

DENVER PARKS & RECREATION 2026 WORK PLAN

Parks, Arts and Culture Committee

May 5, 2026



DENVER
PARKS & RECREATION


GAME PLAN
for a Healthy City





MISSION

As stewards of a legacy park system, Denver Parks and Recreation is dedicated to customer service and enhancing the health of residents and the environment through innovative programs and safe, beautiful and sustainable places.

 **43**
FOUNTAINS /
INTERACTIVE WATER
FEATURES

 **SIX**
BIKE PARKS
& FEATURES

 **671**
ATHLETIC FIELDS &
SPORTS COURTS

 **16**
DOG PARKS

175
PLAYGROUNDS 

24
LAKES 

 **348 mi.**
TRAILS AND PARK WALKS

 **EIGHT**
SKATE PARKS &
FEATURES

50+ 
ACRES OF PLANTING BEDS

 **290+**
URBAN PARKS, TOTALING
MORE THAN 7K ACRES

 **DENVER**
PARKS & RECREATION

1527 
PICNIC TABLES

 **46**
MOUNTAIN PARKS, TOTALING
NEARLY 15K ACRES

 **2.2 MILLION**
TREES WITHIN DENVER'S CITY LIMITS

 **TWO**
BISON HERDS

 **SIX**
EVENT FACILITIES

31  **30** 
SWIMMING POOLS RECREATION CENTERS

TWO MILLION+
RECREATION CENTER VISITS ANNUALLY

 **EIGHT**
GOLF COURSES

MY DENVER

PROVIDES FREE RECREATION CENTER MEMBERSHIPS FOR
DENVER RESIDENTS AGES 60+ AND YOUTH AGES 5-18 AS WELL
AS ORGANIZED AFTER SCHOOL AND SUMMER PROGRAMS

05/05/2026

CORE FUNCTIONS



Recreation: Operate 30 recreation centers, 31 outdoor pools and indoor pools; Offer quality programming for individuals of all ages and abilities in 10 focus areas, ranging from Aquatics to Youth Sports

Golf: Operate and maintain eight public golf courses and support the Junior Golf Program

Parks: Maintain over 290 urban parks, including all buildings, facilities, amenities, athletic fields, and trails; Protect park resources and manage natural resources and wildlife through the ranger programs



Planning, Design & Construction: Provide strategic planning for new and existing parks and manage the design and construction of capital improvements and facilities, including recreation centers and pools.

Forestry: Manage Denver’s urban forest, including protecting, planting and replacing city-owned trees

Mountain Parks: Maintain 14,854 acres of mountain parks and conservation areas, the Buffalo Bill Museum, and two buffalo herds



Administration: Support administrative functions of the departments, including budgeting and accounting, purchasing, contract administration, technology, data analytics, land survey and research, marketing, communication, community engagement, City Council relations, strategic planning, legislation & policy, partnerships, park permitting, cooperative agreements, and volunteerism

2025 Highlights

2.76M- Total Rec. Annual Usage

116K Rec. Program Registrations

MY Denver Usage: 453K | PRIME: 408K

23M Park visitors

4,723 Trees Planted

110 Active Capital Projects

+3,503 Permits Issued & +253,000 Hrs. Athletic Field Use

43,000+ Volunteer Hours

200 Active Partners

DPR 2026 AGENCY GOALS

SAFE

Engage 200 young people through the Summer Camps Permit program in PNI Zones

CHILD FRIENDLY

Provide 2500 Night Moves slots and 8300 Summer Rec Kidz slots

VIBRANT

Launch new Downtown Parks and Public Spaces activation plan and develop budget, rules, regulations, and permit fee schedule for the reopening of Civic Center Park, Skyline Park and the activation of other Downtown Parks and Public Spaces

100% of the projects milestones for Vibrant Bond projects are met within 45 days of their projected deadlines

