



Park Hill Golf Course

Prevailing Vision

December 13, 2021

Why Create a Vision?

The Park Hill Golf Course Area Visioning Process began in January 2021 in order to facilitate community conversations around the future of the Park Hill Golf Course (PHGC) property. In the neighborhoods closest to the property and across Denver, there are many opinions on how best to use this land. By engaging residents in a visioning process, the city sought to achieve the following:

- Understand where there are similarities and shared community priorities for the PHGC site,
- Prioritize outreach and engagement among the neighbors who would be most impacted by the future of this property,
- Determine whether there is community support for continuing to use the land as a golf course, and if there is not, begin to identify what other types of land uses people would like to see at this location, including park and open space, and
- Help determine the possible direction and next steps for the PHGC site.

What is the Prevailing Vision?

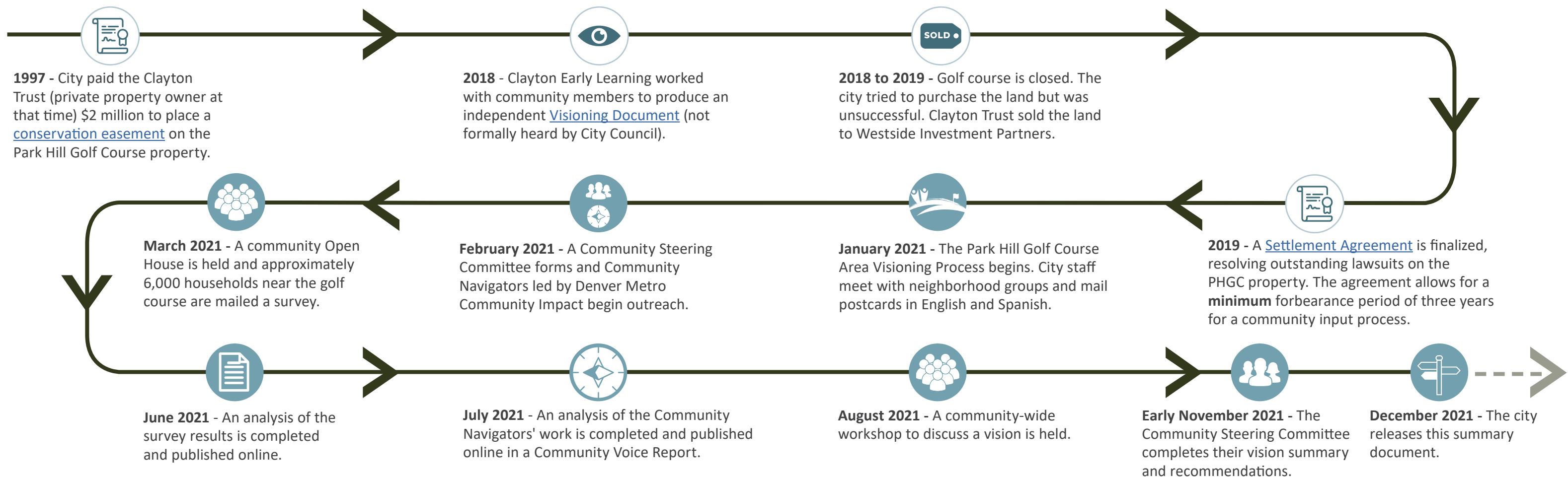
The city considered the public input received from Community Navigators, through surveys, at events and on comment forms, and from the Community Steering Committee. Across all forms of input, there was little support for retaining a golf course exclusively.

RESIDENTS EXPRESSED THE MOST SUPPORT FOR THESE PRIORITIES:

1. Create a **new, significantly-sized park and community gathering places**
2. Stand up an **oversight committee** to guide future planning and development
3. **Preserve and expand the tree canopy** to combat urban heat island effects in this area
4. Add **youth and recreational sports opportunities**
5. Include a variety of **affordable (income-restricted) housing** options, including **for-sale units**
6. Address food insecurity by including space for **grocery and fresh food choices**
7. Create space for **local businesses and businesses owned by people of color**
8. Employ strategies to **mitigate involuntary displacement**

Details and next steps can be found on page 8.

How We Got Here



Background

UNDERSTANDING THE AREA

The Park Hill Golf course is a 155-acre, private property located in the Northeast Park Hill neighborhood.



