

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

INTRODUCTION

Mary Eysenbach: Good morning. Let me go over the general format for the next two days. The way this works is that when the mayor does his or her presentation, following that, I am going to facilitate the discussion about the case problem. Our faculty has discussed the case problems previous to this, and they are very well versed on the issues. However, I want everyone and anyone in the room who wants to participate to participate. If you have thought about a case problem, if you have something to say, if you have a similar experience, please feel free to chime in. That's what this is all about.

Our first faculty presentation is going to be Pat O'Toole, from Leon Younger and Pros.

PARKS FUNDING TODAY: PAT O'TOOLE

Pat O'Toole: Thanks Mary. I am going to talk about the different ways that park systems are being funded, particularly through capital means. With every new job we consult, we find different ways that city attorneys are looking into legislation and how to fund different projects. On many of the projects where there is some public involvement, we see that there are some very creative ways out there of trying to do that. What I intend to do is give you something to take home, almost a shopping list, with a description of each of these types of funding.

We included some of the elementary ones that have been used for years and years, such as general obligation bonds and fees. However, I want to demonstrate that many cities, counties, and parks and recreation districts that used to fund themselves in maybe one, two, or three fashions now have developed a repertoire of maybe 8 to 10 funding sources that have really added to their bottom line, particularly when they can shift dollars around.

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

One of our greatest tasks in consulting with park and recreation departments is to get the entire city to think holistically about where some of these sources can be applied, to relieve some of these tax dollars. Even though parks and recreation might not be involved in that particular project, they can certainly use the money and shift it over. So let's look at some examples:

Corporate sponsorships—I'm going to make an assumption that most people understand and use those types of things. Dedication fees or developer fees—that's something that we have seen evolve over the last few years, as most departments now are at least trying, through the strategic planning process, to implement these types of fees and to include parks and recreation as a beneficiary to those fees.

ISTEA money—the biggest thing that we try to encourage is to use these funds for more than strictly greenways or similar facilities. ISTEA dollars can be used for connected projects, and a lot of times that's overlooked.

Land and Water Conservation Fund—those of us that are old enough know what it used to be when it went away. Now it's back. There is a lot of skepticism around getting involved, based on the history of that, and of course we don't know where things are going with federal dollars, UPARR grants, those types of things, but certainly it is one source to look at. There's an awful lot of dollars at least right now and in the last year in Land and Water Conservation money.

Industrial development bonds—basically those are just a different type of a revenue bond, where you pledge the revenue against the bond, but you do it more in the private partnership arena.

Hotel, motel, and restaurant tax—this is one of our biggest hurdles. In any city that there

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

are particularly high-end or even kid soccer tournaments, the economic impact is really what we struggle with. We have done several studies that show a lot of dollars are generated from hotel rooms being filled, restaurants being filled due to activities that the park and recreation department totally funds and markets. Many times cities look at us to go in and say nothing really needs to change, but most of the time where the dollars are expended by parks and recreation, and they are responsible for bringing in these tourism dollars, they usually end up getting a cut of the pie. Again, that can go directly to and be demonstrated in any type of an activity based costing model of those activities.

What we are finding is that these operational dollars and marketing dollars can assist in fulfilling the additional staff needs on some of these programs, so that is a funding source that is usually already in place. Nobody likes to give it up, but again I think what we're seeing is a trend of understanding of what creates some of these economic impact dollars.

Grants—we're seeing a trend in parks and recreation for staff dedicated to do research and go after grants. We are finding that dollar for dollar it's probably one of the most essential expenditures that they're making, based on the cost of somebody going to a grant library and doing the research. From a federal, state, and local level, it's amazing how many stories we hear on grants, where they start calling people after five years because they have to get rid of some of their interest dollars and nobody has even applied for their grants. So if you've got somebody to spend the time to chase them down, there's a lot of money out there.

Special improvement districts or benefit districts—basically the legislature delineates geographically where the benefits are taking place from said facility and are taxed that way.

Annual appropriation/leasehold financing—that pertains to partnership facilities and is

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

very complex. But we find that for those cities that have reaching their bonding ceiling, and if they've got a third party willing to handle the bonds, it really works well. It doesn't go against the city's bonding. The third-party holds the bonds and gives payments back for those bonds.

Inter-local agreements—government bodies can put in writing the agreements they have financially as well as in-kind. We also deal a lot with partnership agreements and their local agreements. We see frequently the instance of incoming services that have a tremendous value but are never accounted for. What drives these agreements is government being taken advantage of and taken for granted, “You do that anyway.” But for every staff person that's involved in a partnership, there's a way to account for that value and bring it to the table in a trade-out fashion.

The inter-local agreements that we're seeing now can pertain to anything from trade-out services, particularly a privately operated facility. However, there is a certain citizenry or taxpayer that you'd like to see get the advantage of this. An inter-local agreement is an excellent way to make sure that happens.

Revenue bonds—we've used those for years and years, where you pledge the bond payment and it comes out of the revenue of the facility's operation as a line item. It has to be agreed on by the lending company and the bank.

Creation of an authority—this gets the government out of the public perception, particularly on high-end facilities, that they can't charge the market rate that people are willing to pay. By creating an authority, particularly one with expertise in that area that knows the market rates, it releases the city of that perception and puts it in the hands of this authority. The authority can have representation from the city to keep them in tune with the best efforts of all the partners involved, not just the private partners. They go after the big tournaments, the national

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

tournaments and those types of things.

Real estate transfer fees—it is amazing how many dollars can be generated in a 1 to 1.25, sometimes a .5 cent fee, particularly in large cities. Any time a property is sold, whether it's residential or commercial, that tax is applied and can be split any which way. By tying that back to the value and benefits of the park system and how parks have possibly created that property value, that's an obvious link back, based on any exchange of property.

Land trusts—these have been used for years, but we're seeing a lot more, particularly for greenways, where people will bank their land. Another option is the living trust, where people will donate their land now and take it out of their tax appropriations. The city, through the living trust, allows them to live there the rest of their lives and possibly can develop or incorporate a portion of their land into a greenway or a park while they're still living there and not wait until it's a will situation.

Establishing a greenway utility—there are a lot of dollars out there for this, particularly if the corridor is already established. We're seeing many greenways using the already established overhead utility corridors, just like rails to trails. Based on that easement, they can then turn to the cable companies, particularly in new developments, and sell them easements to put in underground cables. Obviously the best time to do that is prior to building trails and landscaping.

Naming rights—I think we've all seen a flurry of that in the last five years, driven a lot by stadiums around the country. Take that same theory and put it to some of your facilities. They don't have to be high-end—it can be a park, it can be a small community center, where for example a company in the area has bought in and assisted in the process. This can provide a lot of maintenance dollars down the road, on an annual basis. So for commercial and private

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

partners that might not be able to do a lot community wide, there might be something for them in naming rights. We used to do that more as an in-kind and memorial or dedication. Now it's big business. There's value to that, and it's almost to the point of bidding wars, not to the extent of stadiums but certainly for some high-end facilities that people like to have their names on.

Rental car tax—particularly in tourism areas, we are seeing more of this. The trend we see in capital funding is the citizens or taxpayers don't want to pay for it. They want everybody else that comes in and takes advantage of their city to do that. This is a great model for that. I don't know if anybody has kept up with the Cardinals stadium down in Phoenix. We've done quite a bit of work down there. As of now the entire stadium is funded through a rental car tax. So if you rent a car in Phoenix for \$49.95 a day, it's about \$100 to \$200 a day going to the stadium.

Sales tax is another funding source that does that same thing. You still have to have your citizens paying sales tax, however. There are exemptions for seniors, for prescriptions. Those get a little complicated but they're doable. We see this a lot in the suburban cities where they have a shopping mall. One example that comes to mind is St. Louis, where there are 160-some subsidiary cities as suburbs. These are cities of 4,000 people that totally fund and operate \$15 to \$20 million recreational facilities off a sales tax, 99 percent of which comes from non-residents.

Designated license plates for parks—statewide conservancies have done a lot of license plates. If the legislation is in place, take advantage of it. In Indianapolis, the greenways plan that was put in place when I worked on the public side is probably 20 to 25 percent ahead of the plan that was put in place 10 years ago, based on things like this and the creative funding opportunities that go through foundations that cities can't touch.

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

But when it comes time to tighten the belt, this belt is expanding because it's all private dollars or dollars that have been designated and voted in for this plan. For that one they went through on a state level and approved it, and now there's a greenways tag. They tied Ducks Unlimited into it, and got other organizations attached that also get their piece of the pie. But who wins overall is the Indianapolis Greenway plan.

Cell towers—very controversial, although what we're finding now in existing parks, particularly ball parks with lights, is that they are viewed a little bit less controversially because you can lease that space without getting into a green park, without putting up a platform. They're also a lot smaller now. So if you have ball parks strategically placed in your city, you can have funds coming in on a lease basis by allowing cell towers to be put on the tops of your lights.

Benefit assessment act—this act basically imposes a fee on those that benefit from the project. You can actually assess whether it is geographic or usage, no different than a boulevard tax or a sidewalk tax.

Facilities benefit assessment—same thing. Who is going to benefit from the facilities, and how do you assess for not just usage? Most of the time the usage fees are to cover operation. This assessment is more for the capital end of getting it there in the first place.

Mello-Roos Act—kind of the same thing, allows that type of an assessment to take place.

Licensing rights—particularly on high-end facilities or, if you have a collective body of facilities, a new city logo, a new image, to take on some of these things. Licensing is big business. We have all seen the NASCAR revolution in the last 10 to 15 years. I listened to a gentleman say that licensing was the number one reason for NASCAR's resurgence. Many times we think that's professional sports stuff, and it doesn't have to be.

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

Logos can be licensed. Anything can be copyrighted. Golf courses are really big with logos. As you sell merchandise, basically a license fee comes back to the governing body of the city.

Food and beverage tax is like the hotel/motel tax. You can tie that directly back to some of the events and the economic impact that parks and recreation does for each city.

Gaming tax—obviously if you're in a city where casinos are floating on the river and those types of things, it's huge money. We see a lot of joint ventures now with Indian reservations. When people see it's coming back to benefit the rest of the community, it's like the old sin tax or tobacco tax that we used to hear about, it's a much easier vote.

Capital improvement fees—mostly these are fees imposed if you build a facility and you need to recuperate that cost or pay a debt service. These are assessments or fees on top of user fees, called capital improvement fees. One of the most successful ones I've seen is a softball complex where every player and spectator for every game paid a \$2.00 capital fee. In exchange for that they got a token to go buy a beer or a soda at the concession stand. So in their mind they're paying for their own special interest. Without that, they wouldn't have a sports complex. Dollar for dollar they probably got it back to the concession stand from the concession stand point of view. A keg of beer a week or how many canisters of coke has very low cost or in some cases it goes back to the concession area and gets donated as an in-kind service. That way 100 percent of the dollars can go towards your bond payment.

Advertising sales—seeing it more and more at the facilities, where on an annual basis you'll sell advertising on fences and backboards, and a lot of ice rinks are making a lot out of advertising dollars for the opportunity for local merchants to have their names there.

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

Irrevocable remainder trusts—if you happen to have wealthy individuals in your community, that's how that one works. For anybody that's tied to the park system that has some wealth they would like to leave for that in legacy, usually what that means is they'll allow a portion of the interest off, almost like an endowment, set up for that. Life estate is the same way.

Permits, you can permit anything. The tie to permits verses usage and parks and recreation is to ask the question is this at this point in time available for anybody to use? If the answer is no you can permit it for a reservation, for having exclusive rights to something.

Settlement of mineral rights—again, depending on your area, some areas make some dollars on that.

Wheel tax is for cars, basically stickers. They can be a park and recreation sticker, a sticker to get in a park, or they can just be a support sticker. Again, it can be on a certain portion of your community. We're also seeing more and more parking fees.

Utility roundup programs—we're seeing a lot of those. It's almost contagious. It's a voluntary program where you can voluntarily round up your utility bills to the next dollar, the utility companies track those dollars, and that roundup fee goes right to parks and recreation. A lot of people do that, particularly when a utility company allows them to pay year round steady bills instead of the high ones in the winter and low ones in the summer.

The whole idea of this presentation was to give you an information resource, something you could go home with, describing different funding options. These are some of the ones of which we're seeing more and more. Get your attorneys to look this list—maybe locally there's some that are not yet used, not heard of before.

But the success we're seeing is from not putting our eggs all in one basket, but getting

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

different chunks of funding for different things and splitting up projects, so that you can possibly get some ISTEA money to cover trails, parking lots, utilities, for example. Break a project up where you're talking about fields and lights and what have you, and sometimes you can be surprised how many dollars can come in, particularly for the capital end.

So when looking at our "shopping list," go back to your community and look at it and say what applies here? What doesn't make sense to our community, what makes some sense? What little chunk can we maybe peel out of our budget based on some of these things? Thank you.

Mary Eysenbach: Thanks Pat. Our first city presentation is going to be Mayor Harris. We chose Mayor Harris to go first for a couple of reasons. But the big reason was that when we told him that we needed presentations to be kept to 15 minutes, he told us a story about a mayor who was at the Institute of City Design and had spoken so long that there was no time left for discussion. So we knew that Mayor Harris was going to set the tone for us. With no further ado, Mayor Harris.

HONOLULU: CENTRAL OAHU REGIONAL PARK

Mayor Harris: Good morning and thanks very much for having us here. Let me introduce our team. Malcolm Tom is our deputy managing director. We also have two leaders of our community. Ron Romano is the executive director of the U.S. Tennis Association for Hawaii, and Mark Beede is executive director of Hawaii Tennis Foundation.

You may be surprised that Honolulu is the 12th largest city in the United States. We have a population of just fewer than 1 million when you add in our tourists and our military. It is some 600 square miles in size, comprises the entire island of Oahu, and contains more than 280 parks.

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

I'm sure you realize our number one industry is tourism. Our tourism industry to date has largely focused on the Waikiki experience, the beach experience in the urban core. What we're trying to do is diversify our tourism into areas such as health and wellness tourism, ecotourism, and sports tourism. But what we have lacked are the venues necessary to bring sporting events into our state, international sporting events and youth sporting events from Asia. Our goal has been to diversify our tourism industry and develop the sporting facilities so that we can broaden our industrial base. That's exactly what we want to discuss today.

We have a whole range of parks on our island, 280 parks, almost 8,000 acres of park in Honolulu. In the last six years we've increased our parks by 28 percent. We've really been focusing on developing more facilities. It's a whole hierarchy of parks, greenways, neighborhood parks, community parks, district parks, regional parks, golf, municipal golf courses, botanical gardens, zoos, and the like.

In the last several years we have also developed these major sporting venues for the economic development aspect that I talked about. So our goal today is to elicit some ideas from you on how to create public-private management for these two new sports complexes.

What we want to be able to do is help our economic development by bringing in all of these different sporting events, but at the same time we want to make sure these great sports facilities are available to our local community, our local families. We don't want them playing second fiddle. And we want to keep our maintenance and operational costs down. We want experts to be able to market these facilities internationally and it's got to make financial sense for the operators that come in to work with us in this public/private partnership. So our question is how do we do this, and hopefully we'll be able to elicit some ideas from you today.

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

We have more than 23,000 kids on our island that are signed up in organized soccer organizations, so we have developed a major soccer complex that's centrally located in our urban area. It has been designed to take care of not only our local soccer enthusiasts, but also to be able to provide us a venue to bring in international events. It was opened just two years ago. It's a 288-acre site. We were able to lease the land from the military at \$1 a year. We've built 23 soccer fields there with a main soccer stadium. We have several more fields under construction and parking for about 1,000 vehicles.

It is a 4,000-seat stadium, lighted for night games, with locker facilities, rest facilities, concessions, all the standard things you would expect in a first-class stadium, and it's been enormously successful. If we had a turnstile, more than 1 million people would have gone through the gates in that period of time. It is the home field for our university women's soccer team, which is one of the best in the nation, and their attendance has skyrocketed since they've moved into this new city home field. We've had 19 major state and national events already at the complex.

Now finally our local teams, our local organizations, have a place where they can hold their major soccer events. They didn't have that in the past. They had to have the whole tournament spread out over our whole 600 square mile island.

In addition to the locals, we've also been able to attract a great deal of national interest. In fact just last week we closed the AYSO National Games. We had almost 200 teams, brought almost 8,000 people into our island and pumped almost \$8 million into our economy. We have a number of other major events scheduled for next year with the U.S. Youth Soccer Association and the Veteran's Cup. So as people become aware that we have this wonderful facility they

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

definitely want to come from Asia, the United States, and elsewhere.

Our second sports complex that we've developed for economic development purposes is not that many miles away from the soccer complex. Central Oahu Regional Sports Complex is in the center of our island, in the area of the island that is very residential. It's the community where about 25 percent of our island's population lives. It's a 269-acre site, and we've developed it with a major league baseball field, little league fields, softball complexes, multipurpose fields, a major tennis complex that we're going to be talking about more, archery, box car racing, aquatics, ballroom dancing, virtually anything you can think of we have incorporated into this major sports complex.

We already have the baseball facilities, major league as well as little league spring training facilities from teams that come from Korea and Japan. We are just finishing up our softball complexes that will be available within the next couple of months. We've been hosting many local tournaments. We were never able to do that before because we never had this concentration of facilities that could handle the scope of tournaments we had in mind.

The tennis complex is what we especially want to discuss today. The first phase is going to be completed in a month or so. It has 20 courts, including a club court and a show court, and hopefully next year we'll build the stadium as well as the clubhouse and four additional training courts. The idea is to provide for all of our state high school tournaments as well as reach out and bring in national and international events.

Some of the issues that we're facing: we want to provide these facilities to our local families. That's the most important thing. We don't want them excluded. We need to be able to bring in revenue for the maintenance, operation, and marketing of the facilities, but we don't

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

want our kids to have to pay. We don't want our kids to have to pay a dollar to go kick a soccer ball or to play tennis after school.