CLIMATE RESILIENT

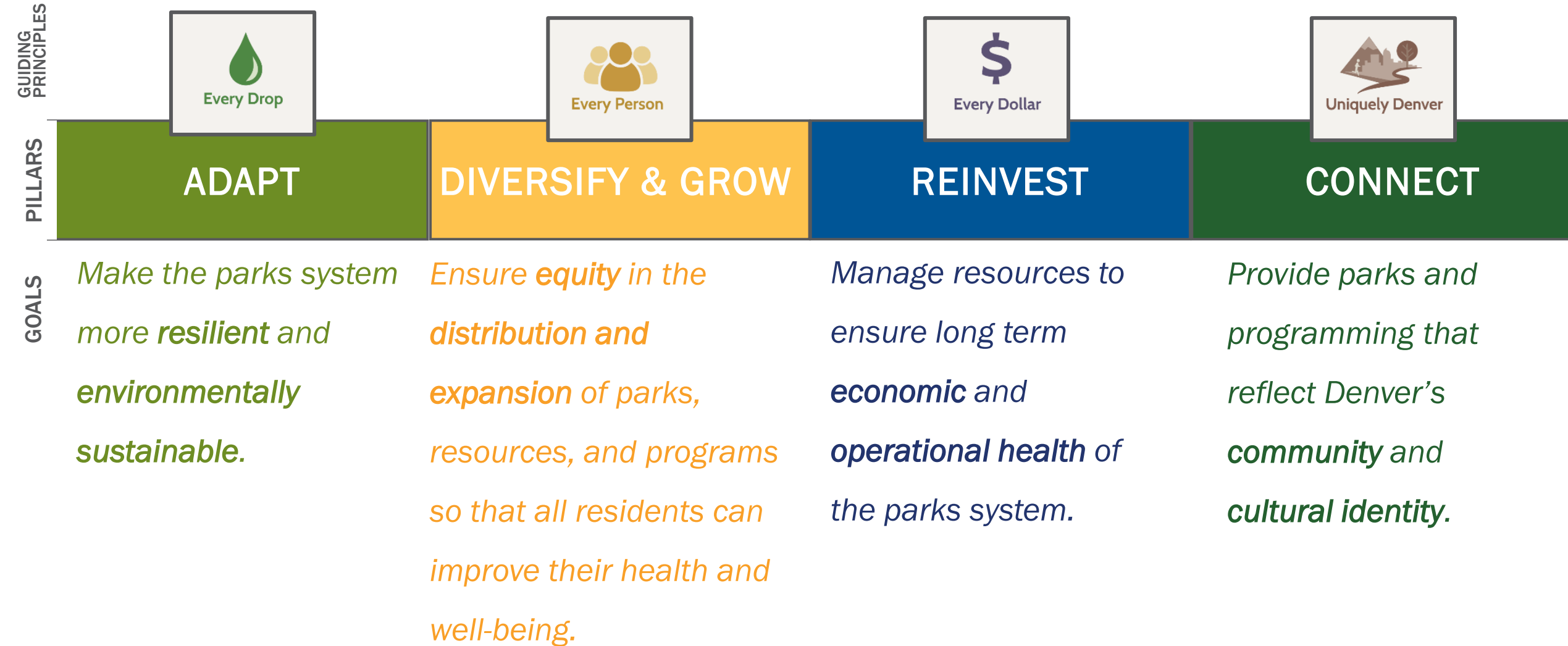
Initiate 40 Acres of Landscape Transformations

Enhance employee engagement by focusing on employee development and creating a culture of appreciation and recognition.

