

RECREATION CENTER TASK FORCE DENVER COMMUNITY MEETINGS - COMMENT SHEETS

MLK	– Meeting Attendance – 113, Total Comment Sheets - 60
East H.S.	– Meeting Attendance – 56, Total Comment Sheets - 19
Swansea	– Meeting Attendance - 84, Total Comment Sheets - 17
Harvard Gulch	– Meeting Attendance – 132, Total Comment Sheets - 30
Barnum	– Meeting Attendance – 92, Total Comment Sheets - 20

*= Similar Comment

MARTIN LUTHER KING MEETING – FEBRUARY 2, 2009 (GREEN FONT)

QUESTION 1. WHAT DO YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT THE DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS THAT HAVE BEEN PRESENTED?

MLK – 42 Comments

Process

- Being proactive
- The fact that they are draft and we have input**
- People are becoming aware of real life in the city
- Nothing – Didn't like what I heard*****
- Your thinking
- If this the only viable alternative it may have to be acceptable but not liked
- Not closing any of the community centers
- Are the decisions already made?

Program

- Like recommendations that improve services at MLK**
- Focus on youth is good*
- New amenities for some centers*
- Adding hours**
- Increased customer service
- Adding more senior programs
- Adding more non-sport programs

Fees

- Some fees will be dropped or reduced
- \$5.00 for youths
- Tiered fees for services**

Physical System

- The assurance that center(s) will not be closed***
- I f need be combine MLK with Hiawatha Davis
- Tiered system*

Community Advisory Boards

- Unifying communities*

Partners

- Community Partners*
- Partnerships can bring focused attention to specific needs
- This is important, partners should be non-profit
- Training for partners

Funding

Misc.

- Transportation is being considered

QUESTION 2. WHAT MOST CONCERNS YOU ABOUT THE DRAFT THAT HAS BEEN PRESENTED?

Comments - 74

Process

- Need to know what the current conditions are at each center – Change may not be needed
- Not enough discussion about persons with disabilities
- Doesn't seem to be enough detail and definitions for recommendations*****
- Not clear what problem is being solved
- How will staff be affected?*
- Benefits the affluent while taking away from the poor and lower middle class
- Focusing too much on youth
- That summer meetings did not discuss the transitioning of centers
- Not being honest about closing centers

Program

- Reducing "at-risk" centers to 4 to 5 days of operation*
- That you want to bring children into senior centers
- Programs for seniors*
- What will happen to Head Start program?
- Loss of days at smaller centers
- Youth are already being taken care of
- Programs for seniors are their only outlet

Fees

- Fee structure could be prohibitive****
- Increased fees for people w/ disabilities**
- The fact that you have to buy a membership to get into a center
- Higher fees for seniors****
- Do fees cover programming and maintenance needs?

Physical System

- Let MLK Stay as it is*
- Don't need a new center in Stapleton*
- Regional Centers
- Make high amenity centers in at-risk communities
- Our center should not be on the list
- Tiered system
- Improve the centers that we have
- St. Charles being a community center, finally has a manager who is doing a fabulous job

Community Advisory Boards

- Do neighborhoods get a voice in accepting new classifications*

Partners

- MLK does not need another partner**
- Outside partnerships*****
- What partners are being considered?
- Who will have control and decide on fee for the centers (City or partner)?**
- Centers in low-income areas will be partnered off and communities will lose services
- Need to reach out to hospitals, clinics etc. for therapy pool
- Let employees help with needs, if they can't, get different employees
- Concerned partners won't serve families
- What happens when partnerships fail?
- No "for profit" organizations
- Partners are compatible in neighborhoods
- Partnering will restrict access to MLK

Funding

- Budget impact on existing centers from the development of new recreation centers

Misc.

- Sell P & R items such t-shirts, water bottles, etc
- Creating a youth vs. senior issue
- Consultant didn't know what the fee schedule was

QUESTION 3. HOW COULD THESE DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS BE IMPROVED? PLEASE BE AS SPECIFIC AS YOU CAN.

