

Parks, Recreation, Open Space & Trails Small Group Meeting Summary

This session was held on October 19, 2010 in the Fire Station Meeting Room. Policies are in **bold font**. Action Items are regular front. Public feedback is inserted directly under the relevant Policy or Action Item, and is in **large font, bold and italic**.

I. Parks Policies & Action Items

Add recreation to this section. Add “Parks/Recreation” wherever “Parks” appears.

I.1. Acquire land for parks whenever possible. ***Five people agreed with this statement.***

“whenever beneficial” – what is tradeoff – quality of life vs. cost of acquisition.

I.1.a Use development review processes whenever possible for the acquisition and development of parks. (*I – P, P/OS*)

I.2. Maintain a balance between active recreational parks and passive parks. ***Five people agreed with this statement.***

***Some facilities can do both (Galena Plaza)
Need to better define “balance”...what is need/what is desired?***

I.2.a Continue to develop future park space as active or passive by assessing the park system’s inventory, conducting needs assessments and inviting public feedback. (*LT – P/OS*)

I.2.b Amend the code to establish a preference for on-site public parks as part of larger new development, where appropriate. (*LT – P/OS, P*)

II. Recreation Policies & Action Items

II.1 Provide affordable recreational opportunities for all ages. ***Five people agreed with this statement.***

***Our recreation/parks efforts are important part of
mind/body/spirit...can be used to market the community.***

***“affordable” is important. Two people agreed with this statement.
How to pay for it?***

II.1.a Update the 2005 Aspen Recreation Department Strategic Plan, ensuring that it complies with the policy. (I – ARD)

Redo the business plan, not “strategic plan” in first year

II.1.b Enhance current programs and create additional recreational programs with a primary focus on utilizing existing facilities. (LT – ARD)

II.2 New recreational programs and facilities should offset impacts regarding traffic and job generation and maintain the contextual character of the built environment. Five people agreed with this statement.

II.2.a Explore mitigation tools in order to offset impacts from new recreational facilities and programs regarding traffic and job generation. (LT – P, T)

II.3 The Aspen Recreation Department should strive to be financially self-sustaining while still providing affordable, quality recreational opportunities. Five people agreed with this statement.

Recognize/be aware of potential for city facilities to be in competition with private businesses.

Add the recognition of economic benefit to community (in addition to direct revenue).

Also the benefit of non-monetary impacts on quality of life.

Take the “fact box” out – the percentage varies a lot...or remind people of economic impact (benefit) nfrom parks and recreation activities.

II.3.a Explore special events programming that optimizes the use of existing recreational facilities, while generating revenue. (LT – SE, ARD)

II.3.b Seek partnerships with outside entities to reduce overall subsidies and to help promote Aspen’s recreational facilities. (LT – ARD)

II.3.c Implement energy-efficiency measures and use sustainable energy resources to help reduce energy costs for recreational facilities. (I – ARD)

II.4. Strive to integrate physical rehabilitation and adaptive recreation into Aspen Recreation Department facilities and programs. Five people agreed with this statement.

Change to “promote” instead of “strive”. Don’t necessarily put city into this business.

II.4.a Identify and invite potential partners to update the Recreation Business Plan to identify staffing and facilities necessary to accommodate physical rehabilitation and adaptive recreation programs. (LT – ARD)

II.1.5 Promote Aspen as a high altitude training venue. **Five people agreed with this statement.**

Add action item to promote affordable lodging opportunities in either existing or proposed private sector development to provide better opportunities for visiting competing teams, camps, meets and their participants.

Link to lodging chapter.

II.5.a Explore updating the Recreation Business Plan to accommodate high altitude training programs that are available to local users. (LT – ARD)

III. Open Space Policies & Action Items

Add a new policy: Develop a vision for open space configuration and to guide expenditures of public funds.

Quantify the policies – be what percentage do we want to increase our open space?

III.1. Maintain and protect existing open space parcels. **Five people agreed with this statement.**

Curious if there are limitations on current parcels already protected (trails, trashcans, restrooms, etc) ...OK, the action item addresses this.

Add “improve” to the policy.

Protect from private development.

III.1.a Develop management plans for all open space parcels according to the terms of acquisition as a means to balance open space values with appropriate recreational opportunities. (LT – P/OS)

III.2. Acquire open space to preserve biodiversity, wildlife habitat, scenic value and to support trail connectivity and recreational activities. **Five people agreed with this statement.**

Add wildlife corridors and movement.

Should be a stronger statement.

Containing the city from sprawling is also a purpose of open space.

Should contain a vision of which properties and look of the town.

Wildlife habitat and open space will be helped by reducing pesticide use throughout town.

III.2.a Continue to evaluate opportunities for the purchase of open space. (LT – OS)

Opportunities for public-private partnerships.

III.2.b Re-authorize the city's open space sales tax before it sunsets in 2025. (LT- P/OS)

III.2.c Use development review processes whenever possible to secure scenic, recreational or agricultural easements. (I – P/OS, P)

III.2.d Explore a consistent method for assessing value of open space. (I – P/OS)

Change “explore” to “develop.”

IV. Trails Policies & Action Items

IV.1. Acquire, improve and develop trail connections throughout the Aspen Area.

Three people agreed with this statement.

Bike routes need to be direct connections, not just where there is space.

Add a policy about funding for trails.

Need resources to maintain trails → don't expand the trail system at the expense of maintaining current trails.

IV.1.a Focus on developing safe and effective trail connections, separated from vehicular traffic, for both commuter and recreational use in the Castle Creek, Maroon Creek, East/West Highway 82, and Hunter Creek valleys. (LT – P/OS)

Insert the words “hub and spoke concept” for trail connections.

IV.1.b Implement marked bike lanes on roads where appropriate. (LT – P, T)

IV.1.c Implement the Pitkin County Nordic Trails Master Plan. (LT – P/OS, Nordic Council)

IV.1.d Continue to acquire trail easements through methods such as, private landowner donations, land use actions or acquisition. (LT – P/OS, Nordic Council)

IV.1.e Implement the City's Pedestrian Walkway and Bikeway Plan through phased capital improvements. (LT – P/OS)

IV.1.f Create buffer areas alongside trails to maintain separation between trails and development to preserve the integrity of the trails experience. Explore new land use tools or potential property acquisitions to implement this action item. (LT – P/OS, P)

IV.2. Increase opportunities for summer and winter trail commuting. *Three people agreed with this statement.*

There should be winter trails for bikes.

Encourage winter biking – would help with PM10 issues.

IV.2.a Identify trails intended to move large numbers of people to and from recreational, cultural, commercial and educational centers and develop them so they are an attractive alternative to the automobile. (LT – P/OS, Nordic Council)

IV.3. Encourage regional trail planning. *Three people agreed with this statement.*

IV.3.a Continue ongoing efforts to improve trail connectivity to outlying communities and public lands. (LT – P/OS)

V. Public Outreach Policies & Action Items

V.1. Promote our parks, open space, trails and recreational opportunities through maps, brochures, and on-line services. *Five people agreed with this statement.*

Volunteers to maintain trails should be promoted as an opportunity. Educate the public about how to create new trails and engage people in the process.

Track the efficiency and effectiveness of the promotion.

Track economic and community benefits to justify and expand further promotion.

Interface with the chamber. Coordinate events, etc.

V.1.a Create a Comprehensive Map and Inventory of all parks, trails, open space properties, land trust properties, conservation easements and fishing easements within the Urban Growth Boundary. (LT – P/OS)

V.1.b Create a comprehensive and publicly accessible database that outlines management plans and other relevant information for parks, open space, trails and recreational facilities. (LT – P/OS)