GAME PLAN FOR A HEALTHY CITY

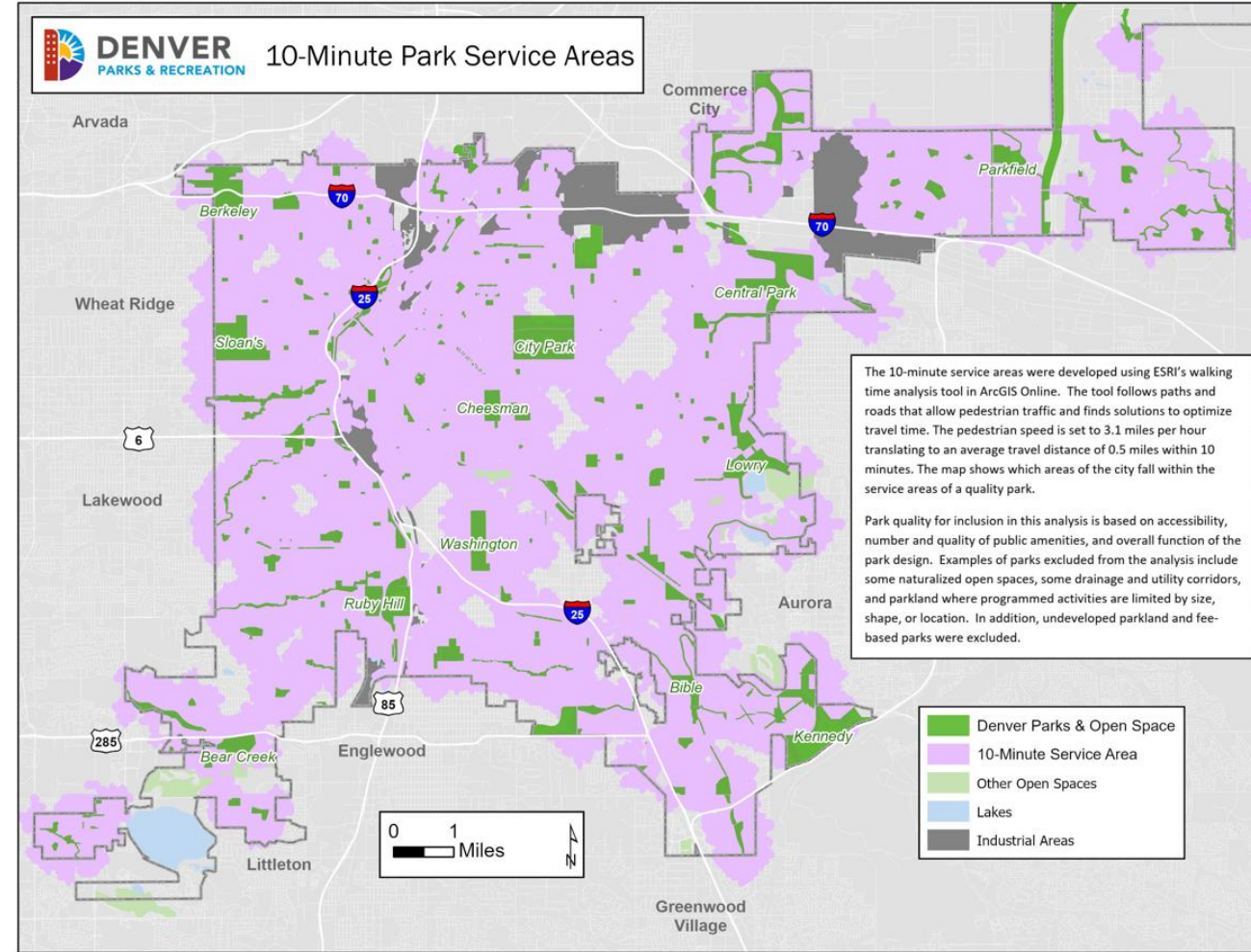
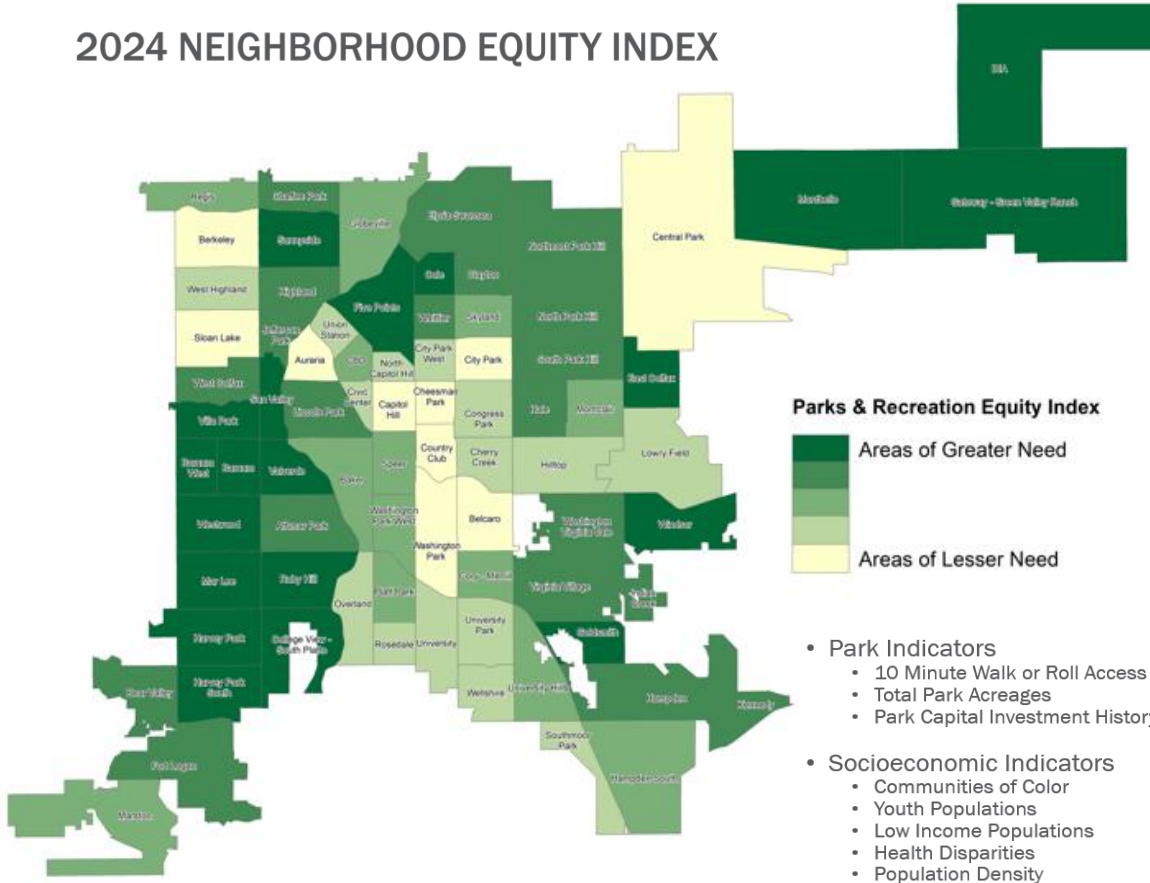


