



PARKS & RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD

Wednesday, February 7, 2024 – 5:00 p.m.

Virtual - WebEx

MINUTES

PARKS & RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD (PRAB) MEMBERS PRESENT: Sydney Futrell, Chairperson, Marty Tessmer, Bobbie McClure, Rosie Comet, Sarah Moll, Rick Eriksen, Vice-Chairperson; Bryan Taylor

MEMBERS ABSENT: Mike Ely, Robert Armstrong

OTHERS PRESENT: Brooke Bell, Director of Parks, Recreation and Open Space Department; Joe Sack, Manager of Recreation Services; Nicole Ankeney, Manager of PROS Planning, Design and Construction Division; Rian French, Project Manager of PROS Planning, Design and Construction Division; Suzie Jaquith, Administrative Supervisor

I. CALL TO ORDER: By Sydney Futrell, Chairperson, at 5:12 p.m.

II. ADOPTION OF AGENDA: The Agenda for February 7, 2024 meeting was approved after a motion was made by Member Eriksen and seconded by Member McClure.

III. ADOPTION OF PARKS & RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES –
The January 3, 2024, meeting Minutes were approved after a motion was made by Member Comet and seconded by Member Moll.

IV. BOARD DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS/REMINDERS

- A. Brooke Bell, Director of Parks, Recreation and Open Space Department, opened up Item A., Recommendation to Adopt the “Our Parks, Our Places: A Plan for Aurora’s Parks, Recreation and Open Space” Master Plan through an Amendment to the Aurora Places Comprehensive Plan.
- Brooke expressed sincere gratitude to staff, the consultant team, the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board and the community who were involved with the Master Plan. Adding, it was an incredibly thorough process involving extensive data utilized to establish the major themes and guiding principles of the Master Plan. The staff and consulting team did a tremendous job in creating a vision for Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Department based on the needs and desires of the community. The approval process has just begun but PROS has already received many accolades in Aurora and beyond. Agencies, such as Sarasota County, Florida have reached out because they identified the plan as an example that they would like to emulate. Staff have been asked to participate and speak at lead sessions for Trust for Public Land, which illustrates the high bar that has been set for this project.
 - Rian French, Project Manager of PROS Planning, Design and Construction Division gave an overview on Recommendation to Adopt the “Our Parks, Our Places: A Plan for Aurora’s Parks, Recreation and Open Space” Master Plan through an Amendment to the Aurora Places Comprehensive Plan.

NOTE: By simple majority vote, Board may re-establish Agenda order. There is quorum with five members in attendance.



- The Master Plan stands as a testament to a multi-year planning effort dedicated to redefining and updating the goals and vision of the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Department.
- PROS is composed of over 8,000 acres of open space; 103 developed parks, 2 reservoirs, 3 nature centers, 5 golf courses, 5 recreation centers and 11 community swimming pools. The Mission is to encourage active lifestyles and create healthy environments for people in nature while maintaining and enhancing spaces to meet the needs of an evolving community.
- PROS is committed to expand and enhance public spaces and programs guided by a community-driven vision that assesses and addressed disparities in services and offering to ensure equitable access and maximize health, wellness, environmental and economic benefits for all residents.
- The Our Parks, Our Places plan shall be adopted by reference to the Aurora Places comprehensive plan.
- With help and guidance from the community, our organizational themes evolved into the following defined set of guiding principles:
 - Guiding Principles:
 - a. Strengthen Connectivity to PROS Assets
 - b. Meet Evolving Needs of the Community
 - c. Create Opportunities for Lifelong Education
 - d. Serve as Steward to Our Environment
 - e. Provide Welcoming and Safe Spaces
 - f. Proactively Invest in the Present and Future
- We will ensure equitable access and productivity through the PROS system for all residents and work to collaborate with organizations, and other public agencies to help inclusively represent the communities that make up Aurora. Promote inclusive and diverse programming, recreational opportunities and amenities and enhance communications to foster healthy living, community building and opportunities for all. We will provide facilities and programs for all ages to propose to promote lifelong learning, health, and discovery to help the community expanded in knowledge of the PROS system and resources. We will preserve and enrich Aurora's natural habitat and ecosystems, the design of sustainable landscapes and educational programs. We are transparent, accountable, and committed to responsible management of our resources. We must promote safety in our parks, recreation centers, open spaces, and golf courses, aiming to provide a diverse welcoming and safe experience for the community. We will invest in sustainable growth to continually improve the quality of our existing assets while creating new welcoming destinations for all. Leading with efficient practices and operations and maintenance when planning the present and future of PROS.
- The project team referenced a variety of local, regional, and national plans to better align our plan with accepted best practices and find new and innovative approaches to data informed decisions. Local health and climate data and land use data was analyzed to develop a variety of scored metrics that can be used and replicated over time to evaluate the impacts of policies and investment into our system.



