

Denver Parks and Recreation Newsletter



Editorial Calendar - Upcoming Issues

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Parks

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Planning/Marketing/Manager's
Office

May - Golf/Parks

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November 2009

New Park Slated For Westwood Neighborhood

The Denver Parks and Recreation Department (DPR), working in partnership with the Trust for Public Land (TPL), has succeeded in purchasing a derelict city block in the heart of the Westwood neighborhood that will be converted into a public park - the only public park in a mile radius. The closing will take place today at 1:30 p.m. at the Heritage Title Company in Denver. Covering a full city block (1.2 acres), the property is completely abandoned, having most recently housed a trailer park, a bar

Parks

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and an auto body shop. TPL negotiated the purchase and put the property under contract earlier this year, securing bridge funding to underwrite the purchase until DPR was able to fully fund the project through federal and state grants.

"Westwood is one of the department's highest priorities for the addition of park land and we are grateful that we were able to work proactively with the west Denver community to locate and secure an entire block of property for our newest park," says Kevin Patterson, Manager of DPR. "This property will go from community eyesore to a wonderful neighborhood asset where families and kids can enjoy a park experience close to home." "One of the exciting things about this project is that it will do more than just provide local residents with a park. New park projects can help stabilize property values in areas that have been hit hard by the real estate market downturn and can often help spur economic growth," says Wade Shelton, TPL Project Manager.

DPR contacted TPL in early 2009 about this opportunity, and TPL began working immediately to secure the purchase of the property. Other buyers had worked to purchase the property in the past but had been unable to reach an agreement with the sellers, Wiggons Farm, Inc. Over a period of months, TPL succeeded in negotiating an agreement that made financial sense to both the sellers and to DPR.

"There is much to celebrate in our purchase and transformation of this blighted piece of land into a beautiful park space for our neighborhoods, families and children to enjoy," said Councilman Paul Lopez, in whose district the property lies.

"Our partners at the Department of Parks and Recreation and the Trust for Public Land are to be commended for their commitment to finding resources to beautify this small but incredibly important space for the families of the Westwood neighborhood."

The land will be remediated immediately and DPR will then work with the community to decide how the park should be developed. These public meetings will be planned for sometime in 2010.

This purchase marks the first success in an ongoing partnership between DPR and TPL to identify and complete park projects throughout the City.

"Since new parks have rarely been added to the system, Denver's ratio of parks to population has slipped year after year. Now we find that Denver's park system is well below average when compared to other similarly sized cities. This purchase will take a step towards remedying that situation," says Tim Wohlgenant, TPL's Colorado State Director.

The Trust for Public Land (TPL) is a national nonprofit land conservation organization that conserves land for people to enjoy as parks, gardens, and natural areas, ensuring livable communities for generations to come.

Denver Parks and Recreation (DPR) facilities are unrivaled in

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the Rocky Mountain West. The DPR system spans over a 138-year history from the first park created in 1868 to nearly 15,000 acres of urban parks and mountain parkland today. It embraces nearly 3,000 acres of "traditional" parks and parkways, 2,500 urban natural acres and close to 8,000 acres of urban forest within the city alone.

Denver and Aurora Partnership Adds to The Mile High Million Goal

On October 17th, the City and County of Denver and the City of Aurora partnered on a volunteer tree planting project at Aurora's Sand Creek Park. More than 150 volunteers worked together to plant 125 trees at the 85-acre park.



The cooperative event was sponsored by Greenprint Denver's Mile High Million Tree Initiative, which proposes to add one million new trees to the metro area by 2025. Other project partners included Suncor Energy and "NeighborWoods," a community service campaign sponsored by Alliance for Community Trees.

Denver Mayor John Hickenlooper and Aurora Mayor Ed Tauer addressed volunteers to highlight the partnership and to commemorate the important event. Mayor Hickenlooper also accepted a \$15,000 check from Comcast in support of The Mile High Million.

Sand Creek Park is located just north of the Anschutz Medical Campus and adjacent to the Sand Creek Regional Trail, which connects Aurora, Denver and Commerce City while passing by premier parks and natural areas situated along the creek.

Learn to Ski and Snowboard Program for Youth



Denver Parks and Recreation is teaming up with Winter Park Resort for a tremendous "LEARN TO SKI & SNOWBOARD" opportunity! This weekday program is designed specifically for groups of first-time and beginner-level skiers and snowboarders, ages 7-17 years old. The program runs November 2009 through March 2010.

Winter Park will provide lift tickets, rental gear, and an all-day lesson. Instruction will be provided by the professionals at the Winter Park Ski

& Ride School. The cost of the program is \$25 per student not including transportation.

Organized groups of up to 40 students are invited to participate in this unique program. These weekday trips depart from Denver at 6am and generally return between 5pm-6pm the same day. Children will be accompanied and supervised by your school and a DPR staff member throughout the day at a 1-10 staff/student ratio. This is an incredible opportunity for your child to establish a life-long interest in winter snow sports.