GAME PLAN FOR A HEALTHY CITY FRAMEWORK



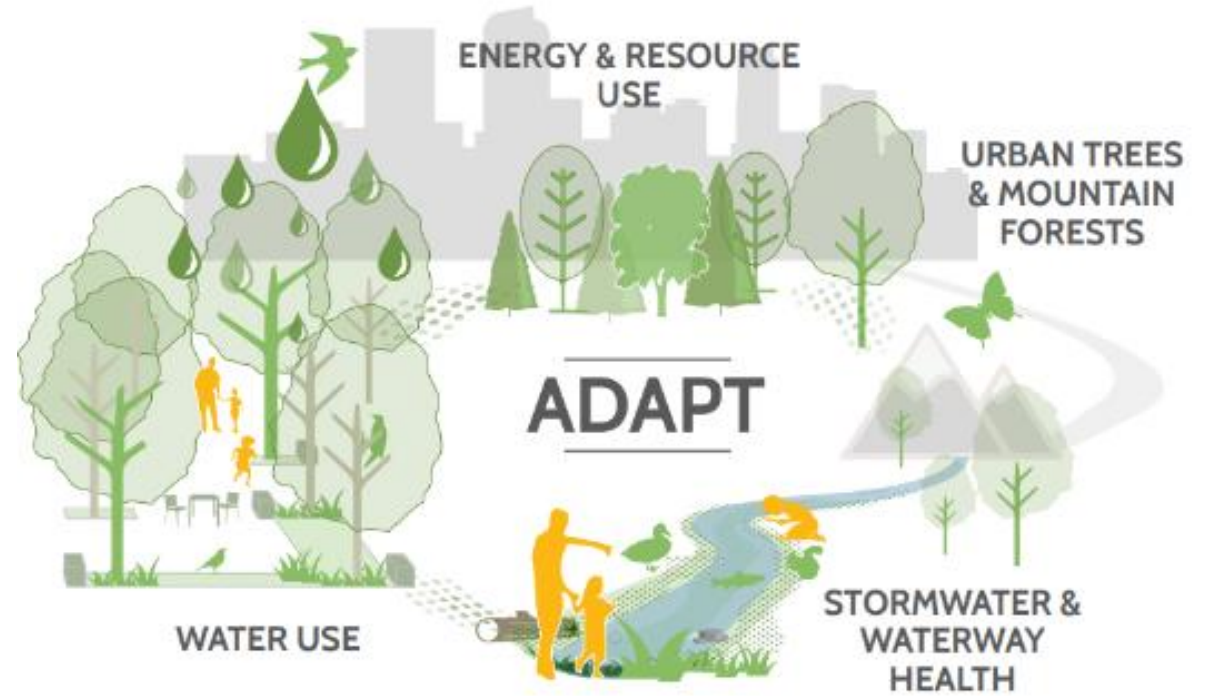
EQUITY & CLOSING THE 10-MINUTE GAP

2024 NEIGHBORHOOD EQUITY INDEX





ADAPT to a changing climate and make the parks system more **resilient** and **environmentally sustainable** through the expansion of resilient landscapes, facilities, and operations as well as environmental education.





ADAPT

- Manage Drought Restrictions
- Expand Landscape Transformation Program
 - Living Land
 - 56th Ave. & Chambers Rd.
 - City and County Building





EVERY
DROP

ADAPT