We want to bring in the tourists for the facilities, because we find that sports tourism not only brings in dollars with the people that come for the sporting events, but for almost every one of the events that we bring in Hawaii whether it's the Pro Bowl for football or the Sony open golf tournament, the TV exposure of Hawaii has tremendous impact on our overall tourism. People see how beautiful it is by watching the sporting event and they want to come and enjoy it themselves, so having a facility that is as self supporting as possible and s marketed appropriately nationally and internationally are the issues that we're facing.

Our stakeholders are the community, the surrounding community impacted by all the things that go with a major park, all of the local users of the sports facilities, and the national and international tournaments that would be coming and all the professional teams and international exhibition teams that would be coming.

How are we going to measure success? Well, the more local residents that use the facility the more successful they have been. The number of tournaments and exhibition games that we're able to bring to our island and the number of spectators that come to enjoy these games is also important, as well as the TV exposure that we get from them. The economic impact of this on our tourism industry is a key indicator of success, from a maintenance standpoint. It's also important that as much of the operating and maintenance costs of these sports venues be covered by their use from these national and international groups.

So our plan is to identify a viable public/private partnership alternative that we can employ with these facilities. We will then issue requests for proposals, whether for the entire

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

sports complex or by component; in other words, a separate operator for tennis, a separate operator for aquatics, a separate operator for baseball, or one for the entire complex. Then once those proposals are in, we will form the public/private partnership and then maintain some oversight capabilities, to make sure that our local families are taken care of and that the maintenance of the facilities and the marketing is done appropriately.

How has this affected my agenda? Our goal in Honolulu is to build a model sustainable city for the United States and for Asia. We are really the gateway between the east and the west, and we are working hard to become a sustainable city in terms of infrastructure development and resource management. We want our main tourism economy to be sustainable rather than tourism that degrades the host culture, which people come to see, or degrades the environment, which people come to enjoy.

We want to make sure that as we grow our tourism, it enhances our environment and protects and enhances our host culture. Our goal is to develop sports tourism, because that is ideal for our situation with our year-round perfect climate and the fact that it doesn't degrade either our culture or our environment. And we want to be able to reduce our cost of maintenance for the facilities we've developed.

So the questions I have are: what forms of public/private partnership have been used successfully elsewhere? Are there any models that we can refer to that will work for us, and what are some of the social, economic, and political implications of forming one of these partnerships to run a city facility and are there any alternatives? Are we locked into this public/private partnership idea or have you come up with perhaps another alternative that might satisfy the goals that I've articulated this morning? Thank you very much.

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

Mary Eysenbach: Let's start off with any questions anyone might have for Mayor Harris about the presentation?

Mayor Masiello: In the initial planning stages of these two complexes, what role did the public, the users, play in designing and building a consensus as to what would be in this facility?

Mayor Harris: We created a sports task force with every imaginable representative and we sat down and came up with the scope of the facilities and what each component sport needed to be successful within the goals that we set out. So it was really a joint effort with the sports groups to design it, to work with the architects through the design, and to oversee its construction.

Mayor Masiello: You must have had some ballroom enthusiasts involved.

Mayor Harris: Actually we didn't bring the ballroom people in till quite late. We didn't realize that ballroom dancing was going to take off as such an important sport in our state.

Tom Fox: Where did you get the capital for these facilities, and how much debt do you have to repay on them?

Mayor Harris: These are all general obligation bond financed. The City of Honolulu luckily doesn't have to go after referendum to finance the general obligation fund. So we do between \$400 and \$500 million a year in capital construction in our city so it's quite easy for us to develop. We're not anticipating that we're going to service the debt with the revenue from marketing. What we're hoping to do is be able to cover the operation and maintenance costs so it doesn't add up on our operating budget.

Tom Fox: What are the estimated operating costs?

Mayor Harris: Well, there's been some debate on it. We are estimating \$750,000 a year

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

for a soccer complex, that's what we're spending now. With marketing it will be north of that number. For the other big multi-sports complex, it will probably be a comparable number. The tennis is what we're particularly interested in. There have been estimates everywhere from \$240,000 to \$480,000 a year for maintenance for the tennis facility.

Bob Searns: To what extent is this development spinning off incremental demand for food and lodging establishments, and is there any connected food and lodging development specifically in the central part of the island?

Mayor Harris: The answer is no. We're really looking for niche markets. These are tourists that would be going somewhere else if we didn't have the facilities, for instance the AYSO nationals. So for Hawaii, with 7 million tourists a year coming to Waikiki or Honolulu, 8,000 tourists is not a major component. It fits within our Waikiki market, they stay in Waikiki hotels, but it's tourism that we wouldn't have otherwise. So there are no special hotel facilities at the sports complexes to service these people. They basically supplement our Waikiki market.

Mayor Torrey: As an old softball coach who tried for years to get to Hawaii with his softball team and had the problem of it being in spring vacation in advance of our spring league, have you looked at making an attempt at getting to those states within two state limits of the west coast to come over there? Does it make sense to do that, given the fact that during spring vacation you're already booked to the gills anyway, not necessarily the facilities but the hotels? This could also apply to tennis, because our spring tennis teams practice outside and Oregon is not a great place to be playing tennis outside in the spring until later.

Mayor Harris: Oh, well we're seldom booked to the gills so we will always find room in the hotels.

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

Mayor Torrey: If that's the case I would urge you to have someone in your organization look at a massive marketing effort to get teams to come to your area in advance—it's almost like a preseason where they can be assured of playing games every day. Because what happens in Oregon, Washington, Wyoming, Idaho, and Northern California, they prepare for a week and a half of spring vacation games, and they get rained out of 70 percent of them.

Mayor Harris: Those are some of the markets we want to tap into, absolutely.

Mayor Oberndorf: Mayor Harris, we have a shoulder season, October until May and then it's our main season. We have been recipients of the Columbus Day soccer tournament, which brings about 8,000 children with their aunts and uncles and grandmothers and grandfathers. It has turned into a real event. People in the city now look forward to these visitors coming and using the 20 soccer fields plus the sportsplex that we built for a professional soccer team, which is still trying to get its sea legs. But we have used that very idea to market for shoulder months.

The other big teams that we bring in are the Special Olympians, especially those who have been trained in ice skating, water sports, and field hockey. It's mostly regional, but we're getting wonderful response and more and more people are coming to visit us as tourists because we made available the opportunity for their children to be able to achieve success and to receive a medal and things of that nature.

Mayor Harris: Mayor, do you have a public/private partnership that runs that facility or is it entirely public?

Mayor Oberndorf: City parks is running the soccer complex, because the private entrepreneur we went into business with was not really that adept at organizing it, operating it, and maintaining the facility. As he began to get weaker and weaker in his commitment and

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

financially, we resolved that we as a city had to take it over. We are using our folks from parks and recreation and the tourism/marketing department to keep that on a steady keel.

Mayor Harris: That's basically what we're doing. We've gone out with one request for proposals. But the strength of the offering didn't appear to be there. But our parks department is really not geared for marketing for international events. They cut grass and line fields and all that quite well. But marketing is different.

Mayor Oberndorf: What I meant to make clear was that our tourism department is the one who is doing the marketing for the sports complex. So it's a partnership between two agencies in the city.

Mayor Torrey: This would be tough thing to do in Eugene, and consequently I think it would be tough thing to do in your community, but it's worth looking at the other side of the coin which says give it to a private-sector operator and then extract from the operator those things that you want. For example, we had a youth baseball group in the Eugene/Springfield area that was disappointed in the quality of our baseball facilities because we had a combination baseball/softball facility and they wanted to play on a straight baseball facility. So they came to us with the concept of if you will provide the land and will get the county to provide the road, we'll take over the facility and here is what we will give you from the time available on those fields that we are not using. Now the negotiation is going to be the tough part there. It will tell you quickly whether or not this makes sense from a private sector standpoint. They're going to do what makes economic sense. We have to do what makes sense for the community.

Mayor Harris: Did they come back to you with a proposal that would allow you use of the field for your local community without charge?

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

Mayor Torrey: Yes. They took responsibility for building out the facility and maintaining the facility, and we get to use it when they are not using it. Where I see a benefit to you, because your environment is 24/12, you've got use of your facility 12 months of the year. Our problem is we only had use maybe 3 months out of the year.

But if it makes sense economically for a private sector developer to come in there and take this over and then subsequently it makes sense to you because you get enough out of it to satisfy the concerns of the citizens, that may be a solution.

Mayor Harris: What percent of the time would you say is allocated for local use as opposed to commercial use?

Andrea Riner: It's spelled out in the lease agreement, approximately 3 out of 7 days, and that's during their season. There's more so off-season.

Mayor Harris: But you set aside certain days of the week for the local community and certain days of the week they have the right to market it?

Andrea Riner: Correct. And we also have a non-profit that runs our community youth sports so there's a good partnership there so that they are able to work together to make sure the schedule is working for the various user groups.

Pat O'Toole: What I think would be really helpful regardless of where you go with this is to develop a business plan for each component, specific to include marketing, to include your local usage and what it's going to cost to maintain. What that also will do is identify what pieces you have. You could very well distribute this as overall maintenance for all of them but individual operations for each component.

The other thing I would suggest is use those business plans as part of your RFP and

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

actually find sports management groups to help you recruit rather than just send something out on the street. The sky is the limit.

Mayor Harris: Let me pull Malcolm in here. Maybe you can explain a little bit of what we've done and some of the dilemmas we faced.

Malcolm Tom: The business plans are being done. The dilemma involves the various different types of private people coming to us with different proposals for fees in a community that is not fee oriented at the moment.

Mayor Harris: Other than things like dues for the botanic gardens and golf courses, the city doesn't charge for any park and recreation use. It's difficult for us to charge a fee, even a modest one that's going to affect the local population.

Pat O'Toole: Is that true with your adult sports also?

Malcolm Tom: Yes.

Pat O'Toole: From a private developer point of view, what that tells me is the city is currently subsidizing those activities at 100 percent, so a business plan would identify, either on a per hour basis or a per game basis, what it costs top to bottom to maintain, officiate, and market, and assess the city say \$52.00 per game in local agreements and partnerships. When you finally come to the table, you have an allowance to put a dollar value or a benefit on what you do in-kind. There's a dollar value associated with that, which any arrangement is going to want to be accounted for.

What we find is if you build a facility like this, if you went out to all your youth soccer people and said how much time do you want, everyone is going to say seven days a week, right after school, till dark. Then you say okay, but it's going to be \$50.00 an hour. You don't have to

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

pay that, but you have to fundraise or you have to do something, all of a sudden seven days a week from after school until dark becomes two days a week, we can live with an hour and a half, and we'll be effective.

That's what partnerships do, they bring to the middle that allowance that from the city's perspective you don't want to charge, but in fact you are covering all those costs now through your policies. Now that amount needs to be shifted to the partnership or you're probably not going to get private partners to come in and say we'll run this but you're only going to give us half the revenue. You're going to allow us to recuperate only 50 percent of the revenue that the market will bear.

Mayor Harris: That's fine with us if that's what the market will bear. If for instance you can only cover 50 percent of the O&M costs with a tennis facility based on the Davis Cup and the other international tournaments and the other statewide tournaments that we bring in, then that's fine. But we would prefer to pay for the other 50 percent out of the operating budget of the city rather than the user because user fees are regressive. We have some communities that the kids would never be able to play.

Pat O'Toole: What I'm saying is for each of those particular venues you can figure out what that cost is so you can put it in a business plan and tell operators you can count on X number of dollars per day, per game from the city to subsidize those times and then this is what we want you to do. Then it might end up that you have to get specific with tennis and soccer, but you might even have an overall marketing arm that markets internationally to do all that for these groups. So you need to build it and layer it and it can become piecemealed out.

Mayor Harris: So maybe one overall marketing group that markets all the different

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

facilities?

Pat O'Toole: All the venues. One model that I would point to that makes sense here is the creation of an authority, the ability to recuperate this tourism economic impact from 8,000 kids or \$8 million just in one soccer event. Without that facility you don't have that, so to be able to turn that into maintenance and marketing costs really makes sense. What I'm thinking of—and this is one even with tennis you'd want to look at as a model—is in Indianapolis with the Sports Corporation, an authority funded directly by the visitors and convention bureau. Their job is to hire top marketing firms in the country to land events such as the NCAA Final Four.

And on down the road they have the RCA tournament. They have all the U.S. diving, U.S. Olympic swimming, all of that, because of venues like this. That's their job—market it, deliver it, and then you figure out what it costs and it all feeds back right through the same entity, which is the visitors and convention bureau and those facilities then are used locally. Anybody can go down and swim in that natatorium downtown, anybody can go and play tennis. They have court fees, a little bit different philosophy, where adults pay and kids are subsidized quite a bit. But the local parks and recreation runs tournaments on all of those. In fact, two of the fields are on park property that Notre Dame University plays on.

Mayor Harris: One of the concerns we have when we get the proposals back—we already went through one RFP process—is that the maintenance budgets the private sector proposes are clearly not adequate to handle the level of maintenance that is required. So they may be able to show an attractive package, but what we may see happening is the quality of the complex deteriorating. So for maybe 10 years they'll be making a fine profit and our children will be able to play for free, but at the end of 10 years maintenance hasn't kept up to prevent

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

deterioration of the facility.

Pat O'Toole: A very important part of each venue's business plan is maintenance standards. That can be linked to grass, that can be number of times reseeded, that can be resting a field, you name the standards in there, then let them put the cost into it. If they put a low cost to it, it puts the city into contract management not maintenance. You set a standard of length of grass rather than number of times to mow, you go out there at any point in time with a ruler and say it's not supposed to be higher than two inches.

Once those are set, you let them do it. It's asking somebody what do you think versus saying here's how we're going to do this, put a cost to it, and give us a proposal back. They're going to have adequate costs in there to keep it at those standards, and you're setting the standard versus allowing them to set the standards of what they think is profitable. They might have short-term in and out the door in mind but as long as you've got the standard set for the sustainability of it, that is what you want.

Tom Fox: I would say you have a wonderful problem that a lot of people would die to have. I would argue perhaps against the private sector. If you folks know how to take care of those fields, if you have a population that's dependent on them, that uses them regularly, that expects a certain level of maintenance, a certain level of security, trying to regulate it into contracts is always an enforcement issue. It's the day after when you realize that on the length of the grass, who's the guy measuring it, whether you measured it or I measured it, what time of day, it always becomes you control your parks department, your parks department can be flexible to your needs. You respond to the public, private sector doesn't.

I might say you take certain segments that you're looking to market and use something

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

similar to the Virginia Beach model where your parks and recreation manages, maintains, and controls the field. Your tourism and marketing which has to be tremendous in Hawaii perhaps starts to work with tennis and soccer. You set up a small group of the ballroom dancers who know their market niches where your tourism board may not know that market niche and you use the power and the reach of your tourism board as informed by tennis or soccer or ballroom dancing. But politically you maintain control of these wonderful facilities for the people of Hawaii who have spent their G.O. bonds to build them, which is very important.

Two is, the buck stops with you. Some people like to use the private sector buffer. "Well, I would love to, but we've negotiated this contract with this guy who really doesn't understand the way we do business because he's from Omaha." You don't have that buffer and you don't have that problem of trying to convince the guy from Omaha that you really need to have more public time at a certain time of the day. You then carve out what you think is acceptable to your public and acceptable to the associations in terms of the time they would need, instead of privatizing the facilities, and carving out the time you think the public would need, start with your public which paid for the facility, and then carve out the elements that you believe would be timely to the associations.

But I might argue that if you have this incredible facility built with public funding and 200,000 people within direct proximity of it, it might be politically difficult to get a private sector operator who really understood your position vis-à-vis these fields. And these associations, tennis, etc., instead of you paying the fee per hour, you set a fee for usage for various events, they give you an idea of how many a year they might see as being used and then you broker the differences between softball and tennis and soccer that may want to have events

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

at the same time that may not be compatible given the carrying capacity of the local roadways, parking facilities, hotels, etc.

But if you have a parks department that really knows how to manage it, you've got 70 percent of the problem down pat. The problem is many cities don't have parks departments with the resources, expertise, or ability to maintain facilities to the level that these professional associations might want. And your indicator that the maintenance budgets coming from these people isn't adequate according to your parks department means that you know a little bit more than they know about managing your particular types of facilities.

Mayor Harris: Ironically, where we fall down is in the marketing. In Hawaii marketing is all done by a separate authority, funded by state government. So the city has very little in the way of marketing capability of staff. And communication between the state authority responsible for marketing all tourism for Hawaii and the city is difficult. But that's a problem. To them this is small potatoes. The mega number is 3 million Japanese visitors; so going after these niche markets is really hard to get on their radar.

Tom Fox: But for your associations, your tennis guys that know that niche market, they see that as their only market, that's your market. Use the weight of that nameless, faceless bureaucracy that is an authority. That term itself—everybody shapes authorities. Using them to your advantage might be the way to focus the energy rather than privatizing the facilities themselves.

Mayor Harris: So what relationship would you see developing with the city, one of landlord/tenant?

Tom Fox: Landlord/tenant, right. They're dependent on you in the quality of the fields.

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

They're dependent on you on the scheduling of their facilities. You're dependent on them to bring in the kinds of activities that make the facilities important to the local tourist economy and the best relationship is always one where you're mutually dependent. Your facilities don't generate that extra bang for its buck unless the tennis guys are good at their job. They can't be good at their job unless they're maintaining the facility.

But you have more of an incentive to maintain the facility to the standard because of the proximity of a quarter of your population that expects quality recreation facilities. So they're ensured somewhat that you'll be doing that because of your responsiveness to the political situation. You're ensured that they'll be doing it because if they don't bring the tennis people—I'm just talking tennis per se—they have no stake in the game, so to speak. So that way both partners really have an incentive to focus on what they're good at. They know tennis better than anybody on your island knows tennis, and you know parks and recreation better than the tennis operators do because they're used to operating facilities that aren't all these natural green courts and that type of thing.