Figure 1: Context Map



Early in the visioning process, the city assessed existing conditions of the area surrounding the Park Hill Golf Course, including demographics, traffic conditions, sidewalk infrastructure, bike lanes, public transportation access, the local economy and market, existing parks, open spaces, recreational and environmental aspects. These existing conditions studies were presented publicly beginning in March 2021.

- [Executive Summary](#)
- [Market Analysis Study](#)
- [Environmental, Parks, Open Space & Recreation Technical Assessment](#)
- [Mobility Study](#)

At the start of this process, **more than 10,400 postcards** were mailed to households within a mile of the Park Hill Golf Course, letting people know where to find information and inviting them to participate.



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FOCUSING ON THOSE MOST IMPACTED

Public input was primarily gathered by Community Navigators, surveys, the Community Steering Committee, and at events.

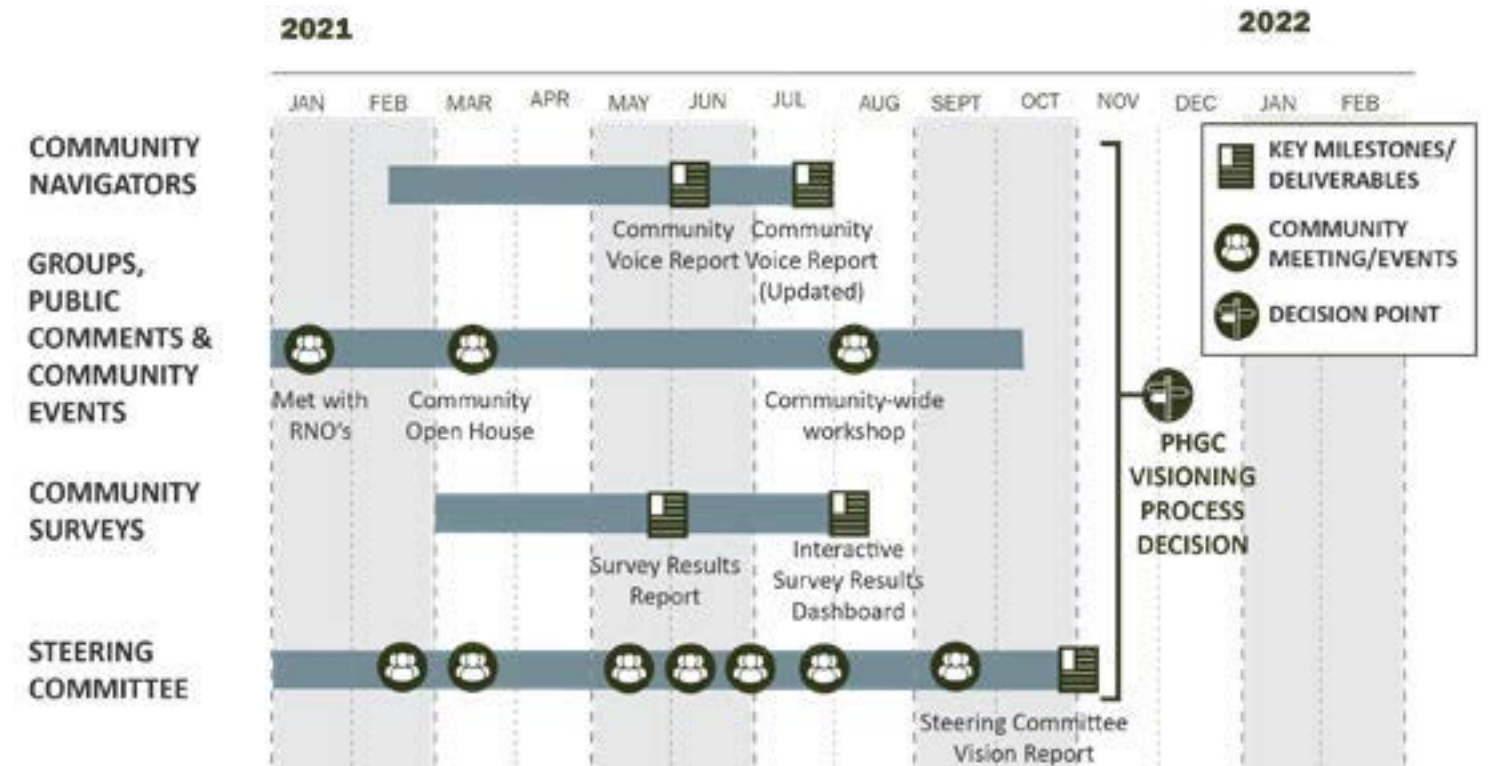


Figure 2: PHGC Visioning Process Timeline

NAVIGATORS HELPED US LISTEN TO DIVERSE VOICES

Denver Metro Community Impact (DMCI), a non-profit based in Northeast Park Hill, led the Community Navigators program. Community Navigators are community members who serve as neutral facilitators encouraging participation among underrepresented populations, including seniors, youth, Latinx, African Americans, and renters in the Northeast Park Hill, Elyria Swansea, and Clayton neighborhoods. DMCI summarized these findings in a [Community Voice Report](#).