- The results of the data analysis is a composite map of Aurora’s neighborhoods, shown on a scale of high to low needs. Areas indicated as high need may present as barriers to safe access to parks and open space properties. They may be lacking in representative recreational and programming opportunities. Or, faced with other social and socio-economic barriers that keep residents from many benefits that parks, open spaces, recreation centers, golf courses and special events, in the community.
- Community Engagement Reach: Engagement strategies included communicating using the following top 6 languages in Aurora, Amharic, English, Korean, Mandarin, Spanish and Vietnamese. There were 17,000+ touchpoints made with the community; 18 in-person engagement events; 1,500+ survey responses; and 1,000+ location-based comments.
- The following priorities were identified:
 - Expand the Walkshed
 - Expand Access to Programs
 - Train and Mentor Youth
 - Boost Resilience
 - Communicate Inclusively
 - Invest Equitably
- Plan Implementation:
 - The master planning process may be coming to an end but is the beginning of a series of projects intended to provide direction and guidance to the PROS department.
 - The Strategic Plan through 2025 will provide specific and measurable goals to achieve the outcomes defined in the Master Plan.
 - Dedication and Development Criteria Manual Update through 2025 aims to align best practices in land use and development with the goals and objectives of the Master Plan to better serve PROS and the Community.
 - Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Planning Tool through 2027 will pair mapping methodology from the Master Plan to provide data-informed modeling for ongoing amenity and programing distribution and asset lifecycle management.
- Questions from Board Members:
 - Member Eriksen asked what the plan for development growth is. Rian French responded, one of the things discovered through the community engagement process was a strong interest from the community to provide meaningful investment into existing assets. Brooke Bell added PROS works closely with developers to establish agreements on what will be built to address the needs of the community. Fees are collected from the developers to help fund the building of parks. In addition, this year, an asset conditions assessment of the park system will be conducted to help create a priority system that will be incorporated into a 5-Year Plan.
 - Member Eriksen asked if a comparison has been made with other similar sized cities to address needs. Brooke Bell and Nicole Ankeney responded, there are many variables between cities, so it is difficult to compare.



- Member Tessmer asked if there is lack of land in the high need areas to build parks or recreation centers. Brooke Bell responded, yes. PROS staff work closely with the city’s Real Property Division to identify properties that may become available in underserved areas. Nicole Ankeney added, where land acquisition may not be possible, there are other opportunities to fill gaps in creative ways such as partnerships with school districts. Member Tessmer suggested staff consider converting empty lots into small, “parklets” or “nano parks”.
 - Member McClure asked if there was a different perspective on the different types of playgrounds from residents that had relocated from other countries. Rian French responded, yes, there was feedback gathered during the community engagement process, which specifically identified how residents wish to use open space and parks as it relates to different cultures.
 - Member McClure asked if areas identified as high needs are just in North Aurora. Rian French responded, there are trends that show gaps in service and amenities all across the city. One of the challenges in future development will be to fill as many service gaps as possible with as many programming and amenity types as possible.
 - In conclusion of the presentation, Rian French posed the Question for Consideration to the board. Does the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board support the adoption of the Our Parks, Our Places Master Plan by reference to the Aurora Places comprehensive plan?
 - Chair Futrell called for a vote from the board to support the adoption of the Our Parks, Our Places Master Plan by reference to the Aurora Places comprehensive plan. The board voted unanimously to support the adoption.
- B. Joe Sack, Manager of Recreation Services, gave an update on the Board Term of Offices and 2024 Expirations.
- Elections for Chair and Vice Chairs seats and interviews for upcoming openings on the board must be completed by the end of April. Three board members, Sydney Futrell, Bryon Taylor, and Sarah Moll, have terms which expire April 30, 2024. All three members expressed interest in serving another term. Joe instructed members to apply online with the City Clerk’s Office. Interviews will be scheduled shortly after.
- C. Brooke Bell, Director of Parks, Recreation and Open Space Department, gave a PROS Update.
- Fulton Park playground renovations will be completed in late March, early April. This is to allow for synthetic surface to be installed during warmer temperatures needed for proper installation. A Grand Re-Opening date will be scheduled once installation is completed.

V. BOARD MEMBERS REMARKS


A. Comments from Board Members



VI. FUTURE MEETINGS

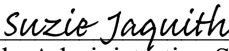
- A. March 6, 2024 – Virtual, WebEx
- B. April, 3, 2024 – In-Person, Location TBD

VII. ADJOURNMENT – Member Tessmer made a motion to adjourn, and Member Taylor seconded. The motion passed at 6:05 p.m.


Sydney Futrell (Mar 12, 2024 11:50 MDT)

03/12/2024

Sydney Futrell, Chairperson;
Parks & Recreation Board



Suzie Jaquith, Administrative Supervisor

ADOPTED _____






PARKS & RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD

Final Audit Report

2024-03-12

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