

Robert W. Smith, FASLA
Landscape Architect

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Cincere Eades
Natural Resource Planner
Department of Parks and Recreation
201 W. Colfax Ave, Dept.613
Denver, Colorado 80202
Cincere.eades@denvergov.org/
720-913-0783

Re: Globeville Park

Background

As a Landscape Architect for the Globeville Park and Platte River Greenway North Segment Trail (38th to North City Limits) I have a keen interest in the renovation plans the City is developing. When the park was designed in 1974 it was one of four initial pilot projects which formed the backbone of the Platte River Greenway System. The park was to be a green space in a heavy industrial area within the Globeville neighborhood. The park over time has become a significant part of the community's recreational resources while also providing a connection to the river corridor. The existing site was a land fill consisting of concrete rubble with a twenty five foot embankment to the river's edge. Our major design theory was to pull back the land fill and create a significant bowl shape greenspace with safe access and to the water's edge and room for amenities. Globeville Park was the only significant green space that served as a sorely needed park for the neighborhood. The cupped shaped landform with a wide gently sloping area provided space for the trail, picnic area, shelter, kayak landing and open play. For miles north and south of the park it was intended as a resting spot and green space in an industrial zone. The vistas to the park from the surrounding area especially from Washington St. was an important connection to the neighborhood.

Today's Park Condition

After forty years of use the amenities of the park have deteriorated and need to be updated for the growing residential needs and small businesses that are expanding in the area. A new shelter, playground, river access, picnic area, restroom and most importantly a modern safe trail system thru the park are needed as the Globeville area develops. In terms of space requirements for these new amenities the park as it sits will barely contain the functions without feeling cramped. When I think of a renovated park having space between uses is a priority especially with a heavily used trail running the length of the park. The trail function was and still is an integral element. With bikes whizzing thru the park separation is needed without impacting and encroaching on the new amenities especially with the increasing number of small children using the space. In the early 90's a drainage plan was prepared for the Platte River from Chatfield Reservoir to Brighton. A companion part of the plan was recreation improvements and opportunities including an additional trail on the opposite bank. Is it time to split the trail use to separate bikes and walk/running functions? Moving the bikes to the opposite bank would be a win win solution. The park could really then be a true neighborhood amenity. Ideally a bit of green on the opposite bank could enhance Globeville Park and the Greenway as a contiguous open space.

Drainage

The water quality improvements to the Globeville channel are desperately needed. The current unfiltered runoff continually degrades the water quality of the South Platte River. Glad to see it being part of the renovation plans for the park.

The concerns are relative to the detention component of the project. The detention space requirements can have a significant impact on the configuration of the park. It feels like the park is being squeezed against the edge of the river and the existing "park space" has been greatly diminished. Yes the detention basin can look green but it does not provide compatible use for the amenities mentioned earlier. It seems like the bowl shaped landform will no longer exist and the community has lost a founding principle of the park. With only a very short time looking at a flat plan it was difficult to gauge the width and depth of the detention needs for both the Globeville District and future I-70 requirements and how they would fit into the current park boundaries.

The following thoughts are off the cuff ideas for consideration without knowing the project's history and background:

- The plan suggests extending Arkins Court on a straight alignment at the edge of the park. What if the road was bowed to the east gaining space for both drainage and park needs?
- Can the Globeville channel follow a straight alignment instead of the current dogleg? Would that enable the detention to be moved to the north keeping some of the bowl landform shape?
- Can the detention be bent towards the river instead of following the future road alignment so you could utilize the embankment as the north side of the bowl?
- If the pedestrian bridge is moved south of the abandoned Globeville channel and reclaimed as park space the bowl landform could slip to the south allowing for additional drainage space to the north.

Community Input

It seems based on last night's meeting that the community needs additional time to provide input and it sounds like that was indicated.

These are just my thoughts for Denver Parks to consider and are very conceptual in nature for the City's use in the planning process.

Regards,

Bob Smith
rws1365@yahoo.com
720-635-3069