



# JOSEPH P. MARTINEZ PARK MASTER PLAN

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PREPARED FOR  
DENVER PARKS &  
RECREATION

JANUARY 2021



LIVABLE  
CITY STUDIO





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January 15, 2021



Dear Villa Park Community,

Denver Parks and Recreation is pleased to share the 2020 Joseph P. Martinez Park Master Plan. Over the past year and a half, we had the privilege of working with park users, steering committee members, advocates, neighbors, and partners who contributed their knowledge, skill and enthusiasm for the park to help establish a framework to guide the park's long-term physical improvement, use and management. We are very grateful for everyone's time and dedication.

Located within the diverse and multi-generational West Denver neighborhood of Villa Park, Joseph P. Martinez Park is a treasured amenity for its residents. In addition, this 12-acre park sits astride Lakewood Gulch and is a defining element of the broader open space network and regional trail experience. We are thrilled to see how this community-driven master plan artfully re-envisioned the park to celebrate and bring together the ecological characteristics of Lakewood Gulch with active recreation and play opportunities, and historic and cultural touchstones. The plan for the park knits together the cultural heritage of the community; opportunities for health, wellness and recreation; and the biodiversity and natural characteristics of the site into a new vibrant space for play, relaxation, and reflection.

Children and families were central to the process and plan outcomes, and their participation in this effort, during a tremendously challenging year due to a global pandemic, is a testament to the strength of this community. We look forward to continuing to work with the community to implement the master plan and ensure Villa Park residents can remain proud of their park for many years to come.

Sincerely,

Allegra "Happy" Haynes  
Executive Director, Department of Parks and Recreation  
City and County of Denver

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November 12, 2020

Dear Community,

It is my pleasure to write a letter of support for the Denver Parks and Recreation Joseph P. Martinez Master Plan.

As the Councilwoman representing the district that Joseph P. Martinez Park is home to, I believe this investment in this park and community is necessary and would broadly impact the health and safety of the neighborhood. The Villa Park neighborhood continues to grow, and it is imperative that we build parks that serve as an oasis from the urban corridors. Realizing this master plan to completion is the opportunity to reflect and embody the community's vision.

Over the first months of the planning process, my predecessor, Clerk Paul Lopez, ensured the need to advocate for community connectivity and health and wellness. His advocacy was a huge step towards quality park space in the district and for that, we thank him.

Through our leadership transition, I have fully supported the effort and I have seen this district mobilize for what they need. The Villa Park neighborhood has been my home for the last 32 years and I am immensely proud of the diversity, culture, and people represented. The preferred design concept for Joseph P. Martinez Park incorporates the identity of the community on many levels. There will not be a park-like Joseph P. Martinez, as it best reflects the diverse and rich culture of the neighborhood, panoramic view of Lakewood Gulch, and an appropriate way to honor its namesake.

Through an unprecedented pandemic, new ideas emerged for community engagement. Our office commitment to provide innovative ways to engage and receive feedback included mailer notices to over 2,000 households, co-hosting Facebook live events for real-time comments, and promote all public meetings and surveys.

This process couldn't have been possible without the commitment of the steering committee members. Their dedication and involvement speak volumes to ensuring equitable access for an underserved community. As I look forward to the completion of the project, I encourage our residents to continue to stay engaged. Thank you for supporting the Joseph P. Martinez Master Plan as we continue to build a healthy, happy community.

Thank you,

Hon. Jamie Torres, Councilwoman  
City and County of Denver, District 3

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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# 01

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This plan highlights and illustrates the community vision to honor and celebrate the history of Joseph P. Martinez and the community of Villa Park through creation of one of Denver's premier park spaces. It also represents an exciting opportunity for the City of Denver to revitalize a neighborhood park and provide new and exciting amenities and programs to an underserved community.

Situated near the start of the Lakewood Gulch trail, Joseph P.

Martinez Park serves as a vital link between the community, a broader open space network and nearby destinations. Today, the trail is viewed as a divider within the park however, careful consideration of circulation and activation of the Gulch revealed key opportunities for the community to connect with nature, reinforce wellness and offer educational opportunities.

The master planning process frequently encouraged and engaged active representation of

the local and broader public to collect their valuable aspirations for the project. Over the course of twelve months in 2019 and 2020 and through an unprecedented pandemic, the engagement process adapted and community support persisted, never wavering. Bringing this plan to fruition will only be possible through the continued engagement and support of the community and its active partners in the future.

## CONCEPT PLAN



## GUIDING PRINCIPLES



Enhance connections and visibility within the park and to nearby destinations.



Celebrate the cultural heritage of the community.



Activate the park with health, wellness and educational opportunities.



Engage with Lakewood Gulch and the natural features within the park.

# 02

## PROJECT BACKGROUND

**CONTENTS**

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## PARK DESCRIPTION

Joseph P. Martinez Park is a 12.16 acre neighborhood park located in Denver's Villa Park neighborhood. The park is predominately surrounded by single family homes with Lakewood Gulch and its associated regional bike trail weaving through the park. Additionally, there are several high density residential buildings just to the west of the park, including senior housing. The Villa Park neighborhood is generally bounded on the north by Lakewood Gulch, on the east by Federal Boulevard, on the south by the 6th Avenue Freeway and on the west by Sheridan Boulevard.

According to 2017 Piton Foundation demographic information, Villa Park neighborhood residents are predominantly Latino/Hispanic, with almost a third of the population under age 18. \*

Currently, the park features a memorial for World War II Medal of Honor recipient Joseph P. Martinez, a softball/baseball field, a half basketball court, an open lawn, and a playground.

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\*<https://denvermetrodata.org/neighborhood/villa-park>

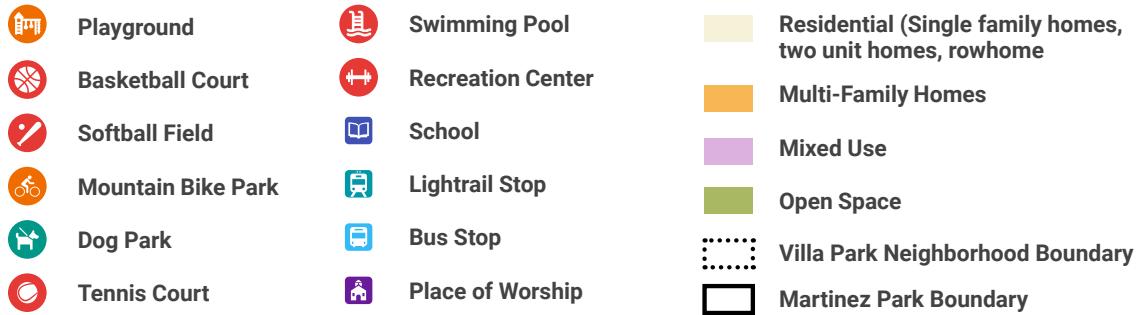
# PARK CONTEXT

The Villa Park neighborhood has approximately 75.54 acres of public open space, which represents 12% of its total neighborhood land area. The park boundaries are Tennyson Street to the west and Perry Street to the

east. While the park is part of the overall Lakewood Gulch system, the gulch area west of Tennyson Street is not current dedicated parkland. The area to the east is designated parkland. DPR will continue to designate new park land as opportunity presents.

The Lakewood Gulch multi-use trail weaves through the park providing regional connectivity for the area. The multi-use trail ends several blocks west of the park at Winona Court.





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## HISTORY OF JOSEPH P. MARTINEZ

The park is named after Private Joseph Pantillion Martínez (July 27, 1920 – May 26, 1943) who was born in Taos, New Mexico. Private Joseph P. Martinez was a United States Army soldier who posthumously received the Medal of Honor — the United States' highest military decoration -- for his actions on the Aleutian Islands during World War II.



Private Joseph P. Martinez, assigned to Company K, 32d Infantry, 7th Infantry Division, was the first Hispanic-American to receive the Medal of Honor for combat heroism on United States soil during World War II.

During World War II, Japanese forces invaded the westernmost island of Alaska on June 6, 1942, the first invaders to set foot on US soil since the War of 1812.

Concerned the invaders would use the islands as a base for launching aerial assaults against the west coast, the US sent the 7th Infantry Division to drive out the enemy.

On May 26, 1943, the 32nd Infantry Regiment engaged in combat against Japanese forces. The regiment was pinned down by enemy fire, and Martinez, on his own accord, led two assaults to eliminate enemy foxholes. (Foxholes are holes in the ground for machine gunners to fire attacks, or use as shelters against enemy fire.)

After taking down two foxholes and approaching the final enemy shelter, Martinez was fatally wounded and died the following day.

His heroic actions helped the US troops expel the Japanese forces from US soil, and earned him the Medal of Honor.

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# SUMMARY OF RELEVANT PLANNING DOCUMENTS

A number of planning efforts have provided foundational elements for this master plan. They reinforced guiding principles for achieving a active, healthy, and equitable park concept. This section summarizes the relevant elements of those plans.

## THE GAME PLAN

Villa Park is identified as a high need neighborhood. High need neighborhoods have less car ownership, greater ethnic and racial diversity, greater population density, lower income, and greater levels of obesity and chronic disease.

Goals applicable to Martinez Park:

- » Celebrate the history and culture of our unique neighborhoods and reflect that in the design of parks and facilities.
- » Improve local trail corridors, in particular gulch corridors, to provide interconnectivity and park access.
- » Protect and expand urban forest
- » Increase opportunities for people to experience and connect to nature.
- » Ensure that parks, facilities, programs, and staff contribute to a high-quality, safe, and meaningful experience for park users and program participants.
- » Achieve equitable access for underserved communities to parks and recreation amenities for all members of the community.

- » Make decisions informed by an understanding of community perspectives.
- » Provide opportunities to expand Denver's healthy, outdoor lifestyle to all.

## GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

The Green Infrastructure Implementation Strategy document identified Martinez Park as having high potential park opportunity for green infrastructure. High potential opportunities offer the ability to integrate water quality elements without compromising the function and aesthetic of a park.

Lakewood Gulch has the most vegetation diversity and healthiest riparian corridors and short grass prairie areas compared to other gulch corridors in the city.

Parks along the Lakewood Gulch Greenbelt corridor, where many people walk their dogs, should manage waste aggressively to reduce bacteria in the gulch.

## DPR LANDSCAPE TYPOLOGIES

Martinez Park consists of the following landscape typologies identified in the DPR Landscape Typologies document:

- » Upland Herbaceous
- » Riparian Forested
- » Bluegrass Lawn
- » Bluegrass Forested

Bluegrass-dominated park space require more intensive maintenance, including frequent mowing, regular irrigation, and routine trash pickup. Parks with greater coverage of native plants, such as riparian forested landscape, may require very little maintenance.

## OTHER PLANNING DOCUMENTS REVIEWED INCLUDE:

- » Denver Moves: Pedestrians & Trails
- » Ultra-Urban Green Infrastructure Guidelines
- » Urban Drainage Master Drainage Plan
- » DPR Master Plan Document Checklist
- » DPR Picnic Master Plan

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## INVENTORY & ANALYSIS

At the beginning of the master plan process, a thorough inventory and analysis was completed to understand the existing conditions and opportunities for the park. The following pages document the work that was undertaken in the following areas:

- » Trail count data                   » Access and connectivity
- » User observations               » Recreation and active uses
- » Permit data                       » Landscape, ecology and trees
- » Cultural and social uses



Pedestrian Bridge Crossing Lakewood Gulch



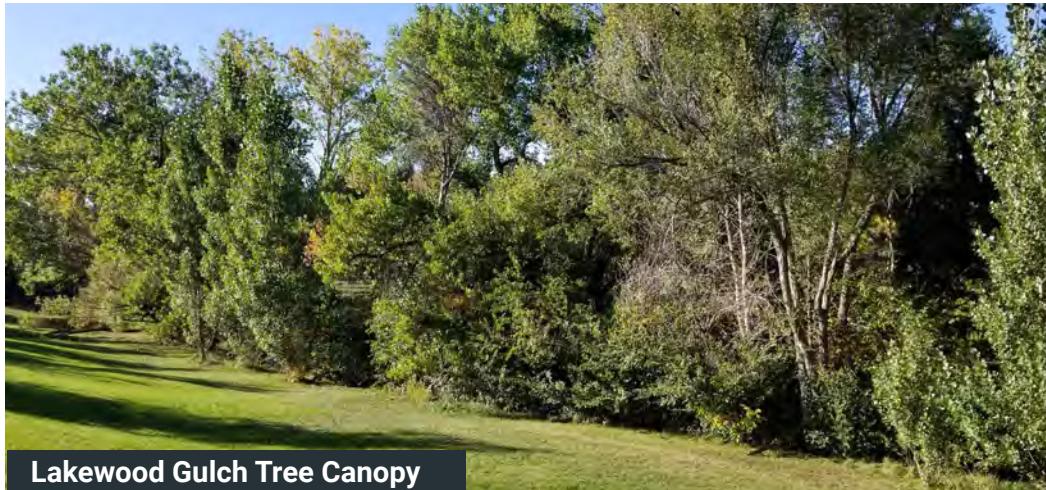
Lakewood Gulch



Existing Mature Tree



Park Sign



Lakewood Gulch Tree Canopy



Bench & Picnic Table



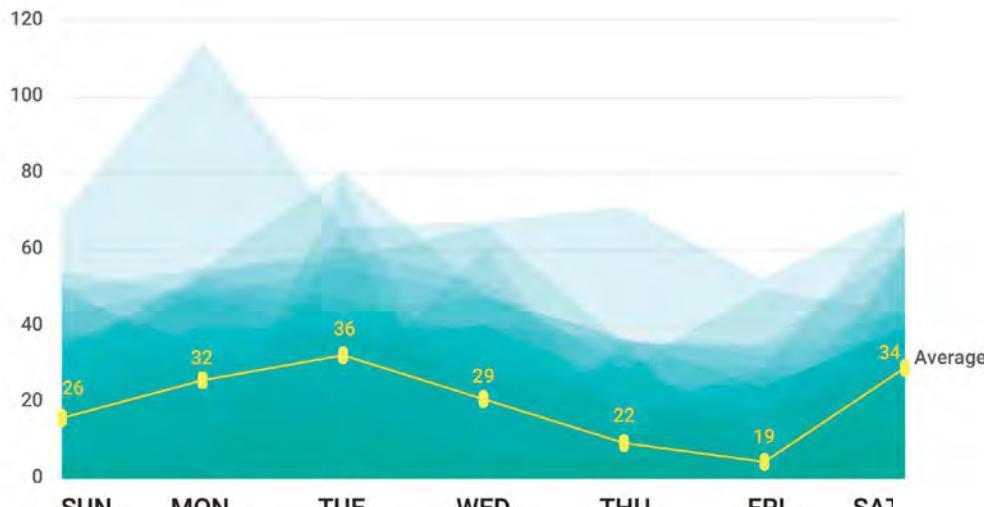
Mural Art at Perry St. Underpass

## TRAIL COUNTS

A trail counter was placed at the north eastern side of the park, near Lakewood Gulch regional trail. Trail counts were taken within Martinez Park between Saturday, August 10, 2019 and Thursday, August 29, 2019.

### WEEKLY USE FREQUENCY

Tuesday and Saturday are the busiest days of the week with an average of 36 and 34 users per hour over the course of the day. Monday, though at a lower per hour average of 32, saw the greatest peak usage at 114 users over the course of an hour.

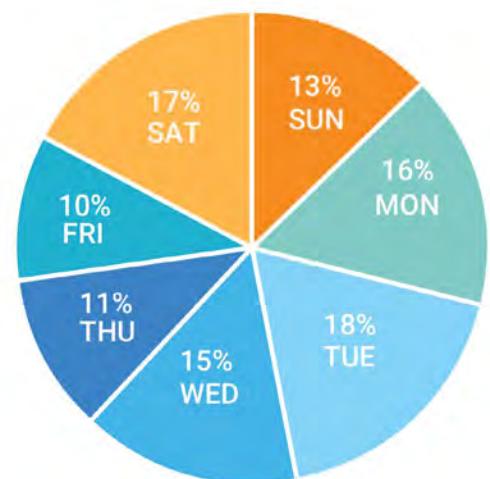


### Frequency of Use Based on Hourly Count



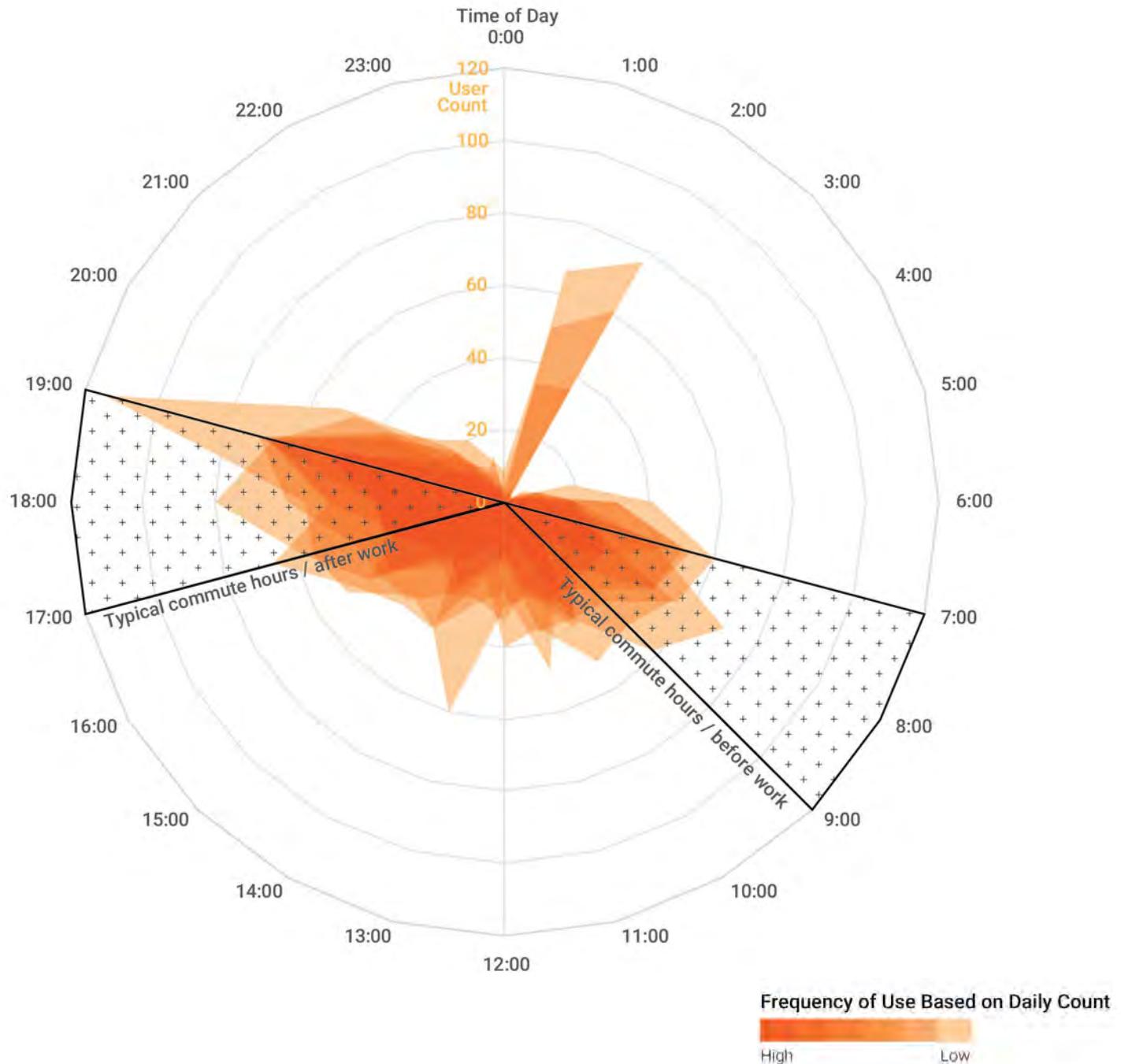
### WEEKLY USE DISTRIBUTION

People regularly use the park over the course of a week.



