Gold Medal 2020

Strategic Planning

Prepared by Citizen Volunteers

for

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November 2008
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To the Board of Directors  
South Suburban Park and Recreation District

It has been our pleasure to serve as your co-chairs for the 2008 Gold Medal 2020 Plan. We convened a diverse group of citizens and representatives from sports groups, governmental entities and interest groups to provide broad-based community input and support. Countless volunteer hours were committed to this effort.

Participants selected the subcommittee(s) with which they wanted to be involved: Vision, Leadership and Collaboration; Parks and Open Space; Recreation Programs and Facilities; and or Trails. The subcommittees reviewed the charge provided and determined their own process and methodology. They had contact with over 1,400 users of District facilities through surveys and direct conversations, visited essentially all the parks and facilities and walked many miles of trails. This process emphasized the concern and care the District shows to the needs and desires of its constituents.

As the process unfolded, we found that there are no significant deficiencies and no vociferous complaints in the District. The users of the services and facilities are, by and large, satisfied with operations and direction of the District. They recognize the value the District provides, and their first priority is the preservation and enhancement of existing services, facilities and amenities.

The subcommittees developed common themes and priorities for the District. Their individual reports have a plethora of good ideas, and we hope South Suburban’s Board and staff will delve into the details and incorporate the suggestions as they are appropriate in the next few years.

Thanks to all the Gold Medal volunteers for dedicating their time and ideas to a District they obviously value and want to preserve and enhance. We all appreciate the opportunity to contribute to the long-range planning efforts that will benefit South Suburban residents for years to come.

On behalf of the entire committee,

LaDonna Jurgensen     Vorry Moon
Co-Chair               Co-Chair
Executive Summary

As South Suburban Park and Recreation District forges ahead into its 50th year of serving the community, one of the best ways to ensure continued success is through long-range planning.

No organization can move forward without goals, and South Suburban has made the long-range planning process a foundation from which the Board of Directors and staff can frame their efforts.

South Suburban began the process of developing the most recent long-range plan in early 2008. The Board invited the public and representatives from local organizations and governments to form a Gold Medal Long-Range Plan Citizens’ Committee that would meet during the year, culminating with a final report to the Board by the end of 2008. The Citizens’ Committee was divided into five working groups, the Steering Committee composed of two co-chairs and the leader from each of the four subcommittees: Vision, Leadership and Collaboration; Parks and Open Space; Recreation Programs and Facilities; and Trails. Each group had South Suburban staff readily available for reference and assistance. Ultimately, more than 40 citizens volunteered their time and talent to analyze current recreational offerings, research demographics, trends and needs, and make recommendations to guide the District for the next several years.

The Citizens’ Committee is proud to present the comprehensive Gold Medal Long-Range Plan that provides many future-thinking findings and recommendations. Some represent strong support for amenities that continue to be prized by the community such as more open space and more enhancements to the popular trails system. Others point to services and programs that the public is placing new emphasis on such as the value of wellness and utilizing advancements in technology and implementing “green” initiatives to make a positive impact on the environment.

Overall, the Citizens’ Committee found that the District enjoys a favorable standing in the community, as well as trust for accomplishing its mission of providing parks, trails, open space and recreation facilities and programs for nearly 140,000 residents.

In this Executive Summary, we would like to call your attention to the six common themes that we have identified from the subcommittee reports that comprise the comprehensive Gold Medal Long-Range Plan. We intend to pique your interest by way of this brief summary and encourage you to read the complete Plan that follows.
6 Common Themes and Highlights of Recommendations

1. Take Care of What We Have

   **Continue to be a premier recreation district**

   We received continuing positive feedback from the committee members and from the public. Through the surveys the committees conducted, the vast majority of respondents expressed satisfaction and support for the facilities, programs, parks and open space of the District. Several people indicated that they moved to the south metro area because of the parks and open space. Our trail network has achieved local and national recognition and inspires other communities. Not only do our users appreciate our core services, they enjoy many of the extras, such as the fact that local artists display their works in our facilities.

   In the many conversations held over the past six months, it is clear that most of the committee members agree that the District is well managed and responsive to the community. The breadth of the operations, facilities and programs of the District surprised many. Our most important recommendation is to strive to maintain what we have, because what we have is valued and valuable.

   Our facilities need to be kept in excellent condition to be competitive. If facilities become worn and shabby, their updating and repair must be immediately addressed. To maintain the quality our residents expect, the District will need to be vigilant in setting high standards for cleanliness and ongoing maintenance.

   Excellent customer service based on empowering and developing District staff to respond to citizen needs will be required. Creativity in programming and an eye to the latest trends in recreational interests in the private marketplace will keep us competitive.

   Small improvements, such as adding picnic tables, planting trees at Cornerstone Park, improving parking lots and restrooms, can make a difference.

   Our trail system is one of our most highly used amenities and ongoing trail maintenance should be a top priority.

2. Invest in Recreation

   **Constituents want more open space, trails, regional parks, better South Suburban Golf Clubhouse, and an expanded and safe parks maintenance shop**

   There is an immediate and critical need for a new maintenance facility due to the over-crowded conditions, including the lack of employee parking. Construction of a modern, consolidated maintenance and service center in a more suitable location is a necessity for the District to continue to maintain what we have.
The public’s desire for additional open space was voiced loud and clear. There is recognition of the significant cost and the disappearing opportunity. In addition, one of our most heavily used amenities, our trail system, is in need of additional east-west development, trailhead parking, safety improvements and enhanced connectivity which may involve bridges, overpasses, underpasses and connecting trails.

There is a need for a large acreage site for a Regional District Park that could be developed into a facility similar to Cornerstone Park. This is primarily for athletic fields to move some of the heavy use out of neighborhood parks.

One of the facilities that has become old, outdated and in need of replacement is the South Suburban Golf Course Clubhouse. Since it is our busiest golf course and generates the most revenue it may be time to consider a new clubhouse.

3. The Budget will continue to be Tight
   Renew the 1 mill property tax and collaborate with others

Budgetary constraints will be an ongoing reality for the District. User fees are generally perceived as “just right” when compared to other organizations, and there is a limit as to how high they could be raised and still remain competitive.

To maintain our financial health, we believe it will be necessary to extend the one-mill levy approved in 2000 for the acquisition of park, open space and trail development. This mill levy is set to expire in 2010 and the District should consider making it permanent. The additional mill levy may be needed for on-going maintenance as our facilities age. It should also be considered as a source of revenue for some of the infrastructure improvements that are needed and recommended, as well as open space acquisitions. It will be necessary to adequately inform our citizens and actively promote the mill levy extension through new communication channels, such as homeowner associations and other publications.

Recognizing we may be in a difficult economic environment, we expect the District to continue to take a leadership position in creating and maintaining collaborative relationships with other governmental entities, regional planning groups, citizen groups, the medical community, schools, sport groups, businesses, private foundations and property owners. These relationships may include funding arrangements, grant applications, joint projects and exploring new funding opportunities, as well as cooperative programming, shared facilities or shared mission, such as safety on our trail system.

4. Wellness is What We Do
   Develop a new image about restoring energy

We believe that “wellness” needs to be added to the District mission with new graphic images and taglines. In addition to existing services, the future demographics suggest a need for mental and physical wellness programs and services that energize and reenergize people for an active and fulfilling life. Obesity, diabetes, high blood
pressure and inactive children are looming problems in our society that the District can positively impact.

The District has started focusing on services beyond traditional parks and recreation, including healthy, abundant living. The Kids Living Well program should be continued and expanded. Creative ways of taking programs and activities to children may be needed to get kids more involved and active. New fee structures or mechanisms such as an “all facility pass” should be considered to make “wellness,” particularly for youth and seniors, more accessible.

5. People expect quick access to just about everything (Admission, Registration, Trail Directions, Wireless Service)

Take advantage of technology

The District needs to embrace, utilize and invest in technology and electronic communications platforms. The District website needs to accommodate more functions and provide more information. Wireless access to the internet available in all recreation locations should be a goal. The District should seek ways to make use of improvements in technology to improve user safety, and satisfaction, to improve accessibility and sustainability of the trails, parks and facilities.