What we heard

Top themes that emerged in conversations with residents included the following:

- A desire for recreational opportunities like parks and open space,
- Local retail space including grocery, and
- Affordably priced, for-sale homes.

The most popular topic discussed was a desire for this land to be used to create community, with ways for people to cultivate bonds with neighbors in outdoor spaces, such as parks and outdoor venues, through small businesses, and over food. The desire for community connections was common across differing viewpoints and bridged the gap between development and open space.



COMMUNITY NAVIGATORS BY THE NUMBERS

From February to July 2021, Community Navigators hosted:

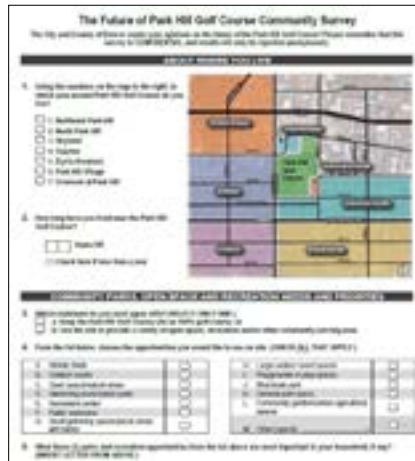
- 18 Community Talks (small group conversations of 8-12 people)
- 101 individual conversations

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COMMUNITY SURVEYS BY THE NUMBERS

- 6,000 surveys mailed
- 1,302 mailed surveys completed
- 1,388 online surveys completed
- 2,690 community members responded



COMMUNITY SURVEYS ENGAGE MORE RESIDENTS

Public surveys on the future of the Park Hill Golf Course were conducted March-April 2021. The survey was mailed to households within 1 mile of the Park Hill Golf Course property and the same survey was also available online and was open to anyone, regardless of their proximity to the Park Hill Golf Course.

All survey responses were collected, analyzed and reported by an independent, professional research firm and provided in the [survey report](#). The mailed survey results are both [statistically valid and significant](#).

The survey report and an [interactive survey response dashboard](#) were published on the project's webpage in June 2021 to make this data available for anyone who wishes to review it. These resources remain available.

What we heard

- 70% of mailed survey respondents favored some development of the site. 22% indicated that their preference is for the site to be green space only and 8% of respondents favored development-oriented uses only without green space. Only 7% of respondents would allocate 100% of the property as a golf course.
- Athletic fields were widely supported as a top priority for nearby residents.
- General park space and playgrounds also rose to the top for recreational needs and desires.
- Two-thirds of mailed survey respondents supported allocating a portion of the site for a grocery store.
- Space for businesses owned by people of color was supported by half of mailed survey respondents. No other uses or services option received support from more than half of respondents.
- Over half of those who responded to the mailed survey felt that there was a need for more affordable housing choices in the neighborhood surrounding the Park Hill Golf Course, and of those respondents, 64% specifically supported affordable housing on the site.

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COMMUNITY STEERING COMMITTEE GUIDES VISION DISCUSSIONS WITH A RACIAL EQUITY LENS

The [Community Steering Committee](#) reflects the diversity of the neighborhoods surrounding the golf course, both in demographics and interests. The 27 members of the committee are a cross section of the community--residents, renters, local business owners, advocates and civic leaders--bringing a wide range of voices and ideas to the process. A list of members and their affiliations is available online [here](#).

Committee meetings were held virtually each month. Dr. Nita Mosby Tyler provided racial equity training at the first meeting, providing a shared understanding of using an equity lens in decision making during this process. In subsequent meetings, the committee reviewed and discussed the Community Navigator and survey results, food insecurity, the conservation easement, and similar topics. The committee also provided guidance to the city at several points regarding public engagement.

What we heard

The steering committee developed a [Vision Summary](#) facilitated by Dr. Ryan Ross. This document summarized their process, perspectives, and recommendations regarding important future considerations and potential pitfalls.