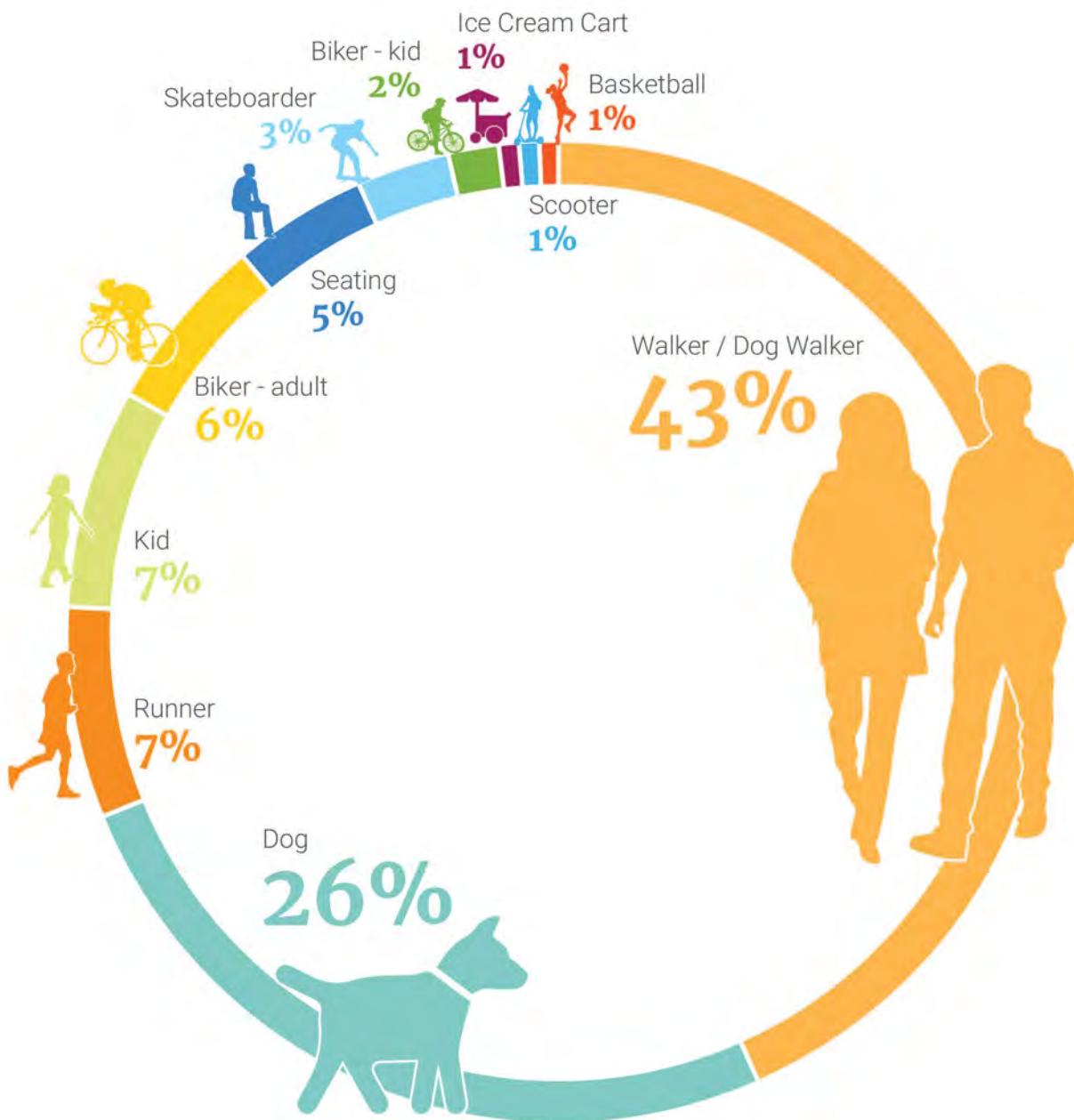
## HOURLY USE FREQUENCY

Based on the data collected, The Lakewood Gulch trail at Martinez Park has more users early and late in the day, between 7AM to 9AM and 5PM to 7PM, with 60-80 people per hour using the trail during those periods.



## USER OBSERVATION

Park / Trail observations were conducted on Oct. 6, 7, and 8, 2019. The observations found that most users were walking their dogs before and after work. The number of commuters going through the park seemed to be limited.



User data collected based on following site observations, and in-person count:

1. October 7 4:00-6:00PM (total 79 users)
2. October 8 7:30-8:30AM (total 21 users)
3. October 8 4:50-5:50PM (total 75 users)

**Total 175 park users observed**

## PERMIT DATA

2019



### NO MARTINEZ PARK PERMIT REQUESTS IN 2019

And the Police Activities League was the only group who permitted the baseball field in 2018.



### PICNIC SITES WITH SHELTERS

And access to permanent restrooms and playgrounds are the most common permit requests in West Denver.



Barnum Park is a highly utilized picnic area, with 16 out of 18 Saturdays and 9 out of 17 Sundays booked between May and August 2019. Types of activities at Barnum Park include baby showers, graduation parties, school picnics, banquets, birthday party, potluck picnic, BBQ, family reunion, work picnic etc.



### HIGH DEMAND FOR MIXED USE FIELD

Versus softball & baseball field



Mixed use fields with lights are the most frequently requested

# ACCESS & CONNECTIVITY

## ACCESS POINTS

**Existing Condition:** Six existing access points, including one main entry along Tennyson St., two along the Lakewood Gulch trail, and three access points located at the terminus of adjacent residential streets. There are two existing parking lots.

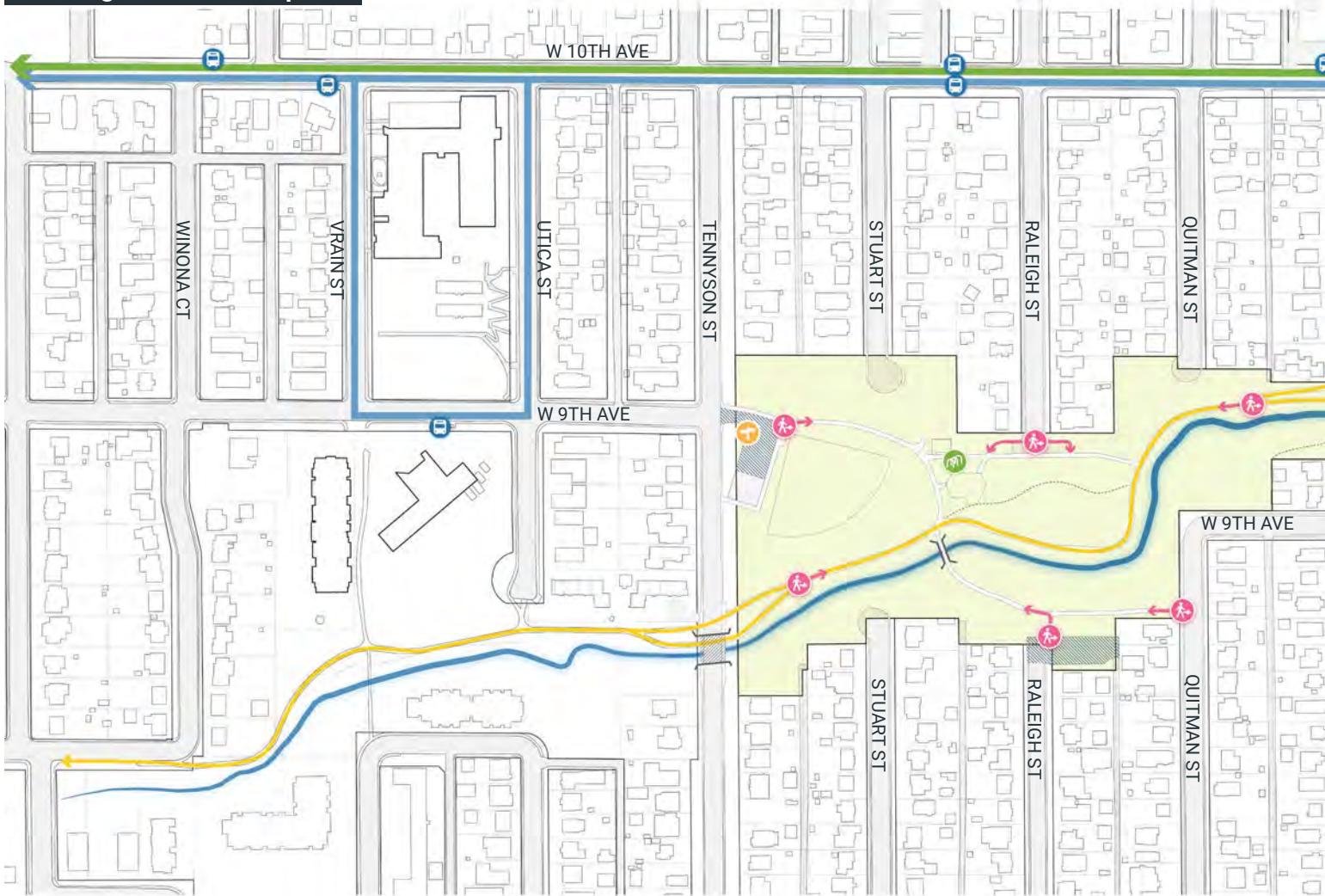
**Opportunities:** Where possible, additional access points should be provided with consideration given to the residential streets that currently do not have direct access.

## MULTI-MODAL CONNECTIONS

**Existing Condition:** The bus route runs along 10th Ave. with stops at Perry and Raleigh Streets. Perry St. is the north/south bike route through the neighborhood.

**Opportunities:** Consideration should be given to enhancing and / or marking the entry from Perry St. as a key gateway to the park.

Existing Conditions Map



## TRAIL UNDERPASSES

**Existing Condition:** There are two existing underpasses at Tennyson St. and Perry St. respectively. Both underpasses experience flooding and sediment build-up during storms. The Perry St. underpass has a mural along the wall improving the user experience.

**Opportunities:** Both underpasses should be designed as gateways into the park with the addition of murals, signage or other elements. A barrier should be considered between the trail and waterway to minimize the impacts of water inundating the trail during storms. Visibility and lighting should also be considered.

## GATEWAYS / SIGNAGE

**Existing Condition:** One park monument sign is located at the Tennyson St. entry.

**Opportunities:** Additional wayfinding and monument signs should be considered at entry points and other locations around the park.

## PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE

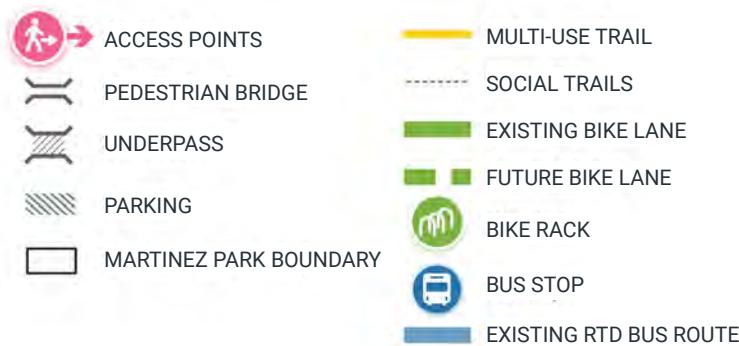
**Existing Condition:** The existing pedestrian bridge serves as a critical north/south link connecting residents to the park and school children to Cowell Elementary.

**Opportunities:** An additional pedestrian bridge should be considered on the east side of the park with additional walking paths.

## SOCIAL TRAIL

**Existing Condition:** Social trails exist on the south side of Lakewood Gulch, mostly east of Perry St. (not within the Martinez Park boundary). One social trail exists within the park cutting across the central open lawn area.

**Opportunities:** Consider formalizing some of the social trails on the top of the gulch banks. The social trail within the park should be incorporated into additional park circulation.



## RECREATION & ACTIVE USES

### TRAIL

**Existing Condition:** The Lakewood Gulch multi-use trail is 0.27 miles through the park. This trail serves mostly pedestrians walking through the park with a daily average of about 250 people using the trail.

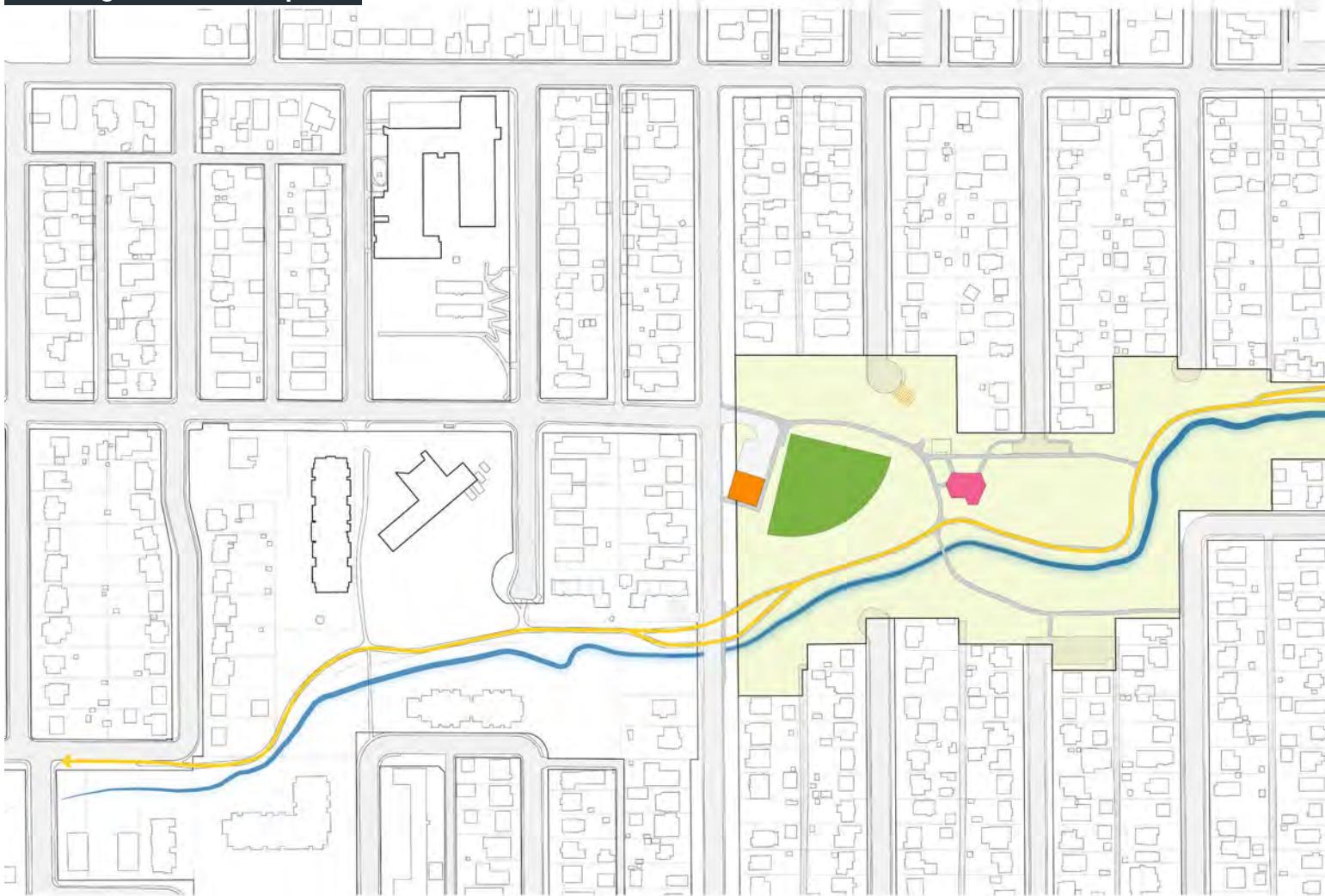
**Opportunities:** Provide additional/secondary paths and a possible park loop to accommodate and encourage circulation within the park.

### SOMBRERO SLIDE/PLAY AREA

**Existing Condition:** Although the sombrero slide no longer exists, the original area with a small wall remains.

**Opportunities:** Remove existing asphalt pad and wall. Consider opportunities for connection south to center of park. Explore incorporating a play element that is artistic and celebrates the culture of the community.

**Existing Conditions Map**



## PLAYGROUND

**Existing Condition:** The park has an older playground that is in fairly poor condition. And the playground is in the center of the park, far from the parking lot

**Opportunities:** Upgrade and expand playground area in new location(s) using play areas as



activators within the park. Consider traditional, adventure and nature play or a combination.

## BASKETBALL

**Existing Condition:** A half basketball court is co-located with the parking lot along Tennyson St.

**Opportunities:** Consider expanding the basketball court into a full-sized court and separate it from the parking lot.

## BASEBALL

**Existing Condition:** The baseball field was not permitted by anyone in 2019. Currently, the field is mostly used for casual pick-up games or a place for dogs to run.

**Opportunities:** A multi-use field should be considered to replace the baseball field so that it can accommodate a variety of recreational uses. Rather than formal bleachers limiting use, edges of the field should allow for flexibility promoting both active recreation uses and community events.



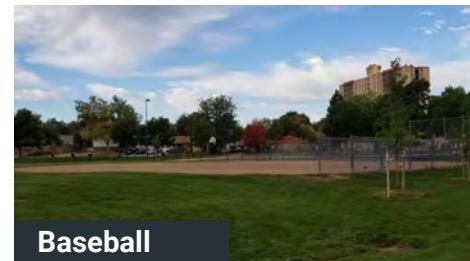
Sombrero slide / play area



Playground



Basketball



Baseball

- PLAYGROUND
- SOFTBALL FIELD
- BASKETBALL
- MARTINEZ PARK BOUNDARY
- TRAIL
- SOMBRERO PLAYGROUND REMNANT

# LANDSCAPE, ECOLOGY & TREES

## TREES & VEGETATION

**Existing Condition:** Tree canopy covers approximately 29% of the entire park. Eastern cottonwoods and boxelders are the most common trees and are located along the riparian corridor. There are large quantities of invasive tree species, such as Siberian Elm and Crack Willow.

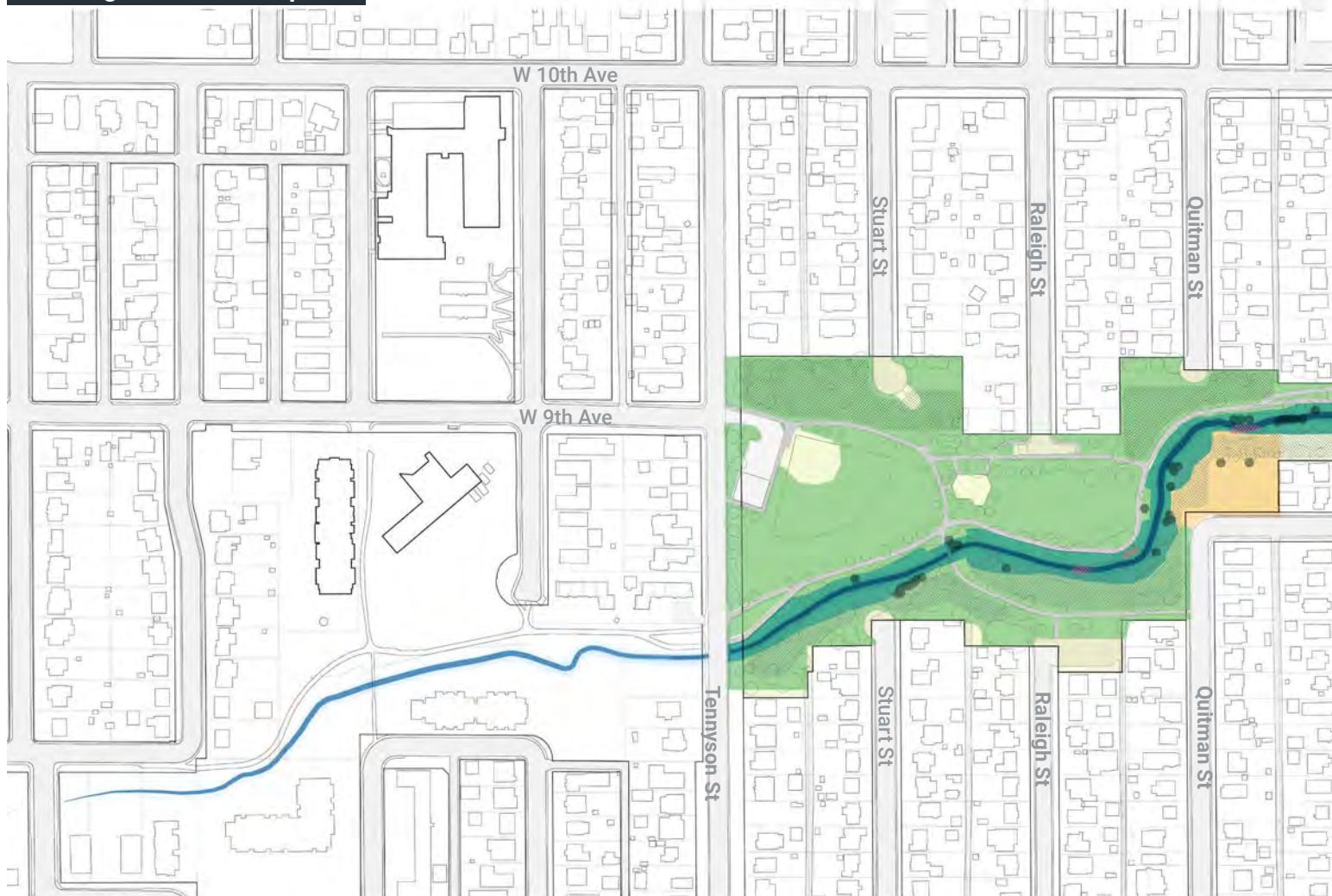
Bluegrass communities (lawn and forest) are dominant throughout the park, covering 54.8% of the overall park. Non-native upland herbaceous communities are primarily located to the areas south of the Gulch and lack substantial tree cover.

**Opportunities:** Removal of non-native and noxious species throughout the park should be prioritized, as well as the removal

of Siberian elms and dead trees to help increase park visibility through the riparian corridor and the park.

Upland areas that will not be used for active recreation should be converted from bluegrass and non-native species to native species, in order to decrease water usage and maintenance costs while improving biodiversity.

Existing Conditions Map



## STREAM / RIPARIAN CORRIDOR

**Existing Condition:** The riparian corridor is generally functioning well but is extremely narrow with a limited floodplain. Because of the constricted corridor, erosion happens during storm events and some of the grouted boulders are being undermined. There is also low ecological connectivity due to the narrow corridor which is

constrained by the bridges at Tennyson and Perry Streets.