Potential suggested uses of technology include:

- Implementing a simple card swipe for signing in at recreation centers
- Making the District’s website and services catalog more user friendly
- Creating subgroups of users such as runners, age groups, team sports, hobby group, seniors for promotion of programs, special catalogs, and dissemination of useful information
- Mapping the District trails, parks and open space
- Providing directions from one location to another using the trail system by querying a database to locate a route or perform trails loop mapping
- Locating the District facilities that are close to your home or business
- Offering a mechanism to collect feedback and share information among users
- Providing a means to gather information on trail conditions or improvement suggestions
- Providing Global Positioning System (GPS) location information on the trail system

6. Let’s Go Green

Maximize how we help the environment

The District should promote a culture of environmental awareness and strive to reduce, reuse and recycle all possible materials. Recommendations ranged from very simple actions like providing recycling bins in all facilities to use of alternative fuels. Efforts to incorporate alternative “green” materials and energy sources should be maximized. Use of drought tolerant and/or low water use plantings in the parks and
natural vegetation, including trees, shrub thickets and wildflowers should be considered to improve visual quality of the trail system.

The District should pursue available grants and other funding sources for increasing the District’s environmental response.
Vision, Leadership and Collaboration Subcommittee

After extensive review of the charges provided to the subcommittee, we decided to follow a process of undirected random brainstorming to identify all questions we thought might be worth considering. We then agreed on which topics to concentrate our research and subsequent Subcommittee discussions. Subcommittee members chose from the list of topics to research and to prepare written comments. The research efforts included consultations with South Suburban Park and Recreation District staff, studying historical records, and meetings with representatives of other organizations. The balance of this document represents the key points and concepts of our discussions.

Vision

Nothing moves us more than an exciting purpose. If we don’t have one, behavior and tactics are just boring routines that often fade away and we plod along in our old ways. We need a purpose that is meaningful, stimulating and appeals to our highest aspirations. What we now call “recreation” (re-creation) has the seed to be such a purpose.

One of the major changes that occur in our lifetime relates to energy. Young kids are bursting with it. Senior citizens are wondering where it went. Many of us in the middle are trying to keep it. The source of our energy is primarily our body and South Suburban helps us keep our body working well and our energy going on and on. But, you cannot “store” energy (or sleep); you can only re-store energy. That is something close to the District’s higher purpose, and the citizens of the District will buy it because they need it, value it and want it for their lives. No other local, public district is offering that.

Our lives are run on four kinds of energy: physical, emotional, mental and spiritual. Using and restoring those energies each day leads to a productive, happy life. The base is physical energy; the other energies are built on the physical. South Suburban can help people focus on their physical energy so their other energies are effective. Most people manage time; the real way to manage a life is by managing all of your energy in a time framework, beginning with the physical. *

“Parks and Recreation” are old terms. They are related to leisure time, relaxation, outdoors and fresh air. They are still perfectly valid and valuable, but they came from an era of hard physical work every day. Now, we need “sweat time” to make up for our “chair time.”

* See Jim Loehr and Tony Schwartz, “The Power of Full Engagement: managing energy, not time, is the key to high performance and personal renewal.”
Keeping our bodies vital now includes supplements, nutrition, sleep habits, high-tech clothing and equipment, and dozens of activities that are indoors, reflecting new bio-science findings about our minds and spirits, our body chemistry, and new ideas of what “work out” means.

Our District does all that, but still under the old “tent.” We need a new tent or maybe an arena to showcase our newly committed purpose.

**Leadership for a New Image about Wellness**

Let’s show our citizens how to keep their body vital, how to live with the energy they need, how to expand their body’s capacity for energy and how to live a lifestyle they will love because it is providing them a base for high performance and personal renewal.

South Suburban actually has a strong start in the “lifestyle” areas as shown in the latest catalog. Clearly the District has services well beyond “park and recreation” that focus on lifestyle: energy (“fitness”), emotional (“mind/body,” “cultural arts,” “storytelling”), and mental (“language,” “computer classes”). In the Gift Card notice the headline is “The Gift of Living Well” (“well”: healthy, abundantly).

Let’s move up to the next level as a renewed commitment to our citizens’ lifestyle, benefit and continuing personal renewal.

Making such a change can be challenging, politically, organizationally and personally. But it has been a common challenge in the last decade, or more. And there is some experienced guidance that is doing it in organizations, the best of which is John Kotter’s, “Leading Change,” Harvard Business School Press. Kotter outlines an eight-step process, based on the experiences of over 150 companies with which he has worked.

Briefly, they are: a sense of urgency, building a coalition, developing a vision and strategies, communicating the vision, taking action, making early wins, consolidating those wins, and anchoring the program.

This plan won’t require any more facilities. It will require a new service model and an image of the District that will take some time to accomplish.

**Collaboration**

In most professional work, there is more success in a collaborative mode. The public sector has always emphasized the collaborative mode because it is more effective and less expensive. The public seems to know when public bodies are cooperating, and they appreciate it. They certainly know when public bodies are working at cross purposes, and they resent it.
Findings and Recommendations

Finding 1
Demographics
Some Growth and Aging Citizens. Will Young Families Move In?
The population in the District is aging, probably faster than the Front Range as a whole. The average age of the District property tax-paying population and potential District services users will substantially increase each year in the future. The majority of residents will be under 50 and 1/3 will be over 50 for this committee planning period. There is an obesity epidemic in the US and rates of diabetes and incidents of high blood pressure are rising alarmingly.

Population growth in the District is limited. Lone Tree has some potential for growth although there is no guarantee that the portion of Lone Tree east of I-25 will be included in the District. Areas that have pulled out of the District still provide a huge out-of-District potential participation in District services.

- Are there potential areas to annex into the District?
- If areas annex into the District there would be a need for more facilities to serve them.

The private marketplace is establishing more competitive facilities, particularly new health clubs. These facilities will siphon off some upper income members of the District who are willing to pay a fee for new, more elaborate workout facilities, especially one closer to home that features extended hours, more convenient for working folks.

Should the District be offering a competitive membership or some features such as personal lockers, more personal coaching, medical check points or other optional upgrades?

Finding 2
Financial Considerations
Support for the Mill Levy Extension in 2010
The Subcommittee reviewed the expected District revenues and expenditures for the next decade. Budgetary constraints will be an ongoing reality for the District. User fees are generally perceived as adequate (just right). Golf generates the most out-of-District money.

- There may be some need for a “guest” fee for a guest attending with a District resident. This should be a discounted out-of-District fee.
Meeting the expected increasing user demand for District services and infrastructure maintenance calls for making permanent the current mill levy that is due to expire in 2010.

- The case for the mill levy extension needs to be clearly defined (with respect to the older primary property owner) and widely communicated to support a ballot initiative for it.

Looking at the projected revenues and expenditures for South Suburban for the next decade, it appears that South Suburban needs the revenue from the one-mill tax now in place. The tax expires unless renewed by the voters. So let’s assume a vote on the extension in 2010. Will it pass?

**Scenario 1: Yes**
If you are optimistic, and think that South Suburban’s performance for the citizens of the District is very good, you would expect the voters to approve the extension of the tax for another decade. The Gold Medal Committee has only to endorse the District’s record and present a series of recommendations to let the voters know that South Suburban is still looking for ways to make improvements in the facilities and in their services. With support politically from our local governments and school districts, local business and the south metro chambers of commerce, and from user-voters, chances are good the tax will be extended.

**Scenario 2: Maybe not!**
If you have doubts about the election results, there is another scenario. The economy in 2010 may still be reeling after the 2008-2009 recession. The middle-class consumer may still be in a world of hurt with little confidence in their employment and continuing personal budget squeeze. In a graying District, the seniors may feel the economic squeeze even more. Depending on how the 2008 election goes, taxpayers may revolt against both political parties and candidates over economic and/or social issues and fight any tax increase, or extension. Other local governments may also be talking tax extensions, bonds, fee increases or similar requests to the voter, and continuing the plea of tight budgets, thus increasing pressure on the voter and risking a stronger backlash against even extending an existing tax.

We tend to agree with the first scenario, but think we need to hedge against the second, just in case. One way to do that is to show the voters a new commitment to them with a fresh approach to enrich their lifestyle, their leisure time, their minds and their bodies, in a new vision for South Suburban.
Finding 3
Words and pictures are powerful
A graphics program is by far the least expensive way to show the citizens of the District something new and exciting, because it reaches every home. It might include a new logo, one that expresses the new service model, as well as the trails and parks as shown on the current logo.

- Let’s develop a new graphic image and words for South Suburban.
- The banners along the entry to Goodson are a start.
- The current catalog of services is not perceived as user friendly and does not generate significant interest for many potential users. The catalog needs refreshing and perhaps it should be a set of catalogs for age groups, sports groups, family groups, social groups, hobby groups and so forth.
- It would be well to find a way to check in with non-users once or twice a year to invite them to use the facilities. These suggestions would be reinforced by a proactive marketing of District services to serve more users and increase revenue.

Finding 4
Collaboration and Partnerships
The previously noted need for future energizing and reenergizing wellness programs leads to an emphasis on relationships that can be collaborations with the medical community, insurers, schools, large corporations, all of which may be access to new populations of service users.