- Support the establishment of trees planted last year
- Manage for Emerald Ash Borer (EAB)
- Forestry Rules and Reg Update
- Launch F.I.R.E.S. Pilot Program in Mountain Parks





ADAPT

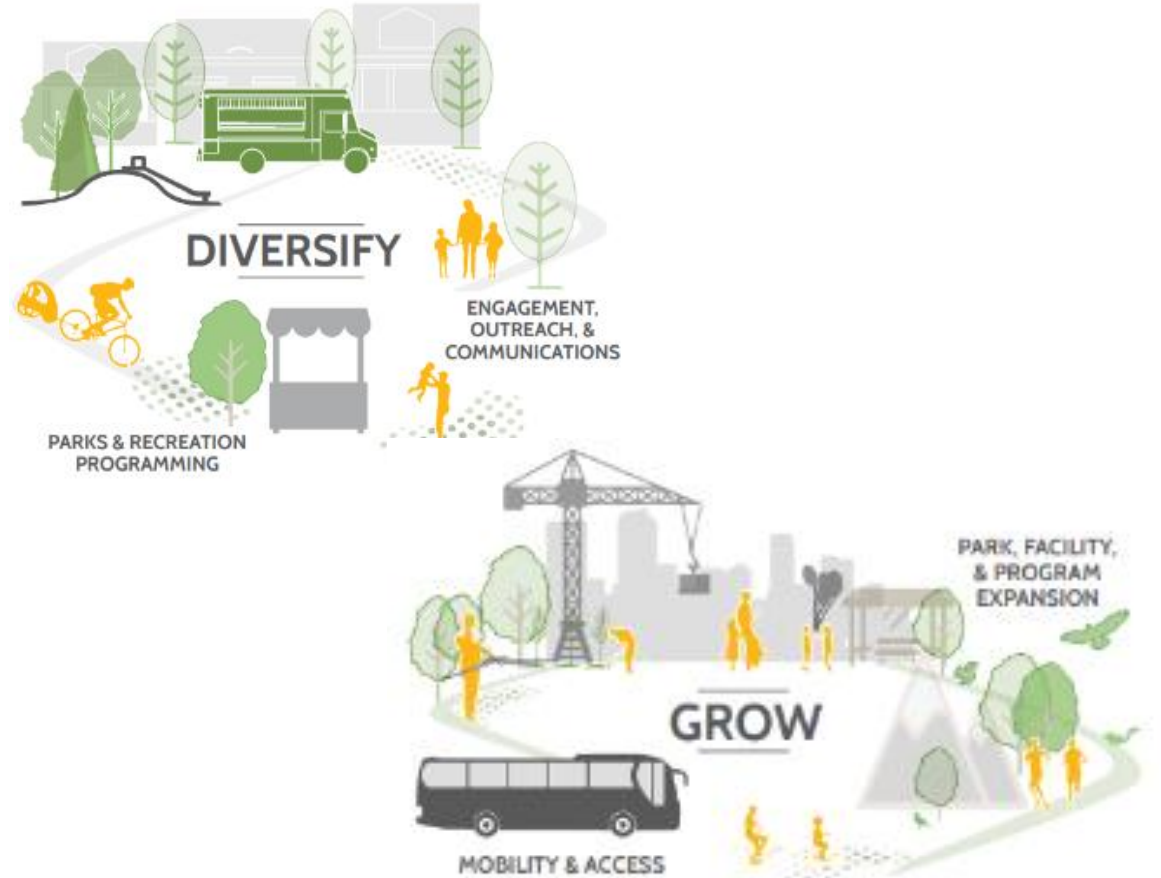
- Universal Recycling and Composting Ordinance coordination
- Replace and Convert Handheld 2-cycle (gas/oil) Equipment (>10HP)
- Improve Building Efficiency
 - Convert Lighting Systems to LED
 - Convert plumbing fixtures to low flow
- Initiate Building Audit
 - Advance energy initiatives in coordination with CASR (Energize Denver)