**Opportunities:** Removal of non-native, aggressive tree species such as Siberian elm and crack willow and replacement with native trees and shrubs to diversify the ecology and canopy layers of the corridor should be considered.



Lakewood Gulch Stream



Retaining Wall at Gulch Bank



## CULTURAL & SOCIAL

### PICNIC/GATHERING AREA

**Existing Condition:** No designated picnic area exists today, however there is a portable restroom with an enclosure.

**Opportunities:** A large picnic and gathering area should be included. The area should be designed so that it can be multi-functional and

accommodate neighborhood events and celebrations. The restroom should be relocated near the picnic area.

Consider the addition of community gardens in easily accessible locations.

### RESTROOM

**Existing Condition:** A portable restroom located at center of the park, near memorial and playground.

**Opportunities:** Consider locating restroom near active uses and near Tennyson St. for ease of maintenance.

**Existing Conditions Map**



## MEMORIAL

**Existing Condition:** The Joseph P. Martinez memorial has been vandalized and is in poor condition.

**Opportunities:** Celebrating the achievements and significance of Joseph P. Martinez is important for the community. A rebuilt memorial should be a centerpiece to the park that educates the community and inspires youth.



## SMALL SEATING AREAS/BENCHES

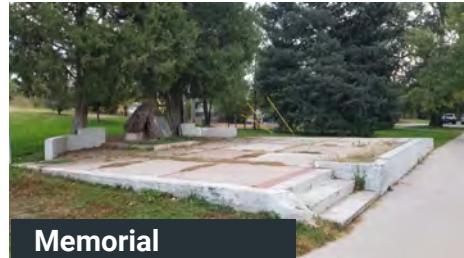
**Existing Condition:** There is only one bench and one picnic table.

**Opportunities:** Numerous small seating areas and benches should be provided throughout the park, especially around active use areas and along walking paths.

## EDUCATIONAL / WATER EXPLORATION

**Existing Condition:** There are no comfortable ways to engage with the Gulch today.

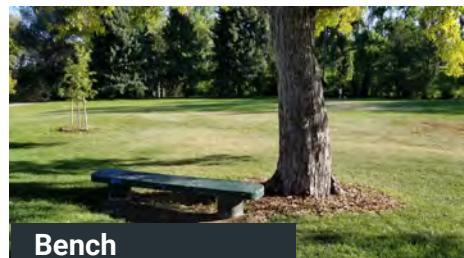
**Opportunities:** Open up the waterway and provide places for people to engage with the water. Environmental education should be



Memorial



Playground



Bench



provided through signage, and offer places for groups to gather and learn.

## LIGHTING

**Existing Condition:** Although there are 6 lights within the park today, the large trees and wide spacing between lights make the park feel fairly dark.

**Opportunities:** Additional lights should be considered at entry points, underpasses, and along the trail and paths.

# PUBLIC PROCESS AND ALTERNATIVE EVALUATION

Public input is fundamental to the master planning process and helps achieve positive outcomes for the community. During the master plan development, public meetings and steering committee meetings were integral in developing alternative concepts and selecting the preferred concept. The Council Office was also integral to the outreach within the community, helping to communicate and solicit

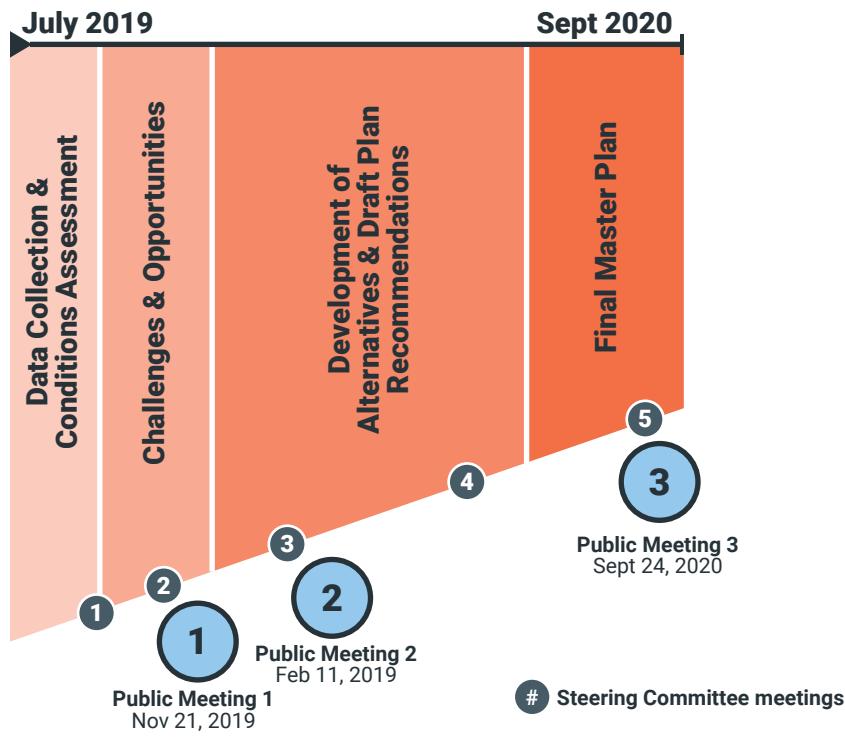
additional feedback from the community. Shortly after the second public meeting, the pandemic hit and the planning team pivoted to fully virtual community engagement for the remainder of the master planning process.

In addition to public meetings, the planning team also coordinated with the West Neighborhood

Planning Initiative team to better understand parks and open space needs for the overall neighborhood.

The team utilized highly visual materials, and all written material was bi-lingual. The following information explains the various meetings and tools that were used during the process.

## MASTER PLAN PROCESS



## IN-DEPTH COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- » 3 bi-lingual Public Meetings (1 of the 3 virtual)
- » 5 Steering Committee meetings (2 of the 5 virtual)
- » 3 bi-lingual online surveys
- » 2 Facebook Live / Zoom events with Councilwoman Torres' office
- » 20 yard signs
- » Over 2,000 postcards
- » Over 1,000 door-to-door flyers
- » Villa Park RNO meeting
- » Coordination with West NPI process
- » One-on-one meetings with targeted groups

## PUBLIC MEETINGS

Three public meetings were held at key points in the master planning process. The first meeting focused on the existing conditions analysis, opportunities and constraints. At the second meeting, the team presented 3 distinct park concepts and gathered feedback on the likes and dislikes of each concept. At the third public meeting, the team shared the preferred design which included most of the most desired elements from each of the 3 concept alternatives. The third meeting also solicited feedback on the prioritization of the elements to inform the phasing.



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## ONLINE SURVEYS

To reach a broader audience, online surveys were utilized at the same time as the public meetings to gather additional feedback. The surveys were highly visual and were bi-lingual.

## CITY COUNCIL ENGAGEMENT

The Council Office was very helpful in supporting our outreach and engagement efforts. They hosted two Zoom/Facebook Live events and organized over 2,000 postcard mailers to the community.

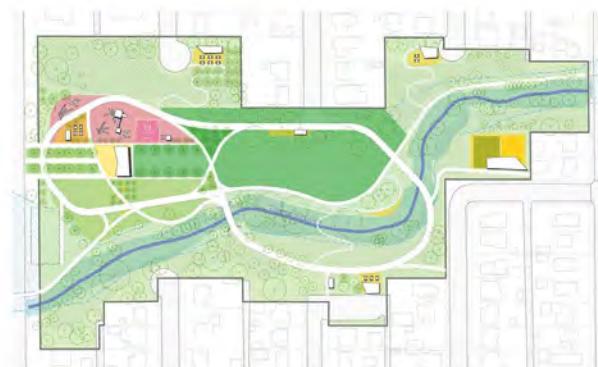
## COVID-19 IMPACT

Shortly after the second public meeting, the COVID-19 pandemic briefly slowed down the outreach efforts on the project. However, to maintain momentum and gather additional feedback, the team quickly released an online survey and left the survey open for over 8 weeks. For the third public meeting and the final two steering committee meetings, Zoom meetings were utilized. Other printed information was disseminated including postcards and yard signs that shared the links to surveys and other ways to engage.

## ALTERNATIVE 1 PLAY & EXPLORATION *JUGAR Y EXPLORAR*



## ALTERNATIVE 2 THE CULTURAL LOOP *EL LAZO CULTURAL*



## ALTERNATIVE 3 WATER STORY *HISTORIA DEL AGUA*



# COMMUNITY INPUT

## TAKEAWAYS

Throughout the process, a number of key takeaways emerged. These takeaways helped shape the design, recommendations, and prioritization within the plan.

### CELEBRATE JOSEPH P. MARTINEZ

Although the existing memorial was vandalized and removed, the importance of Joseph P. Martinez remains. The community expressed a strong desire to honor his legacy and celebrate his achievements as an example for the youth.

### ENGAGE WITH LAKWOOD GULCH

The community continually expressed the desire to engage with nature and Lakewood Gulch. Although there is limited engagement with the water today, the community expressed appreciation for the waterway and the natural elements within the park.

### PROVIDE SEATING AND PICNIC AREAS

With limited seating in the park today, places to sit and gather are top priorities for park users. Benches, picnic tables and other areas to gather were common desires.

### INCORPORATE CULTURE

With a rich cultural heritage, the community continually expressed a desire to have cultural elements throughout the park through the use of colors, plantings, and other elements.



## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

# 03 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

## CONTENTS

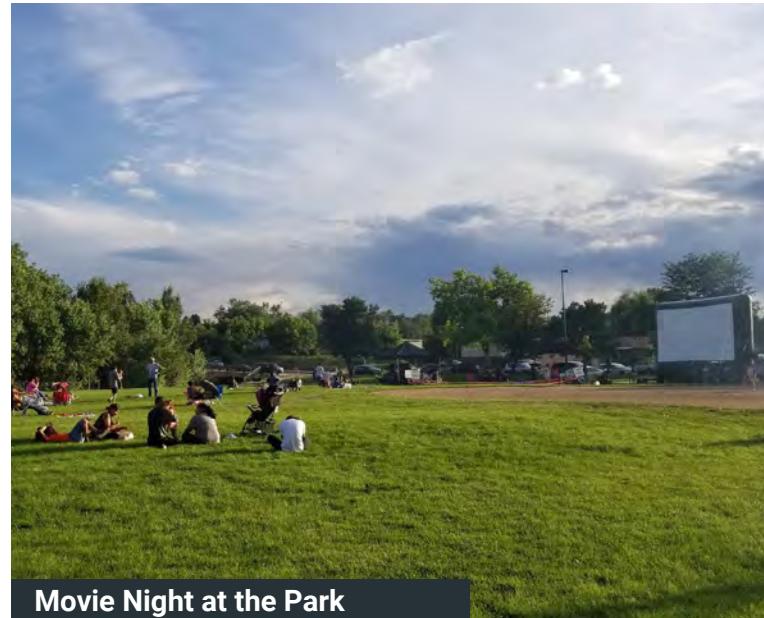
34    GUIDING PRINCIPLES

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The master plan guiding principles were developed by the steering committee and community at the beginning of the process. Input was gathered through initial steering committee meetings, an online survey and the first public meeting. There was additional feedback from the community on the draft guiding principles to ensure alignment with community hopes and desires.



Movie Night at the Park



Movie Night at the Park



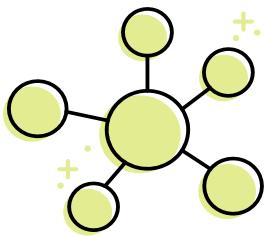
Movie Night at the Park



Public Meeting #1

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# GUIDING PRINCIPLES



## ENHANCE CONNECTIONS AND VISIBILITY WITHIN THE PARK AND TO NEARBY DESTINATIONS.

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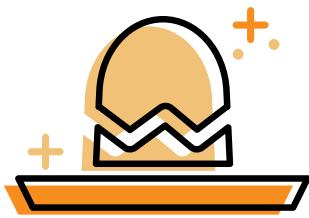
- » Create walking and biking loops
- » Improve underpasses and celebrate them as gateways
- » Increase number of multi-modal connections between the park and the neighborhood
- » Improve accessible connections to the park
- » Increase visibility and site lines throughout the park



## ACTIVATE THE PARK WITH HEALTH, WELLNESS AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES.

---

- » Support and include multi-generational recreational needs
- » Include a variety of play opportunities
- » Encourage school and community partnerships
- » Provide educational signage about the gulch and biodiversity



## CELEBRATE THE CULTURAL HERITAGE OF THE COMMUNITY.

- » Create a central and multi-functional gathering space for the community
- » Re-imagine and rebuild the Joseph P. Martinez memorial
- » Incorporate play areas with a cultural focus



## ENGAGE WITH LAKWOOD GULCH AND THE NATURAL FEATURES WITHIN THE PARK.

- » Open up the gulch corridor and provide places for people to interact with the water
- » Create natural play areas near the water
- » Increase wildlife within the park and improve biodiversity
- » Increase tree canopy and preserve as many trees as possible that are in good condition

# 04

## MASTER PLAN & PARK SYSTEMS

### CONTENTS

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44	PROGRAM ELEMENTS	54	LIGHTING & SIGNAGE

# CONTEXT

Throughout the process, feedback was provided along Lakewood Gulch, both east and west of the park. The following recommendations capture those ideas.



## RECOMMENDATIONS

### West of Tennyson Street:

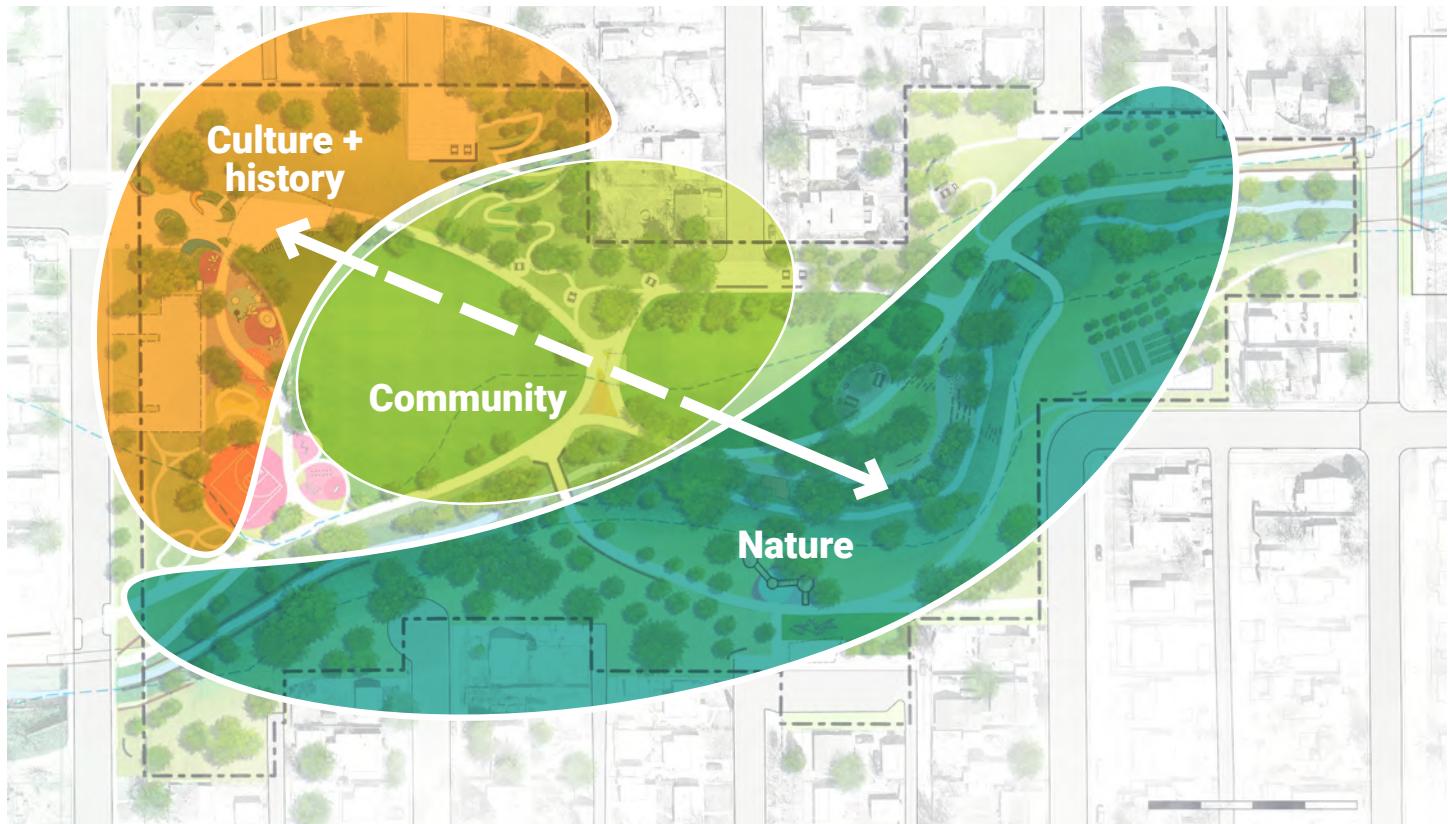
- » City should secure easements west of Tennyson St. through the private properties to ensure public access and allow for maintenance of gulch area.
- » DPR should work with Mile High Flood District to complete tree maintenance and clearing on city owned parcel and within gulch area once easement have been secured.

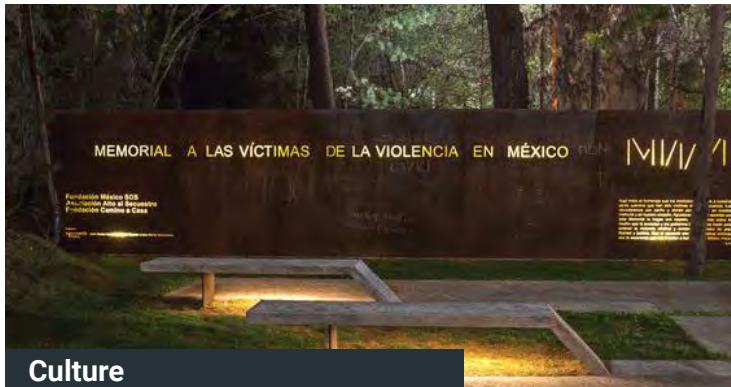
### East of Perry Street

- » DPR should consider incorporating a portion of the land to the east into the park boundary.
- » DPR should work with Mile High Flood District to complete tree maintenance and clearing within gulch area.
- » Consideration should be given to formalizing the social trails on the south and east sides of the gulch.

## CONCEPT DIAGRAM

With extensive community input, a park concept was developed that celebrates the culture of the community, highlights the history of Joseph Martinez, and enhances the natural elements of Lakewood Gulch. Together, these elements create a community focused park.