The District has a long record of collaboration, especially with Littleton. The District also includes Sheridan, Centennial and Lone Tree. The District also includes several school districts, a county, and numerous special districts. Each of these entities has specific obligations and each entity focuses on their facilities, programs, budgets and policies. But none of them focus on “living well” as the District does. It has a unique and personal scope.

- Why not more collaboration with the business community?
- Could we offer our facilities and services to employees in the District, not just residents? Could we offer health and wellness support for companies in the District?
- Many companies go beyond medical benefits by sponsoring a wellness program. South Suburban could offer to help with such a program because South Suburban has the facilities and the professionals for that kind of a program.
- Could we offer a business golf league during the summer for District companies? What about other sports?
- Can we offer businesses that provide large tax contributions to local government and districts something as a thank you?
The District should continue partnering with other organizations to provide hockey, ice skating, and Silver Sneakers, and other wellness program opportunities for the workers of large and moderately sized companies that are near District facilities. These relationships need to be symbiotic and not competitive.

Finding 5
Go Green: Long Term Economies in Energy Conservation
The District has taken some steps toward using renewable resources, but much more is available.

- The District needs to decide if they want to be viewed as a “green organization.”
- If so, it must decide to spend the money necessary to more aggressively support this concept. The general population expects to see this and knows this can cost money, especially in a parks and recreation district in the short range, but save money in the long range.
- A start in this direction would be to implement more aggressive recycling programs in all facilities.

Finding 6
Technology: Use Technology for Citizen Contacts & Services
The District population is becoming increasingly technologically savvy.

- The District needs to embrace newer technologies to help make facility use easier for the public. An example is a simple card swipe or walk-by card flash for signing in at recreation centers. Wireless access to the internet should be available in all recreation locations.
- Technology is available to make accessing the District’s website and services catalog more user friendly. The user data base can be used to create subgroups of users for marketing and customer service purposes.
- Expectations for the District’s electronic communications platforms (including email, website and internet marketing) will increase in the future. The citizens of the District will expect to see technologies used in better ways, in more ways, and increasingly in greener ways. As such, it is vital that the District prepare to meet these needs by investing in the appropriate training, software and IT infrastructure to meet these increased demands.

Finding 7
New Headquarters, Service Center and Regional Park
There is little if any strong potential for significant real property dependant expansion of services in the District.
While office accommodations appear to be at least adequate, construction of a modern and consolidated District maintenance service center is a necessity.

The Subcommittee discussed interest in potential open space property to consider for parks and other open space uses.

- The old Marathon Oil property at Broadway and Dry Creek Rd. and the property on Dry Creek Rd. adjacent to the Honeywell property were discussed specifically.

Finding 8
Customer Service: Empower Employees and Focus on Customer Contacts
The concept of adding and promoting visionary new program services to the District mission may call for a sophisticated or advanced degree of employee interactive customer service requirements than does the current scope of customer services. This kind of additional program service may call for unusually professional employee leadership and guidance. Appropriate leadership development can be addressed via some adjustment in the employee performance evaluation process.

The District Human Resources has been working with an external consultant during the last 12 months to review its performance management system in detail. This effort is in the final recommendation stage. The following fundamental human resources principles are being considered and addressed in these recommendations.

- Employees have to feel understood and appreciated to be optimally engaged in their jobs with minimal supervisor/employee (S/E) relationship stress.
- S/E relationship stress causes less than optimal achievement, employee health problems, employee grievances, and unnecessary organization legal expenses.
- Employees feel optimally understood and appreciated when: 1) they thoroughly understand supervisor’s achievement expectations of them that are specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time based, 2) they are committed to accomplishing achievement expectations and appropriately supported in their accomplishment efforts, and 3) perceptions of employee’s actual achievements meet or exceed expectations.
- Intentional supervisory (leadership) behavior improvement and increased employee achievement are accomplished by supervisors and employees negotiating supervisor support/employee achievement agreements for employee job responsibilities.
- Employee achievement evaluation practices must focus on employees’ perceived achievement of their negotiated achievement expectations and not allow or encourage them to compare their achievement with other employees’ achievement (a form of destructive ranking) as a basis for their perception of their achievement rating.
• Most of all, the employees have to be empowered to respond to citizen needs as well as District rules and procedures. It can be a tough decision area. The public sector is dominated by rules, regulations and control. In the marketplace, it is usually a “May I help you?” smile on the face of those dealing with the public.

A couple of months ago at the Goodson Center, a citizen was stretching barefoot in the free weight area. An employee told him he had to wear shoes. He put them back on. A month later, a different employee saw him stretching in the free weight area (shoes off again) but that employee told him there was a stretching area down the hall, (no shoes required) took him there and showed him some of the equipment. One employee enforced the rules. One helped a citizen and enforced the rules.

In the working world of South Suburban, the ideas and concepts proposed will assure that the employees, particularly the executive core and managers and those in contact with the public, have their work plans, goals and other aspects of their work aligned with the new service model. Their evaluations should reflect that service model as well.
Parks and Open Space Subcommittee

Process - Overview
The District shall strive to provide residents with a sufficient number of safe, secure and well-maintained open spaces, developed parks, athletic fields and outdoor facilities.

The findings, strategies and recommendations developed by the Subcommittee are based on group and individual visits to the South Suburban maintenance facilities, parks, athletic fields and open space and 357 surveys completed by people using the South Suburban parks, athletic fields and open space.

A majority of those surveyed live in the South Suburban District. However, approximately a quarter using the Parks, Open Space and athletic fields do come from communities outside District boundaries.

A majority of respondents to the survey use the Parks, Athletic Fields and Open Space once or more times a week. The most frequently used amenities in the Parks and Athletic Fields are the parks, playgrounds, swimming pools, soccer fields, restrooms and picnic shelters.

The Open Space and Trails are enjoyed most for walking, biking, observing nature and hiking. But there are a substantial number of people who picnic, fish, roller blade, raft and exercise.

A majority of those surveyed felt that there was need for more parks and open space, and they would support the District partnering with other entities to acquire land outside District boundaries.

The Survey indicated that the vast majority of users are very satisfied with South Suburban Parks and Open Space. Several people indicated that they moved to the South Metro area because of the Parks and Open Space.

This subcommittee has determined that the continued acquisition of land for parks and open space is important for the District to meet the needs of its residents, and it is critical that the District continue to support the infrastructure that maintains these assets.
Findings and Recommendations

Finding 1
There is an immediate and critical need for the construction of a new maintenance facility.
The existing maintenance facilities and shops are in desperate need of replacement due to the over-crowded conditions, including the lack of employee parking. There are also safety, health and code compliance issues that must be considered and addressed such as restrooms that are not ADA accessible, poor sight distance for vehicles exiting the site and lack of storage for vehicles and equipment, commodities and hazardous materials. Both facilities have a negative impact on their neighborhoods, which has intensified as District needs have outgrown these facilities.

Strategies
The Jamison and Willow Spring Service Centers should be moved out of the residential areas and into the eastern portion of David A. Lorenz Regional Park.

Extend the existing one mill tax levy to include an appropriation for the maintenance facility, as well as ongoing maintenance of parks and open space.

Dedicate a percentage of revenue to construction of the maintenance facility.

A phased program of closing existing facilities can free up additional land for open space/new park areas, or the old facilities could be sold and the proceeds applied toward the cost of the new centralized maintenance facility.

Recommendations
This subcommittee recommends the District follow the recommendations of the Maintenance Facility Analysis dated August 2005.

Construction of a new maintenance facility should be phased in over a five to seven year period, depending on the appropriation of funds.

Finding 2
There is an immediate need for a large acreage site for a Regional District Park.
The District should acquire a large acreage site that could be developed into a facility similar to Cornerstone Park.

Strategies
Immediate purchase of properties such as the Marathon and/or Comcast properties which could be developed into a regional field complex or a combination retail/field complex development.
Also consider land purchases east of I-25 and south of E 470 that are outside current District boundaries to meet the needs of rapid population growth in the South East area.

As emphasized in the cities of Centennial’s and Lone Trees’ recent Parks, Open Space, Trails and Recreation Master Plans, actively consider joint ventures with other outside governmental agencies.

**Recommendations**
The large organized leagues should be encouraged to move to the regional parks to reduce traffic and parking issues and overuse of the smaller neighborhood parks.

**Finding 3**
**Build out of David A. Lorenz Regional Park per the approved master plan.**
Since David A. Lorenz Regional Park has the only artificial surfaces in the District it is important that the build out of this park is completed to make more fields available for year round use.