**EVERY
PERSON**

GROW & DIVERSIFY to ensure **equity** in the distribution and expansion of parks, recreation centers, resources, and programs so that all residents can improve their health and well-being.





EVERY
PERSON

GROW & DIVERSIFY

- Expansion of Parks and Amenities
 - New Heron Pond/Carpio Sanguinette Regional Park
 - Bethesda Park
 - New pickleball courts at Lowry and Rosamond Parks
- Expand Recreation System
 - Opening of Swansea Indoor Pool and Center Upgrades
 - Community Engagement for Westwood Recreation Center
- Execute Priority Strategic Planning Efforts
 - Recreation Plan, Park Hill Park, Garfield Park, Parkways Study, Mountain Parks, Kennedy Golf Course





EVERY
PERSON

GROW & DIVERSIFY

- Activate parks and recreation centers in or near PNI Zones
- Expand number of youth served through registered programs, such as Summer Rec Kidz, Summer Camp Permits and First Tee



\$
EVERY
DOLLAR

REINVEST in DPR's people and places to ensure the long-term economic and operational health of Denver's high-quality parks and recreation programs and amenities.





REINVEST

- Initiate all 17 DPR bond projects
- Construction underway for signature Downtown projects, specifically Civic Center and Skyline
- Renovation of local parks, playgrounds and sport courts
 - La Raza Park
 - Ruby Hill Outdoor Adventure Hub
 - CCC Mess Hall and Barrack 1 Renovation
 - Ballfield Upgrades
- Recreation Center and Pool Preventive Maintenance and Repair





REINVEST

- Consolidation of parks permitting and recreation permitting teams
- Park Operation Adjustments
 - Maintenance Schedule adjustments
 - Trash Automation
 - Port-o-let Placement
- Focus Employee Engagement efforts on Training, Appreciation and Recognition





CONNECT residents to Denver communities and nature through the expansion of parks and programs reflecting the unique history and cultural identity of Denver's neighborhoods.





CONNECT

- Launch Mount Blue Sky Operations
- Open new concession operations at Pahaska
- Continue and expand Bison Conservation
- Partner in Westracks Shuttle Pilot





CONNECT

- Park Activation
 - Downtown
 - Food and Beverage RFP
- Ranger Education Programs
- Expand Adaptive Golf Program
- Expand Volunteer and Stewardship Opportunities across parks and Recreation centers and programs



THANK YOU!



DENVER
PARKS & RECREATION

GAME PLAN
for a Healthy City



GAME PLAN FOR A HEALTHY CITY

- 2025 Annual Report now available
- Featuring accomplishments under the Game Plan's Pillars:
 - Adapt, Connect, Diversify, Grow, Reinvest





ADDENDUM

DPR DIVISIONS



DENVER
PARKS & RECREATION

GAME PLAN
for a Healthy City





PARKS

PARK OPERATIONS

- 5 Districts, Open Space Program, Greenhouse, Water Conservation, and Park Stewardship
- Over **290 Parks** consist of approximately **7,000 acres** of parks and open space
- Annual Water Budget is around **\$4.5M** a year
- Greenhouse grows around **250,000 plants** in a normal year.