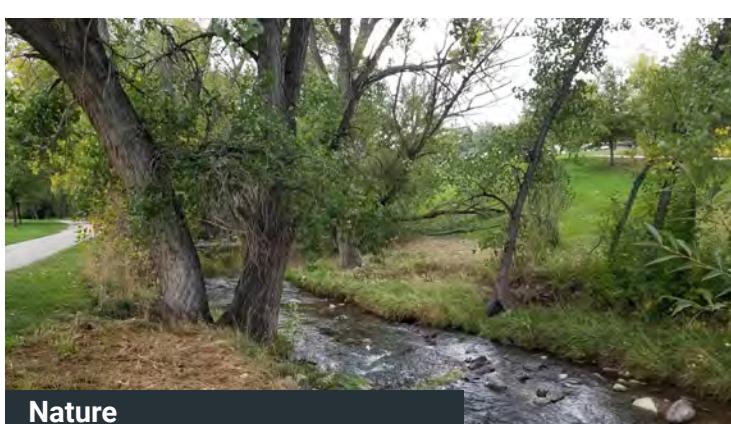




Culture



Community



Nature



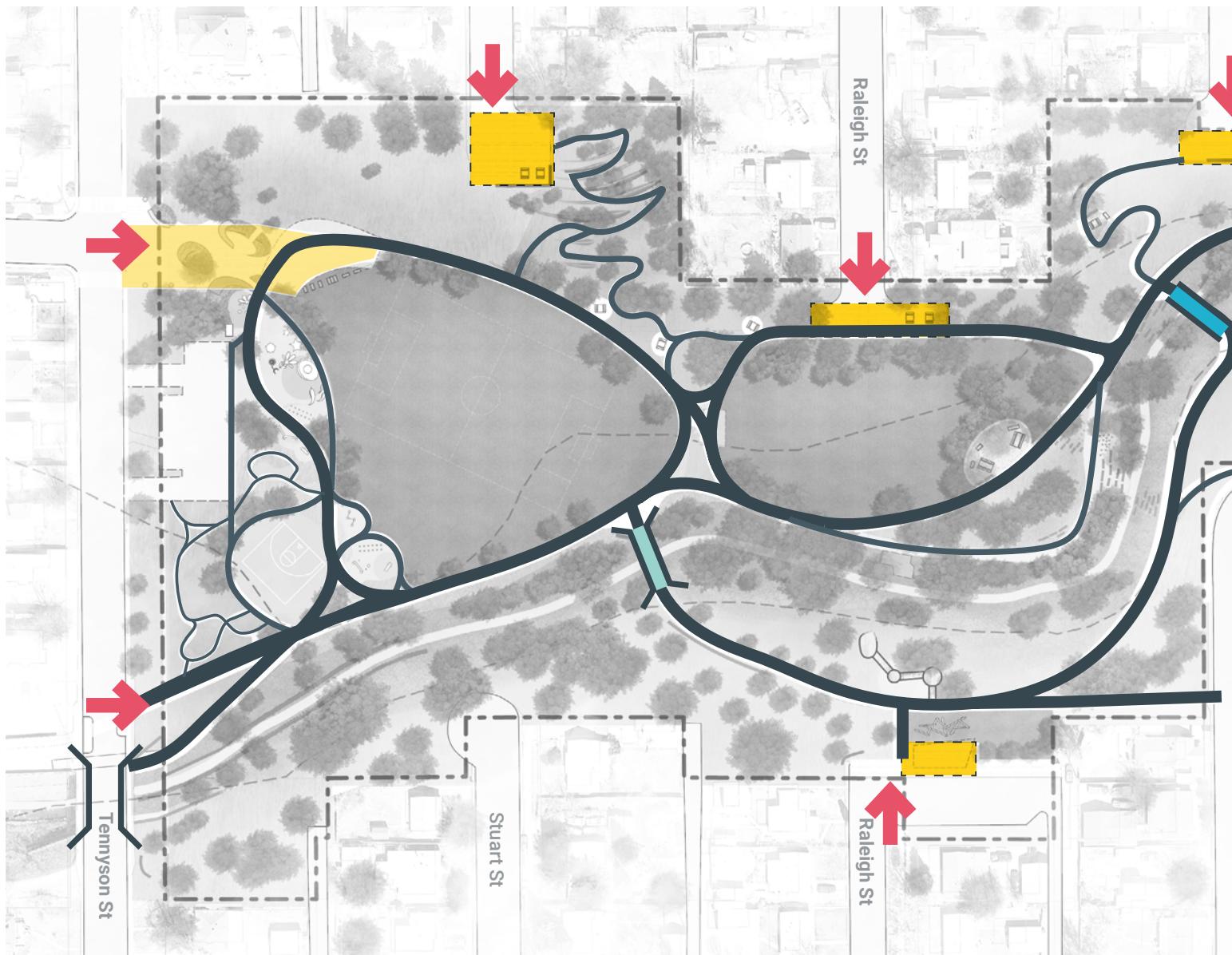
# FINAL MASTER PLAN





- |          |                                   |           |                         |
|----------|-----------------------------------|-----------|-------------------------|
| <b>1</b> | JOSEPH P. MARTINEZ MEMORIAL PLAZA | <b>10</b> | PICNIC AREA             |
| <b>2</b> | CULTURAL PLAYGROUND               | <b>11</b> | NATURE PLAY             |
| <b>3</b> | RESTROOM                          | <b>12</b> | BOULDER TERRACES        |
| <b>4</b> | PARKING LOT                       | <b>13</b> | OVERLOOK PLAY STRUCTURE |
| <b>5</b> | POLLINATOR GARDEN                 | <b>14</b> | SLEDDING HILL           |
| <b>6</b> | MULTI-SPORTS COURT                | <b>15</b> | LOW FLOW CROSSING       |
| <b>7</b> | FITNESS STATIONS                  | <b>16</b> | SHADE STRUCTURE         |
| <b>8</b> | MULTI-USE LAWN                    | <b>17</b> | COMMUNITY GARDEN        |
| <b>9</b> | ETHNOBOTANIC GARDEN               |           |                         |

## CIRCULATION, ACCESS & CONNECTIVITY



— Primary circulation  
(8-12' hard surface path)

— Secondary circulation  
(5-8' hard surface path)

— Tertiary circulation  
(soft surface path)

■ Plaza

→ Park entry points

■ Entry / Shared Plazas

— Existing pedestrian bridge

■ New low flow crossing

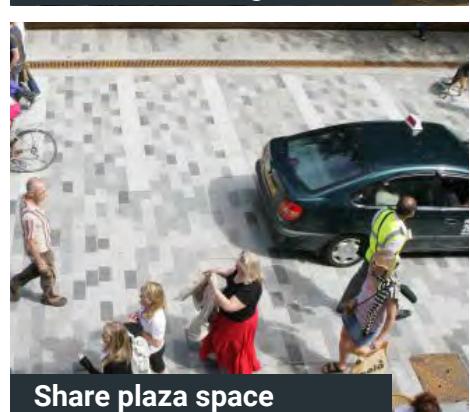
— Bridges / Underpasses



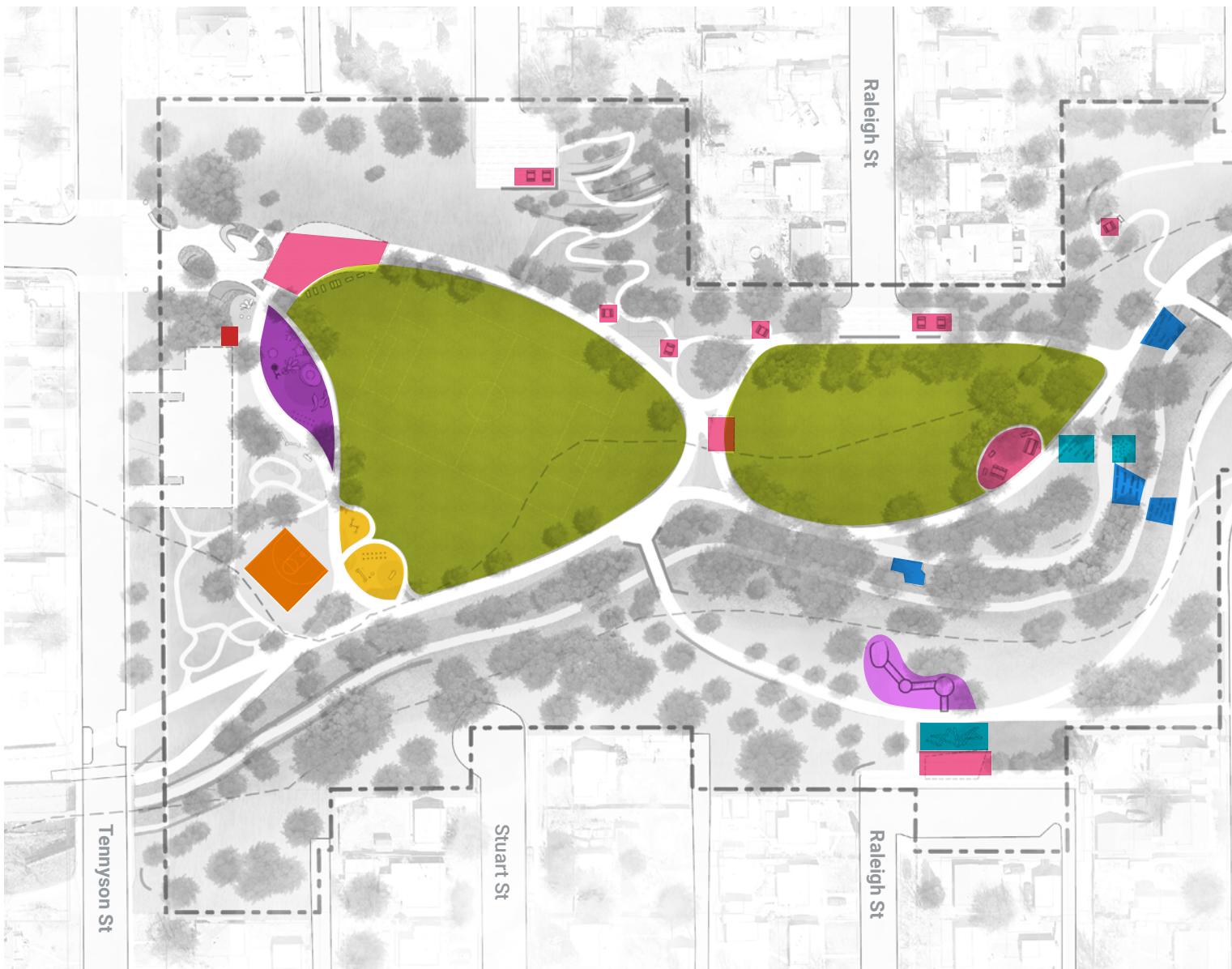
The Lakewood Gulch multi-use trail is the backbone to the park circulation. The proposed circulation system builds upon this and provides additional park paths to provide greater connectivity as well as various loops around the park.

### Key Recommendations

- » Convert cul-de-sacs within the park to shared entry plaza spaces for people and cars.
- » Add a new low flow crossing across Lakewood Gulch to provide better north-south park connectivity while creating additional circulation loops.
- » Provide neighborhood connections from dead-end streets at Stuart St. (north side), Raleigh St. (north and south side) and Quitman St. (north side). Neighborhood connections should include entry wall with park identification signage and a few picnic tables and/or benches.



# PROGRAM ELEMENTS



PICNIC AREAS

CULTURAL PLAYGROUND

OVERLOOK PLAY STRUCTURE

RESTROOM

MULTI-SPORTS COURT

FITNESS STATIONS

LAWN

NATURE PLAY

GULCH TERRACE & OVERLOOK



The proposed park program elements were an outcome of the community process. There were strong desires for active recreation and play areas, community gathering space, and informal picnic and seating areas throughout the park.

### Key Recommendations

- » Opportunities to engage with the gulch and interact with the water should be provided
- » A restroom should be provided near cultural playground, plaza and events area
- » Provide various sizes of picnic areas throughout the park to accommodate multiple groups of different sizes
- » Provide benches throughout the park and along walking loops for people of all ages and abilities to rest and enjoy the park
- » Play areas should include playgrounds for youth as well as teenagers and active adults
- » Locate sports courts and other active elements near parking and away from residential homes
- » Playgrounds should include cultural elements as well as nature play opportunities
- » Fitness stations should be considered with relationship to nearby senior and active adult groups
- » The lawns should be dual purpose and accommodate informal sports as well as events within the park



# HISTORY, ART & CULTURE



## Community Garden

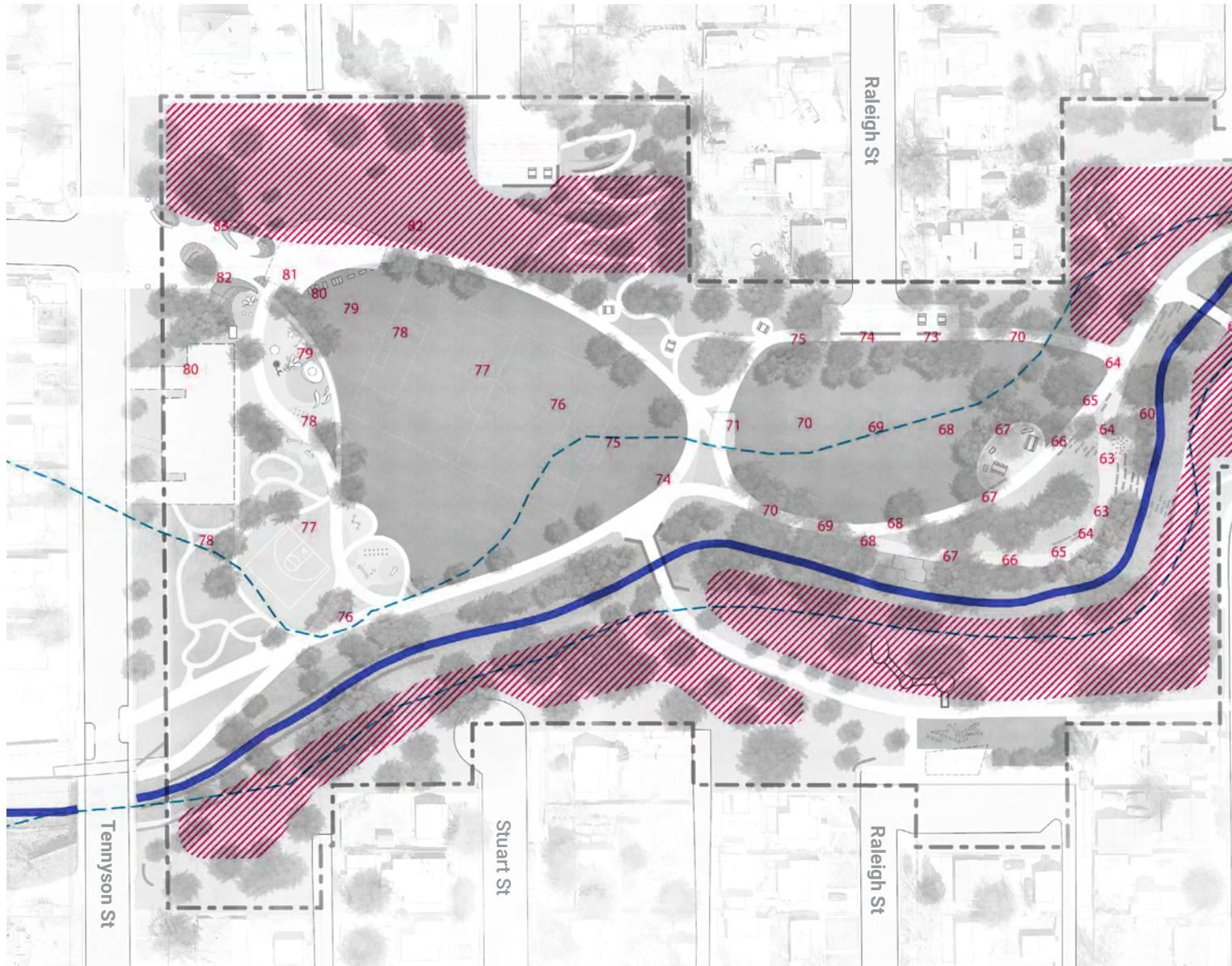


History, art, and culture should be key drivers for the park design. In addition to the memorial plaza, ethnobotanical garden, and community garden, culture and color should be infused throughout the park. All cultural elements should be grounded in the culture of the Villa Park community.

### Key Recommendations

- » Incorporate color and public art throughout the park
- » Work with Denver Urban Gardens to implement a community garden
- » Create a vibrant memorial entry plaza to the park that celebrates and honors Joseph Martinez while also providing spaces for relaxing and enjoyment
- » Locate an ethnobotanical garden on the south facing slope at Stuart Street that includes culturally-relevant native plantings, arts and other elements

# TOPOGRAPHY & DRAINAGE



CHALLENGING SLOPE (GREATER THAN 8.3%)



LAKEWOOD GULCH



100 YEAR FLOODPLAIN

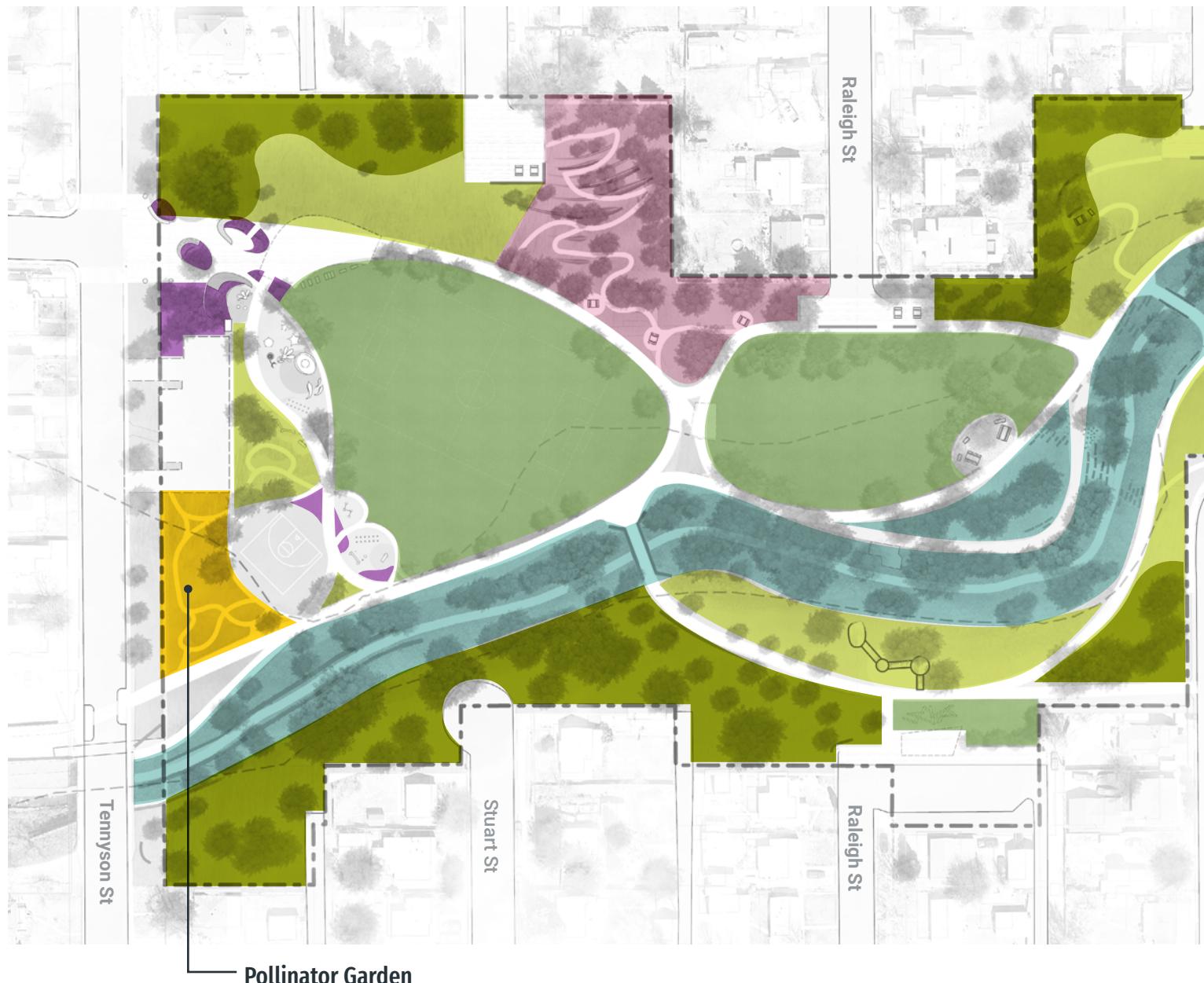


Martinez Park has significant existing slopes on the north side and the south side of the park, and Lakewood Gulch weaves through the center of the park. The topography and natural drainage to Lakewood Gulch are a strong natural resource and should be protected through the park redesign.

#### Key Recommendations

- » Work with existing topography and preserve existing trees.
- » Maintain existing Lakewood Gulch centerline to preserve existing riparian forested landscape.
- » Limit disturbance of sloped areas by placing active programming elsewhere.
- » Work with Mile High Flood District as design advances within the Lakewood Gulch waterway.

# LANDSCAPE TYPOLOGIES\* / ECOLOGY



UPLAND HERBACEOUS

UPLAND FORESTED

TURF

RIPARIAN FORESTED

PLANTING AREAS

POLLINATOR GARDEN

ETHNOBOTANIC GARDEN



This plan re-envisioned Martinez Park as a place with diverse landscape types and ecological zones that are reflective of Denver and the ecology around waterways.