**Strategies**
Continue to pursue all funding sources that may help offset development costs.

Extend the existing one mill tax levy to develop as well as acquire land for parks.

**Recommendations**
Explore annexation of Dave A. Lorenz Park into Arapahoe County and maybe the City of Centennial which would allow the District to apply for Arapahoe County Open Space Funds, and / or Centennial’s share of Arapahoe County’s Open Space and Lottery funds.

**Finding 4**
**There is a need for more open space parks. South Metro area is developing at a rapid pace and thus open space is disappearing.**
The residents will continue to put increased demands on existing open space parks.

**Strategies**
Every effort should be made to acquire all possible open space particularly along the S. Platte River and trails, east of I-25 - possibly as far east as E 470. South Suburban should continue to work with and support the efforts of the South Platte Working Group which has yielded over $26 million for open space acquisition and use this template - i.e. working with multiple jurisdictions, including but not limited to public and private entities, to acquire additional open space.
Extend the existing one mill tax levy to acquire and develop land for open space.

**Recommendations**
Investigate status of availability of undeveloped parcels of land within the District.
Dedicate funds to acquire additional open space as it does become available.

**Finding 5**
**Complete Cornerstone Park**

**Strategies**
Follow recommendations of the approved Master Plan.
Extend the existing one mill tax levy to include an appropriation to complete the work at Cornerstone Park.

**Recommendations**
Finish the parking lots to include curb and gutters with asphalt to correct current drainage issues.
Coordinate funding with the City of Englewood for improvements to the parking lot at Belleview to help accommodate the overflow parking from Pirate’s Cove.
Build additional restroom facilities on the west end of the park.
Build large reserve-able shelters to accommodate requested reservations.
Plant additional trees adjacent to fields in order to provide shade for users and spectators.

**Finding 6**
**Identify existing fields and parks that need more parking and facilities to serve current use. Develop additional fields to help reduce the wear on current fields.**

**Strategies**
Improve parking lots, restrooms, signage and shelters.
Extend the existing one mill tax levy to include an appropriation for on-going maintenance as well as acquisition of parks and open space. Maintenance of facilities is necessary to maintain the quality of parks, open space and athletic fields.
**Recommendations**
Investigate developing the Wynetka Ponds property per the approved Master Plan.

Improve connectivity between trails and parks.

The District should develop a five year plan to increase or upgrade the bathroom facilities/porta-potties and drinking fountains at the most highly used parks and athletic fields.

Plant additional trees and or construct shaded picnic tables/benches to provide increased shelter for park users.

Investigate temporary shelters, i.e.; summer sail covering, that can be removed during the winter months.

---

**Finding 7**
**Strengthen the District-wide “Green” program.**

**Strategies**
Reduce, reuse and recycle all possible materials.
Continually improve the use of electronic technology.

Extend the one mill levy to help develop and strengthen a “green” program for the District.

**Recommendations**
Continue to explore more efficient use of grey water.
When possible, use drought tolerant and/or low water use plantings in the parks.

Work with other entities to increase and improve recycling efforts which includes recycle bins in all facilities, parks, athletic fields and open space.

Explore increasing District use of recyclable materials and alternative fuels.

Explore using “green” materials in all new construction in the District.

Pursue available grants and other funding sources for increasing District’s Green programs, and consider use of solar and wind power where appropriate.
Appendix A: District Resident Survey Responses
South Suburban Parks & Recreation Gold Medal 2020
Parks & Open Space Subcommittee Community Survey Results 8/08

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Questions</th>
<th>Number of Responses</th>
<th>% of Total Responses for Question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. a. Are you a resident of SSPRD? Yes</td>
<td>202 out of 294</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. b. Do you use the SSPRD? Yes</td>
<td>105 out of 113 responding</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Area of Residence:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Littleton</td>
<td>127 out of 347 responses</td>
<td>36.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centennial</td>
<td>112 out of 347</td>
<td>32.35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lone Tree</td>
<td>17 out of 347</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highlands Ranch, Jeffco &amp; Columbine</td>
<td>Each have 14 or 4% out of 347</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denver</td>
<td>8 out of 347</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other – Englewood (6), Bowmar (5), Greenwood Village, Aurora, Castle Rock (4), Cherry Hills Village (3), Ken Caryl, Lakewood, Sheridan, Douglas County (2 each), Castle Pines, Clear Creek, Governors Ranch, Larkspur, Morrison, Minnesota, Los Angeles (1 each)</td>
<td>41 out of 347</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Note in this question – 277 of the respondents lived in the SSPR district or 80% of total respondents.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. How often do you use SSPRD parks &amp; open space?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequently</td>
<td>147 out of 308 responses</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>75 out of 308 responses</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>86 out of 308 responses</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Amenities You Use:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parks</td>
<td>201 out of 1122 responses</td>
<td>17.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Playgrounds</td>
<td>138 out of 1122</td>
<td>12.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swimming Pools</td>
<td>132 out of 1122</td>
<td>11.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restrooms</td>
<td>129 out of 1122</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soccer</td>
<td>120 out of 1122</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Picnic Shelters</td>
<td>84 out of 1122</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golf Courses</td>
<td>69 out of 1122</td>
<td>6 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ice Skating</td>
<td>54 out of 1122</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennis Courts</td>
<td>46 out of 1122</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Softball</td>
<td>29 out of 1122</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basketball Courts</td>
<td>28 out of 1122</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lacrosse</td>
<td>22 out of 1122</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skate Board Parks</td>
<td>21 out of 1122</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Football</td>
<td>16 out of 1122</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disc Golf</td>
<td>14 out of 1122</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey Questions</td>
<td>Number of Responses</td>
<td>% of Total Responses for Question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horseshoe Pits</td>
<td>13 out of 1122</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-line Hockey</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rugby</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5. Purpose for which you use SSPR Open Space and Trails</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walking</td>
<td>209 out of 853</td>
<td>24.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biking</td>
<td>178 out of 853</td>
<td>20.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoying Nature</td>
<td>134 out of 853</td>
<td>15.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiking</td>
<td>125 out of 853</td>
<td>14.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Picnicking</td>
<td>79 out of 853</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bird Watching</td>
<td>33 out of 853</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishing</td>
<td>31 out of 853</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roller Blading</td>
<td>28 out of 863</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rafting</td>
<td>20 out of 853</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Running</td>
<td>16 out of 853</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5. b. How often do you Use SSPR Open Space &amp; Trails?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 or more times a week</td>
<td>187 out of 320</td>
<td>58.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 3 times a week</td>
<td>68 out of 320</td>
<td>21.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (2 a month, 1 a month, several times year)</td>
<td>65 out of 320</td>
<td>20.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6. What Improvements Could be made to enhance experience?</strong></td>
<td>See comments at end of table</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>7. Do You see a Need for More Athletic Fields?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>104 out of 248</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>144 out of 248</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>8. Do you see a need for additional parks and open space?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>157 out of 246</td>
<td>63.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>89 out of 246</td>
<td>36.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>9. Would you Support land acquisition outside district boundaries, partnering with other entities?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>199 out of 232</td>
<td>85.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>33 out of 232</td>
<td>14.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>10. Rate how satisfied you are with SSPR Parks &amp; Open Space. (with 5 most satisfied):</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>94 out of 283</td>
<td>33.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>155 out of 283</td>
<td>54.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>29 out of 283</td>
<td>10.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>5 out of 283</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Question # 6: What Improvements Could be made to enhance your experience or would influence your decision to use SSPR’s parks, open space and trails?
More multipurpose fields - east of I-25

More shade at Cornerstone

BETTER SOCCER FACILITIES
- Keeping the soccer fields in good shape so that the kids playing on them don't suffer injuries from clumping grass and holes on the fields
- We use SS fields for almost every sport my son plays. Space has sometimes been tight when so many teams are out there at the same time
- Lights for night usage besides softball/baseball, i.e. soccer/footfall, other team sports
- Bring the condition of soccer fields - especially at Cornerstone Park - up to par with our competitive communities! We are LOSING city revenue and dollars by not providing the best fields and resources for our soccer clubs (Littleton Soccer & others). Let those clubs use the fields ALL SUMMER and maintain the fields as demanded!

Safety after dark important because I have a small child

Horses should not be allowed to go to the bathroom on the trails. Dog owners pick up after their pets, so should horse owners

A new playground at East Elementary (this commented repeated in a group of 21 surveys)

Proximity, we live in TrailMark which is closer to Foothills Park & Rec. so we use their facilities

More adult use areas; most everything is geared to kids

More bathrooms. Keep them up and have less sport activities scheduled.