So I would look at the partnership and try flipping it around in your mind once and look at marketing the little pieces to each of the individuals, keeping the responsibility within the agency and looking at those incremental revenue streams as complimenting but keeping your base budget, one that's the flip of what Pat said where you're charging them an hourly fee and you understand what that is and you build in not only the maintenance of your facility but whatever other incremental costs you can justify—parking usage and roadway usage—and justify and put the proposal out from that perspective is we have these wonderful fields, we're going to maintain them to a high level of quality. And if you want to use them for particular

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

venues, like soccer or tennis, we'll count on you to do all of the marketing supplemented by our state authority—and it may be a way of getting the state authority to see that particular sports marketing niche as something that they might begin to look more at if you had that team of soccer, tennis, ballroom group of people that looked at working with a larger resource base, which is a state authority.

Grover Mouton: New Orleans is based on tourism; it's a large part of its economic base. Several years ago we tried and succeeded to some extent to expand into sports tourism, which is counter to why you go to New Orleans. We created something called a sports foundation, and it is very successful I think principally because of the individual who is running it. But it was attached very cleverly to the bonding of the Superdome, which was successfully written. They have not retired the bond; when they do start to retire it, they consistently re-write it in such a fashion to provide funding for the sports foundation. The foundation is under the management contract of the Superdome, which is out of Philadelphia.

The second thing is this concept of the professional baseball standards field. At what level is that, because that can be a critical economic factor in a park.

Mayor Harris: Well, these are professional level fields that Korean and hopefully Japanese...

Grover Mouton: But have you signed a contract with any teams?

Mayor Harris: No, and that's the other thing. What we've done so far is we have provided these facilities free of charge the first year with the idea that unless people see the property we're not going to be able to sell it. So for instance we brought the AYSO national games last week, we didn't charge them anything. Now we have 8,000 soccer players around the

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

country telling everybody that it's the best facility in the nation, the same with the Korean professional major league teams that are using the fields for training.

Grover Mouton: The youth group engaged in spring training is phenomenal. Florida has been so successful with this. Small cities without large budgets have used their spring facilities as anchor tenants and have allowed that give and take where you charge and you don't charge. The charge is in the fields to the teams, and the fees are huge. That's something I really suggest you look after if you get your sports foundations because that would be the individual who would lead you through the mine fields, because they have all kinds of rights and sub rights.

Susan Rademacher: We have a sports commission, a non-profit entity, that's tied to Greater Louisville, our chamber organization. The commission is comprised of people who represent the niche sports, whether it's extreme sports or tennis or soccer, what have you, and they are the ones who really generate vision for what could happen in terms of competitions and special events that use more than just a particular complex but tie a whole series of events and series of complexes together into a major weekend that will draw ESPN into Louisville, which is pretty amazing.

But parks hasn't relinquished the management responsibility and maintenance standards in meeting the primary need of the public service with any of those facilities. And it's worked, it's a combination of what several of us have talked about, and it has worked extremely well. It has allowed each facility to flourish at the level that it was intended because we don't have something of this magnitude that you're describing, but even your two complexes have very different scope and different kinds of uses. So I think that has been a really good three-way partnership. And then the tie in to GLI which has gotten marketing capability means that even

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

though they might not be interested, the sports commission members can tack on to what's already out there and being produced by the marketing arm. It's a dawning awareness, and it's taking some time.

One other thing, we're in the process of building a major new outdoor amphitheater. I'm going to talk about that in a minute. But the agreement that we're designing currently with the manager for that complex, which will be a private entity, will include a whole scale of ticket levels which include a very affordable, accessible scale. It also includes a certain percentage of days out of the seasons, which for us is a 120-day season with 12 free days that the parks department has use of for fundraising events or anything that we want to do with that facility.

Then finally on any sales ticketed events, there's a surcharge on those tickets that goes into a long-term major maintenance fund. You talked about your concern, you can keep up your maintenance standards if you're specific about those and capable of doing that, but capitalizing the long-term major maintenance reinvestment you might consider for those ticketed for-profit events a surcharge, a dollar ticket or something like that.

Mayor McCrory: I don't think you have any choice but to get into more user fees, whether directly or indirectly. We do that in Charlotte now with our parks, with softball organizations. Understand that having a fee does cause difficulty, but how you do that is important, and I think a lot of it you go through a sports commission.

Mayor Harris: How do you avoid the regressive aspect of it? We've got a whole range of communities and they all play softball.

Wayne Weston: I think there are opportunities as you look at it to move it beyond the regressive stage. You have to understand that you do have both ends of the spectrum to serve,

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

from a socio-economic standpoint. We do a lot of promotion in the department with corporate sponsorships that support these teams.

We subsidize only in the most fragile and threatened neighborhoods and that's where there's a strong relationship between parks and recreation and our police department or our police athletic leagues that really customizes our approach to serving those populations. The remainder of the community has a very strong backing and we have, just from our adult summer softball program, just a little more than 800 teams, and this is based on fees which cover 100 percent of the cost recovery that we're looking for from just a basic O&M standpoint.

Mayor Harris: But other than those programs, you obviously don't have a city ordinance that says people in this community have to pay this, people in that community pay that for the same field?

Wayne Weston: One of the keys to our successes has come through public participation. We have more than 250 citizens that are involved on a constant basis through our park district advisory councils. We have nine park districts in our community and each one of these has an appointed advisory council that works with these particular issues. So by getting that high level of consumer input from a public participation process, we're able to work through those different standards for all the areas of the city.

Mayor McCrory: I'll add one other point. I think you've got to deal like it's a basketball arena. The fact of the matter is when you have a complex and you have a certain amount of customers in there, you might not be changing them on the way in as much as the actual money you need. But once they get in, how else can you make money especially from those who can afford it? The way you do that is you sell them products. You might be doing that.

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

I would sell signage. Every one of our little league baseball fields have signage all around. We went through a very stringent sign policy on how big the signs could be, but we look at any way you can get money from the private sector.

I'd also get the hotel/motel association directly involved. Because if you're filling up hotel rooms I would even make a grievance with certain hotels where they would help supplement the cost of your maintenance if you direct business towards certain hotels at a certain cost and it can be win-win and you can work that for your hotel associations, which are very powerful groups. We do that for the convention center stuff all the time.

On naming rights, mentioned earlier, I'd call it a name that I could sell right now. Every one of our named products is named after somebody or a product. I'd make an agreement for how many years it would be. You put a 10-year due on the naming rights, where for 10 years this will be the name. Then in the newspaper, everyday it will say soccer tournament held at so and so stadium.

Mayor Harris: Is that \$300,000 for 10 years?

Susan Rademacher: No, \$10,000 a year for 10 years maybe.

Mayor McCrory: We have a second arena in Charlotte, Independence Arena, a small 1950s venue that we didn't want to tear down. We're now naming it Cricket Arena for Cricket Telephone. Most people don't even know its Cricket Telephone. I think we might get a \$100,000 or so a year, that's it. I did some pricing and actually the naming rights prices have gone down in the last three years at all levels, so sometimes you got to get what you can. But that \$100,000 a year is helping out and it's all towards operations. So that's where you sometimes have to swallow hard. I thought it would be a much more uproar than it turns out. But I would put a limit

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

of how many years it is. I wouldn't make it forever.

Andrea Riner: I think we need to hear from the smallest city here. We don't have near the size of facilities but I think we have a couple of lessons learned we can offer. We've gone through a couple of major property tax limitations and had our recreation programs slashed. And for many of them we have to be 100 percent revenue based.

In a community that feels like they've already paid their taxes and will ask why they are having to then pay those user fees, one of the things that helps is, similar to the sports foundation or commission, is a non-profit organization. For us, the fees are paid to that group. And they're able to do more in-the-community marketing, fundraising, go after private grants that we as a city couldn't do, such as selling candy or whatever that they're selling so I would say that might be a tool in going from the no fee to some fees, having that buffer group that's able to market.

I would just again say that nobody does facility maintenance better than the public agencies. We have pretty poor partnerships when it comes to maintenance. That's a major gap and if you can hold on to that part and make sure your investment is there for 50+ years instead of 10, I would be the fourth or fifth for that.

Bob Searns: I'm going to pick up on what Mayor McCrory was saying in trying to figure out a way to make a more equitable nexus between this development and food, lodging, rental car, tourism industry. How do you convince them to pay their fair share of the increment? When you see 8,000 people come for one event, it's just like advertising spending to them to commit to a special sports tourist district or whatever that mechanism might be. I'm just curious, what thoughts do you folks have about how you better make that connection? It's in their best interest to do it ultimately, but how do you do that?

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

Mayor Harris: Well, we have a unique situation. The owner of the largest number of hotels in Hawaii, Outrigger Group, is also the head of the soccer association, and so they're actually the ones that are able to go out and bring the AYSO internationals. They cut the rate of their room down to bargain basement to bring the group in, as much for the business because they are huge soccer enthusiasts and they've been working with us to develop the facilities and all the rest. So in terms of hotel industry support that really has come for soccer other than paying us directly for the maintenance field, in other ways bring the events in and reduce the costs so that we can be competitive.

But with things like tennis I don't imagine though that we're going to bring in the same numbers of people that we would for soccer. Our main benefit from tennis is going to be in media exposure.

Mayor McCrory: That's what gets you the naming rights. If you can get a tenant you can sell the naming rights. Getting a tenant whether it's twice or three times a year, major tenants, that gives you a marketing tool. When the private sector takes over an arena, I have found out they sell the arena inside much more than we are. We are an authority with our current arena. I went to Philadelphia and saw their arena, which is privately operated, and they were making use of every bit of space on selling. The pouring rights—there are so many things that you can do—you know, does Pepsi or Coke get the contract?

I'd also look at leasing land. I don't know if you're allowed to by state law but if you bring in that many people and I don't know what type of food service you bring, but if you can take advantage more of a food service company providing service with an ongoing contract you might be able to negotiate better deals there too as opposed to the parks and recreation running a

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

concession stand.

Mayor Harris: One of the unusual things in Hawaii is that although we have a hotel room tax and the city gets a small share of it, most of it goes back into the tourism authority, which they use for marketing, and we're in a situation where ironically for every tourist that comes to Honolulu we lose money, we the city loses money because the city provides all the services for the tourists, the police, the fire, the parks, the life guards, all of that we pay for it and yet the main taxes that the tourists pay are state excise taxes that go 100 percent to state government and the hotel room taxes that go to the tourist authority. So we have to subsidize every tourist. The city has to subsidize every tourist so it's a little unusual because the more successful we are in bringing the visitors, the more red ink the city itself sees.

Mayor Masiello: That goes to the heart of my question because I was intrigued with the point you made in your presentation that that international soccer tournament generated \$8 million in additional sales tax. What percentage of that did you get?

Mayor Harris: None.

Mayor Masiello: None. So you're out front generating and marketing these great facilities to bring people to Honolulu and it's costing you money. Well, I think what you have to do is go back and try to readjust that formula so that you can have money. We're going through the same thing, too, in Buffalo. We're having the same problem.

Mayor Harris: It's the perennial battle with the state legislature.

Mayor Masiello: Well, in Buffalo, because the city has the significant cultural assets in the region, we get the responsibility of maintaining and providing for them, but the county gets the lion's share of the sales tax. So right now we're in a significant battle and negotiation to get a

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

larger percentage of the sales tax so that we can continue to provide these kinds of services, which they match them. They take advantage of the revenue and we take advantage of the expense.

Mayor Harris: If you figure out how to do that let us know.

Mayor Masiello: Well, it's not a pleasant situation but you have to. It seems to me that you're doing all the right things to give your community great facilities, to market them, to bring in international users of the facilities, but you're paying all the expenses as you mentioned. After a while your own public isn't going to be really happy with this because people from the outside are going to be using your facilities and you're gaining nothing but the headaches and the maintenance costs.

Mayor Harris: It's very unusual [in Honolulu]. I think we're one of the only cities in the country that actually subsidizes its state government.

Mayor McCrory: No, we all do. There isn't a city that doesn't do that, I don't think.

Mayor Harris: We spend \$17 million a year issuing parking tickets and speeding tickets and all the rest, and it comes right out of the city coffers to pay the police overtime and the meter monitors and all that. And the \$13 million of fines that you pay for the tickets goes straight into the state general fund and we don't get a penny of it, so the more tickets we issue the more revenue they get and the more overtime they get. But that's typical for Hawaii and the political battle between city and state.

Mayor Masiello: One of the things you can do, seven years ago we started a winter festival in our Olmsted Parks. We sold partnerships to the local food chains, and corporate Buffalo would take sponsorships. You may want to do the same thing with your international

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

events. Also, sporting goods companies have a lot of money for marketing. They may want to be the sponsor of your next international soccer tournament and pay a fee to you for the use of the facilities.

It appears to me that you're leaving a lot of money on the table and you need to be more aggressive in doing that. If you want to maintain no cost to your constituents, then that's certainly understandable. You've got to figure out where that money is going to come from. If the state isn't going to help you, you got to go to corporate Honolulu, you're going to have to go to corporate America. If you want these events in your facilities they're going to have to pay a fee to do that.

Mayor Harris: We see these revenue pockets and our question basically is do we pursue those with a public/private partnership where we're turning over the management and the marketing to a private entity, or do we do it internally and just pump those dollars into the city general fund? Is there one model that works better than another?

Pat O'Toole: Some of the things that I've written down as I've heard discussions around the table are fundamental things that we as consultants of parks and recreation help to negotiate these private/public partnerships. Fundamental is that you need to define your core business. Is operation and/or maintenance of a facility like this a government core business or are you going to have to jump to this level?

Secondly, I can't emphasize enough about the performance measures. One thing we do see is, bureaucratic costs and maintenance—the private sector doesn't have to mess with that. So as you say they don't come close to our costs, that could be an efficiency measure. A lot of these models that are successful they started years ago in golf courses. In Indianapolis we privatized 12

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

golf courses, being on the front page of the newspaper for almost three years, and we used 8 models and anything from a not-for-profit at one to total maintenance and everything to owning and doing the maintenance and just the piece-mealing it out. They all worked wonderfully and the level of maintenance went up.

So one of the things I would look at are maintenance costs. Just because it costs more doesn't mean it's better. What we found was because we had been maintaining golf courses with government mowers for so long, you've got a veteran greens mower who you're paying \$35.00 an hour on a Sunday because he's union and he's double time and a half. You go to the nicest golf course in Indiana, Crooked Creek, and walk up and say what do you pay your greens mowers on Sunday, and they say \$5.50. That's seven times the amount. Those were the reasons privatization made sense.

Also, when we had to move and buy something or make a move to save a green the bureaucratic tape wouldn't allow that to happen, where the private sector can go out and do that at their own risk. They don't have to ask anybody. The other thing we discovered, the people that come look at your facility and your maintenance modes to allow you to have an international tournament of any kind are the people that you want at your facility.

If as a public entity you've got to convince somebody, if you've got an opportunity for the tennis association and the golf association and the soccer association to actually be operators or on that team, that's where the tournaments go. The exact reason Indianapolis has the Final Four about every four years is because of that sports commission. They wine and dine and they bring them in constantly. That's why all of the Olympic trials are there. The plan that they put together years ago not only included venues, it included getting the governing bodies, U.S.

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

Swimming, U.S. Diving, U.S. Skiing, U.S. Figure Skating, and our NCAA office is there now. That was their mode and they had the clout, so I guess clout is really important and most public entities don't have a bit of clout when it comes to bringing these big events in. You're always going to have to rely on somebody.

I look at this facility and I would say sky is the limit from this recruitment. I'd be calling Disney saying, "You want a west side Wide World of Sports like you got in Orlando?" I'd be calling IMG and asking how they can help you market this or at least look at their models, because I don't think anybody is going to challenge how Disney as a private entity could maintain a facility like this as good or better than what private sector can. So I think even for the long haul, based on what the public entity does with cost of living increases and this and that compared to private sectors, reaction to urgency and the market place is what we see happening.

When you're four or five years out of landing these tournaments, try to get a visitor's bureau to assist you in thinking 15 years down the road we want to have X event here and we got to start now. Sometimes the government doesn't think that way, so typically it doesn't make sense to them. I still lean towards if you want to jump into that arena where the dollars are going for tourism, become part of it.

Mayor Harris: When we went to Disney, to Orlando, they've got a great set up for generating revenue and for promotions. But every kid has to pay like \$7.00 to go walk on the field. So how can you meld that model with a model that allows the children of the island to use the field without costs?

Pat O'Toole: That's what I was talking about earlier about your subsidizing it now so instead of just subsidizing it to yourself or to the state, subsidize it to the private operator. Disney

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

could do the same thing by saying city of Orlando come on out and play.

Mayor Harris: Set aside so many days a week or so many months a year.

Pat O'Toole: Exactly, and put those unit costs in place that everybody should conform to and say we're not losing money when you're there, so you're welcome. It's when you're costing me money that I'm going to fight you because you want me to make this work. So that's what a partnership is all about. In your case what you're basically saying is rather than it coming out of the pockets of your users the city is going to pay it. So what that becomes is a check to these people on an annual basis or on a per hour basis or whatever as a subsidy and your private operators will be happy with that as long as it covers the cost.

Mayor Torrey: You actually said a lot of what I was going to say, but let me ask a question. You have performing arts centers in Honolulu. Do you charge local organizations for their time when they're rehearsing?

Mayor Harris: Yeah, they pay a much-reduced rate for the use of the facilities.

Mayor Torrey: So you do have some instances where you do charge people in your community for access to public facilities?

Mayor Harris: For performing art centers, theater, outdoor amphitheater, symphony, golf courses, zoo, botanical gardens.

Mayor Torrey: So at least your foot is in the door. I hear what you're saying about the kids that are at risk and that if you put a fee on them they may not be able to play. On the other hand I don't see you even telling the public although I'll admit I'm certainly not in Honolulu so maybe you do this every year. I think users pay and in this particular instance the city of Honolulu is a user and you have decided to pay for those children. But do you tell the

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

community how much you're paying for those children? Do you let them know every year how much of your budget goes to make sure that the children and adults regardless of income level are getting in there?