### Key Recommendations

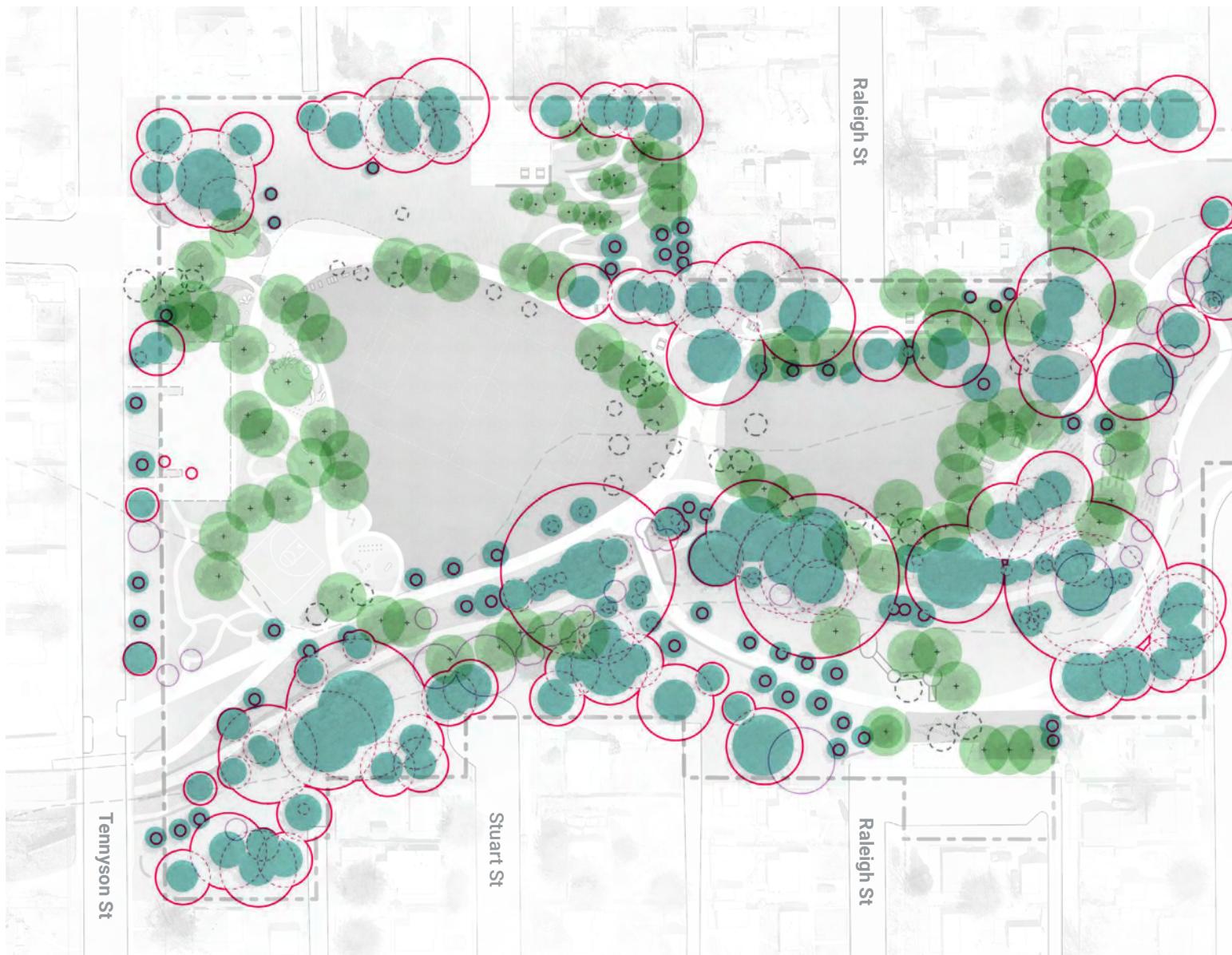
- » Convert upland areas that are not used for active recreation from bluegrass and non-native species to native species identified in upland herbaceous and upland forested typologies.
- » Upland areas around the park periphery, especially near residential homes, should be upland forested typology.
- » Remove non-native and noxious species throughout the park and increasing visibility through the riparian corridor.
- » Locate pollinator garden near major roads, such as Tennyson and parking lot, for ease of maintenance. Fragrant ornamental trees should be prioritized in the pollinator garden.
- » Locate planting areas near entry for seasonal interest and to provide variety of landscape experience throughout the park.
- » Prioritize food-producing plants and ornamental trees within Ethnobotanic Garden.

POLLINATOR GARDEN



\* *Landscape Typology is a DPR system used to delineate different landscape types for the purpose of asset tracking and management. It helps DPR in understanding sizes, landscape function, and maintenance costs of different landscapes throughout parks to inform maintenance decisions and restoration opportunities.*

# TREE CANOPY & TREE PROTECTION AREA



Trees to remain

Invasive / unhealthy trees

Tree protection zone

Trees to relocate / remove

New trees

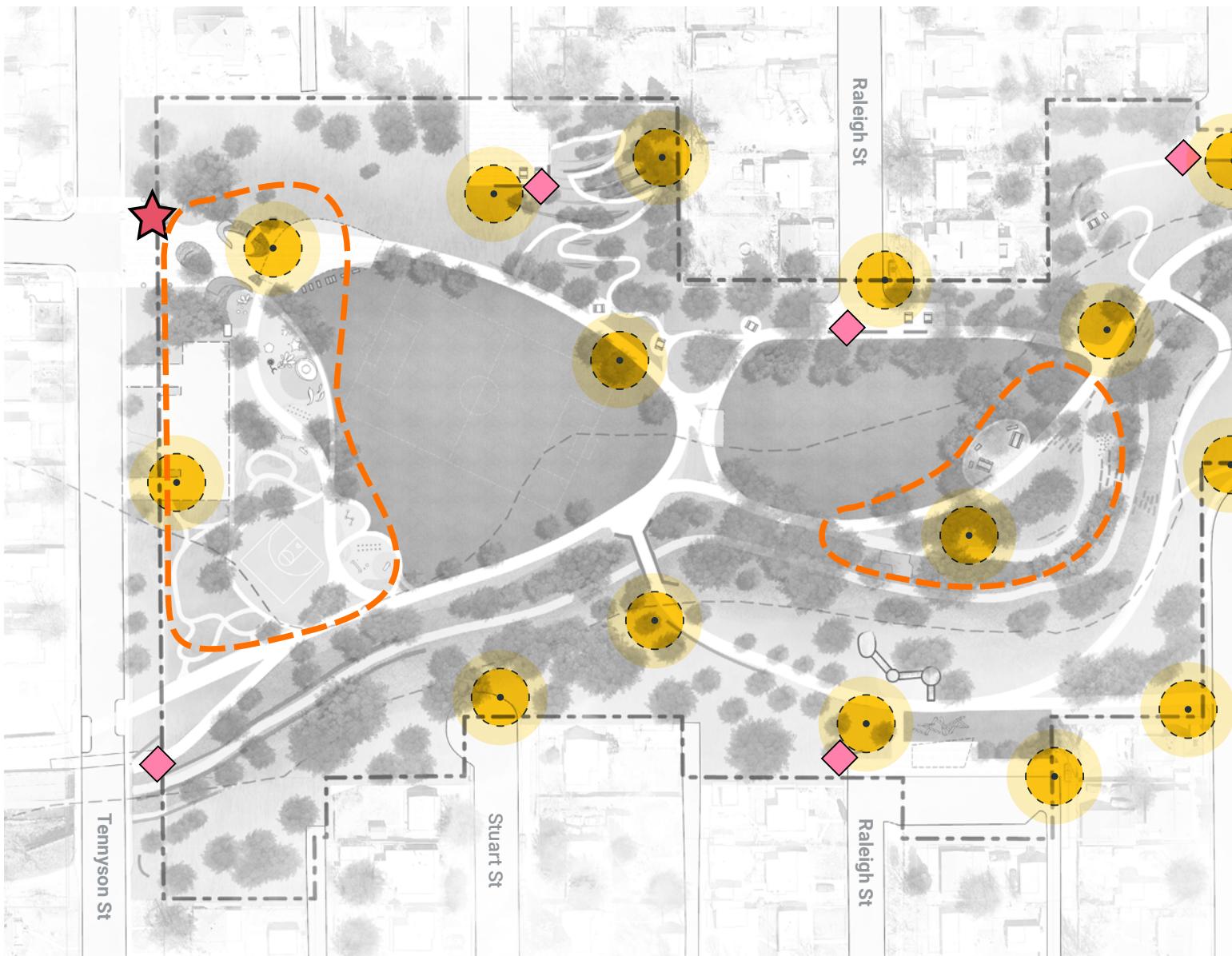


Martinez Park has many existing, mature and high value trees. The park redesign should work around the tree protection zone as much as possible. New trees should be introduced to mitigate the loss of trees as well as providing new areas for shade and planting interest.

### Key Recommendations

- » Remove non-native and noxious species, especially Siberian elms and dead trees, throughout the park to increase park visibility through the riparian corridor.
- » Healthy and high value trees should be air spaded at the beginning of concept design to understand the root zone and inform the design.

## LIGHTING & SIGNAGE



★ Primary park sign

◆ Secondary sign with rules  
& regulation signs

○ Existing light locations  
(Subject to change  
during final design)

○ Priority areas for future lighting



Lighting and signage were identified as key elements for the park redesign. Better signage at all entry points should be provided as well as increased light levels for safety and comfort.

### Key Recommendations

- » Primary park sign should be located at the main park entrance at 9th and Tennyson Street
- » Secondary park signs and rules and regulations signs should be located at all other park entry points
- » Lighting should be prioritized near the active elements along Tennyson St. as well as near the picnic and gulch exploration areas. In other areas, lower levels of consistent lighting should be provided
- » Electrical boxes and power should be considered for maintenance and event use (in the pavilion). If provided, site electrical should have full shut off allowing for DPR to control its use

# 05

## DESIGN CHARACTER

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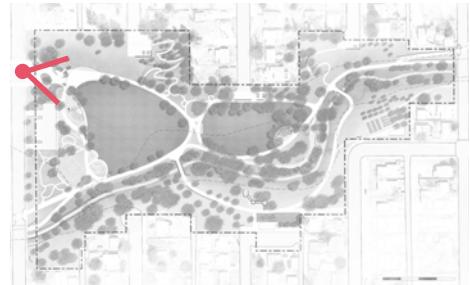
The following pages illustrate the design character for elements within Martinez Park that best reflect the diverse and rich culture of Villa Park and the natural beauty of Lakewood Gulch.



# JOSEPH P. MARTINEZ MEMORIAL PLAZA



## Cultural Playground



As the main entry to the park, the Joseph P. Martinez memorial plaza draws people into the park with bright colors, a variety of plantings and flowers, curvilinear seat walls, and various panels that explain the history and significance of Joesph Martinez. Beyond the plaza is the pavilion for events and daily use that overlooks and engages with both the lawn and the plaza.

# JOSEPH P. MARTINEZ PLAZA



## Pavilion

The pavilion should be designed to be used from all sides. Smaller groups can gather under the pavilion and within the plaza, while larger groups and event can spill out into the lawn. The open air structure should offer comfortable space and different degrees of shading to maximize its use.

Electrical should be provided within the structure, potentially up higher and out of reach for daily use.



## Paving Pattern

The plaza should have a paving pattern that is rich with culturally-relevant patterns. It should be designed in such a way to draw people into the site.



## Mosaic / Art

Color and art should be incorporated into the seat walls through mosaics or in another way. The color should not compete with the memorial panels but should be used to bring color to the space year-round.



### Planting

A variety of perennial and woody plantings should be used in the plaza to provide year-round interest. Color should intentionally be used near the memorial panels.



### Memorial

Corten metal panels should be incorporated into planting beds and near seating areas that tell the story of Joseph P. Martinez. It should be used as an educational and inspirational opportunity.



### Seating

Ample seating should be provided within the plaza, both near the memorial and elsewhere. Seating should include elements that deter skateboarding.

A combination of fixed and movable seating should be provided in the plaza, however additional discussions will be needed to determine the feasibility of movable seating.

## ETHNOBOTANICAL GARDEN

The ethnobotanical garden is a garden space that has culturally-relevant native plantings, potentially including those used for food and medicine.



### Demonstration Garden

A demonstration garden showing how indigenous people of Latin America and Colorado use plants for medicinal, craft and cultural purposes.



### Terraced Garden

The garden should respond to the existing topography of the south facing slope. Through introduction of stone walls and boulders, cultivated beds should terrace along the creating small rooms to gather and enjoy the space.



### Farm Tables for Gathering and Eating

Large, family-style picnic tables should be located near the garden to provide gathering and outdoor dining opportunities.

## MULTI-SPORTS COURT & FITNESS STATION



### Multi-Sports

Integrate multiple sports, such as basketball, futsal, and pickleball, to provide variety of sport activities for different age groups.



### Fitness Station

Provide creative fitness elements to allow for variety of fitness activities.

Layout of the spaces and the elements themselves should allow for use as play elements where possible.



## MULTI-USE LAWN & CULTURAL PLAYGROUND



**Multi-use Lawn**



Located on the western side of the park and near the memorial plaza and pavilion, the multi-use lawn and cultural play area provide everyday activation to the park.

**Cultural Play Area**

## CULTURAL PLAYGROUND



### Cultural Element

The cultural playground should be rich with color and activities for all ages. An iconic element, such as a sombrero slide, should be considered during design. Other elements should tie back to the rich history and celebration of the community in a playful manner.



## POLLINATOR GARDEN



### Educational Signage

Provide educational signage for park users to learn more about pollinator gardens.

Consider developing signage in conjunction with Cowell Elementary School students and curriculum to reinforce learning opportunities and extension within the park.

## MULTI-USE LAWN



### Field Sports

The lawn area should be designed to accommodate a small soccer field or similar type field to ensure flexibility in how it is used.



### Outdoor Events

The multi-use lawn should be designed so that large outdoor community/public events can be hosted.

Event power and locations should be evaluated in concept design by use.

# PICNIC & NATURE PLAY AREA



Picnic Area

Nature Play



Nature Play

Native Wildflower Field



On the east side of the park, a tree grove picnic area is located near Lakewood Gulch and nature play areas. The picnic area features family style picnic tables within outdoor rooms.

---

## NATURE PLAY AREA



### Timber & Logs

A variety of nature play activities should be provided near Lakewood Gulch and the picnic area. Activities should include climbing, stepping, jumping and exploring.



### Boulders

Large boulders should be used within nature play to create additional play opportunities. Layout and overall design character should seek to tie together rockwork found around Lakewood Gulch.



## TREE GROVE PICNIC AREA



### Provide Shade

Ample shade should be provided at this picnic area. Trees should be placed with solar exposure in mind such that there are numerous shady areas within the space.



### Tables

Harvest, or family-style, tables should be provided within the picnic area. Thought should be given to the design such that either one large groups or multiple smaller groups should be able to use the space.



### Grills

The tree grove picnic area should include 2-3 grills. Additionally trash receptacles should be provided.

# LAKWOOD GULCH

Regional Trail



Boulder Terraces



Lakewood Gulch



Boulder terraces and large stepping stones provide opportunities for park users to engage and explore Lakewood Gulch.

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## LAKWOOD GULCH SECTION





Nature Play

Regional Trail

---

## LAKWOOD GULCH



### Boulder Terraces

Strategically locate boulder terraces to provide opportunities to connect park users with Lakewood Gulch.



### Overlook

Provide small overlook to Lakewood Gulch that is ADA accessible. The overlook should be accessible from the secondary path at the top of the bank.

## OVERLOOK PLAY STRUCTURE



### Elevated Structure

The elevated overlook structure on the south side of the park gives park users an opportunity to view the park and Lakewood Gulch. The structure should be designed to accommodate as many users as possible but should be targeted to older children and active adults.



### Open Cover

The structure should have an open, or partially open, cover to prevent anyone from staying too long. Additionally guards, walls and screens should allow for viewing in and out from a distance

# PLANT MATERIALS

A select number of plant types have been identified for the proposed landscape types. Additional plant species should be identified during the design process.

## UPLAND HERBACEOUS



**Blue Grama**  
*Bouteloua gracilis*



**Little Bluestem**  
*Schizachyrium scoparium*



**Western Wheatgrass**  
*Pascopyrum smithii*



**Blanket Flower**  
*Gaillardia aristata*



**Rocky Mountain Penstemon**  
*Penstemon strictus*



**Nuttall's Sunflower**  
*Helianthus nuttallii*



**Golden Currant**  
*Ribes aureum*



**Three-leaf Sumac**  
*Rhus trilobata*



**Western Sandcherry**  
*Prunus pumila var. besseyi*

## UPLAND FORESTED



**American Elm**  
*Ulmus americana*



**Northern Catalpa**  
*Catalpa speciosa*



**Hawthorn**  
*Crataegus*

## RIPARIAN FORESTED



**Cottonwood**  
*Populus spp.*



**Black Chokeberry**  
*Prunus virginiana*



**Peachleaf Willow**  
*Salix amygdaloides*

## RIPARIAN HERBACEOUS



**Switchgrass**  
*Panicum virgatum*



**Fowl Managrass**  
*Glyceria striata*



**Showy Milkweed**  
*Asclepias speciosa*

# 06 IMPLEMENTATION

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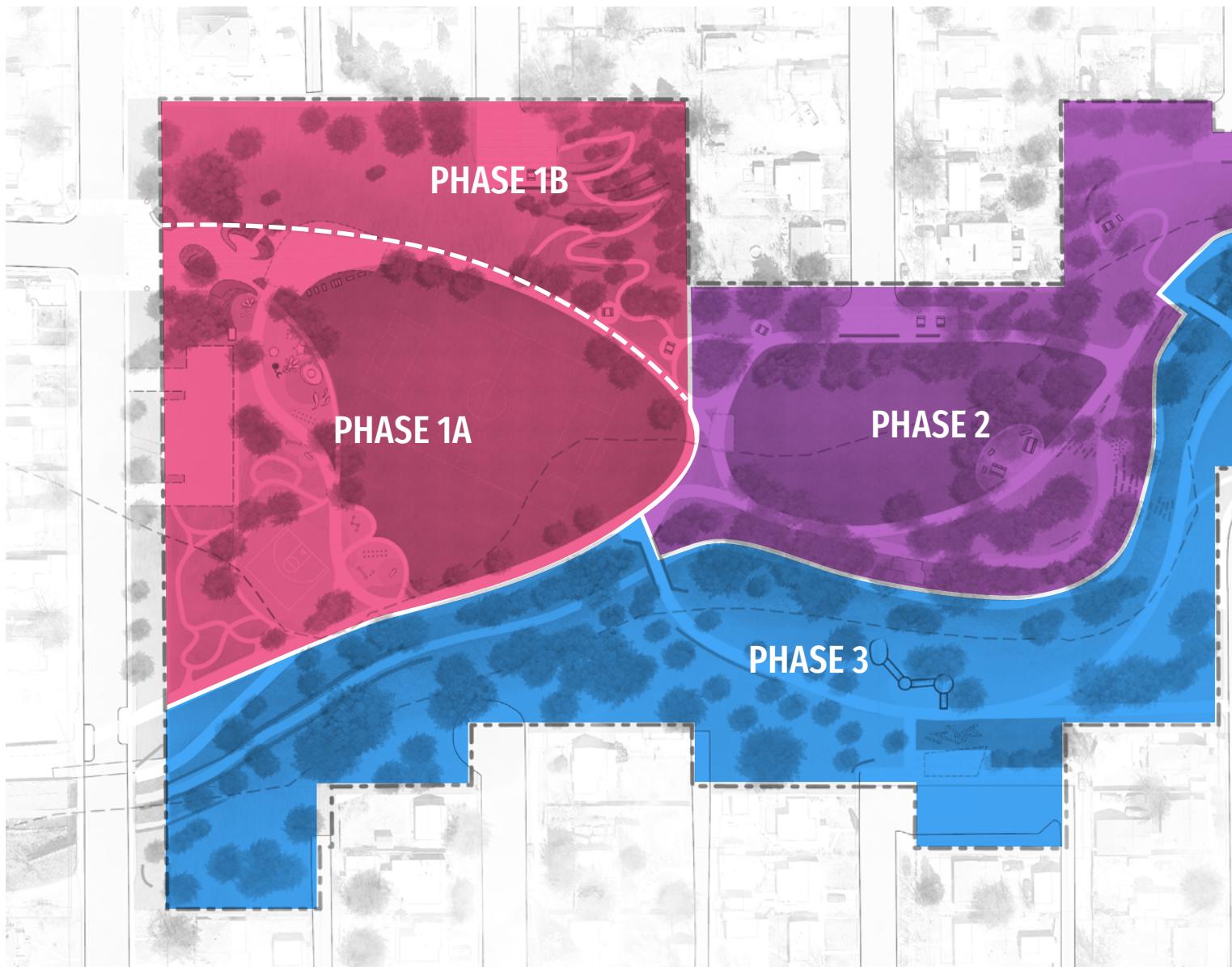
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## PERMITTING RECOMMENDATIONS

1. DPR should consider utilizing a combination of Public Events permits and Picnic permits within Martinez Park.
2. The park should have a combination of permitted picnic areas and non-permitted picnic areas. During future design phases, the tree grove picnic area on the east side of the park should be explored as a permitted picnic area.
3. Consideration should be given to Public Events permits that include the pavilion and west turf area (multi-use lawn) with the optional add-on for the east lawn. When the optional add-on is selected, this would preclude the tree grove picnic area from being permitted so that any potential conflict is minimized.
4. Due to the neighborhood scale and community-oriented nature of the park, Special Occasion permits should be discouraged as they are private events and other park recreation areas, such as playground and court usage, can be in conflict with this type of permit.
5. Future design phases should consider areas within the park for general park users, when the park is permitted.
6. Permit types and areas should be reassessed after being in place for one year to determine whether changes need to be made to the permitting approach.

# PHASING



# COST ESTIMATE

Improvement Item	Total Cost
Phase 1A	\$5,100,000
Phase 1B	\$1,850,000
Phase 2	\$2,860,000
Phase 3	\$3,900,000
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$13,710,000</b>
<i>Art (1% of Total Project)</i>	<b>\$137,100</b>
<i>Design Fees (10%)</i>	<b>\$1,371,000</b>
<b>Total Park Improvements</b>	<b>\$15,218,100</b>

# 07

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# ECOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT MEMORANDUM

## MEMORANDUM

**TO: LIVABLE CITIES STUDIOS**

**FROM: GREAT ECOLOGY**

**DATE: OCTOBER 10, 2019**

**PROJECT: MARTINEZ PARK MASTER PLAN**

**SUBJECT: ECOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT & TREE SURVEY**

---

### BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

Great Ecology was contracted by Livable Cities Studios on behalf of Denver Parks and Recreation (DPR) to perform an ecological evaluation to assess the overall ecological health of Martinez Park (Park) and the Lakewood Gulch riparian corridor between Tennyson Street and West 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue in Denver, CO ([FIGURE 1](#)). As part of the ecological assessment process, Great Ecology also performed a tree survey throughout the Park and riparian corridor to assess tree canopy cover, size, and overall condition. The goal of performing an ecological assessment of the Park and riparian corridor is to understand the general ecological condition and identify master planning level opportunities and constraints.

