



PIONEER PARK Master Plan Update

NEWSLETTER

March 05, 2010

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NOTE:

The 3 Schematic
Plans and presenta-
tion slides for Public
Meeting 2 are avail-
able for download
from the PRPL web-
site. www.prpl.info/

Prepared By:



The Land Group, Inc.

Public Meeting 2 Summary

The second of two public meetings for receiving public input for the Pioneer Park Master Plan Update was held Tuesday evening March 2, 2010. The meeting started at 6:30 pm with a Power Point presentation followed by a public input session to receive written, verbal, and schematic plan specific input from those in attendance.

Staff and Consultants Present:

- Mike Whitaker - Director PRPL
- Joe Fedin - Recreation Superintendent
- Mark Jarvis - Parks Planner
- Jon Thompson - Parks Superintendent
- Stan Griswold - The Land Group, Inc.
- David Selvage - Planet Dynamics

Noted Attendees:

- City Mayor - Thomas Hanel.
- 1 City Council member - Peggy Gagen.
- 4 Parks, Recreation, and Cemetery Board members - Tom Iverson, Rick DeVore, Todd Royal, and Darwin George.

Approximate attendance based on sign-in sheets: 50.

Meeting attendees were given a comment sheet and three dot stickers upon arrival. The comment sheet was used for written comments and the dot stickers were used for identifying the attendee's most pre-

ferred program features shown on the three schematic plans presented.

A presentation was given by the consultants describing the master plan update process and how the public can give direction and input into the process. Then observations and recommendations were presented based on previous public and staff input and the resulting three schematic plan options were presented for public input. Following the presentation the public was given opportunity to speak with the consultants and staff to ask questions, and give verbal input. They were given opportunity to place three dot stickers on the three schematic plans identifying their top preferences of the concepts or ideas presented. The attendees were also encouraged to use their comment sheets to leave written comments for further assessment in the design process.

Of the fifty attendees twenty two turned in written comments. Disc-golf continues to be a major focus of many who attended the public meeting. Of the twenty two written comment sheets turned in, five are specifically opposed to keeping disc-golf in Pioneer Park, thirteen are specifically supportive of keeping disc-golf in Pioneer Park, and three comment sheets have no reference to disc-golf. One comment sheet is initially opposed to disc-golf but willing to see if management and redesign will aid in fixing the problems.

Summary of Comments Received

The following is a summary of the verbal and written comments received at the March 2, 2010 Public Meeting. The comments are not listed in any order or priority.

Much of the comments pertained to disc-golf in Pioneer Park. Some comments opposed to disc-golf referred to disc-golf as an illegal activity and that it should not be allowed to stay in the park so not to reward those who implemented the illegal activity, and it just does not belong in Pioneer Park. Others felt disc-golf users bring in and attract drug activity and sales, and that it has gotten so bad that even the police are afraid to go into Pioneer Park after dark. Some do not want disc-golf in the park because it damages the trees and turf, destroys the park beauty, intimidates and endangers other users, disrupts traffic, degrades the passive personal experience, and takes trees and creek away from rest of the public by dominating too much of the park. Some agreed management of the disc-golf problem is the key. Some would like to see designated managed disc-golf courses provided and disc-golf removed from Pioneer Park as they don't think it can be managed in Pioneer Park. One asked about establishing disc-golf in Spring Creek Park rather than Pioneer Park.

Those who returned comment sheets with specific comments in favor of disc-golf in Pioneer Park had various reasons why they are in favor of it. Some feel disc-golf contributes to the vitality of the community and the experience of Pioneer Park. Some stated disc-golf at Pioneer Park is so popular because it has unique and interesting terrain and it is centrally located and close to high schools and the college. Others stated disc-golf is good for the park as we need outdoor activities for all and that we need to keep places in our community for children and families alike. Some feel safer in the park with other eyes, users, disc-golfers there. Many stated support for the recommendations presented to keep and manage disc-golf in the park. They support redesigning the course to reduce conflicts and be more sustainable, reduce to 9 holes, developing courses in other parks to reduce demand at Pioneer Park, and developing rules and management policies and partnerships.