Mayor Harris: I don't but the media makes a point to.

Mayor Torrey: Do they? Well, but that's not bad. It is the cost of business, of running your city. The other thing I would point out, this AYSO program, what do you get out of that? Now they've left and they know you have the greatest facility. What did the city get out of that?

Mayor Harris: Well for this first stage nothing and the idea was for the first year we wanted to be able to offer facilities for free as part of our marketing. From here on once we establish this framework there will be fees to use the field and perhaps parking fees and who knows what else.

Mayor Torrey: And then the last thing I would ask, I'd give it one more shot and you are the expert because you're there everyday, of going to the visitors and convention bureau. Maybe the first thing you do is sit down and do an economic impact analysis of what happens if you don't do this, because you do have an option. Your option is simply not to market these things. The loss of not bringing people to your state has an impact on the state of Hawaii, has an impact on the tourism and visitors because as you had said before, you're never full to the gills.

Tom Fox: You keep saying are there models, are there models? I think what you should do is just take all the models and put them down in one list because every model applies to a microclimate and your particular situation is different than everybody else's. I think you're wise to chum the waters the first year to see what's there and maybe you can use this particular instance since it's a new facility, since you haven't used it to draw in tax revenue, to set up that

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

sport commission that works with the convention and visitors bureau and try and leverage. What percentage of the population of the state do you have?

Mayor Harris: Seventy-eight percent.

Tom Fox: Okay, you've 78 percent of the vote in the state. Maybe you use this issue as the first issue to claw back a little of that tax revenue that you're not getting and maybe cut this out so it's brand new. You're not affecting the state's revenue overall but of this revenue that starts getting generated here, you'd like a bigger piece of the pie and you're willing to bring to the table your sports groups to help market it and maybe you use that as the camel's nose under the tent if you will and use your population because they want these fields, and inform them of how much its costing them and why its costing them so much and if the state government would only help you a little bit more you'd be out of this problem.

Mary Eysenbach: A quick summary. We seem to have two differing opinions on whether or not we should do this with private management, some of the advantages being maybe an increased efficiency of maintenance and a quicker reaction to changing markets as opposed to government bureaucracy. In that case the money that the city is already spending to subsidize the lower-income kids, in fact most of the kids, would be paid instead to that operator, versus a model where the public would continue to maintain and operate these facilities.

In either case our group is recommending that you develop a business plan, which I understand you are already in the process of doing. For each one of these operations that business plan should maintenance standards. You should have in either case there might be an opportunity for a separate arm to be marketing whether or not you do it with a private operator, whether you do it internally. In terms of models a number of models were brought up, New

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

Orleans Sports Foundation, Louisville Sports Commission, Eugene's Foundation. I'm sure your discussion with people in this next day and a half you will find a number of other models that people know about.

Mayor McCrory: If I could add just one other thing, different payments based upon affordability, different payments for adult leagues verses children leagues and some of it you would keep very informal.

PARKS PARTNERSHIPS: SUSAN RADEMACHER

Susan Rademacher: I wish I could have been with you last night to have an opportunity to begin our conversations earlier than this morning. But my meeting yesterday was such a wonderful example of the pluses and the minuses of a close partnership between a private non-profit foundation and a parks department that I want to tell you a little bit about that before I get into my points that I'd like to make.

Metro Parks in Louisville and Jefferson County is an institution that goes back to 1880. In 1990, 110 years later, the non-profit organization of which I'm president was created to help them remember the things that they had forgotten and bring the fundraising clout to make it possible to renew our park system and to extend those early ideals into the future development of our park system. And so we've had this great 10-year partnership.

Yesterday we had a board meeting. Our parks director is an ex-officio member of our board, and at the end of our board meeting under new business she raised her hand and told the board that she wanted to give them a heads up. There were some employees in our recreation division who had received football cleats for children in sports programs and ended up actually

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

taking some of those home, selling some of those to the parents of the children, and we now have the white-collar crimes unit of the police investigating, and we're filing charges.

The point is that really goes to the heart of the private sector's confidence in the parks department and their willingness to make the kinds of investments that we're asking them to make through the conservancy. So the damage control that results from that, what the conservancy can do to immediately get to its donors to let the principal people know what is afoot, the kinds of counter information that we can put out to balance the media blitz—you're all familiar with this kind of situation. It was just a perfect example of having the downside and the upside of having such an inside relationship as we do in Louisville.

Many other partners with parks are not inside partners. In fact many of them are adversarial. When Louisville decided to create a conservancy, our mayor was involved in the beginning in conceiving that organization. A private friends group approached him and said these historic park resources are deteriorating alarmingly. We don't obviously know what to do with them. Parks doesn't know how to maintain them—something is needed. So there was a study.

The mayor then initiated his own study and out of that looked at models including the Central Park Conservancy in New York City. Betsy Barlow Rogers, who was the director at the time, came to Louisville several times and advised repeatedly that the current friends group was not going to be able to rise to the challenge, that there had to be a high level organization politically on a par with the decision makers and the private business sector in our community that could bring a new level of intelligence to where the parks department was going, new resources, and a larger scope. When city budgets are driven by the need to produce something for

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

ribbon cutting before the next election, you end up with lots of little piecemeal improvements scattered throughout your city that don't really add up to much and often times really begin to tear down whatever good planning infrastructure is there within a particular park.

So there was a year and a half process to recruit our board, during which time the board received a lot of training as did the mayor and some of the other elected officials in the city and other city agency heads and utilities. They began to identify who those other partners were that were going to have to be involved to make this successful, because parks are overlain with many other jurisdictional interests. In our case we have state highway control over some of our historic parkways, utility companies crisscrossing all of our landscapes, easements that were undocumented, encroachments that were illegal, all kinds of things, a very complex layered spaghetti of expectations and forgetfulness. The public was really the victim of this kind of situation.

So the first step the conservancy took once it was installed was to decide how it was going to operate, and the decision was made that there would be a shared person. The conservancy would be responsible for fully funding the executive director, but the director would have an automatic title within the parks department to provide a seat at the table in decision-making and be personally responsible for an effective communication between the two entities.

When I stepped into that position there was no credibility for the conservancy within the parks department. There was a tremendous amount of suspicion. There was no line authority. There was no responsibility within the parks department, so the first few years were just all about helping people understand that the conservancy was there to help and to learn what the realities were in terms of maintenance and operations issues primarily.

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

We knew what the issues were in planning and design and construction, but it's a real eye opener for the private sector to understand what extremely limited resources parks departments are dealing with. We leverage that with the political realities of last minute requests for things like picnic tables at church picnics or putting up the bleachers at the annual Derby parade, unfunded mandates as well as other things like developing major park plans without any funding and no infrastructure, no staff to do that. It was also an education for the private partner.

What happened was as we developed a master plan to restore the Olmsted parks, we also realized that the parks department needed to be renewed as did the community's connection with the parks, which were created to connect and build the community in the first place. So with the advent of the master plan and the dollar amounts that were attached to that, at that time it was \$55 million just for the major historic parks. The estimate now is more like \$100 million just for those Olmsted parks, which are just 43 percent of the whole park system.

The conservancy began to branch out and one of the things that we realized was that we would need an infrastructure within the parks department to really execute the master plan. We realized that we did not want to be responsible for the maintenance of the parks. These Olmsted parks were far along. There was already a structure in place that was doing a pretty good with what they had. They didn't have enough. There was no professional education and development in the parks department, there was no career ladder.

The equipment was incredibly out of date. You had the wrong kinds of tractors scalping hill sides, you had an industrial maintenance ethic which was get as much grass cut as you could, as quickly as you could, regardless of whether those acres were being used for anything that required regularly mown grass. We discovered that 70 percent of the park maintenance

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

employee's time was spent mowing grass in the Olmsted parks and only 20 percent of the parks coverage was in open space. And much of that open space was actually better used as meadow, wetland, stream banks, that sort of thing that wouldn't need weekly mowing or every 10-day rotation mowing.

So there's a lot of learning, and it was decided that I would begin creating a design studio within the parks department to execute and develop capital plans, projects, and so forth that we would use as primarily for procurement and all of the other systems and protections and controls that already existed within the city.

So most of the projects that we raised money for are executed through city contracts, and we reimburse the city for our part of those projects. Sometimes it's 100 percent we're paying for, sometimes its 50 percent, sometimes its nothing. But in every case the conservancy is at the table driving the concept of the project, making sure all the parties are there from the beginning to the end, including the maintenance evaluations and in yearly independent maintenance audits that the conservancy does with an outside committee.

So we've really branched beyond merely raising money for capital projects, because we quickly realized that if we couldn't assure the private investor that the money wasn't going down the tubes, then they wouldn't come back. We couldn't come back to them. And we were created to be the constant over decades so that the institutional memory would not be forgotten again as it once was so that no matter where parks are in the bottom rung or the next to the bottom rung of the ladder.

However the profile for our government and our government's ability to fund parks rises and falls, there would be a constant entity charged with making sure that we were doing the best

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

that we could to maintain the core values to support true community involvement and participation in planning, to educate and inform the community of what the opportunities are, to think bigger than the piecemeal projects and to be able to do things that would not just further the parks department or meet recreational needs but really contribute to the economic development of our community.

One project that I wanted to tell you about briefly is the Iroquois Amphitheater reconstruction. We at the conservancy decided that it was worth keeping a 1938 WPA amphitheater that had been built in one of our largest Olmsted parks because it was a magnet for cultural life. It was the first opportunity many people had to be exposed to the performing arts, especially children. There was a long and glorious past, but the thing was falling down and it had just gotten band-aid treatments for years.

So the conservancy went to one of our major corporate citizens and got \$100,000 to do a design concept study. We created an advisory group of all the performing arts centers in town including promoters and the more common cultural institutions like the orchestra, the children's theater, the fund for the arts, which is like our metro United Way but it's for the arts, all of the potential players. Metro Parks' own performing arts programs had developed a program for this amphitheater that said, yes, this is a magnet. We should reconstruct it. We should meet the market needs for it. So we did a lot of market analyses.

Through the conservancy we were able to study and devote the time and resources to finding out how all the other public amphitheaters around the country were operated, who is responsible for the operations, how many seats they had. We began to develop a program and a vision for this that we took through the concept stage. A team we put together of elected officials

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

and some conservancy board members then sold that concept to the state legislature, which funded half of the cost of the amphitheater project. This is a \$9.3 million reconstruction project and the state put \$4.6 million into it, the city put in \$2 million, which was \$400,000 more than they had planned, and the conservancy is currently raising \$2.3 in our current capital campaign.

So having this wonderful, deep, quality plan that was backed by good marketing and business thinking about how this could spur tourism and economic development for the region, in addition to serving the immediate South Louisville population that thinks of the Iroquois Amphitheater as their own, was the task of the conservancy. We are now involved in negotiations for an RFP for an operator. We've gone through several different versions of that and now we think we've found one that will work for us.

We were also successful at having the amphitheater named the official outdoor amphitheater of the Commonwealth of Kentucky. So it is now in all the state tourism information and we're developing a first season for next year that we hope will have some signature events that Metro Parks will actually own. The operator will promote and book all of the dates from the amphitheater and oversee the stage management and all of that. But we will have the contract for concessions through Metro Parks. What's interesting is that through the partnership model we're able to get everybody together and because we operate with a glass house philosophy we have been able to put uncomfortable issues on the table and work through them effectively.

So there have been times when my board has had to work quietly with the mayor or on sensitive political issues where perhaps a major political supporter wants to build a new condominium development that requires an encroachment across public parkway space. And the conservancy is opposed to that. But rather than the conservancy doing a lot of public advocacy

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

through the media, we're able to work more quietly through our channels and then we're able to tap the resources because we've got our eye on all of the sparrows out there that relate to the interest of public parks. And we have a clear understanding between the two parties that has evolved over time.

Since we've set up this in-house group, it's really working well now to manage the capital projects and the conservancy. It's confident that the projects that we do are well built, they come in on time and in budget. In the past year I have been able to back off of the hands-on management of that division, through a strategic plan and a restatement of our agreement with the city. We have a draft of certain items that we're working on in a new MOU.

I will now be focusing exclusively on the conservancy once again and on our new extended mission, which is how do we take those core values that made a great park system in the beginning into the expansion and extension of our park system? Our community has just voted to merge, so we are facing major new government formations starting in January, starting now for about two years. The mayor who helped to found the conservancy, Jerry Abramson, is 99 percent assured of being the mayor who will take office in January, and he's a strong supporter; however, he's got a lot of big issues on the plate.

So part of our strategic plan was to look at this change and address for the effectiveness of both the conservancy and the city parks department how to fly a little bit under the radar screen during the first several years of merger while the really sticky issues of police compensation levels and human resources, hourly rates, those kinds of things are all worked out. How do we remain effective? How do we continue to bring the good news about parks? And how do we use our park system as a vehicle for really working to bring this newly congealed

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

community truly together? So the conservancy is very involved on that level.

I think a vibrant partnership is one that evolves. It's like a marriage in many ways. Each one is as unique as the two parties that are part of it, but it has got to have the freedom to change. It has got to have the clear expectations and measures of performance. What are the goals of both partners? What does each partner bring to the table in terms of personnel investment, materials, capital costs, and other items? What is the bottom line value of the contribution of both partners? And how do you measure your progress towards the success? How often do you do that? What are the lines of communication that need to be established? What happens when there is a conflict of interest? That's been a real issue and something we might want to talk about, as we have gone through some really sticky wickets in this past decade.

One example—the former mayor was being persuaded to give a 16-acre Olmsted park to the Jefferson County School Board as a site for a new elementary school. That was a case where I had to be careful about what I said, what I did not say, how I supported my board, which was opposed to it, and how I maintained integrity with my parks director because I report to both. It was very interesting. But because there are clear principles and because we do have shared philosophies about what our goal is as a partnership, we have been able to work through those kinds of things.

A huge part of it is the amount of money and resources through community leaders that the conservancy brings to the mix. There are many ways in which we can offset the limitations on the government. The conservancy can directly contract for projects with people who have unusual skills like dry-laid stone masonry. We can do a lot of the R&D work on new projects. We can do market research into park use and community wide perception, things like that.

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

So it's really a loose collaboration that has found a tremendous amount of value, and the end result is that since its creation, the conservancy has raised considerable dollars. Now our total dollar amount is approximately \$20 million. What's interesting is that it has also had the impact of increasing the public sector investment. I think that's because of the value and the credibility that our approach brings to the process.

The state and local government both are excited when there is public investment at the table. They are willing to go for the longer-term projects that may require several phases because they know that there is a guiding hand that's going to make sure that this project does wrap up when it needs to even if it crosses terms and crosses budgets. So it's a lot of rich potential there. The organization of the conservancy is completely different now than what existed two years ago. And that was completely different from what it was 10 years ago. It is a fluid situation. It's opportunistic and it's a fascinating role to be in, and I love it.

VIRGINIA BEACH: PRINCESS ANNE PARK

Mary Eysenbach: Our next case problem is an interesting one in the context of our program, because one of the biggest goals or philosophies you could say about our program is our mission to help people to understand that parks are more than just grass and trees and recreational facilities, and that parks indeed play a broad role in the community. And one of those roles as we heard last night is public health. When I started in this profession, there was a study by Roger Ulrich that showed that people who looked out a hospital window on trees and grass recovered faster and needed less pain medication than those who did not. And that captured my imagination and at that point I became interested in the link between psychological and physiological health

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

and nature, and thereby parks.

That's what led me full on into this profession, and then came Virginia Beach's case problem. I guess I could say I was thrilled when I saw this case problem come across my e-mail. This has some interesting implications for making our case about parks and public health. So Mayor Oberndorf is going to show us their project at Princess Anne Park and Princess Anne Commons and we're going to learn about some neat things they're doing in Virginia Beach.

Mayor Oberndorf: Well, we are delighted to be here. My team with me today includes Barry Frankenfield, who is the design and development administrator for the Virginia Beach Department of Parks and Recreation, and Donald Jellig, who is the president of Sentara Enterprises and Vice President of Sentara Health Care. We actually were able to have a member of the private sector see the merit between using parks and for health all at the same time.

Virginia Beach, which you may not know, is the largest city in the Commonwealth of Virginia. We have 425,257 people living there according to the last census. Our annual growth is about 2 to 3 percent per year, and the city's actual geographic size is 258.7 square miles. One third of the city is still in agriculture if you can imagine that. Our department of parks and recreation controls 4,451.5 acres of parkland, and they also have 38 miles of shoreline, 28 miles of public beach, 79 miles of scenic waterway and 60 miles of bikeway. We take our public park and recreation charge very seriously.

In addition there are 205 parks in the city, including 8 community parks, 9 district parks and 188 parks in the neighborhoods. The recreation resources include six community recreation centers, 198 tennis courts, 155 ballfields and 80 basketball courts. We have one marina, four municipal golf courses, three boat ramps and three canoes/kayak ramps. In addition we have the

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

U.S. National Field Hockey Facility where we have two AstroTurf fields, and the Hampton Road soccer facility, which came about because the private sector came to the city and said to us if you will rent us the land for \$1.00 a year we will create 18 soccer fields that will be second to none. And I must say, the fathers of the children who played soccer did them, and they kept their word every step of the way.

In addition, we made a partnership with someone in the private sector for the first soccer sportsplex. Unfortunately that did not work out as we had envisioned it but we are learning from our mistakes and we're about to have that have a new spirit of growth and flourish.

The parks and recreation department in the City of Virginia Beach actually comes under the city government and is in the department of the chief operating officer. Our budget for the 2002-2003 will be \$25,789,887, and our annual capital budget is \$5,710,000, and we have about 607 employees.

I just want to give you a little background because people who have not visited our city perceive it to be a small strip of beach with Oceana, the master jet race; Little Creek, the amphibious base; Dam Neck, the training center; and Fort Storey. They don't perceive us as a big city, which we are. You go back inland from the resort area and most of the population lives there and that's how we got started.