Comments - 50

Process

- Have an open house at each center so we know what is offered so individuals can make an informed decisions. (Add tour of parks next to centers also)
- Important to recognize needs of each neighborhood
- Need to prioritize
- Need to be more specific**
- Need to take more time
- I think task force is on the right track
- Too much focus on youth
- Explain how decisions are made
- Better translation of the presentation – i.e. flyers in Spanish
- Are you really listening to what the community said
- Unnecessary to do anything*

Program

- Increase hours of operation for centers focused on youth
- More senior activities at Hiawatha Davis
- Clarify operating hours
- More hours for MLK
- MLK has the only hot water pool
- Add a dance class at Montclair

Fees

- Volunteer opportunities to pay for fees*
- Scholarships for people who can't afford higher fees
- Have a reduced fee for local recreation center
- More free programs
- Keep fees affordable

Physical System

- Put high amenity center in at-risk communities*
- Leave MLK as is*****
- Fix before build*
- Concerned that there are large section of the City without centers
- Transition some centers in more affluent neighborhoods
- Don't need a tiered system

Community Advisory Boards

- Should be formed and include youth and seniors
- Have community review any prospective partner

Partners

- Need incentives for center to partner
- Need to be more specific on what partnerships mean*

Funding

- How will improvements/transitions will be paid for?*
- Provide information on administration budget and see if it can be used for direct services
- Would like to see recommendations that address fundraising, philanthropy and volunteering as an alternative to raising fees
- Try harder on trying to get alternative funding

Misc.

- Explain impact on staff

MARTIN LUTHER KING – SCRIBED COMMENTS (QUESTIONS/FEARS):
(There were no scribed comments at this meeting)

Process

Program

Fees

Physical System

Community Advisory Boards

Partners

Funding

Misc.

EAST HIGH SCHOOL MEETING – FEBRUARY 3, 2009 (BLUE FONT)

QUESTION 1. WHAT DO YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT THE DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS THAT HAVE BEEN PRESENTED?

East High School – 16 Comments

Process

- Honesty that everything isn't figured out
- Seems proactive**

Program

Fees

- Lost Cost youth fee*

Physical System

- Like the tier system**

Community Advisory Boards

- Like Idea of adding programs based on local/collaborative need*

Partners

- Partnerships can work **

Funding

- Make the Department more cost effective*

Misc.

QUESTION 2. WHAT MOST CONCERNS YOU ABOUT THE DRAFT THAT HAS BEEN PRESENTED?

East High School – 16 Comments

Process

- Too general, too vague***
- How important is this input?
- No evidence was given that people desired an increase in level of service
- Sense of distrust

Program

Fees

Physical System

- St Charles usage is going up, don't close
- Finding good transportation solutions
- Tiered system is complicated
- There are too many small centers

Community Advisory Boards

Partners

- Concern over task force involvement in the potential partnerships*
- Who decides who the good community partners are?***

Funding

- The city is taking away from the poor

Misc.

QUESTION 3. HOW COULD THESE DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS BE IMPROVED? PLEASE BE AS SPECIFIC AS YOU CAN.

East High School – 12

Process

- Focus on transportation*
- Be transparent**
- Define tiers more clearly
- Develop pilot program*
- Need more specifics i.e. Define partners, fee structure, building renovations

Program

Fees

Physical System

- Keep people at local centers

Community Advisory Boards

- What influence do the local boards have over the City's wants?

Partners

- Partner with DPS

Funding

Misc.

EAST HIGH SCHOOL - SCRIBED COMMENTS (QUESTIONS/FEARS):

The Process

What is the basis for the Task Force?

How are people with disabilities represented in this process?

Could there be a pilot program? (Montbello is a good example to look at).

Will there be a survey to gain broader representation of citizen input?

Program

Will hours of operation be adjusted to be complementary among types of centers?

What is the definition of "at-risk."

Fees

Are both membership and programming fees recommended for adjustment?

Fees – consider fees by activity type, not by physical facility.

Physical System

What do you expect to gain through tier system?

What are the differences among center tiers?

Are we doing away with senior only centers?

Will any centers be closed?

Is there a guarantee that no centers will be closed?

Transportation is a key issue.

Community Advisory Boards

How will community advisory boards be formed?

How will advisory board structure apply to regional centers?

Concern about some communities being able (having the energy/time) to form advisory boards

Partners

What are examples of partners?

Will for-profits be considered for partners?

Will non-profits be in competition with DRP?

Is there an extra expense related to partners?

Concern about non-profit and privatization.

Funding

How will we pay for increased service levels?
How do we assure all communities have access to "equal" resources?
Is there opportunity for increased funding within the P&R budget?
Center cost of operations should be the same or less with partners (for the same service).

SWANSEA MEETING - FEBRUARY 4, 2009 (RED FONT)

QUESTION 1. WHAT DO YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT THE DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS THAT HAVE BEEN PRESENTED?

