-way. CDOT is not sure if wall can be squeezed in but it is an option under study.

**Area "D" Sound Barrier**

Proposed Design: (Wall Options)

Option D.1: 20' high x 1,060' long sound barrier.

Option D.2: 20' high x 1,080' long sound barrier.

Location: Option D.1: Two segments (in "gore area" and east edge of CDOT ROW between the railroad and the highway).

Option D.2: Between Glen Avenue and the railroad.

Area of the Park Receiving Benefit: This will protect the ponds area and trail south of Uintah Street.

Position of Park Staff: Either option is acceptable but there is some concern that D.2 is closer to the park and may have a "crowding" effect to Glen Avenue and the ponds.

**Area "E" Sound Barrier**

Proposed Design: 21' high x 750' long sound barrier.

Location: Between Recreation Way and the railroad.

Area of the Park Receiving Benefit: This wall was proposed for the San Miguel residential neighborhood and perhaps may also benefit the park.

Position of Park Staff: Check on Colorado College's plan for acquisition. Stop noise wall (north edge) short of Parks and Recreation building.

**Area "F" Sound Barrier**

Proposed Design: An earth berm 15' high x approximately 1,500' long.

Location: Replaces portion of Recreation Way between Parks and Recreation Headquarters and Fleet Parking Lot.

Area of the Park Receiving Benefit: Approximately 50' of trail (west side of the creek).

Position of Park Staff: Major concern with closing of Recreation Way and loss of parking lots, maintenance yards and Forestry Operation Center.  
No direct access for vehicles to fuel yards without going on and off I-25.  
Traffic and City Engineering/Fire would probably object to this long cul-de-sac.

Proposed that CDOT build a short pedestrian bridge to span Mesa Creek drainage and move trail out of the noise contour area. City to plant screening trees on west side of Recreation Way to provide visual barrier similar to that which exists opposite Headquarters Building.

~~Note: Daisy Chun Rhodes left the meeting at 11:28 a.m. due to a meeting conflict.~~

**Air Force Memorial (Item #7)**

~~Fred Mais, Manager of Design and Development, said that several months ago, the Board approved the master plan amendment for the Memorial Park to expand the existing War Memorial area to add a second "ring" to accommodate additional memorials. At that time, the Air Force Association expressed an interest in placing an Air Force memorial and said that they would actively pursue a concept plan to bring it forward to the Department for its review.~~

~~**Pikes Peak Greenway:** With the passage of the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA), the Parks Department would be able to work with \$1.0 million to finish the Pikes Peak Greenway as a transportation corridor through Colorado Springs and enhance some of the features along the Greenway as well as for recreational use.~~

~~**2005 Water Team Project:** Parks and Recreation staff are partnering with Colorado Springs Utilities (CSU) Water Resources Division to pioneer a year long informational project. The objective is for staff to better understand CSU's water activities toward providing water to its customers, with the Parks Department being a major user. CSU has been very cooperative regarding this project. Staff will provide copies of the meeting agendas to the Board members as the meetings occur.~~

~~**Department Holiday Potluck:** Mr. Butcher invited the Board members to the annual Department Holiday Potluck that will be held as on Wednesday December 15, 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Hillside Community Center.~~

~~**Break: 9:00 a.m. Holiday Reception (provided by the Board members)**  
**Reconvened: 9:23 a.m.**~~

## NEW BUSINESS

### I-25 Midland Trail Crossing (Item #7)

Paul Butcher, Director of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services, said that at the last Board meeting, the Board requested to invite a representative from Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) to discuss I-25 project, particularly at the Midland Trail crossing as it is affected by the construction of I-25.

Mr. Butcher introduced Dave Poling, North Program Engineer with Colorado Department of Transportation.

Mr. Poling explained what is being proposed to the Midland Trail in terms of relocation according to the I-25 Environmental Assessment and what would be constructed in the Phase I improvements. The Midland Trail currently extends through the old Midland railroad overpass bridge structure and then connects back to Midland Trail at another point.