Princess Anne Park itself is a 70-acre site. It's more than 30 years old, and it is highly programmed. We have a horse ring, a lighted ballfield, multipurpose field, picnic area and playground. To say that Princess Anne Park is the site of many special events is an understatement. We have regular programming for soccer, football, and softball teams, and adjacent to the Hampton Road Soccer Council Complex we have several schools. We actually

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

used some of our parkland for the school and also in this mix of users we have the Verizon Wireless Virginia Beach Amphitheater that entertains 20,000 people at a concert.

But the Princess Anne area had an extraordinary opportunity. When I became mayor 14 years ago, a prominent businessman put together a group of investors, and they bought approximately 1,500 acres that they wanted to develop into tract housing. They came to me and they said, this is what we're going to do with our land, and I said, no you can't because the city council has to agree to the rezoning, and I'm not in favor of it. He said, I don't think you understand. And I said, yes sir I do understand. We have plenty of tract housing. We need more open space and more opportunity for citizens and their quality of life.

We kept turning down his request for rezoning and ultimately the conglomerate went bankrupt. When the bank had to take the hit on the chin, they had not charged any interest or any payment for seven years to any of these entrepreneurs who were in the deal, and that all came out in the newspaper, which I didn't even know. So I got a call from the former mayor of Norfolk who had since left office and had gone back into private practice with the bank, and he invited me to come to lunch with him to ask me if I would like to buy the 1,500 acres for the City of Virginia Beach. And I said let me bring my money man and I'll be there and we'll talk.

He offered us the 1,500 acres at \$9,000 an acre which was just about what it was worth and the only agreement we had to make was that no one on the city council would reveal the price that we were paying for 1,500 acres. Well one of my renegade young male council members walked out and blew the whole thing, and so we paid another \$1.5 million for the land that we hadn't planned on paying.

Well, what did that give us? That gave us the opportunity to partner with the TPC Golf

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

Course. We have the second only public/private partnership that TPC has created in the United States. That has turned out to be an extraordinarily wonderful opportunity for the city. The PGA is interested in the First Tee program where children from every walk of life can have the chance to learn golf at a modest fee. We have a generous lady who underwrote \$1 million for creating the First Tee program there.

In addition, we decided to use the land for Landstown Elementary School and a \$45 million new high school, the Landstown High School. And there was a middle school built in between but still left us plenty of acreage and that's where we situated the sports plex for the soccer opportunity with a private entrepreneur.

In addition, we suddenly had the opportunity that Sentara showed interest in wanting to locate in the Princess Anne Park area. That's where all the future growth of the city is going to occur. Well, here were the things that we had to look at. The relocation of the original park with the ballfields, with the horse ring and with all the sentiment at the commitment that the citizens had grown used to in that area.

Also, the farmer's market is right across the street from Princess Anne Commons. I told you, one-third of our city is still in agriculture. We actually have a farmer's market where they can bring their produce everyday and sell it to the citizens.

So whatever we did, including the campus that was proposed by Sentara, our biggest opportunity was how do we get the citizens of Virginia Beach to agree to allow us to relocate the 30-year-old park and build them all new ballfields and new facilities and still have them not feel that we're giving something or selling something that actually belongs to them and therefore we should keep it all?

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

So we had Sentara make their proposals, but while we were doing that we began to hold public hearings in 1995 under the “what if” scenario. We brought the public in and we said, what if the city were to be able to sell those 70 acres and build you a whole new park, same area because we still have the land available. What do you think? Well, some thought it might be a real good idea because we were getting some complaints about the ballfields, and others said well no, if you have this, why not hold onto this and get something else in addition to it? And I said well that’s not quite the way it would be.

Then as time went on and we thought that the ground had started to be plowed, we went public with the proposal by Sentara to acquire 75 acres and build a campus with health care service education and employment opportunities and still have the recreation area and this opportunity would be constructed in four areas. And we went back to the civic leagues to let them know what we were doing.

So we sat down and I gave them the background and they still didn’t believe me when I said we’re going to move the ballfields first and rebuild a state of the art ballfield opportunity and that Sentara had given us two years to do that. And also another important thing that I haven’t mentioned is we didn’t have the money to do that and Sentara agreed to pay for that opportunity in the cost of the land that they were willing to purchase from us. And I didn’t know whether we were allowed to tell that or not until now so I’ve been quiet about it but I just told people to have faith that we would be able to do what we promised.

Well, we have another commitment in the City of Virginia Beach and that is that the city needs to be a community for a lifetime. It not only has to be a good place to live, it has to be a good place to work, to play, and to be able to raise your family. So we felt that this long-term

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

commitment to the planning and the development of this area would absolutely connect all of the dots that we had promised the public for the future.

And in that vein the City of Virginia Beach, through the regional bodies, had found out that we do not succeed in making the average salary that you find in other parts of the country. We're a little lower than most places although it's cheaper to live in our area. But we weren't satisfied with that so we went to our economic development department and told them that we wanted to raise salaries. Well, then when Sentara said they wanted to bring doctors and technicians and nurses and all of the people whose salaries would help raise that industry, then it sounded twice as good to us.

In addition, in the Princess Anne Commons area, we have Tidewater Community College and we have built a higher education center. This fall we're bringing online an advance technology center that will be second to none in the United States. So we had all the facilities in place. We went to the president of the community college and said if we were able to bring in a client to create a health village in Princess Anne Commons, could you go to the state and make sure that we could train all the nurses, the technicians and all the people necessary for the healthcare industry on this campus? She said okay I will go with you to the governor and we did. And that's what we're seeing in the long range—in addition to the complex, the ability to use the parks for ballfields, soccer, field hockey and the like, but also to be able to educate our adult work force to be able to earn better salaries.

Here were the major issues that we faced: encroachment or development on the existing park site and the resulting loss of acreage, and addressing public concerns about the compatibility of existing uses with proposed uses. We had to create public support for the project

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

and addressing the perception of favoritism towards this private developer.

In fact I have some trouble with members of my council who were new who said let's not sell it to a 501(3)(c), we need to bring in a big industry, something that produces widgets and that's how we should use the land so they'll pay us taxes. And I said no, that doesn't fit in with the community for a lifetime. Let me show you what else this company will do for us, which will help our educational and recreational foundation. So we did get a unanimous vote but for a while there it was a little exciting and I had to bring Don and all of his heavy equipment in to convince people.

We have a heavily used park in need of replacement facilities and the city really lacked the funding for the park improvement and we needed the management of planning and developing a 1,500-acre city park properly. Landstown Elementary School and Landstown High School were both erected on park property. The existing park site became bifurcated by earlier road construction projects when they put in the major roads at Princess Anne. And it has created conflicts for pedestrians and their connections with the park and the difficulty in anybody crossing an eight-lane highway and other conflicts.

And the compatibility question, with regard to the existing uses such as the amphitheater, if people were complaining in some of the housing developments in the area about the noise and the sports plex, would that not make it incompatible with a hospital? I said well it's going to be more than just a hospital and we have basic planning tools that whether you're going to be in a high noise zone from the Oceana master jet base or because of the amphitheater, you have to take extra insulation measures for your home, your business, your office or whatever is built to make sure that we are able to keep that from being a problem. Then there was a concern about traffic

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

congestion and other nuisance issues that we are working on.

So we had the recommendation to relocate the park activities endorsed in 1995 by the city council and like most other cities in the south we don't rush into anything. Second, we had the Princess Anne Ballfield Relocation Advisory Committee, PABRAC, created in November 2001. In 2002, the council agreed to consider selling existing park sites to raise the funds for new facilities at new sites and authorize the staff to proceed with the RFP.

Now creating the public support, there were some letters to the editor and some of the newspaper writers who said that the parkland should be preserved as open space and not sold to private interests. But we were trying to increase the opportunity for more public use.

The city is also concerned about the public's perception of favoritism to a particular developer so we needed to make our case so the public would understand why this wasn't just a cozy arrangement. Well, the baseball fields were built more than 30 years ago and they have been continuously in use night and day literally and are in need of repair. The project creates the opportunity for new recreational facilities to work synergistically with the health campus.

And as I mentioned the lack of funding for the park improvement, they are in direct competition with the health, safety, and educational funds that are used by the city. And the demand for better quality and more fields have increased with higher standards for benches, for lighting and also for the drainage of the fields. I had one man come up to tell me how to dig four feet deep, put rock in it, then put a mat over there, then put the grassy area in and I would finally perhaps have the ballfield I really wanted. And I said I'm not an expert in this area. We'd better take it back to our advisory group who does know how to build them and we'll make you part of that group. So that was a good move because he brought all of the players with him.

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

The current development standards are very expensive to put it mildly so with the planning and the development of the new property, we had to have uninterrupted availability of the ballfield as the construction moves forward. We are working with all facility owners and developers to plan and build the commons in a comprehensive manner. The group involved includes the City Council, the YMCA, who is going to run the health recreational facility, Parks and Recreation Commission, the Civic Leagues will be at the table, the PADRAC Committee, and of course the school administration.

Although the City of Virginia Beach pays for the schools, we do not have a county over us. We are not allowed to direct the schools into how we would like them to use the monies we give them. So we have to bring them to the table and make sure they want to cooperate with us.

The criteria for success would be that the new uses do not become negative encroachments on the site. The quality of the design concept and its impact on the surrounding area would be a positive not a negative. The health care facilities are well integrated with the surrounding park both the facility, design and programming, and the new park facilities are an improvement over the existing facilities. And last but not least, no disruptions of services provided.

The plan of action, we've designed a construction schedule that accommodates the Princess Anne ballfield relocation first to ensure uninterrupted use. We undertook a public process to build support for the partnership. We will develop the health campuses in four phases, and Don Jellig has brought with him a piece that was printed by Sentara itself that will show you every phase of the development and how they plan to get it to work in with us. And then we continue to work with Sentara on health and recreation programs.

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

How does this affect our agenda on the council and me as mayor? It creates high quality jobs for the community at a pay scale that we've been longing for. It provides urgently needed health care facilities to nearby residents. It promotes a village design concept for the area creating a sense of community and it allows for the expansion of recreational uses in the area. Along with this comes the question, how can we build even more public support and consensus for the project? How should we manage the development of this large and diverse commons project? And, how can we handle the issues related to any and further encroachments on the site?

The City of Virginia Beach is huge. Driving around the city in the course of the year I put 35,000 miles on my car just getting from one place to the other, that gives you an idea how huge it is. The City of Virginia Beach from the beginning has always valued its parks and recreation facilities. When I was on the council some years ago, I went to the public and told them for one nickel we could build four new recreation centers, staff them, operate them, and maintain them for that nickel increase. I got the elderly in the community to join with the children in the community and we went to every civic league and explained it. We got it passed and now we have recreation centers that look like they're private country clubs but they are open to the public and they're affordable and they have all kinds of children's programs.

I think we can do that with this new proposal. We're not going to ask the public for a tax increase, but we're going to ask for their goodwill and their commitment and their positive feelings. So I thank you for giving me the opportunity and to remind you again that Barry can answer any of the specific questions about parks and recreation, and Don can give you some perspective from the private entrepreneur as they go into partnership with us.

Mary Eysenbach: Let's start with any questions that anybody has for the mayor or Barry

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

or Don about the project so we can get those resolved before we proceed.

Mayor Harris: What are some of the components of the facility in addition to the hospital? Are there any sports medicine related facilities?

Don Jellig: Yes.

Mayor Harris: Are there any elderly housing, assisted care, or assisted living facilities?

Don Jellig: The city had expressed a specific desire not to have any housing in that particular area, so the original plan when we started looking at that area two years ago was to include senior facilities of some sort, whether it was skilled nursing or assisted living. So that's another part of it. But what we're going to be doing is sponsoring the acquisition and development of the 70 acres.

We're also a health care provider, but we're not going to be the sole provider on the campus. We brought in partnerships with the YMCA to build a comprehensive facility. We're going to have the children's hospital, have a facility in the children's pavilion and corridor. We've got the educational institutions looking at their opportunities there and then on the health piece we'll be starting with the YMCA and medical office building just as soon as we can get out of the ground in two years. That will have a significant sports medicine component. We've got orthopedic surgeons already wanting to be there.

Sentara today currently has a partnership with the YMCA where we bring physical therapists into the YMCAs in the region and do sports medicine rehab and that sort of thing. We move on to surgery centers, diagnostic centers, initially a 120, going to 150-bed hospital.

Mayor Harris: Seventy acres, I assume you're taking up approximately 70 acres.

Don Jellig: We're going to be acquiring it's about 70 acres. We've master planned 43

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

acres of the 70.

Mayor Harris: That's a fairly big footprint. Is there anyway to integrate sports fields within your health complex?

Don Jellig: We've designed it around a health and wellness and sports complex. We've started with a campus design. I do most of the things at Sentara that have nothing to do with hospitals. If we had given this project to a hospital guy we would have started with a hospital and we would be building things around it. By design we're starting with a series of outpatient facilities around a central, large courtyard or gardens area and tried to integrate it that way.

We're integrating on either side of the property to the adjacent facilities with bike paths and jogging trails. If you notice for instance the best management practices for stormwater, they're not your typical circles with fountains coming out of them, they're long so that we can build walking, jogging, biking trails around them.

Mayor Oberndorf: Let me just answer that. I believe the statistics are the growth of the senior citizens in the United States is about 30 percent. The growth in the Commonwealth of Virginia is 40 percent, the growth in the senior citizens who have chosen to live in Virginia Beach now is 100 percent of our normal population so there have been a lot of facilities built to accommodate these folks. So we didn't feel we needed to get Sentara to do any more focus on attracting more people than we can care for as we are doing now. And that was a conscious decision, because when you go out to get referendum passed for transportation, for schools, for libraries, and for recreation, it gets difficult with folks who feel that they pay their way and they're not willing to pay for the next generations.

Tom Fox: I don't understand now looking at the map relative to other things where is the

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

hospital going and where are the ballfields going? Some of the confusion might be we don't understand it from the design.

Barry Frankfield: You have a really good point. In trying to explain this to everybody, one of the things we tried to do is show the comprehensive nature of this whole area, because a lot of people don't understand it. Such as, is that city or is that private? Is that a school? So I'll try to orient you as much as possible. The master plan for this area includes 225 acres. The first phase would be four ballfields, seven soccer fields and then the typical recreation facilities, picnic facilities, and trails, as well as basketball courts. More ballfields are in the second phase. It's a lot of stuff. If I can't explain it to you, how are we going to explain it to the public?

In the existing park is a series of three schools, high school, elementary school, middle school, and an 85-acre soccer complex with the nonprofit group. We also have the Verizon Wireless amphitheater, which is about 60 or 70 acres, with seating for 20,000 and parking for about 6,000 cars, and a major road system coming in which eventually is going to continue.

The soccer sportsplex has a stadium facility under construction, and we have built a new United States Field Hockey Association facility, which are the two AstroTurf fields. The undeveloped 225 acres is left over for expansion of the existing parks.

And it's not just ballfields. In other words there are seven ballfields, nine soccer fields. They're converted back and forth—they're not dedicated to one use. So it means in Virginia Beach they're used almost year around.

We really didn't have the funding to develop it to the level that we would like to develop it to, and it was controversial to say we're going to sell 70 acres. We just went through a \$50 million open space plan to dedicate land for open space. We spent two years going around to the

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

public explaining why it was important to preserve open space and then we're going okay, now we're going to sell open space and we're going to develop it. It was tough. It was a tough call for everybody. It's not just a tough call for staff and council because basically what you're seeing is open space. The value of open space or parks is that it is open space and parks, and that it's not developed, but in this case we're going to make an exception. We're going to sell this.

Well, part of it is that we built in value to this. We built roads to it. We built water and sewer to it. We built lots of stuff around it. We built an 8-lane highway. So all of a sudden we built a site that was incredibly valuable from a development standpoint. But what park isn't incredibly valuable from a development standpoint, because we put it in the right place to serve the community, have access to it. Guess what, it could be developed. So that's a long-term issue, which we didn't even discuss which I think is going to say well, why don't you sell? You need more money for ballfields. Well, sell that piece over there. It's in their neighborhood

Mayor Harris: So the ballfields would be relocated to what site then?

Barry Frankenfield: They would be relocated to the 225-acre site.

Mayor Oberndorf: Barry, maybe we should make it clear when I was trying to explain about TPC's golf course, First Tee and all that, that that is separate from the area that we're talking about.

Tom Fox: Since it looks like those ballfields are pretty centrally located approximal to the existing population, which is one reason why they might feel strongly about it because it's right near where they live, was there any thought initially or was Sentara not willing to look at that other parcel as a purchase site so you didn't have to do this one verses the other?

Don Jellig: Actually historically we started looking at real estate in that area about two

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

years ago. I met with the mayor and city manager just to let them know what we were doing and then gave them an update about a year ago. And at that point paths coincided. So we were open to a number of different options, and this just seemed to work for both of us.

Barry Frankenfield: Let me tell you some reasons why. The new park site is not as developable from a building standpoint due to soil conditions, and the roadway access is not currently in place. For this site access is currently in place, it has a divided median, a four to eight-lane highway depending on where you are, and a signalized intersection. Also, the park originally only had a road around it. Over the years we built one road that went to the schools and then we had to build another road to the amphitheater and all of a sudden we built exactly what in my opinion from a park standpoint you don't want. You have two major road systems plus a ring road around it, and you had to literally cross a road to get from one facility to the other. So the concept in this area is to develop a ring road where once you get in the park you access the parking at the site, you have no more conflict with vehicular traffic. So those are some of the reasons.

Mayor Torrey: After the hospital site is developed is it going to be like a gated community and the community does not get to walk through some of the nice areas? Are you going to keep the community out of there? Or is it just going to be available to the park users?

Don Jellig: It will be open and the residual 15 acres of the original Princess Anne Park which was the kid's recreation area and picnic area and that sort of thing, that's actually going to be integrated with access and easements into this other campus and it's designed for free flow of the community back and forth.