Comments – 8

Process

- Do not like anything about recommendations Task force is going too fast and they will have a negative effect on our kids and community
- We are trying to keep kids and families together
- It sounds good for the communities where they are proposed but does not where you want to shut the centers
- That a group is looking at the rec centers and to best serve the Denver Community
- An attempt to solve a problem
- Stinks
- Need to contact info for all involved to legitimize effort
- Increasing amenities at Swansea, however not many youths from Globeville, St Charles and Johnson will go there

Program

Fees

Physical System

- Don't close St Charles***

Community Advisory Boards

Partners

Funding

Misc.

QUESTION 2. WHAT MOST CONCERNS YOU ABOUT THE DRAFT THAT HAS BEEN PRESENTED?

Comments - 20

Process

- Task force going to fast
- No decisions should be made until DPR has held meetings at effected "transition" Center
- Favoritism is being shown to people who live in rich neighborhoods. (Most have larger gyms, better weight rooms and pools). Center in lower income areas work with fewer funds, less staff, less programming but have larger amount of kids who need programming.
- Improving Swansea will add barriers
- More definition of what a community center concept is
- The presentation was overwhelming to the audience

Program

- That the kids have a safe place to go after school and keep them in sports and off the streets
- That the kids will lose out on playing sports because the center will be too far from home
- Seniors are left out
- Decreased operating hours
- Potential cuts in programs

Fees

- What the new fees would be?
- Seem not all avenues for increasing funding have been explored or tried

Physical System

- You want too PIMP-out our centers
- Don't close St Charles*
- Swansea is too far from St Charles*
- Closing our centers
- Seniors need their centers

Community Advisory Boards

Partners

- Stop trying to privatize recreation and do the job you are getting paid to do.
- Privatization of programming

Funding

- Stop paying big bucks to DPR administration to destroy and discriminate against low neighborhoods that pay their paychecks

Misc.

QUESTION 3. HOW COULD THESE DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS BE IMPROVED? PLEASE BE AS SPECIFIC AS YOU CAN.

Comments - 19

Process

- Slow down the process and give us a chance to look for other alternative to privatizing community centers
- That the people are for the kids
- Visit the centers to better understand why they don't need to be closed
- Listen to people
- Need to simplify
- Turn community work over to the community. There is great human capital to take ownership, lead, volunteer and maintain strong community recreation
- Take them away it will increase health problems for seniors
- Have a meeting in every effected neighborhood

Program

- Be more specific on potential programs i.e. matrix of current vs. proposed

Fees

- \$5.00/yr for youths – WOW, maybe it should be higher
- How about a sliding scale

Physical System

- Don't close St Charles***
- Seniors need places to go also

Community Advisory Boards

- Let the people from the communities make the choices for the centers
- Staff needs to have the biggest say at what happens to these centers

Partners

Funding

- Increase funding via professional teams
- DPR budget needs to be increased and then used wisely (not increase Admin salaries)

Misc.

- Intimidated by the pushy, eager, enthusiastic youth kids at Rude, find it difficult to get the attention I desire because the kids come first
- Actively recruit volunteers

SWANSEA – SCRIBED COMMENTS (QUESTIONS/FEARS):

The Process

What has driven this process?

Why was the task force formed?

Can we have meetings in every “community center” affected neighborhoods?*

Program

Will children at community centers be excluded from parks and recreation programs?

Need to maintain programs that are at the centers.

Is there a way to use more volunteers from the local communities?

Fees

Physical System

Who will manage staff at the community centers?

What happens to existing staff at the community centers?

Could a regional center be located by/at Northside Park?

Why are Highland and Platt Sr. Centers targeted for community centers?

Why are so many centers in the northeast slated for community center status?

Tiers – “feels like separate, but equal”

Don’t take our “Stapleton” name.

Community Advisory Boards

Partners

Who are possible partners?

Funding

Where might the funding come from for the community centers?

Where would funding come from to make capital improvements at Swansea?

Has the task force looked at P&R Administrative budgets?

If partners were not found, how long would centers remain open if budget is a concern?

Are there other ways to generate new funds?

Equity = equal resources for every neighborhood.

Can we approach professional sports organizations (that make millions off of Denver facilities) for funding to keep our little centers operating? Can there be a special assessment?

