



ERIN MENDENHALL
MAYOR

DEPARTMENT of PUBLIC LANDS
OFFICE of the DIRECTOR

CITY COUNCIL TRANSMITTAL

Date Received: _____
Lisa Shaffer, Chief Administrator Officer
Date sent to Council: _____

TO: Salt Lake City Council
Dan Dugan, Chair
DATE: January 25, 2022
FROM: Kristin Riker, Director, Public Lands Department *Kristin Riker*
SUBJECT: Pioneer Park Improvements Project Update and Conceptual Design

STAFF CONTACT: Kristin Riker, Director, Public Lands Department kristin.riker@slcgov.com;
Katherine Maus, Public Lands Planner, Public Lands Department katherine.maus@slcgov.com;
Nancy Monteith, Senior Landscape Architect, Department of Public Services
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COUNCIL SPONSOR: Not Applicable

DOCUMENT TYPE: Information Item

RECOMMENDATION: Review and Comment; Consider for Bond Funding

BUDGET IMPACT:

Current funding allocated: \$3,400,000
Future funding impact: \$17,000,000

BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION:

Pioneer Park is Salt Lake City’s only community-sized downtown park, serving immediate downtown neighbors, Salt Lake City residents and the entire region as a green oasis in the central city neighborhood. Community dissatisfaction with the park continues to activate discussion about how to improve the park so that it can be a community asset. This consistent interest in improvement over the last twenty years has resulted in community activism and several planning efforts for improvements to the park. Funding for improvements has been modest with just over \$3,000,000 dollars of capital improvements made in the last two decades. In 2019, City Council approved a budget amendment for \$3,445,000 of development impact fee capital investments in the park. Planning for this next round of investments is underway but more funding is needed.

The Public Lands Needs Assessment found that the Downtown and Central City planning areas have the fastest rate of population growth with the lowest level of park service per resident.

Recent census numbers show that Council District Four added far more residents than any other district in the city, growing from 26,716 residents in 2010 to 33,153 residents in 2020. The Downtown neighborhood has a deficit of 17.5 acres of park land and that number is increasing. With the addition of new development and the growing population, these planning areas are significantly contributing to the impact fees to be utilized for parks and public lands. According to the City's current Impact Fee Facilities Plan, each unit that becomes available in these planning areas contributes \$2,875 in impact fees to be used by Public Lands, with an increase in this dollar amount proposed for both single-family and multi-family units. In March 2021, according to City records, over 1,016 units are projected for development in the downtown community, resulting in over \$2,921,000 in impact fees for future development. In addition to this, the Public Lands Master Plan, Reimagine Nature, calls for significant investment in Pioneer Park and Downtown. Pioneer Park provides the opportunity to meet immediate needs for more recreation options downtown right now. Salt Lake City continues to look for new park space downtown, however, it is challenging to find centrally located large parcels that can be meet multiple needs and provide space for recreation.

Currently this project is funded for approximately \$3.445 million. With the progress made so far, the project is ready for the creation of technical drawings and construction of select features in the park. Due to the large scale of this project, only a small portion of the full build-out will be able to be constructed with currently allocated impact fees. Initial cost estimates show a full-build of the current concept coming in at \$20 million. While the full project cost is one of the larger requests for funding that Public Lands has made for a park, in comparing this request to other downtown parks of similar size, situation and level of services in other capital cities of comparable size, the number remains modest. With the level of service this park provides, it's central nature and the community desire to make this park an asset, financial investment in this project will be essential for the success of the park, the downtown community and the City at-large.

CURRENT FUNDING: While Salt Lake City has made improvements to Pioneer Park incrementally over time with limited funds (the Market perimeter path, multi-purpose field, etc.), the dedication of \$3,445,000 in impact fees currently allocated specifically to Pioneer Park will allow for service expansion to happen in 2022/2023. Improvements to existing and aging park infrastructure can only be addressed by revenue bond funding and/or general funds.

PLANNING PROCESS: The city hired a planning and design consultant to create a vision plan for the park, *Your Downtown Park*. In early 2021, The planning team began with a thorough review and analysis of past process outcomes and feedback, then incorporated data about the changes in demographics, housing, and other information about the area within a 15-minute walk of Pioneer Park. Stakeholder engagement started in April of 2021 with public engagement persisting throughout the summer event season in the Park.

ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY: The concept team met with past process stakeholders, current area residents, business owners and other stakeholders like the Downtown Community Council, Downtown Alliance, Pioneer Park Coalition and City staff to assess current needs of the downtown community at multiple phases throughout the process.

In summer 2021, the team opened a survey asking Salt Lake City residents to weigh in digitally. The team provided the same questions in-person to attendees of six park events including the Downtown Farmer's Market, Food Truck Night and Field Day/Movie Night. Nearly 2850 respondents (over 1800 online and over 1000 in-person) identified their preferences for the park including amenity type, balance of active and passive spaces, potential layouts and other park elements.

The feedback informed concept development, which was then workshopped with area stakeholders and City staff. Their input was used to refine the layout, features, and proposed locations of items. In total, the project team held nine stakeholder meetings and workshops.

Public Engagement Events	Notes	Time Period
Site Audit	In person event including select area stakeholders, local businesses, residents and selected steering committee	April 2021
Presentation to the Pioneer Park Coalition and Downtown Community Council	Virtual meeting to discuss project concept and solicit feedback.	May-June 2021
Online Survey and In-Person Public Engagement Events	Online public engagement survey was launched and promoted at 6 in-person events (Farmer's Market, Food Truck Night, Movie Night). Over 2850 total responses were collected	June-July 2021
Steering Committee Meeting	Project team provided summary of engagement results to Steering Committee	August 2021
Farmers Market Representatives Meeting	Stakeholder meeting with Urban Food Connections Executive Director to review concept.	August 2021
Downtown Alliance (staff and local business) and Pioneer Park Coalition meeting	Virtual meeting with stakeholders to share project progress.	September 2021
Unsheltered/Low Income Services Provider Meeting	Project team provided engagement summary so far, and held discussion regarding considerations for the future conceptual design and programming needs for the park	October 2021
Downtown Community Council Presentation	Project team provided engagement summary so far, and held discussion regarding considerations for the future conceptual design and programming needs for the park	October 2021
Utah AIA Urban Design Committee	Virtual presentation by City staff to architects, landscape architects and related disciplines to share concept design and solicit feedback.	December 2021
PNUT Board Presentation	Presentation by the project team on project summary to-date and initial conceptual plan for the park	December 2021

PREFERRED VISION PLAN: “Your Downtown Park” is aimed at making Pioneer Park an active and welcoming space for those who live, work and visit the area. Since the completion of this initial window of public engagement, the design team has reviewed public feedback and has developed a refined vision plan (Exhibit A) that will be shared with the public in 2022. See Attachment A: Slide deck for Preferred Concept Plan.

To date, Public Lands has engaged with nearly 3,000 individuals and stakeholders via in-person events and an online survey to gather input on what the public thinks should be priorities for improvements made to Pioneer Park. Last summer’s public engagement process showed that 51% of survey respondents were either somewhat or extremely dissatisfied with the current status of the Park, while just 2% of respondents said they were extremely satisfied and 23% somewhat satisfied.

The resulting concept achieves these project goals:

- **The Heart of the City** – a commons that connects people to our urban center
- **Model for Urban Ecology** – a green space that responds to our climate challenges
- **Balance Neighborhood and Regional Needs** – a park that supports everyday activities and active lifestyles while being a signature park that hosts city-wide and regional events
- **Welcoming for Everyone** – an inviting space for all abilities, incomes, age, genders, and cultures
- **Safe and Well-Maintained Space** – a park with cutting-edge solutions to address common urban park conflicts and recognizes that stewardship and ongoing care is needed
- **Lasting Legacy** – a place that expresses the layered history and provides value to future generations

Top priorities that were identified in the community engagement and are prioritized in the concept plan include natural features (shade trees, plants, gardens), comfort amenities (seating, restrooms), improved security and active play spaces (playground, enhanced dog park). The design team has worked, and will continue to work, with key stakeholders, including the Downtown Alliance, Pioneer Park Coalition, local businesses, unsheltered services providers, and others to refine the concept plan. The plan prioritizes active play features, such as an all-ages playground, a fitness circuit, and sport courts, public spaces, including a large plaza, café space, pavilion space and restrooms, and finally incorporates several natural elements, as 71% of survey respondents said these natural elements would improve the park.

AMENITIES: During our public engagement process this summer and stakeholder workshops this fall, the project team heard that a variety of activities and balance of play and rest were important to park users and neighbors alike.