Encourage people to pick up their own trash

No major improvements - I love them

A NICE BASEBALL FIELD COMPLEX IN LONE TREE. Other cities have great baseball complexes which is totally lacking in Lone Tree. We have all this space and it would be easy to build a nice four-plex with concession stand, etc.

More dog friendly parks

The South Suburban trails are excellent. Continue their upkeep. We use the ice skating facilities 4-5 times per week and would love to see South Suburban Ice Arena remodeled. Keep Family Sports Ice Arena in good shape.
Ridgewood basketball courts need some major attention. They look like inner city basketball court: not flat, cracks, need complete fence so you do not have to chase after the ball down the hill.

Improve quality of soccer fields, bathrooms at parks, more gravel on paths to avoid mud.

11. Additional Comments.
Open up district boundaries to east of I-25. Multi-use parks are needed and would be supported by S.E. growth - soccer, Lacrosse, Football!

I would love to see our 2 groups (SS Parks & Cherry Hills) get back together on open space ownership/maintenance

Thanks you for all that you do to provide safe environments for our kids.

I am a teacher at East Elementary School and we could really use a new playground. It would truly benefit the school & the community. (This comment from a group of surveys from East)

Mountain Biking is very popular. We need more trails for all levels! (From a TrailMark resident) Moderate level of satisfaction is due to proximity issue - we're too far from most parks, facilities to make them extremely beneficial.

BMX park devalues the area.

Restrooms and more trees to prevent scorched earth would be an improvement. However, overall I am very pleased with South Suburban and the facilities. I think you are leaders in the nation for facilities. Keep up the good work.

It is important to put aside parks and open space now, before developers turn them into strip malls. We need a place for mountain lions to go . . . so they stay out of our neighborhoods! Give the children and young adults a safe environment to participate in/on nice facilities with adequate parking.

Growth in county means more children, more teams, more need for athletic fields.

You should use Survey Monkey or another on-line survey service. It would be easier. (From a page long response)

Our son's home fields are at Cornerstone and the fields there are better than some, and worse than others that we have played on around the state. And these fields are not just used by soccer teams - I've seen people playing cricket, Frisbee, lacrosse and football on them so it seems like it makes sense to keep the fields in good shape for everyone to enjoy in a safe and healthy way. It seems like the idea of partnering with other entities could work so that you could pool your resources and offer more facilities and parks for everyone, and maybe having a bigger entity could be good because people may listen to the issues better. Thanks for taking the time to get people's input!
Just having moved here from California, Colorado has no idea how lucky they/we are to have this space. It is truly a blessing and appreciated!

It might be more responsible in this economy to continue to use the funds available to upgrade and continue to make the existing South Suburban facilities, fields, and open space the best they can be.

Note: There were many comments from the neighbors at Cherry Knolls Park concerning what they believe is over scheduling of athletic groups and a lack of parking. These were not included because they have already been addressed at the South Suburban board meetings.

Note: We are including an email which came in on the night of October 21 from a person unable to attend the meeting.
Appendix B: Resource Documents

I. Maintenance Facility Analysis: Executive Summary dated August 2005

II. Gold Medal 2020 Parks and Open Space Subcommittee Report dated April 1999, “Recommendations for Athletic Fields, Parks and Open Space”

III. Executive Summary of the South Platte Working Group’s application for a GOCO Legacy Grant

IV. Excerpts from the City of Centennial’s Parks, Open Space, Trails and Recreation Master Plan, 2007; P1-1 of the Introduction, Executive Summary pages vii-xii and Recommendations, page 9-3

V. Excerpts from the City of Lone Tree Parks and South Suburban’s Trails and Recreation Master Plan, 2007

VI. Cornerstone Park Master Plan

VII. Wynetka Master Plan
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Recreation Programs and Facilities Subcommittee

Process-Overview
The Facilities and Programs Subcommittee arrived at our findings and recommendations through several methods:

Our committee used a survey form to obtain feedback from facility patrons about their specific likes, dislikes and recommendations regarding the facilities and programs. The questions were designed to provide thought provoking results more than simply statistical data. The Survey Form is shown in the appendix. Surveying was done during June, July and August, 2008. Surveying was done through one-on-one dialogue, in groups and by people sending in their comments through the district website, email and regular mail.

Facilities Surveyed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Buck Recreation Center</td>
<td>Franklin Pool</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Littleton Golf &amp; Tennis Center</td>
<td>Goodson Recreation Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cook Creek Pool</td>
<td>South Suburban Golf Course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lone Tree Recreation Center</td>
<td>Harlow Pool</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lone Tree Golf Course</td>
<td>Sheridan Rec-Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holly Pool</td>
<td>Family Sports Center Golf Course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cornerstone Batting Cages</td>
<td>County Line BMX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Sports Center</td>
<td>Colorado Journey Golf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hudson Gardens</td>
<td>Family Sport Center Ice Arena</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holly Tennis Center</td>
<td>South Platte Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Suburban Ice Arena</td>
<td>Sports Dome at Family Sports</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition, surveys were conducted throughout libraries in the Arapahoe Library District and several homeowners associations within the South Suburban Parks and Recreation District. Because our committee has members representing specific groups such as figure skating clubs, men and women golf clubs, etc., we made certain to gather the opinions from the general public as well as from special interest groups. We also made certain that different age groups (from youth to seniors) were targeted for their input. The opinions of staff working at the different facilities were also part of our information gathering process.

Clearly, the overwhelming comments were very positive. A vast majority offered no complaints and expressed satisfaction and support for the facilities and programs operated under South Suburban Parks and Recreation District. It is the opinion of
our committee that this information makes a very strong statement that says that maintaining what already exists is where most resources should be spent. There are issues that did come up like improving customer service in certain areas and improving the overall cleanliness in certain facilities that we ask the District to examine and stress to staff the importance of keeping both a high priority.

As a public recreational provider there is a need to address changes in demographics, recreational and wellness interests, and social consciousness of the community. Looking to the future the following recommendations are offered as stimuli to ensure that the District is competitive, and continues as a leader in providing recreational and wellness support to the community.

**Extending the Mill Levy for the next 10 years**
Our committee recommends that the mill levy be extended for the next 10 years. We understand that requires voter approval. We find that many citizens are uninformed as to the overall breadth of South Suburban facilities and programs. One of the common responses to our survey was “I didn’t realize _________ was part of South Suburban.”

**Recommendation**
In an effort to educate district residents as to what they are missing concerning South Suburban we recommend a concerted effort to better inform the public. One simple way would be to send monthly or bi-monthly information to each HOA within the South Suburban District for publishing in their community newsletters. The Arapahoe Library District and the City of Centennial have been doing this for many years. Many HOA’s will include a listing of all South Suburban facilities and information about South Suburban in their publications and on their websites if they have it. This tool not only informs the public but can help make the connection that South Suburban is a benefit to living in the area and must be supported.

**Maintenance is Vital to the Future Life of Our Facilities**
The Recreation Facilities, including golf courses, and associated programs are valued by facility patrons. Maintaining the facilities in good and clean condition and updating equipment on a regular basis is critical to long term success.

**Finding 1**
There is an overwhelming concern about the cleanliness of the golf course facilities. Most often mentioned were the bathroom facilities. Comments were made about many other facilities as well.

**Recommendation**
Establish stricter criteria towards improving cleanliness at ALL district facilities.
Finding 2
The Heating and Air Conditioning systems at many of the facilities are inconsistent and don’t seem to keep temperatures at a constant or comfortable temperature.

**Recommendation**
Establish a regular maintenance program on the HVAC systems to ensure they are working properly and maintain a comfortable temperature.

Finding 3
The locker rooms and showers at the ice rinks are in need of updating and repair.

**Recommendation**
Increase number of showers at both facilities and renovate locker rooms at DeLio Rink.

**Continue Promoting Individual and Community Wellness**

Finding 4
There are the occasional complaints that food sold at South Suburban facilities should be “healthier.”

**Recommendation**
Continue the “Living Well Program” and make certain all facilities are involved.

Finding 5
There is a concern for access for disabled persons at the lap pool at Buck Recreation Center.

**Recommendation**
Please address this and seek a solution.

**Continue Promoting Youth Related Programs**

Finding 6
We have a serious problem in our society today whereby young people either participate in organized activities or they sit at home and watch television or play video games. For some reason, they don’t just go out and play. That’s the challenge. However, your Kids Living Well Program really seems to be working.
Recommendation
Continue with these types of programs in an effort to reach out to kids in the community. The concept of taking programs and activities to the kids (i.e., parks, etc.) is an important resource in getting kids more involved and getting kids out of the house.

Finding 7
The pre-school and school-aged before and after school programs and summer programs are very popular and seem to be reasonably priced.

Recommendation
Continue these programs and expand them if at all possible.