As a part of Phase I improvements, Midland Trail connection would be maintained and would not be closed. However, during the replacement of I-25/Cimarron interchange and further improvements to I-25, north of Cimarron up to Bijou, the current alignment for Midland Trail would be closed underneath I-25 but it would extend approximately 1,000 feet to the south of old Monument/Fountain Creek to the west and tie into the trail along Cimarron Street. This trail location was determined through a number of discussions held by CDOT, Parks Department and the City's Trails Team. A lot of the discussions revolved around security to the people using that trail and trying to get a crossing that was more along a traveled route to parallel Cimarron/ Highway 24. CDOT would lengthen the bridge structure to accommodate the trail underneath I-25.

Responding to Board members' questions, Mr. Poling said that Phase I improvements will begin in Summer of 2005. The timeframe for the trail closure, which will occur during the construction of I-25/Cimarron interchange, is undetermined at this point because that is a part of Phase II and Phase II is currently not funded. But in the Phase I, there is a requirement for this trail to be kept open.

Chair Case said that the reason that he raised this issue and asked this item to be on the agenda was consideration of any additional input the Board might want provide to CDOT or to staff. He felt that there are issues relating to Confluence Park as it will become an activity center, Pikes Peak Greenway trail on the eastside of the interstate, connectivity from Confluence Park to Pikes Peak Greenway on the west side, historical and future uses of these trails, proposed sound/noise/visual barriers on the interstate and its affects on Monument Valley Park, especially on the north side, etc.. Chair Case would like to have a trail not only on the north side of Highway 24 going west but on the south side as well as and asked Mr. Poling to address on some of these issues.

Mr. Poling said that noise mitigation issue for Monument Valley Park was discussed with the Board approximately a year and half ago. There will be a noise berm constructed in the infield area in Monument Valley Park, primarily to protect the ballfield from noises and to provide a visual barrier to I-25. Also, additional noise walls were constructed at the Uintah interchange to protect the Greenhouses and Demonstration Garden within Monument Valley Park. These will be constructed as a part of the Phase I improvements. CDOT will also do the entire Bijou Street overpass structure with the City's contribution of \$10 million dollars towards this project. This project will include the work associated with the entryway into Monument Valley Park, construction of retaining walls and restoration work on WPA walls that lines the Monument Creek. Phase II project consists of Cimarron/I-25 interchange but it is currently not funded. This area is adjacent to Confluence Park. Also, CDOT has recently initiated an environmental study on Highway 24, which is generally from I-25 west to Manitou Springs. As a part of that project, a kickoff meeting was held two weeks ago with various people along that corridor, including the Parks Department to discuss concerns relating to Red Rock Canyon Open Space and other trails along that corridor. Mr. Poling said that if the Board had any input for both sides of the Highway 24, now is the opportune time to begin planning.

In response to Chair Case's questions, Chris Lieber, TOPS Administrator, and Mr. Poling provided the following responses:

- Trails Team has reviewed Highway 24 and believed that it is desirable to have trails on both sides of the highway. The opportunities for that are at the northwest or southeast ends. The Team felt that people needed to be able to traverse Highway 24, especially when the northeast or southwest side develops into a residential or commercial area. Also, as the Gold Hills Mesa develops, there will be a lot of potential trail users in that area and they need to be able to move back and forth along the south side of the road. This is currently in the Trails master plan and the Team will proceed in that direction.
- Trail Team held a lengthy discussion regarding the closing and relocation of the Midland Trail crossing. The Team felt that if the bridge structure goes away, moving the trail to the

south would be a better alternative from a safety standpoint than to have a box culvert that goes underneath I-25. If there is a way to keep the current I-25 bridge structure then that would be a different discussion.

- Trails master plan does not include any off-street trail connection on the west side of the interstate between Cimarron and Colorado.
- The existing tunnel structure is not salvageable. It is a 45 year-old bridge structure that would require the entire structure to be rebuilt at an estimated cost of \$2.5 to \$3.0 million. The cost would be an issue and a consideration.
- Underpasses are less-preferred than overpasses primarily due to security issues.
- In reference to a high-water bridge across just south of the Pikes Peak Greenway trail and south of Bijou, CDOT will not have any impacts on the actual physical crossings of the creeks. However, the trails in the areas adjacent to the WPA walls would require a detour. Terry Putman, Manager of Design, Development and TOPS will discuss the alternative trail locations in this area at the January meeting during the Monument Valley Park Master Plan presentation.
- There are no sound barriers adjacent to Confluence Park. CDOT had already discussed this with the City. But there will be retaining walls constructed to retain the fill of I-25.
- I-25/Bijou overpass project was briefly explained including street closures/detour routes, construction timeframe, etc.)
- CDOT has conceptual drawings of the Phase II but the detailed design plans have not been completed. That would depend on the funding and when those decisions are need to be made.