Community Contact person:

Elyria or United Community Action Network – Tom at 303 299-0202 or supercab@earthlink.net

HARVARD GULCH MEETING - FEBRUARY 10, 2009 (PLUM FONT)

QUESTION 1. WHAT DO YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT THE DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS THAT HAVE BEEN PRESENTED?

Comments - 30

Process

- It's a start, things are being evaluated*
- Not anything presented****
- Confused why this is being studied
- The fact that they are draft recommendations
- Good job with recommendations except lost sight of senior's and their needs
- Looking at better ways to serve the community*
- Comprehensive approach
- Tried to look at the big picture

Program

- Creating a safe haven for youths
- Programming focus for some centers
- Non sport programming
- Better, longer hours and more programs*

Fees

- Pay for what you use is good*

Physical System

- Reducing the number of senior centers/Closing-Transitioning Platte Park*****

Community Advisory Boards

- Plan for a community board at each center

Partners

- Excellent idea but to what end
- No privatization / yes – non profit

Funding

Misc.

QUESTION 2. WHAT MOST CONCERNS YOU ABOUT THE DRAFT THAT HAS BEEN PRESENTED?

Comments - 34

Process

- Presentation was overwhelming
- Toying with perfection/leave Platte Park alone*****
- Has the decision already been made?*
- Lack of recognition for separate senior programs
- Failure to anticipate negative public reaction
- Understand the desire to have senior program in more places but most seniors prefer (and deserve) centers specifically for seniors.
- Need to consider that people who use the smaller centers won't want to use the larger ones
- The seniors have been an afterthought
- Public understanding of the draft is deeply rooted in this about centers being closed

- Some staff has insisted that the centers (Platte Park) will be closed, this is a disservice

Program

- Environment is like family
- Moving Platte Park programs to Harvard Gulch
- Some things may benefit by not being changed
- The youth programs are far too supported
- Platte Park already has good programs
- Help DPS kids

Fees

- Increasing \$2.00 drop in fee may be a problem
- Would prefer one membership for all centers

Physical System

- More parking at Washington Park
- No safe haven for seniors when you integrate with youths
- Would miss the walkable access to Platte Park

Community Advisory Boards

- Why will the small (Platte Park) community get to say whether there is one or two senior centers in Denver?

Partners

- Lack of detail about partners*
- Are partners going to pay or be paid?
- Is the intent to mix gov't funding with non-profit funding
- Identifying appropriate partners for the programs at Platte Park

Funding

Misc.

- Would lose excellent staff at Platte Park

QUESTION 3. HOW COULD THESE DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS BE IMPROVED? PLEASE BE AS SPECIFIC AS YOU CAN.

Comments - 28

Process

- Need to be more specific*
- If it's not broken don't fix it****

Program

- Need more drop in classes
- Make more adult and senior programs
- Consolidate youth programs into neighborhood centers

Fees

- Please keep affordable

Physical System

- Don't build Stapleton, have Hiawatha Davis be regional center
- Leave Platte Park as is
- Need more senior centers because of Baby Boomers**
- The Evans Ave overpass should be made more pedestrian friendly
- Use other places like empty school buildings**

- MLK needs to be kept open

Community Advisory Boards

- Pilot community board and transition process to demonstrate how the plan might work

Partners

- Concentrate on other centers, partnering is not for senior centers
- “Community Partners” is very vague *
- Partners will need to keep senior programs at Platte Park
- Incorporate community volunteers to help support staff and services

Funding

-

Misc.

- DPS need to be a responsible partner

HARVARD GULCH – SCRIBED COMMENTS (QUESTIONS/FEARS):

Process

- Are changes due to limited funds
- Why are senior centers targeted
- You are marginalizing some centers (i.e. Globeville)
- Are you being honest that you will use this input?
- You will not hear from the non English speaking populations
- You should use Platte Park as a template as to how a senior center is run*
- Leave Platte Park alone***
- Not genuine to say you won't close Platte Park
- Task force members should go to center to see what is going on
- Haven't heard anything is closing, applaud RCTF efforts

Program

- People with disabilities have difficulty participating, what category do we fall in?*
- When Ash Grove was closed non or the programs transferred to Cook Park
- What happens to the youth programs at Harvard Gulch when Senior programs move in?
- Need more hours at Harvard Gulch*
- Rotate swim days to accommodate SR and people with disabilities and adults
- 45 to 60 classes a week offered at Platte Park
- Need to be sure to keep kids off the streets
- Platte Park has an incredible Ti chi programs
- Studies have shown that dancing is a healthy and social activity for seniors*

Fees

Physical System

- There are issues associated with multi generational facilities *
- There is walkable access to Platte Park
- Platte Park is a safe haven for seniors
- No room at Harvard Gulch for all of Platte Park programs/seniors*
- Is there a chance Platte Park stays the same?
- Senior centers are needed in other parts of the City too. (i.e. Montebello and GVR)*
- Many people like smaller centers and won't go the other centers
- Both Platte Park and Highlands serve the entire City
- Young people spread germs
- Lots of seniors have mobility issues

Community Advisory Boards

Partners

- Who are the partners?*
- Partnerships are a good idea

Funding

- Over \$70,000/yr in volunteer hours

Misc.