Great Ecology began the ecological assessment process by reviewing existing tree data and the Landscape Typology dataset from DPR to gain a thorough understanding of current conditions, opportunities, and challenges throughout the Park. Great Ecology visited the Park on August 19, 2019 to perform the ecological assessment and tree survey. Trees were surveyed using a Trimble submeter GPS unit and a tree diameter measuring tape.

### LANDSCAPE TYPOLOGY DATA

Landscape Typology is a DPR tool used to delineate different landscape types and assign a typology function score for the purposes of asset tracking and management. Typology function is scored with focus on species diversity, wildlife habitat, overall aesthetics, ecological connectivity, user trails, improper uses, noxious and invasive weed populations, visual water quality, root depth, root density, bank surface protection, bank angle, and bank height. Function is split into four levels (poor, fair, good, and excellent) based on the scores the area receives for the 14 focus areas. Overall, majority of the **upland landscapes** within Martinez Park are performing at a **fair function**, while majority of the **riparian landscapes** are performing at a **good function** ([FIGURE 2](#)). Based on Landscape Typology data, the landscapes within the Park are not performing at a higher function due to:

- **Wildlife Habitat** – primarily low in bluegrass and upland herbaceous areas;
- **Bank Angle** – primarily low where Lakewood Gulch is channelized with boulders ([PHOTO 1](#));
- **Bank Height** - primarily low where Lakewood Gulch is channelized with boulders ([PHOTO 1](#));
- **Ecological Connectivity** – low due to a narrow riparian corridor and lack of proximity to large open spaces or greenways;
- **User Trails** – several user trails throughout the southern portion of the Park ([PHOTO 2](#)); and
- **Improper Uses** – trash and misuse occur throughout the southern portion of the Park.

[PHOTO 1: BOULDER LINED CHANNEL](#)



[PHOTO 2: SOCIAL TRAIL THROUGH UPLAND AREA](#)



**Bluegrass communities** (lawn and forest) are **dominant** throughout the Park covering **54.8%** of the assessment area, while **riparian forested communities** are dominant throughout the riparian corridor covering **13.3%** of the assessment area ([TABLE 1](#)). Non-native upland herbaceous communities are primarily limited to the areas south of Lakewood Gulch and are dominated by smooth brome (*Bromus inermis*) and crested wheatgrass (*Agropyron cristatum*). These areas lack substantial tree cover. Native upland herbaceous areas exhibit good species diversity and include western wheatgrass (*Pascopyrum smithii*), thickspike wheatgrass (*Elymus lanceolatus*), green needlegrass (*Nassella viridula*), and sideoats grama (*Bouteloua curtipendula*). Riparian forested communities were often dominated by eastern cottonwood (*Populus deltoides*), plains cottonwood (*Populus sargentii*), boxelder (*Acer negundo*), and Siberian elm (*Ulmus pumila*).

[TABLE 1: DISTRIBUTION OF HABITAT TYPES](#)

Habitat Type	Habitat Subtype	Area (ac)	Percent of Park
Bluegrass Lawn	NA	6.06	43.5%
Bluegrass Forested	NA	1.58	11.3%
Surface Water	NA	0.72	5.2%
Riparian Forested	Cottonwood	0.99	7.1%
	Mixed-woodland	0.86	6.2%
Disturbed Area	NA	0.02	0.1%
Upland Herbaceous	Native mixed	1.89	13.6%
	Non-native	1.40	10.0%
Upland Forested	NA	0.42	3.0%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>13.94</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

## GENERAL ECOLOGICAL CONDITIONS

Overall, bluegrass communities are performing as designed throughout the Park but contain some non-native species such as common dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*), white clover (*Trifolium repens*), and prostrate knotweed (*Polygonum aviculare*). **Noxious weed species** were also observed within the bluegrass areas and include **field bindweed (*Convolvulus arvensis*; List C) and Canada thistle (*Cirsium arvense*; List B)** (PHOTO 3). Native upland areas are generally performing well but contain similar noxious weed species and abundance as the bluegrass areas.

PHOTO 3: THISTLE AND FIELD BINDWEED WITHIN UPLAND HERBACEOUS AREA



The **riparian corridor is functioning well but is extremely narrow** with a very limited floodplain due to the steep slopes that exist throughout the corridor. Because of the constricted nature of the corridor, flows likely reach high velocities during storm events and cause **erosion throughout** the reach. In some areas, the grouted boulders used to stabilize the banks of Lakewood Gulch are being undermined and their structural integrity has diminished. During large rain events, the water level rises above the trail in some areas and deposits large volumes of sediment under the Tennyson Street and Perry Street bridges.

Following these events, maintenance crews move the excess sediment off the trail adjacent to the stream. Additionally, the **riparian areas** contain **noxious weeds** in varying densities including **field bindweed, houndstongue (*Cynoglossum officinale*; List B), and Canada thistle**. While not required by State law to eradicate these species, it is important to monitor and control these species to achieve the design intent of the master plan.

A total of **41 tree species with 361 individuals**, including hybrids and subspecies, have been identified throughout Martinez Park and the majority of trees observed are doing well. Eastern cottonwoods are the most common tree observed within the Park followed by boxelders, which both primarily exist within the riparian corridor. **Several planted cottonwoods have died** in the area between Perry Street and West 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue south of Lakewood Gulch (FIGURE 2). It appears the cottonwoods were planted too far up slope of the stream without sufficient irrigation to survive. These dead cottonwoods should be **removed and replaced** with species that can tolerate limited moisture availability. **Siberian elms are present in large quantities** throughout the riparian corridor in various stages of maturity. Siberian elm is a tree species native to eastern Asia; however, it has limited competitors within Colorado allowing it to spread aggressively. **Crack willow (*Salix fragilis*)** is also present throughout the corridor but is not as abundant as Siberian elm. Crack willow, like Siberian elm, is a non-native species that spreads aggressively and displaces native tree species. **Control of these invasive tree species is important to preserve ecological integrity throughout the riparian corridor.** Removal of trees should be carefully communicated to the community as some individual trees are quite large and cutting them down could upset park users even though they're non-native species.

A desktop analysis of tree canopy cover and benefits was performed through iTree, a tool developed by the USDA Forest Service to analyze benefits of urban and rural forestry, to assess the current benefits of the existing tree canopy. Based on the iTree analysis, Martinez Park contains **29.1% ( $\pm 1.44\%$ ) canopy cover** by trees and **70.9% ( $\pm 1.44\%$ ) cover by non-tree surfaces** such as grass, shrubs, sidewalk, and surface water. The trees within the Park sequester roughly **24 tons, or 48,000 pounds, of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) annually**. Additionally, the trees in Martinez Park remove approximately 5 pounds of carbon monoxide (CO), 75 pounds of nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>), and 155 pounds of ozone (O<sub>3</sub>) annually. While this analysis does not take into account tree species, which may

impact sequestration rates, it can be used as a high-level planning tool and a benchmark of the ecological services provided by the trees currently within the Park.

## OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

Based on the current conditions of Martinez Park, several opportunities and constraints exist. **Removal of non-native and noxious species** throughout the Park should be prioritized first as removal of these species will make other opportunities, such as bluegrass conversions, easier to achieve. **Removal of Siberian elms and dead trees** throughout the Park should also be prioritized. The numerous dead cottonwood trees planted in the western portion of the Park should be replaced with upland species that can tolerate drier conditions. If cottonwoods are desired in this area, they should be planted further downslope, adjacent to Lakewood Gulch, to ensure survival. Although beaver dams were not observed throughout this reach of Lakewood Gulch, evidence of beaver activity was noted. New trees planted within the riparian corridor should include beaver fencing to ensure survival.

Bluegrass communities make up majority of the landscape at Martinez Park and some areas represent **excellent conversion opportunities**. Specifically, areas with steep slopes and uneven ground surfaces should be selected for conversion (**FIGURE 3**). These areas are not actively used for recreation or relaxation and conversion would decrease water usage and maintenance costs while improving biodiversity. These areas include the **hillslope north of the ballfield** (**PHOTO 4**), **the hillslopes south of Lakewood Gulch**, and depending on usage, **the uneven field east of the playground**, highlighted on **FIGURE 3**. We recommend seeding these areas with native species already found within the Park such as western wheatgrass, sideoats grama, and blue grama (*Bouteloua gracilis*), amongst others, to create a consistent look within native grass areas. The goal is to create a high function, low maintenance landscape that meets the needs of the community stakeholders.

The riparian buffer throughout this reach of Lakewood Gulch is extremely narrow. **Buffer expansion**, where feasible, could benefit the larger system by **increasing flood attenuation, expanding wildlife habitat, and improving water quality**. Specifically, the area east of the playground should be considered for a trail re-alignment to allow for riparian buffer expansion. This process would involve grading the slope back to a gentler angle which will expand the floodplain and reduce velocities during large rain events, decreasing erosion potential downstream. The current trail alignment and the narrow nature of Martinez Park also represents a constraint to the master plan. The slopes of Lakewood Gulch are steep and create a constricted floodplain; however, there is not enough space in most areas for a trail re-alignment to expand the floodplain. Additionally, even if trail re-alignment was possible in other areas throughout the reach, the bridges at Tennyson Street, Perry Street, and West 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue constrict the floodplain severely and would be extremely costly to alter.

Although there is an abundance of trees within the riparian corridor of Lakewood Gulch, there are expansive upland areas that could benefit ecologically and aesthetically from **planting additional trees**. The area northwest of the Perry Street and West 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue intersection and the area that abuts Newton Street in the east are consumed with non-native species and noxious weeds and contain **little to no tree cover**. The non-native and noxious species should be removed from these areas and seeded with a native grass and forb mix. Tree species such as Austrian pine (*Pinus nigra*), pinyon pine (*Pinus*

PHOTO 4: BLUEGRASS AREA FOR CONVERSION



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*edulis*), Scotch pine (*Pinus sylvestris*), bur oak (*Quercus macrocarpa*), flowering crabapple (*Malus sylvestris*), flowering pear (*Pyrus calleryana*), and Douglas fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*) should be considered for these upland areas as they require less irrigation than other trees found throughout the Park. The area south of the Stuart Street cul de sac should also be considered for additional tree plantings of similar species and potentially a trail that meanders down the slope and connects the cul de sac to the Park's trail system (FIGURE 3). This area could be turned into a miniature arboretum with a diverse tree planting plan.

## CONCLUSIONS

Martinez Park is highlighted by an **abundance of bluegrass communities** and a **constricted riparian corridor** with several opportunities to improve the ecological integrity of the Park. **Bluegrass conversions** to native grasses and forbs in areas that are not activated for recreation should be a high priority to improve overall biodiversity, natural aesthetics, and reduce long-term maintenance costs. The combination of a constrained riparian corridor and the abundance of Siberian elms represents an opportunity and a constraint for the project. There is minimal opportunity to expand the floodplain and create a wider riparian corridor, but at least **one area has been identified for floodplain expansion** and there could be others depending on the desire to improve floodplain connectivity. The **removal of dead and undesirable trees** should be considered to prevent non-native, invasive tree species from further colonizing the riparian areas surrounding Lakewood Gulch. Several areas have been highlighted as opportunities to **plant additional trees** to create a more inviting aesthetic and achieve DPR's Game Plan goal of protecting and expanding tree cover in Denver.

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## Martinez Park

Figure 1

Landscape Typologies

10/09/2019

West 10th Avenue



**GREATEcology**  
ENVIRONMENT • DESIGN



## Martinez Park

Figure 2

### Ecological Existing Conditions

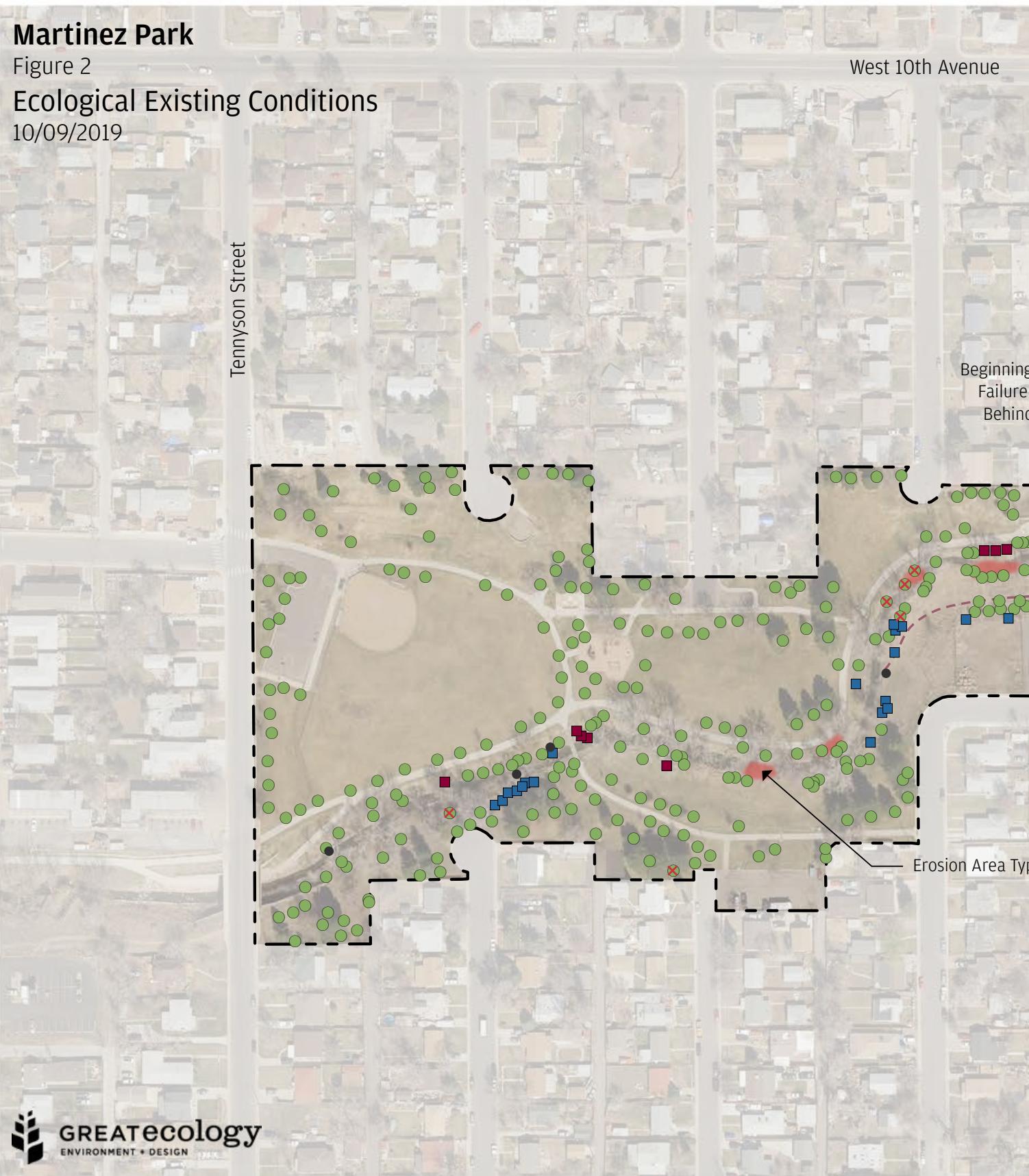
10/09/2019

West 10th Avenue

Tennyson Street

Beginning  
Failure  
Behind

Erosion Area Typ





## Martinez Park

Figure 3

### Ecological Opportunities & Constraints

10/09/2019

West 10th Avenue

Noxi

Increase  
Diversity

Pr

Floodplain Conne



**GREATecology**  
ENVIRONMENT • DESIGN



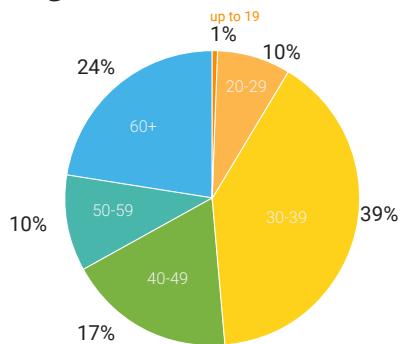
# PUBLIC OUTREACH DOCUMENTS

## PUBLIC MEETING #1 ONLINE SURVEY

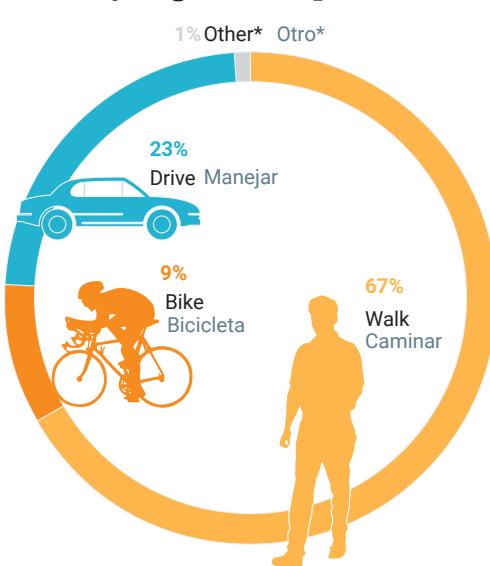
### Survey Background

The survey was open from September 9 to November 8, 2019.

#### Age Distribution



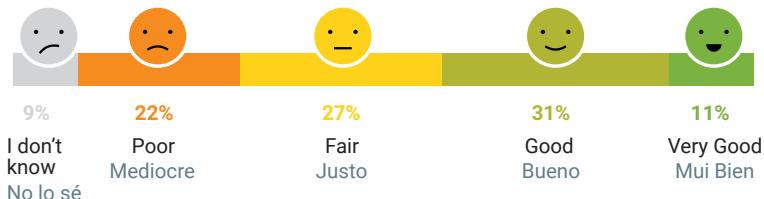
#### How do you get to the park?



**160**  
Responses  
respuestas

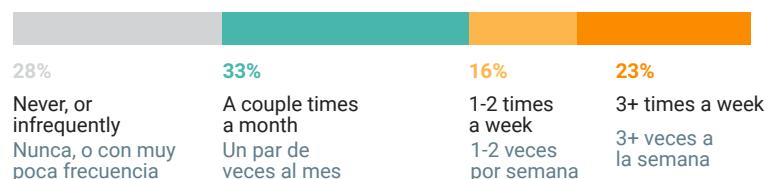
#### How would you rate the current overall conditions of park amenities?

¿Cómo calificaría las condiciones generales actuales de los servicios del parque?



#### How often do you visit Martinez Park?

¿Con qué frecuencia visitas Martinez Park?



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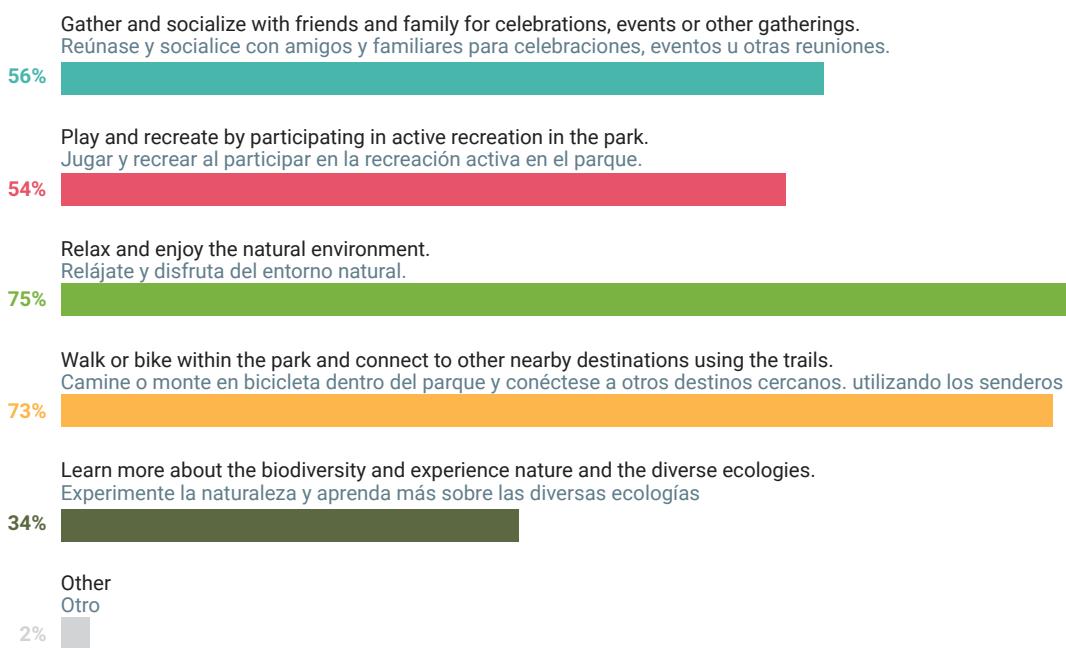
## What are the most important characteristics/values of Martinez Park?

¿Cuáles son las características / valores más importantes de Martinez Park?



## How do you want to use and enjoy the park?

¿Cómo quieres usar y disfrutar el parque?



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## What amenities do you use at Martinez Park today?

¿Qué comodidades utilizas hoy en Martinez Park?