Chair Case said the following:

- Would like to have a multiple trail connections/access points.
- Have a crossing at Cimarron and Colorado
- Keep the underground crossing.
- Encouraged having as many off-street trail connection through the system.
- Would like to offer the community the ability to continue to go west. Vermijo would be an ideal connection from east to west side. Chair Case asked that Mr. Poling keep this as an open item for future funding discussions. Mr. Poling agreed.

#### Cascade Median Alteration (Item #8)

~~Terry Putman, Manager of Design, Development and TOPS, said that this is an added item.~~

~~The downtown medians are subject to the Historic Median Policy that requires that any alteration to the medians must go through a public discussion. The new courthouse project that El Paso County is starting will require a reroute of traffic on Cascade Avenue.~~

~~Staff was contacted about the traffic control plan and discovered that it involved the temporary removal of approximately fifty feet of the median mid-block between Vermijo and Colorado~~

~~Arnold Cramer said that he did not have a problem with the increases in the fees. Mr. Cramer's concern was with the quality of the golf course. He would like to see a quality golf course if a premium fee is expected to be paid. At Patty Jewett, that is the Peak and Plains courses.~~

~~Mr. Cramer's other issue was the elimination of the Non-Resident Fee and asked why that was being eliminated in 2007.~~

~~Mr. Lockwood said that the "resident" and "non resident" fee structures that were in place in the past have not proven to be very effective. With the new Prime Time fee structure, staff felt that the golf courses will be charging enough to make sure that their revenues are going to meet the expenses. Higher fees will chase away the golfers. The non resident fees have been and are going away from many golf courses.~~

~~Richard Stettler said that publicly owned item should be benefiting the public that supports it. The golf courses are publicly owned, but in the City's case, they are self-supporting. Therefore, the staff could have a little more freedom to be able to charge more for being self-supportive. However, if the golf courses have more public support, then Mr. Stettler would agree with Mr. Cramer in terms of the golf courses making a distinction between the residents and non residents fees.~~

~~In response to Ms. Chun Rhodes, Mr. Cramer said that he does not purchase the Senior Permit because he would rather play on weekends and can only play during weekends.~~

~~Mr. Cramer responded to Chair Nuhn's question regarding the improvements that were needed on the golf courses:~~

- ~~— Sand traps, but Mr. Lockwood had already addressed them.~~
- ~~— There are some issues on the Prairie course, which may become a part of the 18 hole course.~~
- ~~— In front of #3, the landing area has been a swamp for four years. The grass in front of the 150 yard pole is almost gone.~~
- ~~— No grass on the right side of #4 and the left side on #5.~~
- ~~— At this point, the 9 hole course is not ready for a premium play.~~

~~Essentially, the proposed fee increases in 2007 is the increase of \$.75 per 9 holes everyday from November through April and \$1.75 per 9 holes for Friday, Saturday and Sunday during the months from May through October. (The \$1.75 per 9 holes charge is the "Prime Rate", which is newly designed fee structure.) Also, the Non-Resident fees are being eliminated.~~

~~Richard Stettler made a motion to approve the proposed Golf fee increases for 2007 as presented. Motion seconded by Daisy Chun Rhodes and carried unanimously.~~

## TOPS BUSINESS

### Red Rock Canyon/Midland Trail Access at Highway 24 (Item #6)

Chris Lieber, Manager of Design, Development and TOPS, said that the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) is currently engaged in a process to determine alternatives to guide future development and expansion of the Hwy-24 corridor between I-25 and Manitou Springs.