- Platte Park provides a large support system for seniors
- Transportation is a key issue for seniors
- Staff treats you like a human being at Platte Park/Staff is excellent**

BARNUM MEETING - FEBRUARY 11, 2009 (BROWN FONT)

QUESTION 1. WHAT DO YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT THE DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS THAT HAVE BEEN PRESENTED?

Comments - 20

Process

- Nothing*
- I like the process that has gotten to where we are, especially the community input
- That you looked at all centers and programs
- To create a sustainable system
- That transition is not a euphemism for closures
- Why aren't meetings being held at the seven transition centers?
- Why are all the meetings at night, not all seniors can drive at night

Program

- Expanded days and hours of operations*
- Emphasis on youth and the growing population needs

Fees

- Tier System

Physical System

- Seniors like local centers

Community Advisory Boards

- Good idea

Partners

- Collaboration with service partners, shared resources and enhance offerings**

Funding

Misc.

QUESTION 2. WHAT MOST CONCERNS YOU ABOUT THE DRAFT THAT HAS BEEN PRESENTED?

Comments - 12

Process

- No daytime meetings
- How will outsourcing/partnerships make the system better?

Program

- Have you considered using more volunteers
- What is going to happen to the quilting group at Highland
- Concerned about the impact on suburban senior centers
- Concerned about Head Start Program at Highland Sr Center

Fees

- Exchange volunteer hours for memberships

Physical System

- Breaking down seniors as a community
- Leave the two senior centers alone
- DPS has not been considered
- Keep Highland as is so the Head Start Program can stay

- That long time centers will be closed

Community Advisory Boards

Partners

Funding

Misc.

QUESTION 3. HOW COULD THESE DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS BE IMPROVED? PLEASE BE AS SPECIFIC AS YOU CAN.

Comments – 19

Process

- Visit Highland Senior Center
- More specific information*
- Need input from Head Start program at Highland Sr Center*
- Need to conduct a comprehensive survey
- Need to have a fundamental understanding of the budget

Program

- Having centers open on school holidays
- Spanish outreach and staff that speaks Spanish
- 4 – days/wk not enough, Why close Sundays when kids aren't in school
- Young people will not compatible with seniors
- Find a place for Head Start to fill without large fees

Fees

- Raising fees

Physical System

- Add racquetball courts in the park east of Highland Center
- Leave us at Highland

Community Advisory Boards

- Community Boards need to listen to input from the users of the centers

Partners

- Head Start staff is very supportive of the collaboration and relationship between the seniors and the children**

Funding

Misc.

BARNUM – SCRIBED COMMENTS (QUESTIONS/FEARS):

Process

- Why are you transitioning both senior centers?
- Need to look at long term. i.e. growing senior population
- Closing senior centers will destroy our sense of community/ could cause big depression issues
- Don't understand full reason for change*
- Need comprehensive survey
- Has the Head Start program at Highland been considered as to how it will be impacted?
- Lack of advertising of these meetings
- Relieved "transition" is not closure
- Why hasn't task force been to Highland

- Think about what you are doing

Program

- What will be the senior programs that will be at all centers?
- Highland has a family atmosphere
- Suburban cities doing a better job with youth and adult softball

Fees

Physical System

- What impact will transition center (Highland) this have on suburban centers (Wheatridge.)
- Does proposal have any new centers in Westwood*
- City needs to look at the pockets of the City not being served by recommendations
- Athmar seems small for a regional center
- We love our center do not close

Community Advisory Boards

- Who are they?

Partners

- Privatization will be a loss of jobs – must be guidelines
- Partners will have difficulty getting money
- Partners must not destroy the elegance of the Highland Center

Funding

- City needs to allocate resources better so centers can better serve their communities

Misc.

- Highland wants there staff
- If a partner takes over can you still rent the facility?