## What is your least favorite place or feature in the park?

¿Cuál es su lugar o característica menos favorita?



## What is your most favorite place or feature in the park?

¿Cuál es tu lugar o característica favorita?



## PUBLIC MEETING #1 FLYER



### Joseph P. Martinez Park Master Plan

## Public Meeting #1

Please join us for the first public meeting to re-imagine Martinez Park! Drop in to explore what we have found in our existing conditions analysis, give input on the significance of the Joseph P. Martinez memorial and share your hopes and desires for the park.

**Refreshments will be provided.**

**Thursday, Nov 21, 2019  
5:30-7:00pm  
Cowell Elementary School**

School Cafeteria

4540 W 10th Ave, Denver, CO 80204

Spanish language interpretation services will be provided.

A sign language interpreter or CART will be provided upon request. Three business days' notice is requested. Contact [SignLanguageServices@denvergov.org](mailto:SignLanguageServices@denvergov.org)

For any other public accommodation requests/concerns, [DisabilityAccess@denvergov.org](mailto:DisabilityAccess@denvergov.org)

For more information visit [www.denvergov/parkprojects](http://www.denvergov/parkprojects) or email [anaclaudia.magalhaes@denvergov.org](mailto:anaclaudia.magalhaes@denvergov.org)

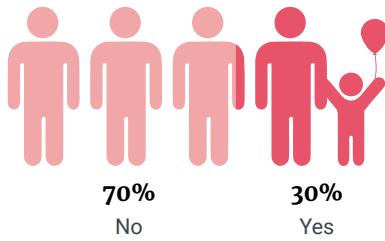
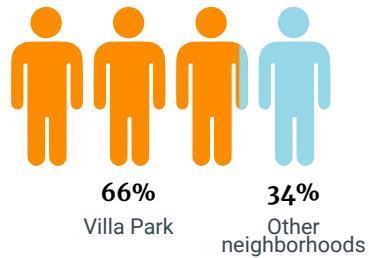
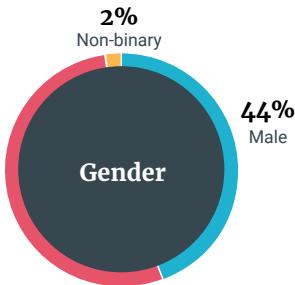
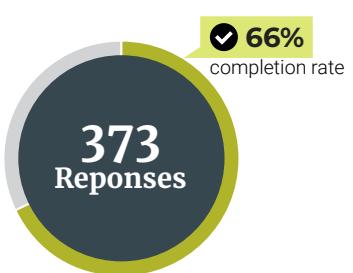


## PUBLIC MEETING #2 ONLINE SURVEY

### Joseph P Martinez Park Survey 2 Summary

Survey Respondents Demographic

Data as of 8/9/20



#### Neighborhoods

Almost 3 out of 4 respondents live in the Villa Park neighborhood

#### Children at Home

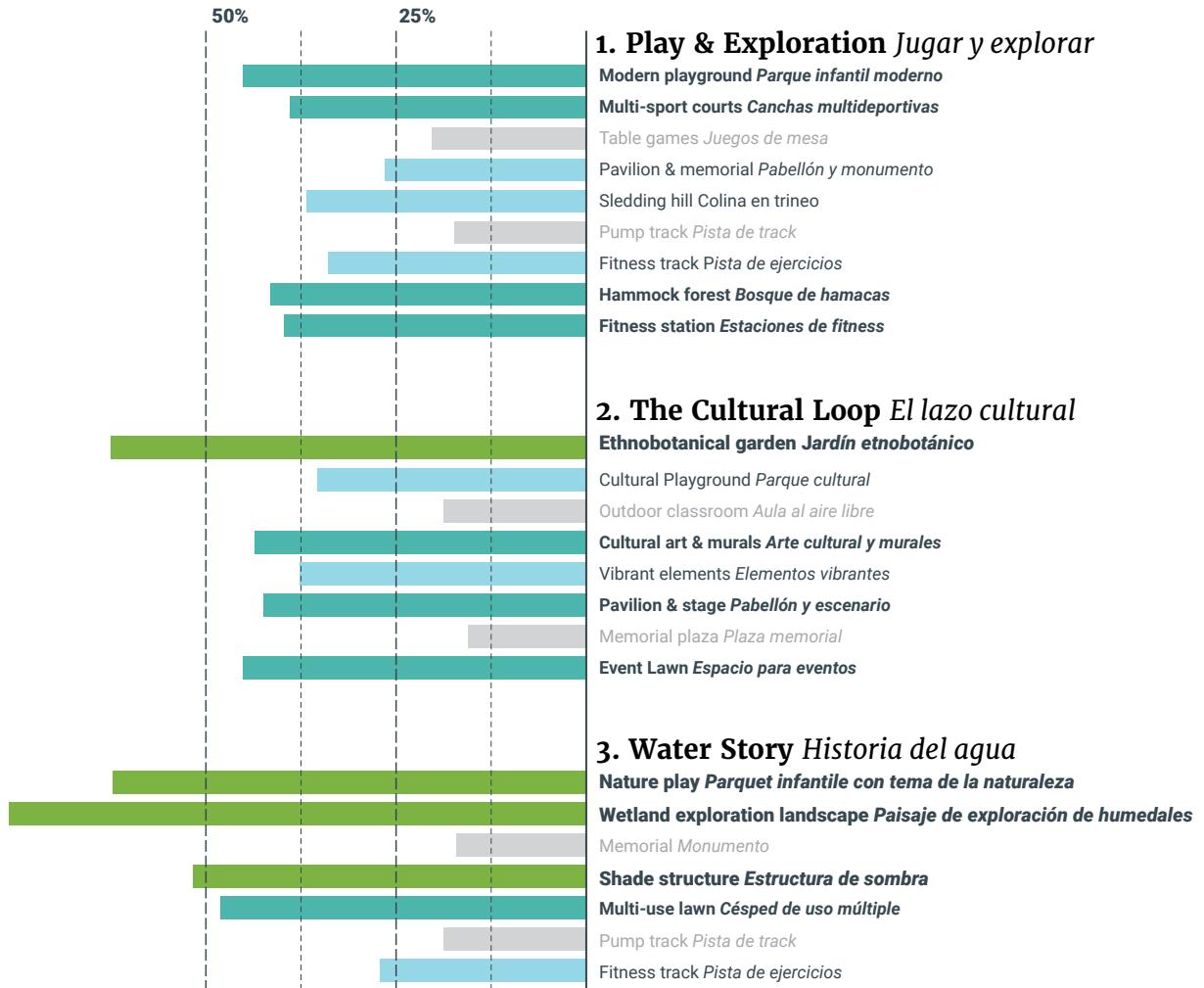
Almost 3 out of 4 respondents do not have kids younger than 18 years old

#### Languages Spoken At Home

9 different languages were reported by the respondents. With majority of respondents speaking English and/or Spanish at home

Joseph P Martinez Park Survey 2 Summary

Data as of 8/9/20

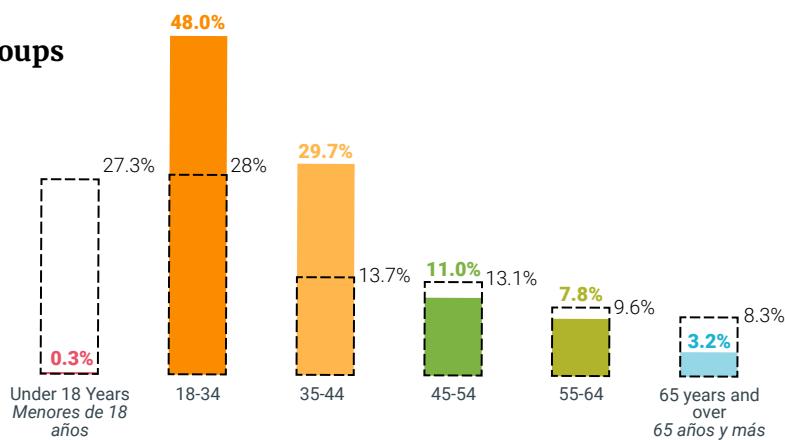


The following data compares some key demographics of Villa Park residents to the demographic information of those who completed the survey

## Demographic: Age Groups

█ Survey Demographic Data  
█ 2017 Villa Park Demographic Data

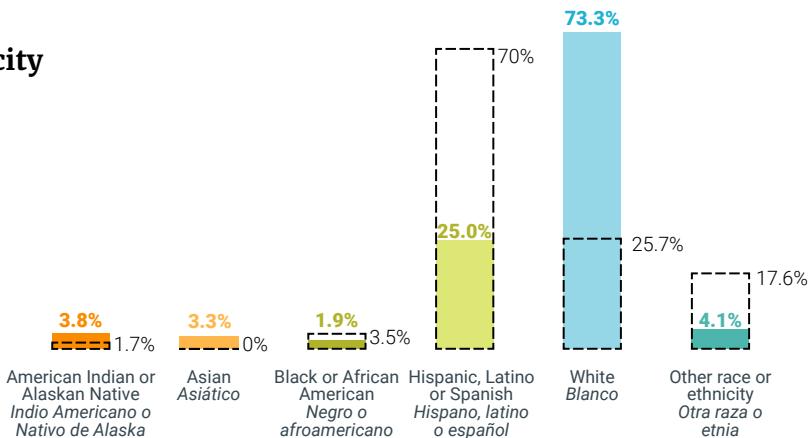
77% of respondents are in the 18 - 44 age range. That is approximately 3 out of 4 respondents in the survey.



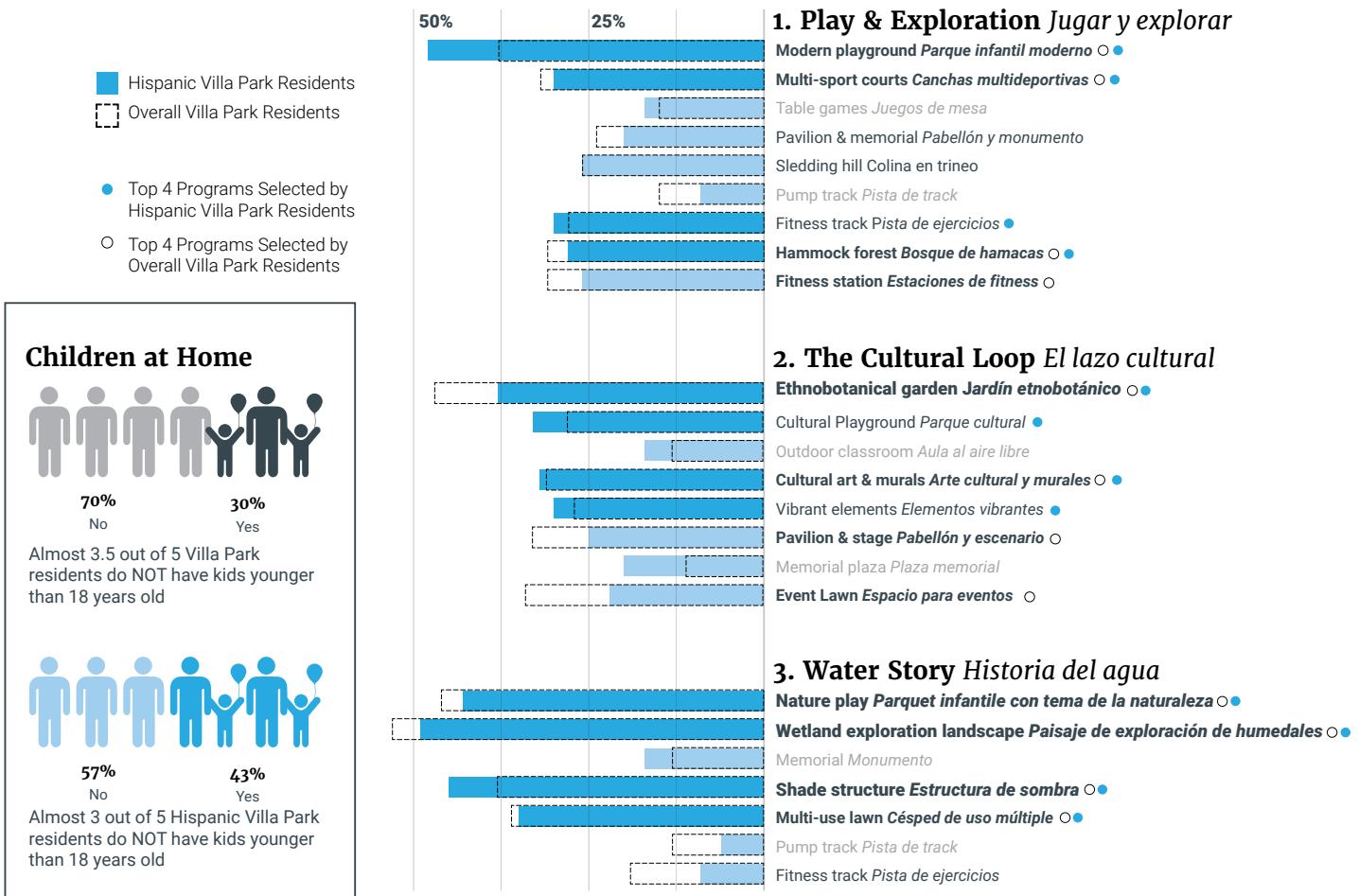
## Demographic: Ethnicity

█ Survey Demographic Data  
█ 2017 Villa Park Demographic Data

74% of respondents identified as white. That is approximately 3 out of 4 respondents.



The following data compares the responses of all Villa Park residents to Hispanics/Latinos living in Villa Park. Survey responses of those who do not live in Villa Park are not reflected in the data below



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## PUBLIC MEETING #2 FLYER



### Joseph P. Martinez Park Master Plan

## Public Meeting #2

Please join us for the second public meeting to re-imagine Martinez Park! Drop in to explore draft alternatives and to provide feedback on what park uses and themes you would like to include in the park.

**Refreshments will be provided.**

**Thursday, Feb 11, 2020  
5:30-7:00pm  
Cowell Elementary School  
School Cafeteria**

4540 W 10th Ave, Denver, CO 80204

Spanish language interpretation services will be provided.

A sign language interpreter or CART will be provided upon request. Three business days' notice is requested. Contact [SignLanguageServices@denvergov.org](mailto:SignLanguageServices@denvergov.org)

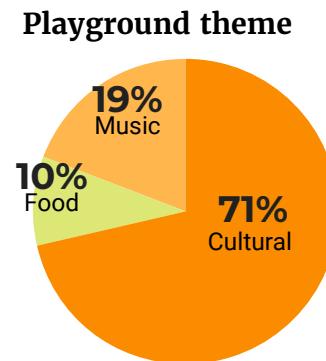
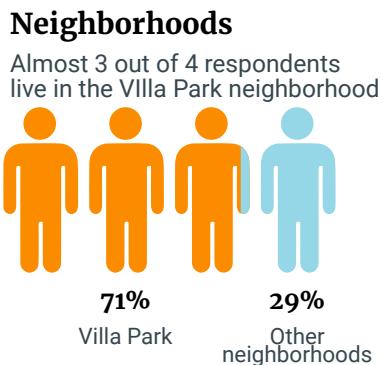
For any other public accommodation requests/concerns, [DisabilityAccess@denvergov.org](mailto:DisabilityAccess@denvergov.org)

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## PUBLIC MEETING #3 ONLINE SURVEY

### Joseph P Martinez Park Survey 3 Summary

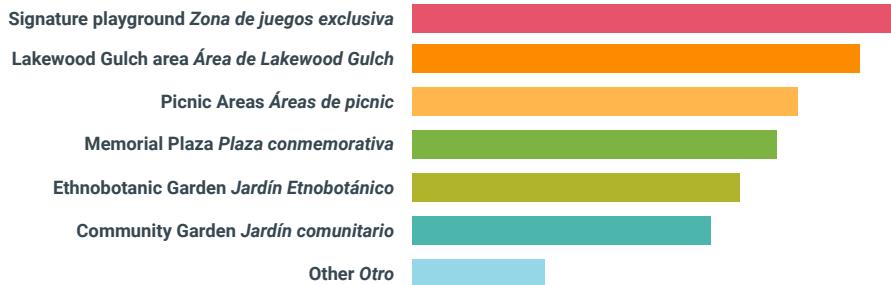


### Park Area Prioritization

#### Priority during Zoom Meeting

1. Memorial Plaza *Plaza conmemorativa*
2. Picnic Areas *Áreas de picnic*
3. Signature playground *Zona de juegos exclusiva*
4. Ethnobotanic Garden *Jardín Etnobotánico*
5. Lakewood Gulch area *Área de Lakewood Gulch*
6. Community Garden *Jardín comunitario*

#### Priority from Online Survey



## PUBLIC MEETING #3 FLYER



### Joseph P. Martinez Park Master Plan

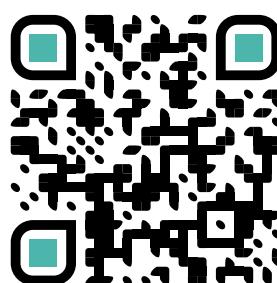
### Public Meeting #3 - Preferred Park Concept

Please join us for a virtual public meeting to re-imagine Martinez Park! See the preferred park concept plan and provide feedback on your priorities that will help inform future phasing and implementation.

**Thursday, September 24, 2020  
5:30-7:00pm  
Zoom Meeting**

Join us on your computer through the link below:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6555336153>



OR scan QR Code with your phone to access the virtual public meeting

For more information visit [www.denvergov.org/parkprojects](http://www.denvergov.org/parkprojects) or email [anaclaudia.magalhaes@denvergov.org](mailto:anaclaudia.magalhaes@denvergov.org)

Spanish language interpretation services will be provided.

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For any other public accommodation requests/concerns, [DisabilityAccess@denvergov.org](mailto:DisabilityAccess@denvergov.org)



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# MEETING NOTES

**Public Meeting #1  
Martinez Park Master Plan  
Cowell Elementary - 4540 W 10th Ave, Denver, CO 80204  
Thursday November 21, 2019  
5:30-7:00 p.m.**

## Meeting Summary

The public meeting consisted of a PowerPoint presentation, followed by open house format that allowed the public to review and comment on boards covering Joseph P. Martinez, the park context, permit data, trail use data, site observations, access & connectivity, recreation & active uses, landscape & ecology, and cultural & social topics for the park. The public gave their feedback by placing post-it notes on the boards.

The information below represents comments and feedback at the meeting:

## **GENERAL THEMES**

1. Desire for a bigger playground that incorporates a sombrero slide or something similar.
2. Desire for gathering areas, with shade shelters, picnic tables, and grills.
3. More seating and benches throughout the park
4. More lighting for safety
5. Desire for a permanent restroom and more trash receptacles
6. Making the park more accessible for seniors and people with disability
7. Managing off-leash dogs, provide signage and pet waste stations
8. Desire for educational signage about ecology and the landscape
9. Honoring Joseph P. Martinez and celebrate Hispanic and indigenous culture

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

At the station with park background information, the following feedback was provided:

1. **Most important elements about Joseph P. Martinez**
  - a. Share his bravery and initiative in the memorial. Incorporate the memorial with garden and provide seating area.
  - b. Permanently honor Joseph Martinez, and the contributions and history of Hispanic American and indigenous people on the west side of Denver
  - c. What's his connection to the neighborhood? Make a note on whether he is from Denver or lived in the neighborhood.
2. **Permit Data, Trail Use & Site Observation**
  - a. Provide informational sign at the park that includes permit cost and how to get apply for permit. People currently use the park for birthday parties and Easter.
  - b. Conduct site observation in the summer as well. More people bike and play basketball during summer months.

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## PARK CHALLENGE & OPPORTUNITIES

At the station highlighting challenges and opportunities, the following feedback was provided:

### 1. Access & Connectivity

- a. Make the park more accessible for seniors and people with disability (\*3)
- b. Signify park entrances with landscape design, such as large mature trees.
- c. Improve underpasses with mural and address flooding issue.

### 2. Recreation & Active Use

- a. Integrate the sombrero slide in the park (4)
- b. Bigger playground (4)
- c. Nature play that uses natural elements (2)
- d. Themed playground that celebrates the cultural identity of the neighborhood
- e. Recreational amenities such as basketball and futsal courts.
- f. Place basketball court close to playground, so big kids can watch over small kids

### 3. Ecology & Landscape

#### Desires

- a. Integrate educational opportunities and signage about riparian preservation, biodiversity, native plants, wildlife, and reforestation (5)
- b. Incorporate edible plants, such as community garden space, crabapples, and fruit trees. (4)
- c. Implement green infrastructure (3)
- d. Engage with and access to Lakewood Gulch (2)
- e. Recycling at all Denver parks

#### Concerns

- f. Monitor water quality and eliminate chemical fertilizers use in the park, so children can play in the water safely (2)
- g. Flooding close to homes, at lawn area and underpasses (2)
- h. Overgrown vegetation near gulch and trails impedes visibility and poses as safety concern

### 4. Cultural & Social

#### Desires

- a. Provide more amenities, such shade shelters with electric outlets, picnic tables, grills, mini-stage, and benches (15)
- b. Large area for gathering, such concerts, movies, birthday parties and jumpy castle. (4)
- c. Install more lights throughout the park (5)
- d. Permanent restroom in the park (2)

- 
- e. More trash receptacles and pet waste stations (3)
  - f. Consider expanding the theme from Osceola and 10<sup>th</sup> playground (2)
  - g. Integrate more murals and art into the park

#### Concerns

- a. Make sure park amenities are visible (2)
- b. Provide signage for dogs to be on leash and picking up after pets (2)

*\*reflects the number of comments received for that specific topic*

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**Public Meeting #2**  
**Martinez Park Master Plan**  
**Cowell Elementary - 4540 W 10th Ave, Denver, CO 80204**  
**Tuesday February 11, 2020**  
**5:30-7:00 p.m.**

### Meeting Summary

The public meeting consisted of a PowerPoint presentation, followed by open house format that allowed the public to review and comment on boards covering three alternative concepts for the park: Play & Exploration, The Cultural Loop, and Water Story. The public gave their feedback by answering what they like and concerned about each concept with post-it notes on the boards.