PARKS AMENITIES, FACILITIES, AND CITYWIDE MAINTENANCE

Amenities – Repair & Maintain:

- Historical Fountains, Playgrounds, Indoor and Outdoor Swimming Pools

Citywide Maintenance – Repair & Maintain:

- Athletic Fields, 3000 + Park Pieces of Equipment & Miles of Urban Trails

Facilities – Repair & Maintain:

- Park Structures, Buildings and Facilities, Park Parking Lots, Complete 3000 + Work Orders Annually



RANGERS

- Dogs off leash in Denver Parks is the most common complaint.
- Park Rangers **patrol** by truck, gator bike, e-bike, and foot.
- Rangers **administer Naloxone** to people experiencing opioid overdoses.
- <https://www.denver7.com/news/front-range/denver-caught-on-camera-denver-park-ranger-helps-save-mans-life>





FORESTRY



FORESTRY

- **2.2 Million Trees** make up Denver's Urban Forest. Of which Denver owns and maintains approximately **310,000 Trees** in over **300 Parks & Parkways** and all **ROW trees**.
- Forestry staff also help assist **Mountain Parks** as well as **Denver Golf**.

WHAT WE DO



TREE PLANTING

Free planting program for single-family residential properties in the right-of-way.



ASH REMOVAL & REPLACEMENT

- Intended for small, poor condition Ash trees in the right-of-way. Replacement with diverse species



MISCELLANEOUS

- Outreach
- Events
- Partnerships
- Program evaluation & data collection
- Etc.

MOUNTAIN PARKS

MOUNTAIN PARKS

- Over 14,000 acres
- Denver Mountain Parks is **older** than the National Park Service
- We manage **two bison herds** at Daniels and Genesee parks and work in partnership with the Denver Zoo
- **Red Rocks Park and Amphitheatre** is considered one of the most significant historic places in the nation



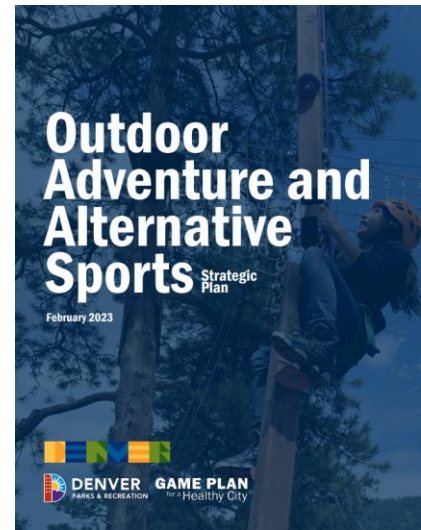
PLANNING, DESIGN, & CONSTRUCTION

PLANNING

- Annual Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Planning
- System-wide Strategic Plans/Policy Development
- Site-specific Vision Plans
- Acquisition Program
- Large Development Review
- Interagency Collaboration