Barry Frankenfield: If we are successful, then if you come to the site in five years you

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

will be more confused because our design guidelines will integrate so that the community, all these different facilities are somehow tied together visually and physically so you can't see where one starts and where the other stops so it should be seamless. You should be able to walk from your neighborhood into the park, walk to the doctors. And that's design guidelines, that's transportation road planning, that's feasible and visible linkages so if we're successful, it's seamless, and there aren't any gates, only gateways.

Mayor Oberndorf: If there is to be a hospital built it has to get a certificate of need from the State of Virginia so that would probably be in the last phase of development. What they're looking at putting up in the beginning phases is the office building for the doctors to be able to diagnose and treat the patients.

Then there will be another building developed that will have a miniature emergency room if somebody's hurt or injured in the fields or the like you can take them immediately over there for treatment. And actually the hospital concept comes at the very end after the Y goes in with a health facility where you can work out and train kids to do whatever is necessary for them to continue to pursue their sports and the like.

Mayor Torrey: How many hospitals do you have in the community? The reason I ask that question is 75 acres is a lot of acreage. But if you're growing the way you are you're going to then have to push this hospital area out into some of the adjacent parking areas.

Have you considered a no net loss of open space that would allow you to go someplace else, not the land that you already own, but someplace else and acquire it? If a citizen were to say you've talked to us for years about open space and the first good opportunity for development comes along, you buy into it, you would then be able to say we're going to acquire

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

another 75 acres of equal or better value...

Mayor Oberndorf: I'm proud to tell you that the Council of Virginia Beach along with myself, has appropriated \$50 million in our budget to buy open space in the more developed part of the city where more of the housing areas are.

We originally started this whole concept by being told by the public they wanted to keep our farmland open so we adopted the Agricultural Reserve Program where we buy up the development rights from willing farmers who are willing to sell, and they amass a great fortune without having to sell their land to developers. Then last year I suggested that the council buy a portion of land called Stumpy Lake, which is like an extension of the Dismal Swamp. We had to buy it from the City of Norfolk. We negotiated and they got \$13 million from the city to keep this all natural. So we are moving about our city and finding critical areas to buy up for just open space and yes so we will be able to point out where we're buying more open space.

Barry Frankenfield: In the last year we bought 1,536 acres, so this was a good time to sell 70.

Pat O'Toole: Part of my question he just answered, and that is the ability to sell the benefits of the amount of acreage you have accumulated. How do you stand in the national standards of park acreage per capita? If you're above that, put that front and center and your plan front and center for continued purchases. Secondly, it might work to your advantage to also do a national per capita per hospital or hospital beds. If that's low, then you've brought two needs together and you can probably capitalize on that as far as the favoritism and that process.

It looks to me like your 70 acres from a ballfield perspective is land locked. If the new fields are of a higher quality with sub-drainage and that type of thing, those would be selling

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

points, that if you don't do this, what you see is what you get and there's no expansion opportunities, versus the ability to build in for expansion and higher quality fields.

And as far as selling it to the community, I would use wellness anywhere you can and capitalize on the YMCA. From my own perspective, the first place I would go is to a YMCA partnership, because when they don't want something, they are in force. If they do want something, they can help sell that in their neighborhoods and stand up behind you. I think that would be a tremendous force in the community to start with.

Don Jellig: Let me just make two or three comments that may be helpful for the group. This was a competitive RFP process, and I was leading it for our organization, but the city was open to a whole array of potentials, other than residential and big box. It was up to us to make sure that we differentiated our proposal, so we designed an approach of programs and process facilities and ended up with exclusive letters of support from the presidents of Tarborough Community College and Old Dominion University. We've got the joint venture with the YMCA, the Children's Hospital of the King's Daughters being there. On the athletic venue, we had the exclusive support from the soccer leagues and the softball teams.

So we've tried to cover all bases to relieve the City Council of the tensions of how's this one going to come out or how's that one going to come out.

Pat O'Toole: Where is the opposition? Is it the direct neighborhood?

Mayor Oberndorf: Not so much there. We have some members of the Council who are historically known for not trusting, not believing, and otherwise attacking anything that's new or different. And once they speak up, they can sometimes get that 20 percent that always finds fault with anything new in any city.

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

When we were out in San Francisco, one day Willie Brown took the mayors for a walk. All of a sudden this whole group of demonstrators were walking right next to us with their signs, and Willie didn't seem the least bit upset by it. And he said to the guy, "What are you demonstrating for now? And the guy said whatever we were doing that they didn't approve of. And he said, "Well, where's your next job?" And he said, "At 2:00 o'clock we're going to do it over at --." So I said, "Are they paid demonstrators, like actors?" And he said, "Yes." So we have that 20 percent that are not paid, but they are our built-in opportunity to have opposition.

I look at them as the conscience of the city, because if they attack it and we have good enough answers, then we can feel that indeed we have not done something that isn't appropriate, but we have gone that extra mile to try and accommodate the concerns that they have articulated.

Mark Beede: My questions or comments are supplemental to Pat's on the favoritism. A lot of the times you hear about favoritism as if it's a bad thing, and oftentimes perhaps it is a bad thing. But also I hear you, Mayor, talk about whether it's inappropriate. And I guess some of the questions I have, which I think you may have already gone over, is that Sentara is a 501(c)(3). It's a part of the competitive bid process, so that whatever competitors there are out there have had an opportunity to participate, to be involved.

Also, I see that Sentara's got 40 percent, 5,700 employees, that live within the community, so that seems to be a fairly big factor there. Is there an indication to the extent that Sentara generates any revenue over expense, where that money goes? Does any of that money go back into the City of Virginia Beach? Are there plans for that?

Don Jellig: With any 501(c)(3), whatever residual stays within the community. Our community for Sentara is southeast Virginia, from Williamsburg to northeast North Carolina. We

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

own six hospitals, seven nursing homes, and an array of other services, including an HMO.

But where our contributions go back fairly directly are clearly in indigent care, which is an array of services. We didn't want to talk that up in the brochure because that could make people nervous that we would be attracting things there. But we do an inordinate amount in indigent care, \$78,000,000 last year alone.

Mark Beede: So even if you're not purely a local charity or not-for-profit, you're a regional one.

Don Jellig: Yes, right. And then the indigent care is a big area, and the health education is a huge area, where we invest an awful lot in regenerating caregivers for the future.

Mark Beede: I'd suggest that on the favoritism side of the coin say yes, they are favorites, because the favoritism is warranted. They're providing a tremendous benefit for the community, and we want them in. And the reason we want them is because they provide so much and deserve to be favorites, unless you've got a competitor out there who's crying foul because there might be something on the inside that nobody else knows about. But it sounds as if the process has been up front. The cream is rising to the top, and that cream consists of Sentara.

Don Jellig: The newspaper was a little tough about six or eight months ago on this particular project. And yet then they actually came out and editorially endorsed it two or three weeks before the vote. But some of the articles the Mayor spoke of were by one of her favorite columnists, who wrote that everything is for sale in the City of Virginia Beach, when they were trying to gain momentum on this.

Mayor McCrory: As a nonprofit, will this be tax-free land?

Don Jellig: No, we will be paying property tax on everything but the hospital and the

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

YMCA. Tax generated off of today's numbers, almost \$800,000 a year.

Mayor McCrory: Right now you're getting nothing.

Don Jellig: Correct.

Mayor Oberndorf: Sound better, Pat?

Mayor McCrory: Yeah, well, I think where that makes a difference is in your budgeting. If it were just one-time capital money, I wouldn't put that in the operating budget. But if it's an ongoing property tax, it's something you can budget into operating.

Bob Searns: I want to come back to any neighborhood issues that do exist, any anxieties that are in the neighborhood about the impact of this on those neighborhoods. Did I understand that that is really an issue?

Mayor Oberndorf: I think that they have a sense of calm, now that they understand it's not going to be a strip mall coming with the big box, because those things in and of themselves cause traffic congestion, and we don't need or want anymore. We would like to have this area remain unique as an opportunity to stay well by being able to recreate there. Also by promoting it, like Jeremy was talking about doing in Hawaii. We do that with this whole area.

I think the folks feel better. We finally found out that there were really only two members of one neighborhood that were complaining about the noise from the Amphitheater. So my husband and I went over when they had the group Phish performing. I think they're pretty much as loud as you're ever going to get. And we sat in front of this man's house in a convertible, and we waited and waited to hear the concert or the bass or anything, and we couldn't. So I called the Amphitheater and I said, "When is the break going to be over? And when are you all going to start performing?" And they said, "We've been performing all along."

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

Bob Searns: The second part of my question is that if the issues aren't really in the local neighborhood and it's coming from some other members of council, what percentage of their concern is just political stuff that really can't be resolved by design and financial questions? And what if any legitimate concerns of theirs can be addressed? I heard the no net loss response, which makes a lot of sense. But I know I've got projects where we've got council people who've been fighting since they've been in high school. One person's against it just because the other person is for it, and there's no other reason. I'm trying to get a handle on what are the legitimate things that can be addressed as far as the open space.

Mayor Oberndorf: Well, let me say that one of the members of council who had objections had the city give land to her personal Little League, when I had been holding off Little Leagues all over the city, saying we're not going to be able to give one unless we can do it for all of you. And of course, she came in and she brought her mommas and daddies and their little kids, and by God, she got hers. And it's in the same area and will stay in that same area. And yet, when somebody else made a recommendation, it was immediately opposed.

So I think in all due respect it's what we call that healthy competition, I get mine, you don't get anything.

Grover Mouton: I want to speak to you not so much from the park side, but from the pure urban design side, and also maybe from the facility-user side.

First of all, if I was your consultant, I would be so excited and thrilled to hear that this kind of facility was being developed for this town, which seems to be a city which has a resort community on the beach and then the rest of the town in the back, and probably has seasonal people, and which means it's probably a little schizophrenic to some degree. We have worked

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

very hard in New Orleans to try to capture this market, i.e., in an urban setting, looking at Birmingham, Alabama, and to see what Birmingham has succeeded in doing in its city. It may not be the prettiest city in America, but it certainly economically has done well.

So for your site, the use is fantastic. The problem that I see is twofold. One is aside from your buddy who hates your guts, and it's no matter what you do, he's going to say you're terrible, is that this plan brochure is really probably not the best plan to show anyone who you're trying to get any grass-roots park support from. Maybe this goes to people who are your bankers. But I would be very careful with this plan. This is a tough, rough plan.

It's probably great for doctors. It's real, they're going to see that they're going to go in their 877 BMW, pop in, and go in to work, and then they can live in a nice community. But for a normal human being, this represents probably one of the toughest kinds of environments being created today. So this needs to be erased from everyone's memory.

And the other thing that somebody ought to do, and I'm sure they will, is that you're in a phase situation, so your 250,000 square feet structure is in Phase 3. You should just pound into everybody's head that we've got plenty of time before this image ever appears.

Now, the post-modern building you're showing that looks like a Michael Graves, nothing wrong with it. But it doesn't say anything to this community. This is imagery that makes people feel like everybody's very efficient within the building. But the opportunity you have is to play a more contextual game.

Now, the next thing is, you must show some integration in a master plan from the whole park perspective. You can never be this isolated.

These are critical issues for you to address, and pick out the people you're going to work

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

with. Play the low ball and play the small town community game. Don't play the big boys, even though you are, and you're wonderful. I would play it just the reverse and slowly fan out your big dreams.

And you do that through a series of public events. You stage the whole thing over a 10-month period. Because you're a good client, but you need to be staged, programmed, and managed in terms of the design and the implementation and the park. Whenever you go public, this plan really needs to be better understood. I can go into this for days because this is my job. And always be positive. Anytime there's the slightest hint of negative, take it out.

Mayor Harris: I really agree with Grover, and he said most of what I was going to say. I think you were visionary to grab the 1,500 acres right from where you were sitting. Very few mayors would have been able to pull that off. But I don't get a sense there's a master plan for the 1,500 acres. There may be, but I don't get a sense there is. I think you need to change the subject. I think you need to be selling the master plan for this wonderful thing, being able to show how the health care facilities all integrate into this master plan concept. And in doing the master plan, if you have the opportunity to rethink cutting it in half with the 8-lane highway, I don't know if that's possible, but that will basically eliminate any activity between those two major components. You've got sports facilities on both sides to do that.

But I speak to you with great authority on how not to do it. Our experience was with one of our golf courses. We had built the city golf course for \$19 million. The Japanese came in and offered me \$111 million for that golf course, and \$200 million more if I simply gave them a permit to build two more golf courses at their own expense on their own land. In other words, they offered \$311 million for the one \$19 million city golf course. And the city council turned

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

them down, because local golfers had seen that golf course we built, and it was ready to play on, and those greens looked beautiful, and they didn't want to hear about any \$300 million and some future huge golf courses that we could build.

The way we would do it now is we would develop the master plan, we would develop dozens of renderings from all different perspectives, the trees, in the parks, people on bicycles, and people walking past little parts of your health facilities. Then we would put it all together in a half-hour TV show and we would run the heck out of it in prime time: the vision of the Princess Anne Commons, the future of Virginia Beach.

Just change the topic, because if your topic is going to be we're going to lose our 70 acres of ballfields, but don't worry, there's going to be new ones coming, you're not going to win.

My final bit of advice is even with all that if you're not able to convince them, do it anyway. The fact is you have to break the egg to make the omelet. And once it's done, you're not going to be able to find one person who was against it. That's our experience, because once you get the project done, if you put the good design in it, and you do a quality job, at the end, you can't find the people who were opposed. They all thought it was a good idea and they were all for it from the beginning. So it's the transition period and it's a little bit rough and political.

Susan Rademacher: The whole thing is about integration in both directions. In addition to the no net loss of parkland policy, you should look to a viable symmetrical space that remains. It should be both natural open space and facility development for recreational open space.

When I look at this plan, I totally agree with the issue with this, because the thing I zero in on is these huge major blocks, and the storm water retention basin, which is something that could be done differently, using more natural systems management and integrating it into a

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

greenway that's part of a whole framework for this entire development.

Some other opportunities that occurred to me in making hay off of the presence of the health and wellness organizations would be to take the sports medicine idea in terms of a sports medicine clinic for local professional and university athletes, but also take the sports medicine idea out into the recreation program so that you maybe have an internship clinic there or you have a volunteer program for young people who might want to go into medicine. Or you have a quick treatment mobile that goes around or something like that so that there's that direct benefit.

There also is the opportunity to do more research in the wellness benefit of parks, the value of walking, all of those things. This is a great laboratory for that.

In terms of a TV show and communicating the whole plan, it's absolutely on target. I would want to see the net gains defined clearly. I would want to see a model. People understand when they look at a model; they don't get it when they look at plans, typically. They get it when they look at pictures and sketches. But something that could be a traveling exhibit. Take it to banks, community centers, libraries, all of those key places.

We did a mobile TV show that was a live call-in on a waterfront park development, which was fantastic. It was an hour long and it afforded the chance to really dispel a lot of the myths and rumors that were going around.

Finally, about that campaign you did a couple of years ago, where you went with community leaders to lay the groundwork. What have you done to re-engage and enlist them in support of this project?

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

Mayor Oberndorf: They were part of the citizens in the civic leagues that were invited to get their consent and to ask us the questions that we may not have perceived were out there.

We haven't really started anything. We still have enough time to do something. I do a monthly television show and it's an hour-long call-in show. We don't know who the people are. When they come on there, there's no three-second delay, they get to say what they're going to say. And so I can do that. That's not a problem.

I need to point out that Mr. Jellig is a partner not only in the sense of a major corporation; he has also served as a citizen on our community services board and he's recently been appointed to our Industrial Development Board. And he's never said no when we've come with a civic job.

I can tell you one quick story. We had a letter to the editor, and it said, what else are they going to do with Princess Anne Park? They've just taken away our tennis courts. And the answer was, those courts went away four years ago. They didn't notice it until four years later. But we have the answer and where the courts are going to be built and what's going on.

But you know, once you hit a nerve, every complaint that they ever had, that they ever wanted to use, it could be 10 years ago, but that's going to come up in the mix. I understand that.

Andrea Riner: I wanted to speak on behalf of the parks directors. In any given month, somebody needs what you have. We're typically land rich and poor in every other capacity. So we take those things seriously, and I get in trouble for defending the land fairly fiercely, and I always just look for how they can maximize the benefit. A lot of times the responses are, we'll make you whole. Sometimes that's just not good enough. You have to almost give me 150

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

percent back, because I have lost something. I've lost some public trust, I've lost some time of use on those facilities.

So sweeten the pot as much as you can. I would definitely agree with the comments on the site plan and integrating this facility. If you're phasing, leave some of those sites for soccer fields and show good faith that that's the intent, that only two fields leave at a time, and you still can use that until your phase is in place. If you're not going to do that for 10 years, that's 10 years of use, that's a child's soccer season.

It seems like you might want to use it as your sales pitch to the community, your first phase as opposed to your final phase. Again, with the increased revenue, you're talking about \$800,000 in taxes. Sell what that means, not for the community as a whole, but for parks, to your parks folks and your parks advocates. Because I tell you, we get tired of saying, okay, take our park land for public utility, for fire districts, and for schools. We're serving the public, and we don't get much return.

Mayor Oberndorf: I agree, and I'm very sensitive, and you're correct, and we have not articulated that, but that is our plan.

Mayor McCrory: I'm not going to pile on anymore. This promotional piece you've developed is not good, because it looks like a zoning map. If this were a political brochure, any political consultant would say it's too wordy, too much in it, you wouldn't read it. It's good information, but you're fighting sound bytes. I'd take the bigger picture. Draw a picture of what it's going to look like in the future and you'll win the battle. You don't even have to talk about it.

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

Just say, this is the picture 20 years from now, this is the picture now, what looks better? End of discussion.

Tom Fox: If a third of your county is agriculture, you got a farmer's market, maybe you buy your produce from your farmer's market or make an agreement that you buy it from organic farms. And then secondarily perhaps, you do healing landscape on the campus that your botanic gardener, your arboreta can begin to interpret. So you begin to integrate yourself in with other facilities within the county that may not be proximal but can provide you with some support.