In response to a survey posed independently by Dr. Ross, 66.7% of committee members favored a vision for the property that included green space and development. 28.6% indicated that their vision for the property is open green space and no development. 4.8% responded that the Park Hill Golf Course should be totally developed. No one recommended that it be retained as a golf course.

Areas where committee members were in agreement included the following:

- Parks and open spaces must be part of the future vision for the property.
- Affordable (income-restricted) housing is an essential need throughout Denver.
- Active recreational uses, especially sports-related uses, should be included on the property.
- The area surrounding the golf course is in a food crisis and needs support increasing access to fresh, healthy food.
- The city should support equitable and intentional engagement of the community throughout this process.
- There is a desire for enhanced accountability measures for any entity making changes to the PHGC property.

COMMUNITY STEERING COMMITTEE BY THE NUMBERS

- 27 members
- 1 professional facilitator, Dr. Ryan Ross
- 8 meetings (replays available online)
- 1 work session
- 30 people who spoke during public comment



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ADDITIONAL COMMUNITY INPUT BY THE NUMBERS

- 300 Open House attendees
- 100 Workshop attendees
- 80 people sent comments via email or online form



RESIDENTS CITYWIDE ENGAGED IN COMMUNITY EVENTS AND SUBMITTED COMMENTS

The virtual open house and workshop were public meetings held for anyone interested in participating and providing their input.

- **Virtual Open House** - Held in March 2021 with approximately 300 attendees, the open house provided an opportunity for everyone to learn about the visioning process, the studies and surveys underway, to ask questions, and to provide input on the future of this property.
- Most questions were answered live during the virtual open house. In addition, remaining questions were answered in a [follow-up document](#) shared with attendees and made available online.
- **Community Workshop** - Over 100 community members participated in this August 2021 workshop that included multiple break-out groups. Each group interacted on a [virtual "Miro" board](#) and self-reported out to the full audience.
- **Other Input** - In addition, approximately 80 people weighed in via email or through an online comment card.

What we heard

The importance of parks and open spaces was mentioned frequently at the public events and throughout the comments submitted. Comments generally centered on the health and environmental benefits of parks and open spaces, and many specifically mentioned preserving existing trees and increasing the number of trees in the area.

Many comments also mentioned development. While many comments stressed the importance of increasing open space, others urged the city to consider community needs and discussed desires for community-serving retail and development of active recreational amenities and spaces.

Those who supported adding additional uses to the site noted the opportunity to create community spaces and places that can address area needs.

Prevailing Vision and Next Steps

As detailed on pages 4-7, the prevailing vision was guided by the input and feedback gathered via Community Navigators, surveys, comments, workshops and the Community Steering Committee.

While there was not unanimous agreement on a single vision, there was clear support to explore a new future for this property that focuses on one or more large parks and a mixture of land uses that would benefit area residents. These priorities and land uses are outlined below.

- Create a significantly-sized park and other community-gathering places that bring together the area's diverse communities
- Ensure accountability to residents by creating an oversight board or committee to guide a small area plan and its implementation
- Improve environmental and community health by preserving the existing mature trees and expanding the tree canopy on the property
- Support youth and community recreational opportunities by building playgrounds, athletic fields and ways to experience nature
- Include a variety of affordable (income-restricted) housing types, including for-sale units
- Explore the inclusion of some commercial uses on the site for grocery and fresh food access
- Create space for local businesses and businesses owned by people of color
- Employ strategies to mitigate involuntary displacement and help current residents stay in the area long-term

NEXT STEPS

The city will build upon what was heard from residents during the Visioning Process and will begin developing a coordinated park framework as part of an area plan that primarily includes this property. This work will continue to include community engagement at every step and will provide high-level policy direction to meet the shared priorities of area residents, as expressed above. Near-term next steps are as follows:

- Starting an area plan that will include a park framework, detailing amounts, locations and considerations for future parks and open spaces;
- Continuing the work of the Steering Committee; and
- Laying out future requirements as part of the city's Large Development Review (LDR), including collecting the required LDR fee from the land owner to help fund this planning work.

Longer term, after the community-driven guidance in the area plan takes shape, Denver City Council will vote on the plan and potentially other related actions, including an update to the conservation easement, zoning and development commitments that implement the area plan. When there is a clear proposal for how the conservation easement should be updated, the city will also refer the matter to a public vote in accordance with ballot initiative 301.