The returned comment sheets also had a variety of comments other than disc-golf related. The majority of comments support additional pathways in the park with a slight preference to providing wider pathways for safety and service. One respondent would like to see more police patrols within the park. Those who wish for smaller pathways are concerned of having too much impact in the park. Some like the northwest and northeast pathway additions specifically. Some like enhancing the promenade in the southeast portion of the park with benches and Billings Pioneer historical markers. Many would like to see benches used with the pathways. Many support using more picturesque bridges, structures, and signs, to help beautify the park.

Continued page 3....

Summary of Comments Received Continued...

The majority of comments are opposed to providing additional on-site parking in the park. More particularly they do not want to see parking in the southeast portion of the park. Those that are okay with parking there prefer the east-west oriented option. Several respondents who live next to the park commented that the parking is adequate and they would not want to see green space taken in the park for a parking lot. Some mentioned they would rather see on-street parking return on Parkhill Drive rather than parking being added at the southeast. Several like the idea of formally using the Senior High School parking lot when available and enhancing the park entrance and pathways to connect the parking to the park. Some mentioned they would like to see more physical connections between the park and the school facilities at the south. Some like the efforts for preservation of the multi-use open green spaces.

Several mentioned the tennis courts need to be maintained and they like the post tension upgrade idea. One had a concern of the tennis surface of the post tension option and would support it if it has an actual tennis surface applied to it. All who support the tennis upgrade also support with many other's comments the option of using the tennis court as an ice rink in the off season. The majority of those who support the ice rink prefer it be located in the northern three courts. The option of lighting this area for both tennis and ice skating received some interest. Some will support the ice skate rink option only if it is the synthetic ice option as they feel the refrigerated option would be too costly and harder to maintain. While some support the tennis court/ice rink option they have concerns with lowering the sides of the tennis fencing due to the potential for more errant balls.

Many support the addition of multiple picnic structures through the park, but several have concerns of not over building the park and taking away from the open character. Related to park structures many support upgrading the Zimmerman Center and providing restrooms on the west side of the park. One suggested the Zimmerman Center be done in a neighborhood historic architectural style to fit with the historic nature of the neighborhood.

Many comments are in favor of enhancing and highlighting the creek with more low maintenance and naturalized options along the creek with some suggesting adding some shrubs and bird houses. Many like the celebration of the creek by improvements including creek enhancements, decorative bridges, and the amphitheater/shelter.

Summary of Dot Sticker Preferences.

The following indicates the preferences of those who attended the public meeting and participated in placing a dot sticker on the schematic plan features they most prefer. The percentage represents the percent of total dots placed on the listed item. (Some participants chose to place dots with "No" written on them to indicate a definite vote against an item.)

15.38%	Amphitheater/Shelter/Bridge Enhancements at Creek.
14.28%	Ice Skate Rink/Tennis Court. (2.2% south courts, 12.08% north courts)
8.8%	New Northwest Pathway. (5.5% 10' width, 3.3% 6' width)
8.8%	Seasonal Disc-Golf. (No stickers – 6.6%)
7.7%	Low Maintenance Turf/Creek Edges.
6.6%	Revise Zimmerman Center/Restrooms.
5.5%	New South East Parking Lot. (No stickers – 8.8%)
4.4%	Enhanced Creek Basin/intake Structure/Bridge.
4.4%	New Northeast Pathway.
2.2%	"Legacy Promenade".
2.2%	Multi-Use Open Green Space Areas.
2.2%	Northeast Picnic/BBQ Area.
2.2%	Pioneer Park Monument Signage at Southeast.
1.09%	New Path/Bridge at south portion Creek.

PROJECT SCHEDULE:

Special Park, Recreation, & Cemetery Board Meeting:

Date: March 24th

Time: 11:30 am

Place: Billings Community Center

City Council Work Session:

Date: April 5, 2010



For More Information:

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[facebook.com/BillingsParksandRecreation](https://www.facebook.com/BillingsParksandRecreation)

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