Finding 8
Some of the facilities don’t seem to have as much youth participation as others.

Recommendation
Establish a plan to better inform area schools about South Suburban facilities and programs.

South Suburban Golf Clubhouse Needs Attention

Finding 9
The clubhouse at South Suburban Golf Course is old and outdated. Since South Suburban is the busiest golf course and generates the most revenue it is perhaps time to consider a new clubhouse.

Recommendation
We realize that, although this is a major expenditure, there is also a cost/benefit aspect. A new clubhouse does not necessarily mean more golfers or more revenue. However, something will need to be done. Perhaps a major restoration could be done. Many design ideas were given. The most logical recommendation, due to space limitations, would be to build a two-story building with a restaurant and patio area on the top and a pro shop and cart storage area in the lower level.

Focus on Customer Service

Finding 10
Overall patrons feel South Suburban has good customer service. However, there are still complaints.
**Recommendation**
Make customer relations a priority across ALL district facilities.

**Finding 11**
Golf facilities user groups request an improved mechanism to communicate with golf course management.

**Recommendation**
Establish a public Golf Facilities Advisory Board as an ongoing communication forum for constructive input from golf facilities user groups.

**Services to Seniors Will Continue to Grow**

**Finding 12**
Seniors continue to be among the largest growing group of users of South Suburban facilities.

**Recommendation**
Continue to explore ways to provide services to seniors that are both meaningful and affordable. The numbers of seniors will continue to grow over the next decade.

**Finding 13**
Seniors request a fee structure that allows them to use each of the district golf courses.

**Recommendation**
Explore the feasibility of a “fee for seniors” that would allow them to use each of the golf courses. Most likely this would only be good Monday through Thursday.

**Thinking “Green” is Not a Bad Thing**

**Finding 14**
For several years there has been a greater social awareness and emphasis on becoming more environmental conscious.

**Recommendation**
Continue to explore more ways to be “green” as long as the cost benefit justifies the end result.
Patrons find Value in the Arts Programs

Finding 15
Patrons like the various art that is displayed at the facilities. They like the fact that local artists in the community are given the opportunity to show their works.

Recommendation
Continue this program and try to expand it to allow for more public artwork to be put on display.

Suggestions (Not Recommendations)
The following are common issues that were brought to our attention. We believe that since they were brought up by several people we should include them in our report.

Finding 16
Many patrons have suggested an “all facilities pass.”

Suggestion
Explore the possibility and feasibility of such a pass. Naturally, golf may have to be excluded or such a pass might include a certain number of rounds or a discounted fee at each course.

Finding 17
The service of providing towels at the recreation centers is both costly and time consuming.

Suggestion
Evaluate the feasibility of the future of this service. A more thorough study should be done to weigh the positives and negatives. Many people like the service. Others feel it is an unnecessary cost incurred by the district. Plus the additional water usage has been brought up.

Finding 18
Figure skating programs have both skilled and unskilled skaters.

Suggestion
Consider running programs that separate the higher level skaters from lower level primarily for safety reasons.

Finding 19
There is a need for additional ice for figure skating and hockey.
**Suggestion**
Look at the feasibility of building a new ice arena or look for an opportunity to purchase an existing public facility. (We understand that operating an ice arena is an expensive undertaking!)

**Finding 20**
Patrons at Hudson Gardens like the facility and its programming. They made several suggestions

**Suggestion**
Add a few picnic tables along the Platte River between Hudson Gardens and C-470. Also add more water fountains. Consider a summer membership for college students. Continue doing what you have been doing.

**Finding 21**
Despite one of the best par-3 courses in the area, the public practice area at South Suburban Golf Course is greatly lacking.

**Suggestion**
Add some type of practice area that would include a practice chipping area and sand trap.

**Finding 22**
The water fountains on South Suburban Golf Course are warm and the water tastes bad.

**Suggestion**
Put water stands every few holes.

**Finding 23**
At South Suburban Golf Course the loudspeaker used by the starter is very loud and can be heard over the entire golf course.

**Suggestion**
Turn the volume down or replace the system with something that is less distracting for players on the course. Only people in the area of the clubhouse and driving range really need to hear who is “next up on the tee box.”

**Finding 24**
Slow play is an ongoing problem at all the courses.
**Suggestion**
Establish a strict policy regarding pace of play and enforce it. Consider trying to educate both experienced players as well as beginners about ways to speed up play. Have the course rangers be more forceful about pace of play.

**Finding 25**
At South Suburban Golf Course many complained that the beverage cart is rarely seen until after 11:00 a.m. even on the weekends.

**Suggestion**
Have the beverage cart on the course earlier. Perhaps when the course is busy the beverage cart could bounce between the #5 and #14 green. Could supplies be stored in the building above the #5 green?

**Suggestion**
Provide snack bars with quick food and easy access for players making the turn.
Suggested at all the golf courses.

**Suggestion**
Conduct a cost benefit analysis of outsourcing food services at all the South Suburban golf courses and/or all South Suburban facilities that provide food services.

**Finding 26**
At South Suburban Golf Course, there are many thoughtful ideas offered concerning specific golf holes. They are listed below:

**Suggestion**
Build a bridge over the creek on hole #7 to allow golfers to walk directly to the green without going around by the #6 green.

Fill in the front part of the #6 green making it a three-tiered green; some suggested a new back tee box.

Fill in the front right part of the #7 green; add a sand trap to the left front instead of the mound.

Put a sand trap in front of the #10 green; remove the extreme slope on the left side of the green.
Raise the front of the #14 green. Put a sand trap right front and consider making a two- or three-tiered green. Some suggested a new back tee box.

Fill in the front left part of the green which has been sinking over the years. The difficulty of the green is fine except there are only two or three places to put the hole.

Rebuild the practice green. Over a third of it is unusable due to the severe slope.

**Finding 27**
Several golfers – especially those involved in the men and women golf clubs – expressed a desire for a louder voice. They believe they have a level of knowledge above the occasional walk-on golfer as a result of their numbers and their close and ongoing association with the golf facilities they support. They want to be heard.

**Suggestion**
Establish a public Golf Facilities Advisory Board as an ongoing communication forum for constructive input from golf facilities user groups.
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Appendix A: Recreation Survey

Evaluator ________________________       Facility _____________________    Date & Time _________________

South Suburban Parks and Recreation Board of Directors has formed a Gold Medal 2020 Long-Range Planning Committee in order to gather citizen input about the recreation district. One of the Gold Medal working groups is the Recreation Facilities and Programs Subcommittee. This subcommittee is seeking input from the many users of SSPR facilities and programs. Please take a few minutes to provide feedback so that we can determine how to best meet the needs of those who use the facilities.

Survey Questions:

1. Which of these SSPR District facilities do you use?
   - Buck Recreation Center
   - Goodson Recreation Center
   - Lone Tree Recreation Center
   - Sheridan Recreation Center
   - Cornerstone Batting Cages
   - Colorado Journey Golf
   - Holly Tennis Center
   - Sports Dome at Family Sports
   - Franklin Pool
   - Cook Creek Pool
   - Harlow Pool
   - Holly Pool
   - County Line BMX
   - Hudson Gardens
   - South Platte Park
   - Littleton Golf & Tennis Center
   - South Suburban Golf Course
   - Lone Tree Golf Course
   - Family Sports Center Golf Course
   - Family Sports Center
   - Family Sport Center Ice Arena
   - South Suburban Ice Arena
   - Other (List): ____________________________________________________________________

2. How often do you use SSPR facilities?
   - 3 or more times a week______
   - Less than 3 times a week______
   - Other____ (describe below)

3. Please list the programs you participate in at the facilities you use. (i.e. swimming lessons, cultural arts programs, weight rooms, yoga, Silver Sneakers, lap pool, indoor track, exercise class, etc.)
   ___________________________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________________________

4. Are there other classes or programs you would like to see offered through SSPR? Please list________

5. What is one improvement that could be made to enhance your experience or would influence your decision to use South Suburban facilities more frequently?_____________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________________________

6. Do you see a need for additional facilities and/or improvements to existing facilities?  Please describe
   ___________________________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________________________

7. Are SSPR fees competitive with other fitness facilities and programs?
   - More expensive_______
   - Less expensive_______
   - Same_________

8. Please provide us with any additional comments:
   ___________________________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________________________

For more information, please visit www.sspr.org.