Mr. Lieber and Landscape Architect Jeff Haley from the Parks Department have been a part of the Technical Team on this project that has been looking at the corridor and have been working with CDOT and their planning staff to address open space and trail access needs along the Hwy-24 corridor. Staff and CDOT team agree that this project proposes both some challenges and opportunities, specifically with the Red Rock Canyon access and the Midland Trail corridor.

Over the past few months, the TOPS Committee received several presentations on this corridor, specifically in reference to the access to Red Rock Canyon and Midland Trail. Through these discussions, the Working Committee developed a list of recommendations, which were included in the Board packet. Staff was not requesting Board action on these recommendations but to update the Board as to where CDOT is in their process.

Mr. Lieber said that this presentation was somewhat similar to what the TOPS Committee has received. This presentation is intended to provide the Board with information regarding the complexities of the Hwy-24 Corridor Project.

Mr. Lieber introduced the Design Team members who provided the presentation:

- Dave Watt, Colorado Department of Transportation
- Dirk Draper, Project Manager, CH2MHill
- Kevin Shanks, Landscape Architect with THK Associates
- Mary Jo Vobejda, Project Manager, CH2M Hill

Mr. Watt said that the Leadership Team on this project was established three years ago in coordination with the City of Colorado Springs, which included seven entities within the City that were impacted by the corridor (i.e. Engineering, Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services, Springs Metro, etc.), Manitou Springs, El Paso County and Pikes Peak Areas Council of Governments. These groups have been identified as stakeholders and they have been participating through the planning process.

Mr. Watt said that Dirk Draper has been the environmental lead working on this project for the past two years. He said that this project has presented a number of challenges and issues. Mr. Watt said that the presentation included fairly fresh ideas. They had a chance to go back and worked with the TOPS Committee on some of their issues and develop this plan.

Mr. Draper said that he is a member of the TOPS Working Committee and has participated in a number of discussions with the Committee as a member of the CDOT Project Team. In those situations where he was representing the Project Team, he recused himself from any motions or votes that came before the Committee. At this meeting, he was representing the CDOT and its Consulting Planning Team as a member of the Project Team.

Mr. Drapers provided a PowerPoint presentation as follows:

Study Corridor

Hwy-24 corridor between I-25 to the east end and Manitou Springs (the east interchange Manitou Avenue) to the west end is five miles long. The highway was built in 1960's. Fountain

Creek runs parallel and there are two park features: Red Rock Canyon Open Space on the west end and America the Beautiful Park just east of I-25.

#### EA Schedule

- 2007 Continue with environmental studies and ongoing public meetings. (They are halfway through a four-year study project.)
- 2008 Public Hearings (Early part of 2008 will be spent on agency approval with Federal Highways and Colorado Department of Transportation. Then public hearings on the formal proposal and the environment [NEPA] document later.)
- 2009 Decision Document (Final approval from the Federal Highways.)

#### Purpose and Need

- Purpose: The project is to enhance local, regional mobility for all travel modes in the Hwy-24 corridor.
- Need: - There is traffic congestion.
  - Hwy-24 proper serves in some ways as a barrier, particularly to non-motorized travelers moving north and south through the corridor. There is limited opportunity for people who are on foot or on bikes to cross the highway.
  - This is the only mountain access between Pueblo to Denver (100 miles).
  - There are many users with competing demands in the corridor (i.e. regional commuters, local travelers, etc.)

#### Midland Expressway Alternative

They are still working on the details and design options but what was being recommended at this time along the corridor was pointed out on a map. The alternatives included alternate routes, additional lanes, access points for cross streets, additional interchange locations, overpass, and intersection or overpass at Ridge Road. The intersections on 26<sup>th</sup> Street and 31<sup>st</sup> Street will remain as is.

CDOT is considering an intersection or an overpass at Ridge Road. This is the access to Red Rock Open Space. An overpass would be a bridge structure across the highway without ramps or direct access to Hwy-24.

Mr. Stettler said that this would push traffic onto Colorado Avenue and asked if this was discussed with Old Colorado City merchants and residents and if that was acceptable.

Mr. Draper said that they have discussed it with the Old Colorado City area and that they are working with Manitou Springs. He said that the stakeholders have many different opinions but the stakeholders that they have met seemed to have a strong preference with the overpass.