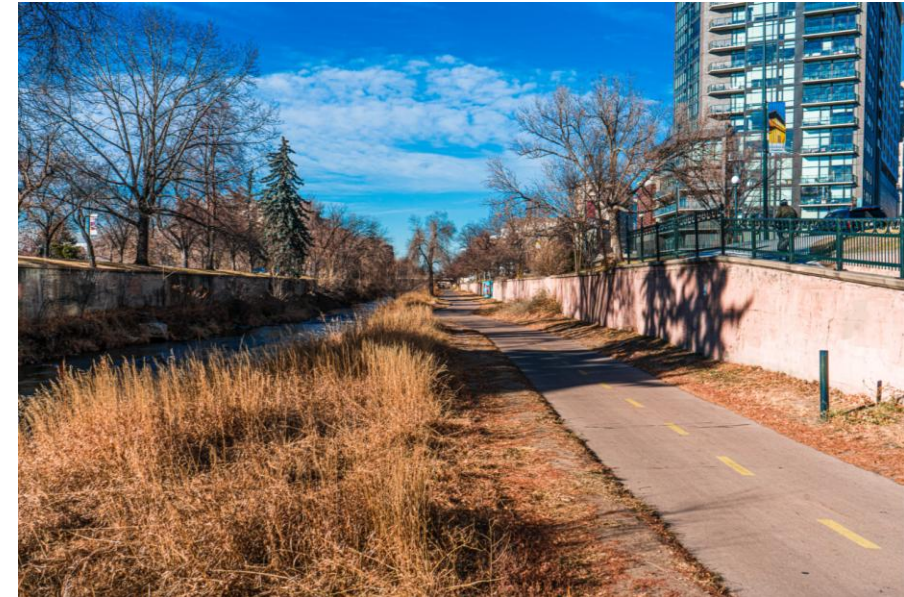


Rendering of Martinez Park



URBAN ECOLOGY & TRAILS

- Landscape Transformations
- Pollinator and Habitat Restoration
- Nearby Nature
- Water Conservation
- Water Quality
- Regional Trail buildout and capital maintenance





DESIGN, & CONSTRUCTION

Over 100 projects in design or construction phases at any given time

- Maintenance Projects
- Expansion Projects
- Horizontal (park amenities)
- Vertical (buildings)

QA/QC

- Standards, Specifications and SOP's
- Developer & Internal Plan Reviews
- Irrigation & Landscape establishment



RECREATION & GOLF

RECREATION PROGRAM AREAS

Alternative Sports



Active Older Adults



Adaptive Recreation



Aquatics



MY Denver



Arts & Culture



Citywide Sports



Fitness & Wellness



Outdoor Recreation



Youth Sports



RECREATION CENTER ACCESS

- MY Denver Card: ages 5-18
- MY Denver Prime: ages 60+



YOUR LIBRARY AND CARD RECREATION ALL IN ONE

FREE FOR DENVER YOUTH, AGES 5 - 18.

EXPERIENCE WHAT MAKES DENVER GREAT!

- Visit your libraries for activities, events or homework/research assistance
- Swing by your recreation centers for art, education, sports and swimming
- Take a trip to your museums, cultural exhibits and theatrical productions

26 LIBRARIES | 28 RECREATION CENTERS | 16 INDOOR AND 16 OUTDOOR POOLS | 12 CULTURAL SITES

GOLF

- 8 locations
- 450,000+ guests each year
- First Tee Colorado Rocky Mountains is the Denver Golf Youth Development program and serve over 12,000 kids annually



PERMITTING

Recreation Center Rentals



Event Facilities



Park Permits





ADMINISTRATION

POLICY & STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

Strategic Planning i.e., Game Plan Implementation

Inter-Agency & Inter-Governmental Liaison

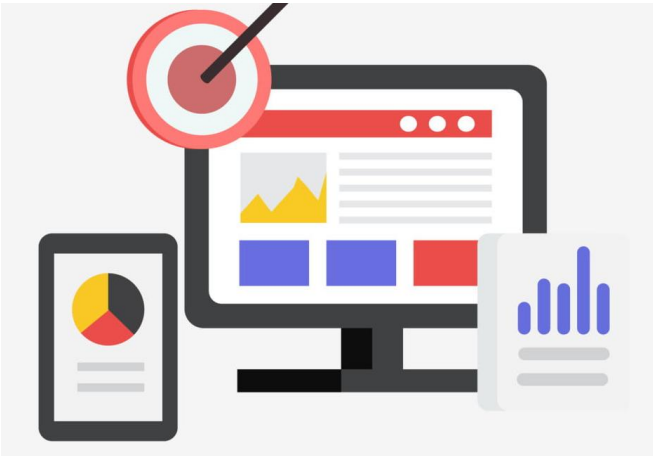
Policy & Legislation

Special Projects & Initiatives

Strategic Partnerships & Sponsorships



FINANCE & DATA ANALYTICS



Purchasing

- Credit card purchases
- Requisitions for goods and services
- Request for Proposals (RFP's)

Contract Management

- Grants
- Sponsorship, partnerships, etc.
- Concessions

Finance

- Accounting
- Budgeting
- Financial reporting
- Data Analytics
- GIS
- Asset Management
- Land Survey and Research
- ActiveNet Point of Sale

MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS



Media relations



Legislative Services



Community Engagement



Internal and External Communications



Social Media & Website



Marketing/Promotions



Events