Thank you for your time!
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Trails Subcommittee

Process – Overview
The subcommittee assigned to review and revise the Gold Medal 2020 Strategic Plan for Trails in the South Suburban Parks and Recreation District began its task by becoming familiar with the trails network, which has achieved local and national recognition and inspires other communities to have as comprehensive a trail system and to be as interconnected. The subcommittee compared the physical reality of the system with the goals and strategies contained in the Strategic Plan adopted in 1999 and found many examples of successful implementation by the Board of Directors and the District staff. There were also examples where the good work begun needs to be continued. The Vision Statement that follows was inspired by the successes and give direction for continued efforts. The subcommittee findings are consistent with the Vision Statement and the Goals stated in the 1999 Strategic Plan. The recommendations for specific improvements or actions at specific locations that follow are keyed to the South Suburban Park and Recreation District Trails Map.

Vision Statement
South Suburban will maintain, improve and expand the existing trail system and encourage trail connections to adjacent counties and municipalities. Recreational trails will be easily accessible and safe and will provide an enjoyable experience in a natural environment.

South Suburban will encourage commuting to work or school using alternative means of transportation by coordinating with local jurisdictions to establish a system of “urban trails” alongside major roads, particularly those east–west roads that have no nearby recreational trails.

Finding 1
The South Suburban trail system is largely focused on drainage ways and lacks east-west connections and key connections for use for access for work, schools, and shopping.

Recommendations
As most of the District’s recreational trails are built along streams and drainage ways and follow the water flow in a south–north direction, South Suburban should encourage designated bike routes along east–west streets such as Arapahoe Road, Bowles Avenue, and Dry Creek Road. The District should seek cooperation with property owners, local governments, and others interested in or able to provide assistance to acquire route access and construct the trails. (The Power-line trail along the Caley Avenue right-of-way, in design stages at this time, is an example of seeking the participation of the
community, the City of Centennial, and Xcel Energy to provide a needed trail improvement.)

Connections from trails to neighborhoods and roadside paths should be made wherever possible.

The trail system should provide access to light rail stations in the District.

An overpass at Little's Creek over the railroad tracks should be constructed to provide a connection from the Littleton light rail station to Sterne Park.

A trail should be added along the City Ditch in Littleton to enable easier access from the Colorado Center for the Blind to the Littleton light rail station.

Access to light rail from neighborhoods on the west side of the Platte River should be provided.

A bridge over the Platte River should be constructed south of Dartmouth Avenue to provide a direct connection between the Little Dry Creek Trail in Englewood and the Mary Carter Greenway.

An underpass at County Line Road should be built to connect the Lee Gulch Trail with the C-470 trail.

I-25 presents a significant barrier to east-west movement in Centennial and Lone Tree. Safe crossings should be explored in order to provide a series of loops in these areas.

Through coordination with other jurisdictions, a connection (a street connection, trail/bridge, or both) should be provided between the end of the Big Dry Creek Trail at Powers Avenue and the High Line Canal, and a connection should exist from the end of the trail to Orchard Road at Clarkson Street.

Two bridges spanning Big Dry Creek should be provided:

   At Progress Park, to connect Cornerstone Park and the handicap accessible fishing dock to the Big Dry Creek Trail; and,

   At the Murray Property (which will soon be acquired by the District for a public park), to connect to the Big Dry Creek Trail.

An additional bridge spanning Big Dry Creek near Littleton High School should be installed, for purposes of allowing students who live north of the high school grounds direct access to the grounds.

At Littleton Boulevard and City Ditch, consideration should be given to the widening of the Littleton Boulevard south-side sidewalk to accommodate pedestrians, bicycles, etc., and give the public the option to access downtown Littleton, the light rail station, and Littles Creek (which will then connect to
Mary Carter Greenway at the Platte River). The expanded sidewalk should be approximately 15 feet wide. This would be a less expensive trail connection than the Sterne Park flume.

Finding 2
The South Suburban trails system is highly regarded and highly used. The area’s budgetary priorities may not reflect the level of use the system receives. High levels of trail use may create conflicts or friction among users and user groups.

Recommendations
Trails may be the most heavily used component of South Suburban’s recreational system; therefore, the annual amount budgeted for trails should be managed to reflect that priority.

Improving the safety of the Bear Creek Trail from the Platte River to the street crossing at Lowell Boulevard should be a priority. A safety review of this important corridor should be considered.

Dual trails, hard surfaced and paralleling soft-surfaced paths, could help improve safety while addressing the needs of a variety of trail users.

A second dual trail on the east bank of the Platte River, on the Mary Carter Greenway between Prince Street and the Englewood Golf Course, should be considered to help reduce traffic volume.

 Owners of dogs off-leash and speeders should be ticketed.

Trailhead parking on the east side of the Platte River at Bowles and Santa Fe is needed.

Finding 3
Trails are important to the residents of the South Suburban Parks and Recreation District. Residents and property owners receive value in many ways—physical, economic, aesthetic, etc.—from the area’s trails system.

Recommendations
The District’s minimum width for new and reconstructed trail segments should be 10 feet unless physical or right-of-way factors dictate otherwise. All trails should be developed and maintained at the minimum width to meet the needs of the trail users for safety and comfort.

Ongoing trail maintenance should be a top priority. All-weather access, year-around, should be provided on a priority/user frequency basis. Potholes should be filled. Crusher fines should be renewed on an as-needed basis. Graffiti should be removed immediately.
South Suburban should pursue trails construction and maintenance programs that are as environmentally friendly (Green) and sustainable as possible. Efforts to incorporate alternative materials and energy sources should be maximized. The District should balance the short-term needs for action and budget management with long-term sustainability.

Natural vegetation, including trees, shrub thickets and wildflowers, should be added wherever possible to improve visual quality of the trail system, address privacy concerns of nearby residents, and provide wildlife habitat.

South Suburban should provide a means to collect information on trails conditions or improvement suggestions from trail users.

Public education efforts on trail etiquette should be on a continual basis:

- The District should join with the school districts and police departments in schools to emphasize trail safety.
- South Suburban should provide a mechanism to collect feedback and share information among trail providers and trail users. The District could use newsletters as well as periodic and regularly scheduled forums or meetings, among other methods.
- Telephone call boxes should be added in remote areas of trail system.

Neighborhood “Adopt-a-Trail” programs should be encouraged.

Periodic sites with bags for dog waste and disposal containers should be provided and their use enforced.

A new trail system signage system, including mileage bollards that provide Global Positioning System (GPS) location information, should be installed.

**Finding 4**

**The High Line Canal is the backbone of South Suburban’s trail system, as well as a local amenity. The trail has achieved recognition as a National Recreational Trail.**

**Recommendations**

To provide the optimum trail experience, South Suburban should investigate and pursue designs that would provide High Line Canal trail users with ways to cross heavily traveled thoroughfares in a safe manner. Attention is most needed at the following streets:

- Santa Fe Drive
- Broadway (at Ridge Road, Arapahoe Road and Caley Avenue)
Orchard Road (crossings near Franklin Street and Colorado Blvd.)

Investigations should consider grade separation, alternative routes, intersection visibility, signage for trail users and motorists.

An underpass at Santa Fe Drive and the High Line Canal should be constructed to allow easy connection to portions of the High Line Canal trail west of Santa Fe.

To make the High Line Canal more accessible to neighborhoods, walkways and bridges should be added where appropriate.

South Suburban should continue participating in and providing leadership, in regional planning efforts for the High Line Canal.

The Denver Water Department should be encouraged to create a tree replacement program that would preserve the vegetative beauty of the High Line Canal trail corridor.

The 1989 High Line Canal Trail Study should be used as the community’s policy.

South Suburban’s portion of the High Line Canal trail should be maintained as a crusher-fines trail. Attempts to hard surface this trail by any authority should be strongly resisted.

If opportunities arise, the District should acquire additional trailhead parking wherever possible along the Canal. Attempts should be made to coordinate use of existing parking lots at churches, shopping centers, etc. whenever possible.

Finding 5
Progress toward making the South Suburban trails system a true Gold Medal facility should be enhanced through cooperation among many entities and jurisdictions.

Recommendations
The trails plans for the Cities of Lone Tree and Centennial should be included by reference as recommendations in this document.

Trails, paths, and walks should be considered part of the infrastructure, with planning for the needs of pedestrians and bicyclists done at the beginning of any development project, including road construction, reconstruction, or maintenance projects. Trails should be built in conjunction with streetscape beautification and traffic calming projects along major roads.

South Suburban should work cooperatively with the Colorado Department of Transportation and the Public Works departments of the appropriate
jurisdictions (Highlands Ranch, Douglas County, Arapahoe County, Littleton, Centennial, Lone Tree, etc.) to investigate ways to enhance trail user safety.

South Suburban should make its trail concerns and needs known when local governments consider street improvements or land development applications.

South Suburban should search for other means to increase funds for trails, such as private foundations’ support, grants (State and Great Outdoors Colorado), Federal programs such as Rails to Trails, and joint funding projects with other parties, including adjacent property owners, districts and municipalities.