#### Parks and Open Space in the Project Region

There is a full range of park properties on the west side. This includes a regional park destination, Midland trail, neighborhood parks, vacant park properties, open space, etc.

#### Potential Direct Impacts to Parks and Open Space

### Red Rock Canyon Open Space

- Potential impacts:
  - There is no physical impact at this point.
  - There is a potential for increased noise and visual intrusion into the park as it exists today.
  - There is a potential to change to the Ridge Road access if an overpass is constructed there.
- Steps to avoid and minimize:
  - Modified footprint to avoid open space boundaries.
- Potential Mitigation:
  - Noise barriers are considered. This was discussed with park staff.
  - Provide a grade-separated pedestrian access so that non -motorized traffic will not mingle with highway traffic.

### Midland Trail

- Potential impacts:
  - Trail within project footprint near 8<sup>th</sup> Street and 21<sup>st</sup> Street trail parking is impacted. There is a segment of the trail that is very close to Hwy-24 today that will need to be relocated as the highway is expanded in that area. There would be opportunities to do that.
- Steps to avoid and minimize:
  - Evaluate Hwy-24 alignment particularly at 8<sup>th</sup> Street and 21<sup>st</sup> Street.
- Potential Mitigation:
  - Relocate impacted trail sections.
  - Improve regional trail connections
  - Provide new trailheads
  - Replace trailhead at 21<sup>st</sup> Street.
  - Connections under all bridges.

### Pikes Peak Greenway/America the Beautiful Park

- Potential impacts:
  - There are encroachment issues from the ramp.
  - There exists noise impacts today and will continue with noise issues.
  - Potential construction impacts.
  - Visual impacts.
  - No physical impact to America the Beautiful Park.
- Steps to avoid and minimize:
  - Modified interchange design to reduce its size and visual intrusion (remove flyover ramp).
- Potential Mitigation:
  - Enhance Midland Trail connections by aligning it along the creek and provide a third connection into America the Beautiful Park.

### Gateway Park at 21<sup>st</sup> Street

This park was identified as one of the parks that might be impacted but no detail was given.

### Complexities

CDOT is updating a 40-year old highway facility and planning it for 30 more years into the future, so there are number of complexities to deal with (i.e. widen and realign Hwy-24, build

interchanges, cross-street configuration, purchase right-of-way, modify creek and floodplains, avoid historic properties, maintain trail connections, enhance aesthetics, etc.).

### Opportunities

The alternatives that were presented at this meeting have been developed over the past two years through hundreds of meetings with various groups, agency staff at Federal, State and Local government levels and through eight public meetings. Through the input many opportunities were identified (i.e. enhance the highway corridor, opportunity to address stakeholders' "critical issues", multiple users/multiple objectives, aesthetics, respect corridor context, natural and human environment, safety, accessibility, mobility, Hwy-24 is a gateway and destination, Midland greenway, etc.).

### Midland Trail Opportunities

Kevin Shanks said that an opportunity emerged recently relating to Midland Trail while looking at improvements to Hwy-24 by realigning, the 100 year flood plain and raising all the bridges that cross the Fountain Creek on 8<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> Streets. There is a possibility of putting an entire length of a trail adjacent to the Creek in a greenway-type environment. This will be a much wider corridor. Also, there is an opportunity for recreational activities.

As a part of the Midland Trail Master Plan, a good portion of the Midland Trail is on west side along the Creek. If a trail is added adjacent to the Creek, it can also pick up the area along the south side of Hwy-24. If the main stretch of the trail is placed along the Creek, CDOT can still maintain the portion of the Midland Trail. With a construction of a trail on the north side, another major east-west route on the south side can be introduced. This provides additional mobility and access for to the neighbors on the west side of the community as well as people coming from other parts of the community that access Red Rock Canyon (i.e. Old Colorado City, Manitou Springs, etc.).

A map showing the existing Midland Trail and cross connections, which are part of the Midland Trail Master Plan, and the locations of the pedestrian access which will be provided as a part of this project on both sides of Hwy-24 was explained.

CDOT was willing to sponsor an effort to develop a master plan for the greenway as a part of the overall Hwy-24 plan.