The concept that has been developed provides opportunities for active play with a basketball and six pickleball courts, an all-ages playground, lawn game rental kiosk, and an enhanced dog-park. At the same time a shaded lawn, multiple seating areas, native plantings and tree groves offer a variety of places to relax. In between as a focal point of the park, the pavilion offers the opportunity for small to mid-sized events when utilizing the plaza or larger-scale events when facing the great lawn.

This concept adds a state of the art restroom located adjacent to the most active area of the park – near the café, park ranger station and plaza where the park amenities may remain most accessible and visible to park users. Cost, maintenance, and infrastructure requirements are all important considerations that will be addressed in more detail in the design phase.

EVENTS: The concept maintains the great lawn, which has been actively used for soccer leagues, sporting events, movies in the park and other events, and will add a plaza and covered pavilion to the current configuration. The pavilion is open, offering the opportunity for small to mid-sized events when oriented north towards the plaza, or for larger-scale events when oriented to the south towards the great lawn. Concrete paths will be vehicle-rated for event-coordinated traffic and Parks' maintenance use.

FARMERS MARKET: The Downtown Farmer's Market is an event well-loved by Salt Lake City residents and visitors alike. It is critical that successful events can continue in or near the park. The project team consulted with the Downtown Alliance and the Farmer's Market several times throughout the engagement process to refine the project concept to incorporate the Market's needs while also achieving our goal of activating the park on a regular basis. This concept maintains the Market path around the perimeter of the park and provides nearly the same number of stalls as existed at the Farmer's Market prior to COVID. It also provides restrooms and more seating areas, making it easier for patrons who visit the market to stay in the park longer.

ECOLOGICAL ELEMENTS: Water features were identified as important amenities by the public throughout the planning process. The soon-to-be released Cultural Landscape Report for Pioneer Park also notes that fresh-water springs drew Native Americans and the pioneers to this site.

The proposed concept includes “The Source,” a sculptural feature that uses misting at key times throughout the season to add a water experience while being mindful of the arid climate in which we live, and the increased frequency and effects of drought. The concept increases the tree canopy and provides increased shade, maximizes use of secondary water via The Source water feature, and swales in the landscaping responds to the sites grading with a swale that runs from the north-east corner to the south-east corner of the site as elevation decreases.

Planting ribbons, natural landscaping and biodiversity were also listed as passive feature priorities by the public during engagement. Planting design will intentionally include low water/drought tolerant, native plantings and will take advantage of the natural topography of the site, where water flows from the northeast corner to the southwest corner. Planting groups that favor more moisture will be placed in response to the natural slope for designed irrigation or rain events. This strategic addition will respond to the increased hardscape and impervious surface added to the park on this plan.

EXISTING TREES: Trees and shade are important assets to any park, but particularly to a downtown park. The concept does impact a few trees, but limits tree removal whenever possible. It also adds opportunities for small tree groves distributed in multiple locations around the park. In the next phase of design, the project team will work with the Salt Lake City Urban Forestry Division to assess the health of any trees and may remove those that are unhealthy or approaching the end of their life. SLC Public Lands has committed to replanting more trees in the park than are removed, which is reflected in the current concept.

SAFETY: Increased park activation and safety for all people are at the forefront of our planning process as the concept moves to construction plan development and details related to Salt Lake City’s recently announced Park Ranger Program are confirmed. Public Lands will work with the community to encourage and enhance programming opportunities and use of the park year-round.

The concept addresses safety by providing activities to engage a variety of people to be in the park, maintaining clear sight lines around the park, adding lighting, a park ranger office, information booth and café which significantly increase the presence of day-time staff and patrons in multiple locations. The concept prioritizes safety in the layout of features and amenities in the park, as well as circulation.

Fortunately, reports of illegal activities and police calls to the park have decreased in the past five years for a variety of reasons, including increased use by area residents, dog walkers and sports/league use of the new multipurpose field. During this process, the project team also consulted with the Salt Lake City Police Department Parks Squad to review the concept and they confirmed that concept features would increase a staffed presence, attract a variety of park users, and maintain open sight lines, all of which contribute to decreased opportunities for illegal or antisocial activities.

UNSHELTERED POPULATIONS: The team also met with a variety of area stakeholders, including local unsheltered service providers, Salt Lake City Homeless Services, the Utah Coalition to End Homelessness and Pioneer Park Coalition to ensure the park design encourages social connection, positive interaction, and can be a welcoming place for all.