Mary Eysenbach: I'm going to wrap up. To address the issue of how do we get public support, we had a lot of ideas, from looking at standards, park land per capita versus hospitals per capita and where those needs fall out, promoting the quality of the number of fields that you're going get out of this deal. Selling wellness, capitalize on your YMCA members, and let them help you promote the facility. Same thing with the employees of Sentara, promote the benefits of the deal, including the property tax on the revenue-generating buildings in this complex. One strong way you're going to do that is to change the brochure to promote the green community, the integration with the park.

You're going to sell the master plan concept strongly. You're going to do that using TV and models. In terms of integrating the park, how you're developing this park with the common concept, some ideas was we're going to look at not just physical integrating, but also doing programs, including education and research regarding wellness and the facilities, and then from a physical point of view, creating healing landscapes, interpreting those so that the public begins to

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

understand the relationship between those two.

GREENWAY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Mary Eysenbach: Our next speaker is Bob Searns of Urban Edges, Inc. Bob has a vast amount of experience with greenways. The one I'm familiar with is the Platte River in Denver. Bob is going to talk to us about the importance of greenways and what we can do to achieve success.

Bob Searns: I'm going to talk about the greenway and its impact, and opportunities for cities across North America. The greenway movement is something that grew out of the Olmsted tradition and legacy. I consider those to be the first generation of greenways. Olmsted had the notion that you could connect parks and open spaces together with corridors that were pleasure drives that would give you a linear experience.

In the 1970s, a second generation of greenways emerged which I call the bikepath greenways. People were getting sick of the dominance of the automobile and wanted alternative ways to move around cities. So they began looking at building bike paths. And many of those found their ways along rivers and streams, seashores, and other corridors.

A third phase began to emerge in the late 1980s, and that was the multi-objective notion of greenways. People began to see these corridors as infrastructure, offering opportunities for storm water management, those cooler places, those green spots in cities, and as corridors that could promote health, economic development, transportation, and many other benefits.

We're going to see the emergence of a fourth generation of greenways in the next decade

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

or so. Those are going to be regional metro-wide networks and bioregions. I'll talk a little bit about that in the presentation.

The Denver model is the one I've been involved with over the years. This [reference to slide] is what the Platte River looked like back in 1974. I came out to Denver from Buffalo, and they told me I was going to work on the river, and at first I couldn't find the river. It was the backyard, it was the dumping ground, it was the place that nobody really cared about until it flooded, and then I think people learned that nature bats last.

It was the floods back in the early 1970s that prompted then-Mayor Bill McNichols to put together a task force to take a look at doing something differently with the river. The plan involved creating a series of places for people and trails that connected them together. Leadership was key to this. There was a great coalition that was put together. A guy named Joe Schumacher, who was chair of the joint budget committee in the state legislature, a Republican, teamed up with Democrat Bill McNichols. They pulled together a bunch of folks from town, the neighborhood, the arts community, and the entrepreneurial community into a nine-member task force charged with turning the area around.

Initially it started with a spine system and began to expand into what now is a 450-mile network in Denver of trails and greenways. It's probably the most extensive network of any city in North America. The goal in one of the spines was to have a multi-use, paved, continuous trail, grade separated from street traffic; to create some mini-parks that would transform the view and the impression that people got of the river; and swapping out areas that were inappropriately

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

used for more appropriate riverfront use.

Regarding what boating was like on the Platte River in the early 1970s, we had a number of dams that were hazardous, creating problems. We modified the dams with boat chutes. These boat chutes provide recreational passage and they're multi-objective in terms of the fish can swim upstream too, so they're dual use. It took some convincing to get the Corps of Engineers to see it this way, though.

And we have competition kayak courses and similar facilities that become theater and event places that attract people to Denver's waterfront. It's a place for the arts. The arts are an important aspect of this as well, for people's mental and spiritual development as well as physical exercise opportunities, to have a civic space.

Industrial walls became our canvasses, and the folks from the community came out and painted murals. Integrated systems and things that would tell you about the history and culture of the area were put in place. Children's museum and other new developments were drawn to the Platte Valley. There's now been \$1 billion, that's with a "b," worth of development infrastructure that's occurred around the Platte River greenway in the central part of Denver.

Some adaptive reuse is also on the site. REI's got their flagship facility there. People can try out their recreational equipment right there on the greenway. Some new development has moved in to a forgotten area, so it definitely is an investment that pays off in your communities, that unites communities.

The system then began to expand, connecting on the tributaries going out to the suburbs,

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

and tying in this 450-mile network that we have today. All kinds of trails that provide all kinds of trail experiences are part of that network. Development is taking place in suburban communities, such as Middleton. A lot of this development involved partnering with property owners.

Another suburban community adjusted some of its parking, providing access to the river instead of it just being a parking area. These benefits now are a legacy that will be here for hundreds of years, we hope, for many generations in the Denver metro area.

The greenway actually goes through industrial areas. One interesting greenway was funded as a result of a lawsuit against an oil refinery. There's was a million-dollar settlement by the Sierra Club, and they funded us to begin development of a 14-mile greenway through the oil refinery district. We engaged youth in restoration work, and the area is revegetating.

Going on to the railroads, some of those kinds of challenges were overcome. Actually for one project part of a trail goes through a working gravel mine, so don't let an industrial operator tell you that it can't work; it can.

Wildlife and resource preservation is part of that third generation of greenways, trying to preserve some islands of habitat and linking them together, that has been a goal in our greenway planning. Our goal was to come back and regrade, restore, and engage the community in these endeavors.

For another project, called 10,000 Trees, we got a thousand volunteers to come out in a single day and plant trees, which is a great way to raise money, by the way. The company sponsored sites and sent 200 or so of their employees out to plant trees, and they put up \$20,000

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

or \$30,000. We divided an eight-mile river segment into 20 different areas and sold those to different companies as well as volunteer groups to raise funds.

In an area in an industrial district where we had a bunch of fill, we came in and we removed the fill, brought a bunch of at-risk kids in, had a planting event, and rebuilt a wetland. And these kids can remember and they come back and point to it with pride, and they'll show their kids hopefully how they made a change. Again, the company sponsorship was a part of it.

I think the idea spun off to the private sector, and developers began to realize that these greenways are assets. There's a study that's been done of 800 home builders around the country that shows that this is the preferred amenity that people want over all other amenities when they're buying property. They'll pay extra for a little bit of nature. A development called Ken Kell Ranch outside of Denver is an example of where people are paying probably a \$100,000 lot premium to live on the greenway.

Part of the education process in the greenway movement is to show everybody benefits if you do it in a way that doesn't just look at a perfunctory moving water from here to there, but looking at water resources as an asset, and a place for kids and a place for the community.

To avoid building the world's narrowest greenway, we need standards when we're doing greenway planning, so that developers understand how the facility really needs to work. Regarding setbacks, as Mayor Torrey was asking, 150 feet is an ideal setback to provide that environmental space and preserve it and integrate people in homes and wild things in one space.

With the greenway at Ken Kell Ranch, you can literally get on this 17 miles from

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

downtown and ride all the way to downtown Denver on your bicycle.

An important thing about greenways is also providing places that aren't formally developed, that are places where a kid can still go catch a crawfish and there's no ranger there to tell him he can't do that. We want to have those forgotten landscapes, those throwaway landscapes in our cities, and we need to preserve these places. That is part of the health picture, having this direct connection with nature in a non-structured and non-programmed way, where a kid can just use his imagination.

The Denver system, in design, comes together with a spine, and then just spins a system off. I call it the virus concept. If one city does it and you have the right idea, the other communities in the suburbs are going to replicate it. The model's there and it works. If you build it, people will keep building it. Eventually if you have the vision, it will lead to a metropolitan system that the goal is ultimately everybody's no more than a 10-minute walk from a greenway.

It's a 400-plus mile system now, of trails and open space that serve a billion dollars of new development. In the future, Denver is looking toward preserving additional space and continuing to build the system.

The system's success was the legacy of the Highline Canal Trail, which was something that was built back in the 1960s that people could look to, and the Platte greenway model is a spine. The other thing was a dedicated open space sales tax in the 1970s. Building successful quality demonstration projects. If you build it, they will believe you, and I think that's really important; they can visualize it, and strong leadership, the champion of the project.

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

Regarding funding, we have a lottery program in Colorado that raises quite a bit of money every year. We also partnered up with the storm drainage utility. We had these guys convinced that those bike trails were storm maintenance routes, and so they paid us money to build them. Local funding, you have to have that public side commitment.

You also have open space sales tax programs, National Park Service, ISTEA, the state DOT, and developers participating, and of course, private foundations. The Gates Foundation in Denver really kicked it off with a \$3.25 million grant in 1976, which set the tone in the credibility for the Platte project.

I'm going to run quickly through a couple of other success stories. I recommend talking to Tom Murphy, Mayor of Pittsburgh. They are putting an awesome system together that's becoming a focal point for revitalized Pittsburgh. That system is now falling into place. They actually have their own trail construction crew in Pittsburgh. And they have 50-foot setbacks they've been able to dedicate.

Mayor Murphy told me that they actually convinced the Steelers to make one of their practice fields 80 yards so there'd be enough room for the setback. I don't know if that has anything to do with the football team's performance, but they made that sacrifice, so it can be done.

And there's an organization now called Sustainable Pittsburgh, which is a not-for-profit organization that is pursuing those multiple objectives of health, environment, recreation, and economic development. Some of Pittsburgh's accomplishments include cleaning up some toxic

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

waste areas, redevelopment, creating a metro area green necklace—they're actually now working on a trail that will go all the way to Washington, D.C. that will be a tremendous tourist attraction. Tom Murphy's leadership was very important in making that happen, for those of you that know him, know how dynamic a guy he is.

For their funding sources, they managed to pass a bond issue, and they had quite a bit of support from foundations, including the Heinz Endowment and from their own crew.

Minneapolis is another example of a system that's coming into place, a regional necklace of trails that's playing on the heritage of rivers and waterways in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area. Indianapolis has of course been successful with their effort, and there's some successful rail trail efforts in Indiana as well. In Chicago, the same thing is happening. So cities are grabbing this.

We're now also pursuing the greenway model as a way to promote non-motorized access to our national parks. Instead of having the traffic backed up going into Yosemite or Grand Canyon, you park your car outside, you get a bicycle—maybe the bicycle's free. And you just pedal it on a trail system into the national parks. I'm working with a group that's now developing a system at Grand Canyon National Park. We've got some of it built. We're trying to raise another \$6 million this year to build another piece of the demonstration trail. Eventually it'll be a 70-mile system that'll access the national park.

On a national and worldwide level, I think inspiring people to get out of their cars and use their feet and their muscle power and to experience these spaces, it's a much more enjoyable way to experience them. And all these trail systems are going to be accessible as well.

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

So, what are the commonalities in making successful greenways happen? One is having a good vision to start with. The models we've seen here, the case studies, are excellent visions that we're looking at. Building community support and doing that with pilot projects and examples is important. Having that leadership. You've got to have the commitment of the mayors and the business leaders to say, we are going to do this, and we're going to be obsessive and compulsive about doing it; it's going to happen. We're not going to let this thing go.

Seed funding. Sometimes there needs to be a public-side commitment up front to give the project credibility. If you're going to ask the private sector to come in, they're going to want to see a public side commitment as well.

Building those pilot projects, and making sure they're quality projects. I think Reno's a good example of that. Partnership building. Look at all the different alliances that you can build, whether it's with a drainage district, or somebody wants to run a fiber optic line, or it's the downtown businesses. Build all those partnerships and bring everybody under the tent. And most importantly is the patience of Job to do it and persistence and promotion. It might take two generations to build one of these things, but I can tell you, it's worth it.

The virus concept I talked about--a successful model will replicate itself. And so we have models out there that we can look to and we can expand on that as well.

The notion of partnerships. Multi Objective Management, MOM, is working with the drainage agency, working with the environmental agencies, the wildlife people, to have the multi-disciplinary approach to these projects. They're more than just trails. Start building and

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

don't stop until it's done, just obsessive commitment to making it happen. Recognizing and touting the economic benefits. I think that's pretty obvious to everyone here. Building quality projects. And the implementation models, these are some of the different ways that it can be done. I can go into more detail about this when we have some of the case studies, but I think many of you are familiar with these different models, of public and private approaches, and there's lots of different examples of ways to do it.

One quote that's always struck me is Tom Murphy's quote that for everything that is done, there's always somebody against it. At the end of the day, it's about political and community will. And Robert Moses once said, if you put a stake in the ground, no one will dare put it out. So if you get that thing built, people will support it.

And Joe Schumacher, who led the effort in Denver, said no power is all power. You don't necessarily need a mandatory authority to build these things. What you need is a good example and a group that is going to advocate it. But what Joe always used to say if nobody's told you what you can do, then nobody's told you what you can't do. And therefore you can do anything. It's just having that image and getting the backing behind you.

I think that there are a lot of reasons why we want to be pursuing the notion of greenways. One, the mental and physical health and community development benefits I talked about. I think we're also beginning to learn, if we learned anything from the floods in Texas or the wildfires in Colorado, is that nature bats last. And greenways may be a way that we can learn to stay out of nature's way, and we can convey that notion. It might be a lot less costly to do that,

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

and greenways may be the way to set that aside.

CHARLOTTE: LITTLE SUGAR CREEK GREENWAY

Mary Eysenbach: Our next presentation is from Charlotte. When Charlotte presented their case problem to us, we were really interested in it, just as we were interested in Virginia Beach and the connection between parks and open space and public health. There was an immediate connection in Charlotte between this public open space and storm water drainage, flood control, and green infrastructure. That's a use that is under touted in terms of parks and open space. Public infrastructure, as you may as well know, is incredibly expensive. Green infrastructure is an opportunity for us to start making some good economic decisions in how we build infrastructure in our cities, and I think that storm water management is one of those objectives. Charlotte's case problem involves the connection between those two.

Mayor McCrory: Thank you very much. This is actually a great transition from Robert's excellent presentation because of what we're trying to develop in Charlotte-Mecklenburg. I call it Charlotte-Mecklenburg because we're the city of Charlotte, and we're in Mecklenburg County, and that distinction needs to be made because we have a consolidated parks department. Through a deal that was made when I first became mayor, we consolidated the police department and the parks department, and the deal was that the county would run the park department and the city would run the police department. It was a very good efficiency move made by both political bodies about eight years ago. And we're very pleased with that move.

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

But what's unique about this is that we want to develop greenway on a creek that is right outside our major urban center, within viewing distance just like in the pictures of Denver—similar dynamics there. And this is the typical creek that has been ignored in which the highways cross it. No one even knows it's there. You have electric utilities in and around it, going over it. We have a major community college right next to it, but no walkable conditions to get down to the creek—a lot of weeds and everything else. Most people do not know it's there.

We also have a mall that was built in the 1960's that was built over much of this. This is the first suburban mall which now is right next door to our center city, and since then the malls have moved much further out, and these are the typical malls that have now become factory outlet malls. And now we are in a major redevelopment with that mall. In fact, Charlotte is doing all the zoning. So our zoning decisions are crucial to what happens along that greenway.

So you have greenway issues and then you have land-use issues in and around that greenway, and we're working in close cooperation with two individuals that I'd like to introduce. The first one is Wayne Weston, director of Mecklenburg County Parks and Recreation. He is the one who is implementing the greenway plan all the way from the center city of Charlotte to the South Carolina border. However, the portion we'll be talking about today is about a mile and a half that will be near our center city. We can tie our convention center business into it, CPCC, our community college, into it and follow the trend presented by Robert.

Our other speaker is Tony Zeiss, president of Central Piedmont Community Colleges, which have several satellite schools in the Charlotte area. They have more than 70,000 students.

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

It's one of the largest community college systems in the nation. He is one of the visionary dreamers of this, because he used to work in Pueblo, Colorado, where he saw this concept of a successful creek converted into a greenway project.

Charlotte is a city of about 575,000 people; we're 275 square miles. We're the second largest financial center in the United States and home of Bank of America and Wachovia, and now an NFL team. With that, I'd like to introduce Wayne Weston

Wayne Weston: Thank you, Mayor Pat. The greenway program in Mecklenburg County is an exciting initiative. To look at it in its entirety, it makes one of Bob's slides that shows a network of trails together really happen for us. We're looking at a greenway master plan that identifies with 28 of the 46 creeks that come into Mecklenburg County and the City of Charlotte, and that's a considerable number of creeks.

Our greenway master plan calls for 185 miles of built-out greenway, which will link together 6 rural towns that are growing in size rapidly in our community with the central city core of Charlotte.

The spinal creek that we're concentrating on now is Little Sugar Creek. On Little Sugar Creek, you might say the two words that Bob threw out there, patience and persistence. This has been somewhat of a greenway initiative since back in the late 1960s and early 1970s. As we researched the creek, we look back in history to the 1600s when the Native Americans were lodged on this same particular creek. That tribe was the Sugaree Indian Tribe.

What our research showed us, Sugaree, even though it sounds awfully sweet and nice,

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

that's an Indian word for people of the unclean water. We're dealing with a creek that is the most contaminated creek in the state of North Carolina. As we begin our initiative, we've concentrated on the fact that flood control and water quality have to be a predominant outcomes. Recreation, education, and the connectivity to our neighborhoods throughout the community remain strong in our effort to reclaim this particular creek.

The creek flows from the center city of Charlotte and varies drastically along that corridor. One of the great things, in the suburban area, we have acquired more than 60 percent of the total greenway. So as we're looking at it, we're focusing our center core piece on 1.2 miles, while the remaining portion of 11 miles will carry us to South Carolina. We are already working with the authorities in South Carolina to ensure that this is a regional opportunity, and several of the towns south of us are working on the connectivity pieces so that eventually they will be able to access the core of the city of Charlotte.

One area of the existing trail runs from one of our neighborhood parks, Cordelia Park, which serves two fragile and threatened African-American neighborhoods. So we will be linking up that diverse population with the central core of the city. This is under construction now.