The information below represents comments and feedback at the meeting:

#### **GENERAL THEMES**

1. Make the park and park elements accessible to people of different ages, such as ADA paths, playground, picnic tables, and fitness stations.
2. Keep sledding hill in all options
3. More benches and picnic tables throughout the park
4. Clear visibility on all park elements
5. Provide multi-use lawn for gathering
6. Like the idea of multi-sports court for each option

#### **GENERAL COMMENTS**

- East entrance from Perry is not shown as activated in any alternatives. Parks needs more "eyes" to be pleasant for safety concerns
- What type of wildlife is anticipated with the proposed improvements? Most species attracted to riparian areas area considered nuisance
- Plan for human access out of alleys on the north side. It already happens.
- Concern about S. Raleigh parking lot. Would like to see improvement of this lot
- More trash cans and poop dispensaries
- Do not make this an athletic priority park. Make it equally accessible for athletic and other organized activities
- Round vs. rectangle tables – less lonely if one person is sitting on a round table – more approachable
- Need electric plugs to park available in multiple places for when activity occur

---

## ALTERNATIVE 1: PLAY & EXPLORATION

### What do you like about this concept?

- Most interest in this option is fitness/athletic (walk dogs, bike). Build upon this theme to have similar activities (cookouts, jungle gym, fields)
- Focus on park should be kid activities. Adults mostly bike/walk. Kids have more free time and a lot live nearby. Make Martinez Park a kid destination. Like Wash Park, but for kids.
- I like the open green space
- I like the fitness elements but maybe adding less and more of the nature play stuff
- Appreciate the addition of benches, pavilions, etc. Please try to place them where they are visible to law enforcement
- Play space is more free form/adventure like
- Like using and enhancing the playground area
- Would like to combine the cultural Martinez monument and shelter with the plan
- Like playground and sledding hill
- Playground with new updated equipment. Soft rubber material or foam base. Bench seating around playground.
- Full basketball court outside of parking lot

### What concerns you about this concept?

- The playgrounds on the hill are too removed from main area, would feel quiet/boring
- Too similar to current layout, which is not working
- Musical elements in this would be cool
- Making sure all neighbors could use it. Elderly and in a wheelchair should be able to use fitness elements too
- Please make sure fitness stations are usable by folks in wheelchairs, walkers, canes, etc. as well as the elders.
- Shelter at South Raleigh St – this was a basketball court in past, but people played too late making neighbors angry. Put in non-late-night activity such as community garden with lights out at 10PM.
- More creek crossings
- I like two shelters in this design, wish they had more Tennyson visibility
- Quitman & 9<sup>th</sup> Ave – chokecherries, blue berries, raspberries. Move shelter to the northside so it's not blocking sun from the community garden
- Garden to be shared with homeless residents. Free to harvest edible foliage
- Ping pong tables – do people have to bring their own paddles/balls?
- North Stuart St. dead-end - Perfect spot for edible forest with south facing and lot of south exposure

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## ALTERNATIVE 2: THE CULTURAL LOOP

### What do you like about this concept?

- Incorporating the sombrero. Nod to the past
- Incorporate local art into design – more than 1% public art

- 
- This has a great balance between the programmed spaces
  - The garden and formal entrance are great. More culture! Loop would be fun to explore
  - Garden! Yes, fruit trees! Native planting!
  - Love idea of introducing native plants!
  - Fruit and berry trees for foraging!!!
  - Community garden – yes, please!
  - Love community garden & fruit orchard (4)
  - Like the idea of memorial using light
  - Yes! Especially if we can have anti-graffiti paint
  - Really like classroom and cultural art!
  - Lots of seating and benches (and trash cans) for cooking meetups
  - Formal plaza would be cool
  - Plaza – add quotes on the floor. Get community to identify quotes

#### **What concerns you about this concept?**

- Can cultural loop have multicourt?
- Way too complicated. Too much of a change
- Concerned about maintenance of court paint.
- I like some cultural, but not the entire park. Concern about graffiti, that is popular around here and is discouraging
- Garden and trees need care to be kept healthy
- I'm concerned about center of the plan not having an activity area. Seconded.
- Concern community garden might not have on going participation to keep it going. Can it have some ethnobotanical garden elements?
- Make lawn multi-use. Have benches around multi-use lawn
- Can we have a secondary & big pavilion or shelters?
- Make space for sledding
- Like to see the memorial plaza oriented NW and pull the playground to the south of the plaza
- Not sombrero slide, too dangerous
- Would like to have more options for the community garden idea, perhaps other game area or exercise area

#### **ALTERNATIVE 3: WATER STORY**

#### **What do you like about this concept?**

- Like the connection to the creek and enhancing the connecting loop
- I like the open lawn/ multi-use area. Simpler than cultural loop. The community garden is great. Will it have water?
- The wetland exploration landscape is the strongest desirable aspect of alt 3
- Would like to see improvements that connect to the open space between Newton to 10<sup>th</sup> Ave
- Riparian is important! Good lawn still
- Nature play – like this one!

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- Expand and improve water & riparian
  - Wetland exploration – I love this idea just worry about the cleanliness of the gulch

#### **What concerns you about this concept?**

- Water in the gulch isn't good to play in. Needs to be kept clean
- The reduction of the playground area
- This is harder to build community and common interests in a public space
- Water destroys infrastructures. More trash would end up in/near water which is bad
- Tables and picnic areas should be in visible locations
- Shelter on North Quitman St cannot see play area – concern about shelters and tables here, it's hidden

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**Public Meeting #3**  
**Martinez Park Master Plan**  
**Virtual Zoom Meeting**  
**Thursday September 24, 2020**  
**5:30-7:00 p.m.**

### Meeting Summary

The public meeting consisted of a presentation with a few live polling questions throughout and an open Q&A at the end. The intent was to gather feedback on the preferred concept design and prioritization to inform phasing of implementation.

The information below represents comments, questions, and feedback at the meeting:

#### **GENERAL THEMES**

1. Positive feedback on the design and the programmatic elements that are aligned with the community feedback throughout the process
2. Overall excitement to see the park built
3. Preference for the playground theme to be culturally focused (per polling results)

#### **GENERAL COMMENTS + FEEDBACK**

*The following includes notes from Q/A session recorded with public question and design team response immediately after.*

- Where is the regional trail/ bike path located?
  - Trail connections cut through the park will remain in approximately the same location with improvements to surfacing, marking and crossings proposed. The alignment for the multi-use trail is proposed to shift away from the gulch near the east lawn to give more space for people to enjoy access to the water area.
- How can the design deter vandalism? Has this been considered?
  - Location of the memorial on the west adjacent to Tennyson was deliberate to put eyes on the space from the street. The existing memorial is less visible within the park and has been subject to vandalism. Additionally, programs have been clustered by function yet distributed to activate many of the parks underutilized spaces safety. Finally, lighting at entries and throughout key nodes is planned for to both enhance experience while fostering a safe environment.
- How long are the benches? Will there be a skate deterrent?
  - The memorial benches proposed are large at up to 30' – 40' long and are at 18" H.

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- Though the approach has not been fully determined the benches will have some deterrent for skating built into them, whether notches and depressions within the form or inserted metal skate stops.
  - Will there be senior focused programs in the park?
    - Yes, the proposed plan creates a series of ADA walking loops through the park. These offer varying lengths and slope. In addition, fitness stations are proposed on the west side of the park to allow for easy access from Tennyson St and parking. Benches and seating are also provided throughout the park.
  - How can we deter homeless from camping at the gulch?
    - The current park has many spaces that are not activated and offer shade and shelter while remaining out of sight. While the proposed plan does not activate every space within the park it seeks to distribute program and open up viewsheds that will passively discourage this behavior. Increased visibility will also enable park rangers to more effectively manage use within the park. Mile High Flood District will be doing tree maintenance which will improve visibility in the waterway.
  - Will trees and other vegetation be prioritized early in phasing as they can take a long time to establish?
    - Revegetation of areas that will be cleared of invasive will be a phased effort with initial clearing potentially occurring in 2021. Where it makes sense the team would hope to plant and revegetate areas during phase 1. Ultimately, construction phasing of the park by area will largely dictate when planting may occur.
  - How deep is the water at the gulch?
    - The gulch shown in the rendering is from a photo taken in the beginning of September. The proposed park plan does not plan to alter the volume of water within the gulch at any point during the year or modify the centerline of the channel.
  - I live near the Tennyson entry. How will the construction impact the Tennyson and other streets?
    - Parks will manage traffic control and scheduling as with any other construction project and will coordinate streets closures to minimize impact on the community.

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**Steering Committee Meeting #1**  
**Martinez Park Master Plan**  
**900 Raleigh Street, Denver, CO 80204**  
**Wednesday September 4, 2019**  
**3:45 - 5:15 p.m.**

Meeting Notes

**1. General Feedback**

- a. Committee would like to see more activation in the park and potential partnering with local non-profits. Currently, the park is more of a pass-thru with no reason for people to stop.
- b. Interest in activating the park but expanding on the natural elements that exist today.
- c. Need to engage with the aging communities and address their needs, such as adding more benches to the park.
- d. Universal accessibility needs to be addressed in the design.
- e. Park is very dark at night, and there is a desire to improve pedestrian lighting throughout the park.
- f. People park at the ends of streets for events which is hard for neighbors. Parking on the south side of the park at Raleigh St. could be better utilized but needs resurfacing.
- g. The sloped areas are popular for sledding in the winter.

**2. Joseph P. Martinez Memorial**

- a. Original memorial was a concrete statue that eventually broke. Would like to see this made out of a different material in the future, possibly bronze.
- b. Desire for making the memorial an educational opportunity for kids about war history, medal of honor, etc.
- c. Would like to see the flagpole more prominent and not covered by the tree.
- d. Opportunity to make the memorial serve multiple functions. Could be a community gathering area (or stage) with a covered shelter over part of it in addition to the memorial. This could be an area of remembrance and celebration for the community.

**3. Basketball**

- a. This is a very highly used amenity in the park, especially during weekends.
- b. There used to be another basketball court at dead-end of Raleigh but was removed due to the lingering at night and the associated noise.

**4. Baseball Field**

- a. Currently used more as a dog play area or soccer field.
- b. Committee would like to understand how often it gets used with a permit.
- c. Opportunity for this to become a multi-purpose field that could be used for soccer and other sports.

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## **5. Playground**

- a. Playground gets used but it's not very exciting or fun. Equipment is old.
- b. More people go to Paco Sanchez to play.
- c. There was a very popular and memorable sombrero slide play area at the end of Stuart St. Neighbors have photos of this.

## **6. Lakewood Gulch**

- a. Need to clear out some vegetation to provide more views and openness to the gulch area.
- b. Opportunity to create natural terraces and stepping stones down to the water and allow community to engage with the water and overall ecosystem. This could happen near the playground making the whole area visible and inviting.
- c. Opportunity for educational and interpretive signage.

## **7. Other Potential Uses and Needs**

- a. Strong desire for more benches around the park.
- b. Desire for recycle bins.
- c. Interested in a community garden and collaborating with a school on this.
- d. Need pet waste stations and signage to keep dogs on leash.
- e. Desire for the park to be accommodating to events at multiple scales, from small gatherings to large community gatherings and events.
- f. Desire for local community public art.

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**Steering Committee Meeting #2**  
**Martinez Park Master Plan**  
**Cowell Elementary - 4540 W 10th Ave, Denver, CO 80204**  
**Tuesday October 22, 2019**  
**5:30-7:00 p.m.**

**Meeting Notes**

The Steering Committee meeting consisted of a PowerPoint presentation, followed by small group discussion on maps covering access & connectivity, recreation & active uses, landscape & ecology, and cultural & social topics for the park. During the presentation, the Committee offered general feedback, and during the small group discussion, they provided specific comments on the maps.

The information below represents comments and feedback at the meeting:

**1. General Feedback**

- a. Provide the park acreage in Villa Park and locations within a 5- and 10-minute walk
- b. Provide additional detail about Barnum Park picnic site utilization, including whether it is full booked all season and/or when there is availability
- c. Questioned the number of people at night on the trail and whether there are any police calls about the park at night
- d. Expand map extents west to include the trail connection to Wolff St.

**2. Access & Connectivity**

- a. Southern parking lot in poor condition. Parking may not be needed but may need to keep it for services going down the alley
- b. Consider treatment at end of the alleys
- c. Consider access point and overlook at north Stuart St dead-end
- d. Consider treatment to residential edges at the park
- e. Add entry signs at park entrances – Perry St, Tennyson St, and Raleigh St.

**3. Recreation & Active Uses**

- a. Lots of casual pickup games happening on the field and within the open lawn
- b. Provide interior loops in the park, with larger and smaller loop options. Consider another crossing of the gulch within a larger park loop. There was a low-flow crossing of the gulch at one point.
- c. Consider exercise stations

**4. Landscape & Ecology**

- a. Desire to improve landscape and overall ecology so that wildlife lives within park
- b. Desire for access to the gulch near lawn area so that people can enjoy the water
- c. Provide educational signage as there are lots of school activities in the park
- d. Desire for chokecherry grove and American Plum
- e. Remove understory plantings and dead trees to decrease hidden areas

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- f. Integrate play with water

## 5. Cultural & Social

- a. Interest in having community gardens in area south of the gulch between Perry and Quitman where storage yard was located. Also, potential opportunity for community gardens in vacant lot along Newton St.
- b. Need to analyze timing of the lights so the park stays illuminated. East side of the park, between Perry St. and Quitman St., is very dark and needs lighting
- c. Desire for permittable picnic area with shade structure. This area needs to be accessible.
- d. Desire for permanent restroom, not just a portable restroom
- e. Include a plaza that can also double as a stage
- f. Add dog waste stations and provide rules and regulation signage for dogs in park

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**Steering Committee Meeting #3**  
**Martinez Park Master Plan**  
**Cowell Elementary - 4540 W 10th Ave, Denver, CO 80204**  
**Wednesday, January 29, 2020**  
**5:30-7:00 p.m.**

**Meeting Notes**

The Steering Committee meeting consisted of a PowerPoint presentation, followed by small group discussion reviewing the 3 concept alternatives. During the presentation, the Committee offered general feedback, and during the group discussion, they provided specific comments on the maps.

The information below represents comments and feedback at the meeting:

**1. General Feedback**

- a. Desire for pollinator gardens within the park
- b. Memorial Park in Arvada was mentioned as a good park to visit that incorporates water and culture and other elements
- c. Consider expanding the designated park area to the east to include area up to 10<sup>th</sup> Ave.
- d. For gulch areas to the east and the west, there was a strong desire to focus on signage, visibility and maintenance of trees and plant material

**2. Alternative 1: Play and Recreation**

- a. Like the universal sports court

**3. Alternative 2: Cultural Loop**

- a. Strong interest in celebrating the native communities and indigenous cultures
- b. Consider incorporating plant material like sage, chokecherry, tobacco, corn, beans and squash

**4. Alternative 3: Water Story**

- a. Like the stepping-stones crossing the water and channel area
- b. Consider an area for tubing
- c. Concern about the stormwater features due to culturally significant stories. The group suggested removing these features.

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**Steering Committee Meeting #4**  
**Martinez Park Master Plan**  
**Virtual Meeting**  
**Thursday, May 14, 2020**  
**6:30-7:30 p.m.**

**Meeting Notes**

The virtual Steering Committee meeting consisted of a PowerPoint presentation and discussion. The purpose of the meeting was to review the feedback to-date on the alternatives and discuss the best ways to gather additional feedback during the pandemic. The Committee offered general feedback on both the alternatives and the best ways for additional outreach.

The information below represents comments and feedback at the meeting:

**1. Alternative 1: Play and Recreation**

- a. Concern about gathering space and shelters at the dead-ends, especially Quitman, will create more of a parking problem. Residents currently don't have enough parking for their own cars. There is also a concern about late night gatherings and activities under the shade shelters.
- b. Dislike multi-sport court – current open lawn allows for more activity than a sports court
  - i. Concerned about sinking due to site being a previous landfill, and hardscape is not the best investment
  - ii. Not sure about pickleball for this neighborhood

**2. Alternative 2: Cultural Loop**

- a. If shelters are further away from residents, it may encourage people to gather in less visible areas. Police are slow to respond when residents call about issues.
- b. Current concerns about people squandering in resident's backyards already
- c. Need to engage park rangers to keep park safe
- d. 8th and Raleigh parking area has soil and erosion problem
- e. Doesn't seem like there are many play spaces and does not seem kid friendly.  
Overall desire to make the park very kid friendly.

**3. Alternative 3: Water Story**

- a. Believe water quality is very good. Much of the current debris is tree branches

**4. Alternative 3: Water Story**

- a. Facebook is only mode of communication – no digital reach
- b. Best way for the community to engage is to canvass, knocking on doors and providing free food
- c. Direct mailing – only 40 valid addresses out of 5000 people in this neighborhood
- d. Flyers should be placed on doors and not in the mailbox
- e. Put information on Cowell Facebook because the parents are very active.
  - i. Cowell also calls and texts parents

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**Steering Committee #5**  
**Martinez Park Master Plan**  
**Virtual Microsoft Teams Meeting**  
**Tuesday, September 15, 2020**  
**6:00-7:00 p.m.**

**Meeting Notes**

The virtual Steering Committee meeting consisted of a PowerPoint presentation and discussion. The purpose of the meeting was to review the preferred concept.

The information below represents comments and feedback at the meeting:

**1. General Feedback**

- a. Pavilion and plaza should have lighting for safety and to mark entry.
- b. Design team to develop a lighting strategy to show with public meeting.
- c. Lockable and outlets with shutoff would also be included in the plaza and pavilion.
- d. Structure is generous and open. 14' H, 4000 SF
- e. Pavilion space should have picnic tables and designated gathering area under the structure.
- f. Would be nice to strike a balance between fully covered vs. trellis/ open to sky.
- g. Could reference to water find its way into cultural play area? Maybe could help to inform/tie together the theme.
- h. Low flow crossing would be helpful to show an image to public to depict what it is and clarify expectations.
- i. Bathroom structure should be shown. Should be centrally located to active/intensive programmed spaces.
- j. Plan almost looks like a butterfly. Maybe could be explored in ethnobotanical area or on west with pollinator gardens.
- k. Like the activation of the park and maximizing use of space.
- l. Design seems to really incorporate the best of the initial concepts and comments (even the most obscure).
- m. Design really takes advantage of topography.
- n. Remove the colorful crosswalks at Perry, Tennyson and 9th. Replace with standard thick white bands for a pedestrian crossing.
- o. Show shade structure in central spot where paths connect.

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**Preferred Design Site Visit  
Martinez Park Master Plan  
Site Visit at Martinez Park  
Thursday, September 3, 2020  
1:00-3:30 p.m.**

**Meeting Notes**

A site visit with Denver Parks and Recreation, Forestry, and Mile High Flood District to discuss site constraints and opportunities for the preferred design concept. The site visit format includes walking around the park to review specific site conditions.

The information below represents comments and feedback at the meeting:

**1. General Feedback**

- a. FHAD and MDP for Lakewood Gulch are currently underway but will take years to complete. Our proposed changes can be incorporated into their work.
- b. MHFD suggested not realigning the CL of the channel due to reviews and approvals that take a long time
- c. MHFD suggested saying out of the “ordinary water line” in our design
- d. MHFD to work with Denver (through Denver maintenance money) on bank stabilization. Priority on South bank, east close to Raleigh alignment with existing failing gabions, but could possible opportunity to do banks along Northern channel edge where failing.
- e. MHFD has money and can do tree maintenance and clearing along the waterway this year
- f. From on-site assessment, gulch experience and access points should be “inserted” with intent to minimize change to existing grade adjacent to trees along bank. Two locations were identified around the channel bend between 3 groupings of mature existing cottonwoods. One additional opportunity was noted closer to the proposed bridge on E.
- g. Proposed bridge on E of park should be considered a low flow crossing and not full pedestrian bridge given relative elevation as compared to floodway.
- h. Regarding the existing trees, Forestry (Jim) suggested air spading the trees at the beginning of 30% design to inform decisions at that time. This process should be kept in mind moving from MP process into DD/CD phases.
- i. Livable Cities to show tree protection exhibit for all trees based on 18" per 1" caliper (CCD standard TPZ detail)
- j. Design beginning next year with construction in 2023 at the earliest
- k. City is working to get easements west of Tennyson through private property for access and maintenance in gulch areas.