Historically, the land on which Pioneer Park exists was a meeting place that provided refuge and a place for congregation. As a historically public space, different groups and uses have raised questions about how to provide equitable opportunities for all community members to find

sanctuary in a natural setting, relaxation, and socialization. The concept does not provide specific amenities or services for those experiencing homelessness because Pioneer Park is near service providers and community programs that deliver and are seeking to increase the provision of housing, showers, personal storage, and social services to address root causes of homelessness.

NEXT STEPS: The project team is beginning the last public engagement window in January to confirm the conceptual design with the public and ensure that the design reflects the engagement and desires of the community. In conjunction with the public engagement, the project team is also working through prioritization of included elements for phasing of the full build-out. With the completion of the public engagement and development of an initial concept plan, the project team is in a position to share the concept plan for Pioneer Park with City Council and in turn, the broader public for comments and refinement.

COST CONSIDERATIONS: Currently this project is funded for approximately \$3.445 million. Due to the large scale of this project, only a small portion of the full build-out will be able to be constructed with this amount of funding. Upon initial cost estimating by the consultant, a full build of the proposed conceptual design would cost around \$20 million including escalation and inflation. The project team is continuing to work through prioritization of elements as well as clustering of elements that must be installed in conjunction with one another, recognizing that implementation may have to occur in phases based on funding availability.

“Your Downtown Park,” the Pioneer Park Improvement Project is on the project list for the consideration of bond funding. With public engagement, conceptual design and cost estimates completed, this project is ready to begin the process of technical drawing development. The progress made so far has positioned this project favorably in the context of being able to begin technical drawing and construction almost immediately upon funding, which would easily be used within a three-year time frame if funded by the bond. The use of bond funding would allow this project to move forward in a timely manner and could potentially reduce the number of phases required for full build-out. While the full project cost of approximately \$20 million is one of the larger requests for funding that Public Lands has made, in comparing this request to other downtown parks of similar size, situation and level of services in other capital cities of comparable size, the number is modest. \$20 million for a 10-acre park equates to approximately \$46/square foot, which is comparable to very active parks similar in size and situation to Pioneer Park around the nation (see Exhibit B for an analysis of comparable park development costs nationwide). With the level of service this park provides, its central nature and the community desire to make this park an asset, financial investment in this project will be essential for the success of the park, the downtown community, and the City at-large.

PUBLIC PROCESS:

- Winter 2022:** Public Engagement Window 3: Project team will return to the public with concept design for confirmation
- Winter 2022:** Review of concept design by City Council
- Spring 2022:** Begin technical drawings for construction of elements
- 2023:** Construction

Notes:

Individuals who are available to present to City Council at Work Session:

- Kat Maus, Public Lands Planner, Department of Public Lands
- Nancy Monteith, Senior Landscape Architect, Department of Public Services
- Kristin Riker, Director, Department of Public Lands

EXHIBITS:

- A. Preferred Concept Plan Slide Deck
- B. Nationwide Parks Comparison Costs



YOUR DOWNTOWN PARK



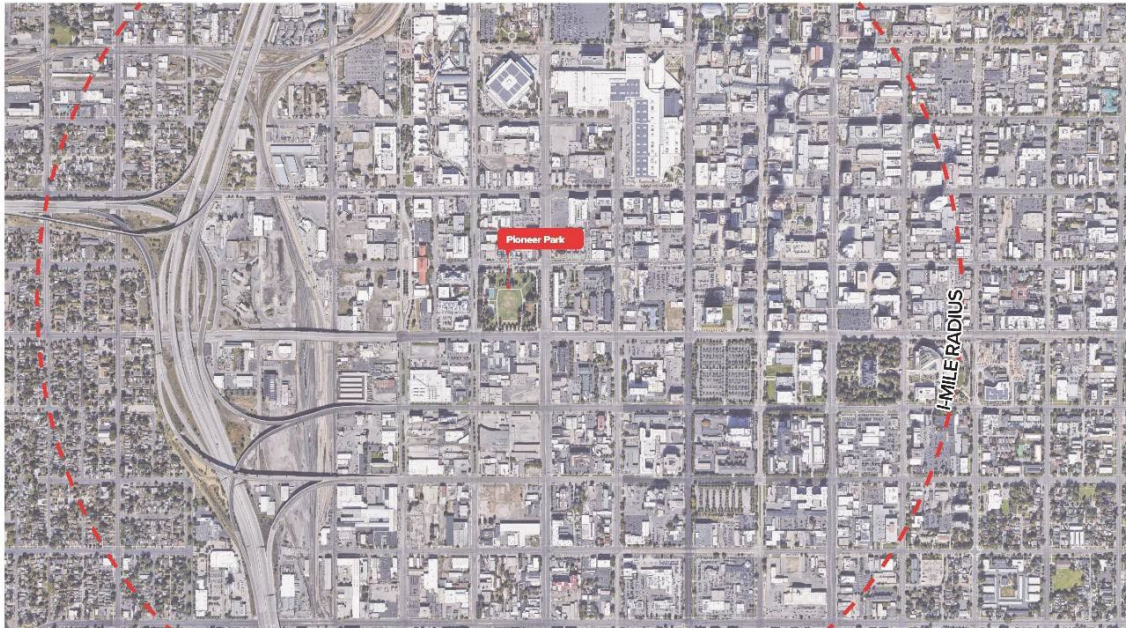
PIONEER PARK

**YOUR
DOWNTOWN
PARK**



PREFERRED CONCEPT PLAN
(DRAFT PREPARED FOR COUNCIL REVIEW)
JANUARY 2022

YOUR DOWNTOWN PARK
PROJECT SCOPE



YOUR DOWNTOWN PARK
PROJECT BRIEF



-17.5ac
 Service Area
 (Salt Lake City)

79sf
 Park Space in
 Service Area per
 Resident

12sf
 Park Space in
 Service Area per
 Worker

2.22%
 Project Population
 Growth

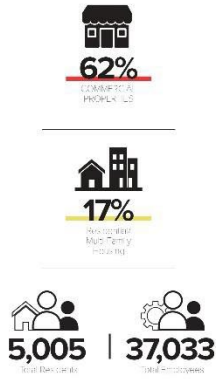
1,000+
 PROJECTED NUMBER
 OF NEW UNITS

*COMPARED TO 1.5% for United States and 0.5% for the state of Utah

Note: Salt Lake County Park Department has identified the extent of 5 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents as a goal for the city. This goal is based on the current level of parkland in the city. The goal is to increase the amount of parkland per resident to meet this goal. The goal is to increase the amount of parkland per resident to meet this goal. The goal is to increase the amount of parkland per resident to meet this goal.



YOUR DOWNTOWN PARK
PROJECT BRIEF



Source: US Census Bureau, "Quick Facts, Lewis County, Kentucky, US; American Factfinder 2019"

YOUR DOWNTOWN PARK
WHAT'S NEW?



YOUR DOWNTOWN PARK
ENGAGEMENT



- APRIL**
 - Site audit (in-person) - select area stakeholders, businesses, residents and Steering committee
- MAY**
 - Pioneer Park Coalition Presentation
- JUNE**
 - Downtown Community Council Presentation
 - Online Survey Launch
 - Farmer's market (in-person)
 - Movie night (in-person)
 - Food truck night (in-person)
- JULY**
 - Farmer's Market 2 in-person engagements
 - Food truck night
 - Conclude Online survey
- AUGUST**
 - Steering Committee Meeting for survey results
 - Farmers Market Representatives Meeting
- SEPTEMBER**
 - Downtown Alliance Staff Meeting
 - Downtown Alliance-hosted business meeting
 - Pioneer Park Coalition
- OCTOBER**
 - Low Income/Unsheltered Service provider meeting
 - Downtown Community Council Presentation
- NOVEMBER**
 - SLVCEH Crisis Response Core Function Group