Finding 6
The District should seek ways to make use of improvements in technology to improve user safety, and satisfaction, to improve accessibility and sustainability of the trails, and to enhance flexibility in the trails’ use.

Recommendations
When evaluating trail use policies, the District should consider the potential for use of mobility devices, such as vehicles with engines.

The District should participate in trails mapping activities that would make the South Suburban system part of the digital map network.

Such an online map would enable trails users to query a database to locate a route or perform trails loop mapping.

The District should continually evaluate alternative trails surface materials to enhance economy and sustainability without sacrificing safety and user satisfaction.

The District should consider alternative power sources for performing trails maintenance.
District Overview

The mission of South Suburban Park and Recreation District is to contribute to the full and meaningful lives of our residents by providing a variety of leisure services as well as improving the quality of life through stewardship of the environment, parks, trails, open space, and facilities.

The South Suburban Park and Recreation District is a quasi-municipal corporation and a political subdivision of the State of Colorado, formed in 1959 pursuant to state law, for the purpose of providing recreational facilities and services for District residents. In 1959, approximately 45,000 people lived in the District. In 2008, the population totals nearly 140,000 residents. The District includes Bow Mar, Columbine Valley, Littleton, Sheridan, Centennial and Lone Tree west of I-25, and portions of unincorporated Arapahoe and Douglas counties.

South Suburban offers extensive facilities and thousands of leisure, cultural, fitness and recreational classes and programs for people of all ages and abilities. Amenities include over 100 parks and open space locations spread over approximately 3,500 acres (including 878-acre South Platte Park), 56 playgrounds 81 miles of trails, a nature center, four recreation centers, eight pools (four indoor and four outdoor), five golf courses (three 18-hole, one 9-hole “Executive” and one 9-hole par 3), three 18-hole miniature golf courses, a disc golf course, two ice arenas (each with two sheets of ice), two inline hockey rinks, two skate parks, an indoor sports dome, batting cages, an entertainment arcade, a BMX cycling track, 215 multipurpose fields, including 7 lighted softball/baseball fields and 4 multipurpose synthetic turf fields athletic and baseball fields, 64 tennis courts (16 lighted indoor), two off-leash dog parks, and a heated, year-round driving range.
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Charge to the Gold Medal 2020 Committee

The Citizen Committee was challenged to review the District completely, analyze current functions, facilities and requirements, to make recommendations to the Board of Directors on how best to serve the citizens and community to meet the stated mission in the future. The working groups were tasked to use the following task statements to meet their subcommittee goals:

1. Review and update the information from the Gold Medal 2020 Plan (April 1999) as needed.
2. Visit District parks and open spaces and make recommendations for additional parks and/or open space acquisitions, and/or improvements to the existing parks and open spaces.
3. Visit District recreation facilities and make recommendations for additional facilities and/or improvements to existing facilities.
4. Review current recreation program offerings and make suggestions for additions, changes, or elimination of programs.
5. Review current fees and charges policy, including District and non-District rates, and make appropriate recommendations.
6. Visit the District’s trail system and make recommendations regarding new trails, trail surfaces, trail connectivity, and trail signage.
7. Review the recent recreation, parks, trails, and open space master plans adopted by the cities of Lone Tree and Centennial to help identify District opportunities and the role the District should play in implementation of the cities’ plans. Also, review the City of Littleton’s 2030 Comprehensive Plan and the South Platte Working Group’s Legacy Grant application and make appropriate recommendations.
8. Review the District’s finances and make recommendations regarding appropriate funding levels for operations and maintenance, future bonding needs and capacity, and possibly extending the one-mill approved by voters for open space acquisitions and trail development, which sunsets in 2010.
9. Review the District’s organization and individual departments’ structures for best practices, and identify opportunities that might be more economically and efficiently performed by the private sector.
10. Review demographics and growth projections, and make recommendations on how to best serve the various populations (and communities) within the District regarding services, programs, and facilities.
11. Identify areas that might be providing duplicated services, are unnecessary or wasteful, could be better accomplished by other organizations, or could be eliminated altogether.
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FACILITIES

Administration Office
6631 S. University Boulevard
Centennial, CO 80120
303-798-5131

Jamison Service Center
101 W. Jamison Avenue
Littleton, CO 80120
303-795-9856

Willow Spring Shop
7100 S. Holly Street
Centennial, CO 80112
303-721-8478

LIGHTED ATHLETIC BALLFIELDS

Bowles Grove Park
3200 W. Berry Avenue
Littleton, CO 80123

Cornerstone Park
5150 S. Windermere Street
Englewood, CO 80120
303-734-1083

David A. Lorenz Regional Park
8422 S. Colorado Boulevard
Centennial, CO 80126

deKoevend Park
6301 S. University Boulevard
Centennial, CO 80121

Sheridan High School
3201 W. Oxford Avenue
Sheridan, CO 80236

Sheridan Middle School
4107 South Federal Boulevard
Sheridan, CO 80110
ICE ARENAS
Family Sports Center
Ice Arena
6901 S. Peoria Street
Centennial, CO 80112
303-708-9500
Pro Shop 303-649-1115

South Suburban Ice Arena
6580 S. Vine Street
Centennial, CO 80121
303-798-7881

RECREATION FACILITIES
Buck Recreation Center
2004 W. Powers Avenue
Littleton, CO 80120
303-797-8787

Carson Nature Center &
South Platte Park
3000 W. Carson Drive
Littleton, CO 80120
303-730-1022

Cornerstone Park
Skatepark & Inline Hockey
5150 S. Windermere Street
Englewood, CO 80120
303-798-7515

Cornerstone Park
Batting Cages
5150 S. Windermere Street
Englewood, CO 80120
303-797-3796

County Line BMX Track
8422 S. Colorado Boulevard
Centennial, CO 80126
303-798-7515
Disc Golf Course
County Line & Holly
Centennial, CO 80126

Family Sports Center
& Sports Dome
6901 S. Peoria Street
Centennial, CO 80112
303-708-9500
Pro Shop 303-649-1115

Goodson Recreation Center
6315 S. University Boulevard
Centennial, CO 80121
303-798-2476
Registration Line: 303-347-5999

Holly Tennis Center-6 Lighted Courts
6651 S. Krameria Way
Centennial, CO 80111
303-771-3654

Littleton Tennis Center
5800 S. Federal Boulevard
Littleton, CO 80123
Tennis: 303-794-6933

Lone Tree Recreation Center
10249 Ridgegate Circle
Lone Tree, CO 80124
303-708-3500

Sheridan Recreation Center
3325 W. Oxford Avenue
Sheridan, CO 80236
303-761-2241
Rocking Horse Day Care:
303-789-2029

Sheridan Skate Park
3325 W. Oxford Avenue
Sheridan, CO 80236
OUTDOOR POOLS
Ben Franklin Pool
1600 E. Panama Drive
Centennial, CO 80121
303-798-5922

Cook Creek Pool
8711 Lone Tree Parkway
Lone Tree, CO 80124
303-790-7665

Harlow Pool
5151 S. Lowell Boulevard
Littleton, CO 80123
303-798-6269

Holly Pool
6651 S. Krameria Way
Centennial, CO 80111
303-770-0333

INDOOR POOLS
Buck Recreation Center Pool
2004 W. Powers Avenue
Littleton, CO 80120
303-797-8787

Goodson Recreation Center Pool
6315 S. University Boulevard
Centennial, CO 80121
303-798-2476

Sheridan Recreation Center Pool
3325 W. Oxford Avenue
Sheridan, CO 80236
303-789-3221

Lone Tree Recreation Center Pool
10249 Ridgegate Circle
Lone Tree, CO 80124
303-708-3500
GOLF COURSES
Littleton Golf Center
5800 S. Federal Boulevard
Littleton, CO 80123
303-794-5838

Lone Tree Golf Club
9808 Sunningdale Boulevard
Lone Tree, CO 80124
Clubhouse: 303-790-0202
Golf Reservation: 303-799-9940

South Suburban Golf Course
7900 S. Colorado Boulevard
Centennial, CO 80122
Starter: 303-770-5500
Pro Shop: 303-770-5508
Restaurant/Clubhouse
303-770-1882

Family Sports Golf Course
6901 S. Peoria Street
Centennial, CO 80112
303-649-1115

MINIATURE GOLF
Colorado Journey
Miniature Golf at Cornerstone Park
5150 S. Windermere Avenue
Englewood, CO 80120
303-734-1083

Family Sports Miniature Golf Course
6901 S. Peoria Street
Centennial, CO 80112
303-649-1115