Mr. Shanks said that there had been some discussions regarding Midland Trail, which included:

- Trailheads
- Grade separated crossings.
- Multi-corridor efforts in the west side.
- Placing trails under the bridges since all bridges now have to be raised.
- How the trail system will relate to mass transit (Park and Ride at 31<sup>st</sup> Street).
- Providing alternative ways for people to get around when they get trips off on Hwy-24.
- How people can get from Park and Ride to Red Rock Canyon open space, etc.
- Midland Trail is a Tier I multi-purpose trail. This will requires substantial cross sections. This would be easy to accommodate in this greenway-type concept.

- A positive visual aspect along Hwy-24 is in this corridor, which is the natural riparian vegetation that currently exists in the Fountain Creek area particularly towards the Gold Hills Mesa area and west of 21<sup>st</sup> Street.
- CDOT will maintain the existing Creek channel, banks and existing vegetation. It will also look at widening the 100-year flood plain keeping the existing vegetation along the Creek in this area.
- Some of the gateway statements that Old Colorado City is concerned about having traffic in some locations.

Mr. Shanks plans to move forward with a process of refining ideas through meetings with the stakeholders and the public in order to develop a shared vision not only for the CDOT but for Colorado Springs, Manitou Springs, El Paso County and other stakeholders and create a master plan.

Cindy Zahler asked where the trail is in relation to the meatpacking plant and what, if any, special considerations are given to screen for safety and aesthetics.

Mr. Shanks said the meatpacking plant is located on the north side of the Creek and the bank is higher on the north side. Also, Hwy-24 is some distance away from the Creek in that location and there will be a wide buffer. Mr. Shanks said the trail could be located anywhere within the area where he was pointing on a map and said that was a substantial area. He would encourage landscaping in this area be natural.

Daisy Chun Rhodes suggested that the maintenance issue be a part of the process to discuss during their planning meetings as well as in various other meetings.

Mr. Shanks said that was important and that effective master planning effort should address the maintenance issues (i.e. who will manage it, how is it going to be maintained, who pays for it? etc.) and said that he will make sure to address this issue during the master planning process.

Mr. Stettler said that there was a great opportunity for bringing the Midland trail to the southern side of 24<sup>th</sup> through the open space and utilizing the trail accesses on both sides. That would eliminate some of their problems on 31<sup>st</sup> Street and Ridge Road.

Mr. Draper said that Foothills trail comes down 31<sup>st</sup> Street and he pointed out a connection. He said that provides access into the equestrian parking in the supplementary parking lot in the park. Topographically there some real challenges in that corner; a fifty-foot bluff, almost adjacent to the highway, requiring significant laying back of slopes. Mr. Draper said that they were aware of the connections with the cross trails and pointed to the locations where they would suggest connections and access to the open space.

Mr. Stettler said that they seemed to be eliminating the simplest way in and creating a difficult situation, pushing traffic onto Colorado Avenue. He said that local residents may know the way in but it may be difficult for the people from out-of-town.

Mr. Shanks said that this was not the final concept.

Mr. Stettler said to not set any hard rules such as “We are not going to touch this park”. He said that maybe they ought to.

Mr. Lieber said that TOPS Ordinance is in affect on Red Rock Canyon and it essentially puts it off limits.

Mr. Lieber said that Red Rock Canyon Master Plan does call for a trail connection, which would be appropriate in the TOPS purchased ground, and that trail connecting the 31<sup>st</sup> Street trailhead and the High Street/Ridge Road trailhead was completed this Summer. This trail comes across and drops into the lower end of Red Rock Canyon proper. With this trail in place people coming from Garden of the Gods along 31<sup>st</sup> could cross at the point where Mr. Lieber pointed on a map and then access all of Red Rock Canyon. Also, there are multiple trails and ways to connect Chamberlain trail and into the interior of Red Rock Canyon open space.

Mr. Stettler asked why Midland trail could not move right through Red Rock Canyon.

Mr. Lieber said that could be possible from the northern standpoint, however, Midland trail is a Tier I trail and it is intended to move a lot of people with different purposes. The best location would be on the opposite side of Hwy-24, which would provide access to the neighbors on Midland trail and they could continue along that route. The intention is to connect as many places as possible (i.e. businesses, residential areas, neighbors, etc.) as well as a connection into Red Rock Canyon.