Approx. 1,828 people responded to the online survey from June 25-July 21

Approx. 1,025 people engaged in-person from June 26-July 14

Approx. 2,900 people engaged to date

YOUR DOWNTOWN PARK
PROJECT PRINCIPLES



THE HEART OF THE CITY

BALANCE REGIONAL & NEIGHBORHOOD NEEDS

WELCOMING FOR EVERYONE

SAFE & WELL-MAINTAINED SPACE

MODEL FOR URBAN ECOLOGY

A LASTING LEGACY

YOUR DOWNTOWN PARK
OVERVIEW



YOUR DOWNTOWN PARK
SITE PLAN



NATIVE RESILIENT PLANTING



CANOPY WALKS AND SHADE LAWNS



SIGNATURE PLAZA AND EVENT PAVILION



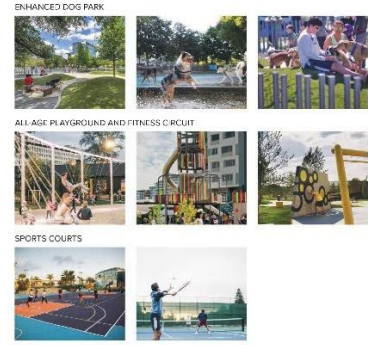
"THE SOURCE" MIST FEATURE



- 1 "THE SOURCE" MIST FEATURE
- 2 INFORMATIONAL SIGNAGE
- 3 SIGNATURE SIGNAGE
- 4 TRANSIT STATIONS
- 5 SELF-CLEANING BATHROOM

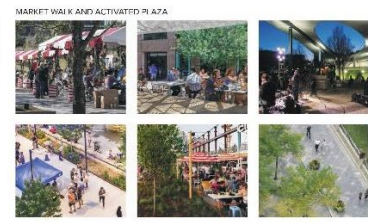
- Trees to preserve
- Proposed Shade Trees

YOUR DOWNTOWN PARK SITE PLAN



- 1 "THE SOURCE" MUST FEATURE
 - 2 INFORMATIONAL SIGNAGE
 - 3 SIGNATURE SIGNAGE
 - 4 TRANSIT STATIONS
 - 5 SELF-CLEANING BATHROOM
- Trees to preserve
 - Proposed Shade Trees

YOUR DOWNTOWN PARK SITE PLAN



300+ TENT CAPACITY
70 ARTS ALONG MARKET WALK

- Tent locations

YOUR DOWNTOWN PARK
EXPERIENCE



YOUR DOWNTOWN PARK
EXPERIENCE



YOUR DOWNTOWN PARK
EXPERIENCE



DRAFT ILLUSTRATIVE BY DESIGN WORKSHOP | JANUARY 2022

YOUR DOWNTOWN PARK
EXPERIENCE



DRAFT ILLUSTRATIVE BY DESIGN WORKSHOP | JANUARY 2022

COST COMPARISON

PARK	TOTAL COST	SIZE	COST PER ACRE	COST PER SQ/FT	YEAR CONSTRUCTED	OVER STRUCTURED?	PERCENT SOFTSCAPE	PERCENT HARDSCAPE & STRUCTURES
City Garden St. Louis, MO	\$22,150,000	3 acres	\$7.4M/acre	\$170/sf	2008-2009	No	45%	55%
Mary Barleeme Park Chicago, IL	\$5,500,000	1.4 acres	\$3.9M/acre	\$90/sf	2004	No	58%	42%
Klyde Warren Park Dallas, TX	\$15,900,000	5.2 acres	\$3M/acre	\$70/sf	2009-2012	Yes	54%	46%
Discovery Green Houston, TX	\$38,700,000	12 acres	\$3.2M/acre	\$74/sf	2008	Yes	44%	56%
Visio Park Sacramento, CA	\$20,739,680	9.5 acres	\$2.7M/acre	\$60/sf	Present	Yes	67%	33%
North End Parks Boston, MA	\$12,300,000	4.7 acres	\$2.6M/acre	\$60/sf	2008	Yes	35%	65%
Wharf District Parks Boston, MA	\$12,800,000	7 acres	\$1.8M/acre	\$42/sf	2008	Yes	26%	74%
Midtown Superblock Park Houston, TX	\$5,600,000	3 acres	\$1.8M/acre	\$41/sf	2014-Present	Yes	32%	68%
Hunts Point Riverside Park Bronx, NY	\$3,200,000	1.7 acres	\$1.8M/acre	\$41/sf	2004	No	66%	34%
Railyard Park Santa Fe, NM	\$13,500,000	13 acres	\$1M/acre	\$23/sf	2008	No	78%	22%
Centennial Center Park Centennial, CO	\$6,800,000	11 acres	\$600K/acre	\$14/sf	2012	No	90%	10%
Gold Medal Park Minneapolis, MN	\$3,500,000	7.5 acres	\$480K/acre	\$11/sf	2007	No	88%	12%
Crescent Park Denver, CO	\$1,600,000	4 acres	\$400K/acre	\$9/sf	2004	No	80%	20%

DESIGNWORKSHOP