Mr. Stettler said that Hwy-24 was creating a barrier for access between Midland Trail and Red Rock Canyon and that he would like to see something compatible so that it becomes one of the same recreational experience.

Chair Nuhn said that south trail on 31<sup>st</sup> Street would be more for hiking and the northern trail more suitable for bikers because it has less switchbacks and ups and downs.

Kent Obee said that he heard the presentation several times and was appreciative of the plan including many issues that were discussed by the TOPS Committee (i.e. North and south of 24<sup>th</sup> Street and between 8<sup>th</sup> Street and 21<sup>st</sup> Street, etc.). Mr. Obee suggested keeping trails on both sides between 21<sup>st</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> Streets.

Mr. Draper thanked the staff and the Board for their input and said that he would come back in the future to present the plan as they continue to refine it.

## **BOARD BUSINESS**

### **~~Board Committee Reports~~**

~~School/Park Fee Advisory Committee: Jim Schworin said that the Committee did not meet.~~

~~City Assets Naming Board: The City Administration is currently working to form the Board. Cindy Zahler had no report.~~



STEVE BACH  
MAYOR

## THE MOST SENSIBLE APPROACH TO STORMWATER

### I. Storm Water Hybrid (New Regional Authority, Individual Participant Funding Sources, No Overhead)

1. New Regional Authority to be formed within El Paso County boundaries by City of Colorado Springs, El Paso County and other interested municipalities. Additional municipalities may join in the future.
2. Each participant will bring its own funding source and receive commensurate spending. COS to participate financially in stormwater projects outside our City limits where we have some joint responsibility or extraordinary benefit.
3. The Authority will be led by an unpaid Board of Directors comprised of representatives of the participants. Voting will be proportional based on impervious surface/population.
4. The Authority will have no staff. Colorado Springs Executive Branch will administer the Authority based on an Inter-Governmental Agreement and as an "in kind" contribution, affording other participants the ability to maximize their spending on capital improvements and avoid overhead.
5. Projects design, construction and maintenance will be outsourced to the private sector with local vendors receiving preference wherever practical to help create local private sector jobs.
6. The Authority will formally report quarterly to the public on its progress toward reaching measurable outcomes.

### II. COS Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) and Operations & Maintenance (O&M) Funding (NO NEW TAXES/FEES FOR COLORADO SPRINGS RESIDENTS AT LEAST 1ST HALF DECADE)

#### 1st half decade (5 years)

Sell new bonds: without raising taxes and subject to voter approval - provides \$175 million available for CIP projects.

Spend \$35M/year

~\$20M Stormwater

~\$11.5M Roads and bridges

~\$2.5M Public safety infrastructure

~\$1M Parks

O&M: Dedicated General Fund line items annually

Stormwater. ~\$5.0M+

Roads and bridges \$16.0M (Initially and growing as the City achieves additional efficiencies and sales tax gains).

#### After first half decade (Year 6+) (GROW THE ECONOMY-SALES TAX/ASK VOTERS FOR HELP)

CIP: Scale up the economy, including City for Champions, generating incremental sales tax to fund additional CIP. If organic General Fund growth is not sufficient trending into Year three of four, then ask the voters to approve additional funding via a sales/property tax increase with a Sunset provision.

O&M: Continue dedicating General Fund line items for stormwater, roads and bridges.

sgb: 10.09.2013 (updated 12.09.2013)

## **Items of Information for Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Members**

### **Article from the Gazette**

- "No butts about it: Students learn tobacco risks during cigarette cleanup", March 26, 2014
- "Side Streets: Putting the springs back in the Springs", March 10, 2014

### **Article from KOAA**

- "City prepping for flood season near Garden of Gods", April 1, 2014

### **Article from KKTV**

- "Waldo Canyon Trail Expected to Remain Closed for Years", March 18, 2014

### **Minutes**

- Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Minutes – March 13, 2014  
(Available via website: [www.springsgov.com](http://www.springsgov.com) → Your Government → Parks and Recreation Advisory Board)