And we're linking into Freedom Park, which is probably the premier park of the central area of the city. This particular linkage is under construction now in removing significant hardscape that was placed in that park to control floods back in the 1970s. So that area is being completely naturalized, we're returning the natural riffles to that area, and we will see that segment become dedicated sometime this September.

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

Some of the major issues that are faced by the city and the county include developing the greenway segment in a way that maintains the creek storm water capabilities. We have strict regulations for storm water. The acronym SWIM is a very popular acronym to all of us in Mecklenburg County, Storm Water Improvement Management, and we have maybe put ourselves in the box a little bit with those ordinances, because we're going to be restricted in how we use some of the hardscape that you've seen even here today on this river to ensure that this creek has the opportunity to become interactive with the public at some point in the future.

Addressing the pollution issues, again, the high level of contamination causes us to ensure to our public and to our elected officials that water quality will be the issue that we concentrate on significantly. The state of South Carolina has said, "We're not going to work with you, Mecklenburg County, unless you clean this dirty water up that you're sending downstream."

We are working with local developers of adjacent properties with respect to the greenway and creek, and transforming the creek into a community connection rather than a barrier. Again, the premise behind our total movement is the connectivity factor. We're looking at that fact that once these 185 miles are built out, approximately 90 percent of all the neighborhoods of Charlotte would be linked to the overall greenway initiative.

We have undertaken a great amount of land acquisition in residential areas. Under our flood mitigation program, numerous homes have been removed through FEMA funding, and it's evolved into a fairly significant open space for that particular neighborhood.

In the commercial areas, we have recently acquired some retail uses, such as a tire store.

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

We are going through several condemnations in this area. We have significant opportunities, but as you look at it, we've got to be concerned about the development potential. How do we leave building pads in this area so that we can encourage economic development along this particular corridor? In this particular corridor, we will be removing some 11 different retail interests. We recently have closed on a former Ramada Inn, and we will be taking that particular facility down within the next three to five weeks.

The problems we're confronted with, such as using an old culvert, some of these are very reflective of what Bob just showed us in his presentation. Above the creek is the old shopping mall that Mayor McCrory mentioned, and it completely covers a section of the creek. The city and the county are working in economic development unison with the developer, and this developer is positioning his firm to expend somewhere in the neighborhood of \$150 million in private capital in this area. We will be removing this particular asphalt parking lot from that facility, opening up the creek, and ensuring that that development is impacted on the edge of the creek's boundary.

We've already got a good strong working relationship with Home Depot, which is replacing an abandoned movie theater with a Home Depot Expo facility. They will be breaking ground in September. The adjacent greenway, about 3 1/2 acres, will be dedicated by the developer to the greenway program.

The advisory groups range from our elected board of county commissioners through the park commission, our district advisory councils, our Partners for Parks Foundation, stewardship

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

advisory, and then our Little Sugar Creek Action Committee and steering committee. These are stakeholder groups that have been working significantly on this project for the last two years.

You get a good impression there of the long-time stakeholders that represent various elements of community life, from education to recreation to the environment.

Project opponents. We do have businesses that certainly do not want to be bought out. We're making lots of initiatives to provide rent abatement to these retail firms. We are assisting in relocation within the same target market. So we're trying to really eliminate as much of that opposition as possible. Right now we have only one unfriendly land transaction that's going on, and the remainder are all from willing sellers.

We do have residents further downstream who do not want connectivity across the creek between low and high-end income neighborhoods. This requires significant dialogue. Most residents come to us and say, well, we have a sidewalk in front of our house. We have a public street, and now you're putting a trail behind our homes. We are using national data that show how the perceived negative impact of that is not what is occurring across the nation. So we are educating people and spending significant amounts of time on that.

Touching on that partnering piece, I think that's one of the commonalities that Bob's pointed out in his presentation. Strong relationship with Charlotte Department of Transportation is crucial in this particular area of the community. Identification of projects and donors that would support them, the economic benefits of open space, and illustrating case studies that demonstrate increased economic development, especially along the edges of greenways.

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

Gaining strong city policy support, as Mayor Pat mentioned, we do have a consolidated police function in the community. We have a strong park relationship. The police districts overlap the park districts. Our relationship is quite strong there from a community policing standpoint, and on most days you can vividly see the involvement of our police on bicycle and on foot on many segments of greenway already.

I'm going to ask Tony Zeiss to come up and talk about this plan of action right now. What we did was take advantage of Tony's background in Colorado, and asked him to step forward and champion this by chairing the Little Sugar Creek Action Committee. And he's providing us that expertise that he learned during his stint of involvement with Pueblo.

Tony Zeiss: I don't know anything that excites me more than these things. It's tremendously exciting. If you haven't been involved in one, you need to do it. It'll revitalize you, get you going.

But one's usually enough, unless you're in the business like Robert. So I thought when I left Pueblo and moved to Charlotte that would be the end of it. But lo and behold, we had this liability there, it runs right by the college, and every time I'd drive over it, I'd look at it and say, something needs to be done. After about 10 years we finally decided something should, so Wayne and I and some others took a group of county commissioners and other key stakeholders in Charlotte to Denver. They took a look at the Platte River plan, and they loved it. Then we took them down to Pueblo, they saw what we did in Pueblo, the bug bit, they came back and said, why don't you get started on this.

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

Now, the good thing is, we got both city council and county commissioner support. Our job is keeping talking to each other and firmly with each other, and so far we think we've done well. Because this is a really great project that we began at the grassroots level by holding five community forums where everybody came in and they had their input. And we didn't try to force-feed this in any way. So we looked at it from an educational point of view, a recreational point of view, environmental point of view, cultural history, you name it. It's exciting, and it's catching on.

But at first, people were saying, wait a minute, are you going to do something with Little Sugar Creek? They called it Tuddle's Puddle, because a guy named Tuddle tried to do it in the 1970s and it didn't work, and so it became the butt of many jokes. But now it has really caught on. We're in the master planning stage as Wayne mentioned. We own 60 percent of the land on the 12 1/2 mile corridor, and we have a plan of action. We've got all sorts of key stakeholders, a former mayor, John Belk of Belk Stores, the largest privately owned department store in America. The more we get people involved, the more excited everybody gets about it.

But I must tell you, we don't want it to be the top duck on the shooting range out here for the public sector. We want to be just a little under the radar screen, because one, it takes so long to put together; two, when we do finish the master plan and put some cost figures to it, the sticker shock might frighten them to death; and three, we don't want to get in front of Mayor Pat's arena. We want that to be the top thing, so when they shoot, they'll shoot at that.

So nevertheless, we have a plan put together and we are very excited about it. Now, here

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

are the strengths, and I'm going to show you the threats, and we'd like your input, particularly on the threats, if you had some of these experiences. One strength is that it's citizen-based. We had both city and county leadership involved. We've got broad support from the public and the press. By the way, we had special meetings like you normally do with the press early on to make sure they bought in before we even announced what we were doing. It connects a lot of wonderful people and neighborhoods in new and meaningful ways, as we mentioned. By the way, Charlotte is a new south city so we've lost our history. It's another opportunity not only to attach cultural things to it, but historical things also.

And the other thing is, when you go to Charlotte, people say, what is there to do in Charlotte? And there's this pause and this silence. You know, Dallas has the West End. San Antonio has the Riverwalk. San Francisco has the Wharf. We don't have anything. And so we've got a huge convention center and they go to restaurants and that's nice, a Panthers game. They used to go to Hornets game, but they don't do that anymore. But, we're going to have this signature piece.

Now, here's the dilemma. One of the dilemmas is with this signature piece downtown -- it will be the cultural node of this whole greenway. The dilemma is how do you balance that cultural node with the environmental folks who think it should be pristine and don't touch it, no hard edges. I've learned a lot from these things, only soft edges. Well, we got to convince them you can integrate those things, and it's actually good for people.

Another one is we've got complicated infrastructure and zoning issues. Another threat is

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

maintaining interest over a long period of time on a project like this. The project in Pueblo took 10 to 12 years, and it's not finished. Of course, that's the first major stage. Same thing with us.

On raising private and public funding, the presentation we had this morning was wonderful. We're going to go back and sift through that information and use every idea we can on that. The other thing is we are in a competitive environment, everything from the Children's Museum to the Aquatic Center to now a new artificial whitewater park, and it'll cost a lot of money. This thing doesn't charge admission. It's great for everybody. So those are some of our threats. But I'm tremendously optimistic.

Mayor McCrory: As you see, we have some introverted, non-passionate people about this project. One thing you don't recognize in the pictures, this is actually very close to a strong downtown area. Our downtown area is very much like Denver. We have 40, 50, 60-story buildings, an active restaurant district, and a football stadium. This is about probably 10 blocks from that area. What separates it are highway overpasses. And as you know, that is a barrier. By the way, parallel to this about 6 blocks up, we're building a light rail line and a trolley line, which will go through our convention center. The trolley line will be implemented within the year. They're about a half-mile away from each other. So you cannot tell how it relates to the city, but the comparison is similar to Denver's creek in downtown and the placement of where the aquarium is in Denver to the downtown or where the basketball arena is in relation to the downtown in Denver if you've ever been there.

With that, we would like your ideas and shared experiences to help us out in this

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

endeavor. As you see, we are at the elementary stage, but the advantage is we have a lot of land acquisition already in place. And we just got good word the other day—we're working with Home Depot—it looks like that development project where we'll be able to lift up that whole parking lot is going to work out. Now they're coming to the city and asking for about \$6 to \$7 million to help them, because we're going to have to reroute roads and build new bridges. But we're going to have to do that anyways, because some of this is in a floodplain area where we're having roads flooding anyway. But you've got to find that capital dollar quick.

My goal with working with this group is to get two or three blocks of this done, and show the victory, and that will incur that momentum. That's one history lesson I've learned as being Mayor, win a battle before you try to win world peace.

Mayor Harris: Is the Home Depot an existing facility?

Mayor McCrory: No. The existing facility is a vacant movie theater from the 1960s that closed down about 10 years ago. It's been vacant with a huge parking lot. Then across the street from that we have the first shopping mall in North Carolina, which is now really going downhill.

By the way, the residential area in and around this is very strong. As you go down the creek, you're talking about some wealthy land that you're going through.

Mayor Harris: Is a big box operation like that what you really want?

Mayor McCrory: We don't have much control over the zoning. It's zoned for commercial right now, so the developer can come in and ignore us, but they have agreed to work with us. By the way, this is a Home Depot Expo, so it's not the typical Home Depot. And they

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

have agreed to work with us on the design and not put its back to the creek, for example.

Mayor Harris: Why don't you just rezone it?

Mayor McCrory: They've already got a building permit. And we're going to make this a bigger project. Next to the Home Depot, we're going to build major residential and make it into a Duany type of design. The Home Depot will be the major tenant for the area.

You know how you get caught in the zoning situations, where they've got you. They can go ahead and do whatever the heck they want, so you try to threaten and cajole. It's worked, in some regards, and Home Depot's been very cooperative.

Mayor Torrey: Of the two or three blocks that you want to develop, how much of it will be soft edge and how much of it will be hard edge?

Mayor McCrory: I'm going to let Wayne answer that question; I don't know if that's been decided. Wayne?

Wayne Weston: I don't think it's been decided at this time. It looks at this particular point that it would be a complete soft edge that would cause the redevelopment to occur on the other side of King's Drive, which would be the road that abuts the property.

Mayor Torrey: And the opposition is what? If it's all soft, where's your opposition here?

Wayne Weston: We've got to work that out, Tony and I do. But we've got two excellent anchor tenants there now—Tony's campus, which probably has 40,000 students on that central campus, and our largest hospital. The two would be connected together. So we think we can work those issues out. Again, we're working with the environmental forces. Charlotte is known

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

to be the City of Trees, and you can hardly remove a bush in Charlotte. We have a strong environmentally sensitive community. So we're working through those pieces that would be soft edges versus hard edges right now.

Mayor Torrey: What is Central Piedmont Community College looking for?

Tony Zeiss: Well, we've done our focus groups and all of that. Our faculty particularly are interested in cultural things, so they can have the performing arts. We have a jazz band. And so an amphitheater is number one that they want out there. Our students want restaurants and Starbucks and bookstores. And they want to be able to sit there and look at the creek, that sort of thing. It can be done, I've seen it done, but the trick is to get that balance.

Mayor McCrory: I think the developers, when they build residential in and around this Home Depot, are going to want access to the creek, and have nice walking trails. So I'm sure it's going to be an issue.

Bob Searns: Maybe it's more questions about what we mean by environmental opposition. Are we talking about ecologists and biologists who are talking about some sort of damage to the edge, or are we talking about loss of tree canopy. What is exactly is the concern?

Tony Zeiss: Our faculty is fine, because they know they'll use other sections for their outdoor laboratories. The only resistance I felt has been from parks staff.

Wayne Weston: I think it's our stewardship staff working with our Department of Environmental Protection and wanting to live within the full spirit and intent of the Storm Water Improvement Management program that doesn't permit any development to the edge of the

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

water. So we've got to work through some of that with the ordinance in itself. But we feel with the complete 12 1/2 miles of the project that we can devote that particular suburban piece to the strong environmental greenway that we're looking for, but move a little more forward with customizing the hard edges for the uptown portion.

Bob Searns: Is there adequate room through the hard edge segment to have some setback? It's hard for me to visualize it, but I'm trying to get a picture of what's there. For example, when Mayor Torrey and I were walking today, we entered this tree canopy area that actually had a fairly hard edge, a bolder edge, than was contained in the bank. But then there was this green space that was about 50 feet wide with this beautiful tree canopy over it. I suppose the ecologists would say that's not ideal, but it certainly was a good trade-off. It had an aesthetic appeal to it, certainly for the tree canopy, for the birds, and so on. Then you have that rock treatment, with some of the natural vegetation.

Because what you want is continuity for the migration of species along the river, you want some filtration, which maybe you can also do artificially if you can't do it totally by setbacks. There's sedimentation basins you can build so if you do have a section of hard edge, you can demonstrate that you're capturing what's coming off the streets. So from a performance standpoint, you're still achieving the same objective of protecting the aquatic habitat, having some tree cover to keep the creek cool, and some of those other things.

So is there a way you could demonstrate a sustainable solution, using some of the ecologists from the school to do a study so that you can identify what the concerns are, and

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

here's how we're meeting each one. But demonstrating a point where you also have urban development and explain by doing that you build a sense of ownership in the community, which is important to sustain the creek.

Also, a common solution is to have one side natural and the other side hardscaped. But I think if you can identify those criteria, and then with some professional input show that you're taking steps to address those real concerns, be they aesthetic or scientific, then that's a start.

Wayne Weston: I think you're right on target with where we want to take that initiative, and I think that with the land acquisition that we're coming forward with now, we're going to have some areas with enough breadth and scope to make those tradeoffs.

Mayor McCrory: I've got a question for you all. What do I do about the bridges? I've got major bridges of the major roads coming into our downtown area that are right near the campus that I'd love to make like Paris and build some beautiful stone bridges with walkways. But the cost, you're talking millions of dollars. So I'm just curious, how do we work around that in the short term? I'm especially talking about the area near the college, where you're talking about 6-lane roads. In this area, we're going to be taking all this park and bridges down and raising this.

Bob Searns: Is that at grade or above grade?

Mayor McCrory: Well, both. The highway going around this is above grade. These roads going across are at grade. But the problem is you can't walk under there. They were built to cross a creek the easiest way possible, and in building them the state did it the easiest way they could.

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

Bob Searns: There's no room to actually set the trail under the overpass?

Wayne Weston: We can cross beneath the bridges that are there now. We're in good shape to do that. We've already worked with our DOT staff as well as the State DOT, so we know that we can make those passages beneath there now.

Mayor McCrory: It's not real aesthetic.

Wayne Weston: One of the keys with our comprehensive master plan that's going on is that we've pulled that out so that bridges could be looked at and identified with more of an art form and much more architecture down the road when those bridges might have to be replaced, that we could come up with some type of funding formula where the county could work with the city to make those bridge improvements and provide the aesthetics that we feel that the greenway should have there.

Bob Searns: We've lighted them, tiled them, and painted them with murals and with talented artists. It's an interim solution. That may be one way to think about going. But you have to make people feel safe under there. That's the key. So there's good lines of site. And we've actually had school kids come in and do tile mosaics that you attach underneath.

Grover Mouton: I'm not an expert on this. But because I'm working with some of these small cities in the deep South that do not have the revenue, let's say, of most cities at this table, I have had to look at these rails to trails as pure economic development schemes. I was forced to do that because I have nothing else to play with. And most of the cities that I was in were historic, so my line to them was it's not what you do, it's what you don't do.

But what I did in one city was I took a rail trail and I made up an interpretive center. They have tons to interpret but nobody knows about it. And I drew it up with my students,

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

and I had the engineers attach a real budget to it. I had the mayor go up to Livingston and asking for \$6 million, and we got \$3. We called it a trailhead. What happened was we got this money for an interpretive center. Then we expanded it into a community center.

What happens is it gives ownership to the site immediately from the people. All of a sudden we became heroes overnight because we created a trailhead and an interpretive center. People bought into it, and then I did an overlay district with design guidelines, and no one could do anything unless they came to me and showed it to me and I approved it.

Mayor McCrory: We're doing overlay districts now along our trolley and light rail lines, so that might be an idea to do an overlay zoning district, so we won't have to go through the city council to do re-zoning.

Grover Mouton: Exactly, because then they go through me and we go through planning and zoning. But what I'm saying is, because it is a wonderful and powerful city that you have, it shouldn't be hard for you to get this funding and it doesn't take a great deal of money to get it. And it immediately defines the trail as a highly important piece of infrastructure in the city. Then there's ownership, and no one can dare say anything about it. It's a simple move.

You said something about The Natural Museum of The Discovery Center. You might be able to play off that because you never want to run an interpretive center as a city. I gave mine to the National Park Service. I said we'll build it, we'll do the exhibits, and then we'll give it to them because you don't want to run that.

Mayor McCrory: Just to let you know, Discovery Place is changing their theme to Places of Discovery. That might be a point we can bounce off of.

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

Cynthia Girling: I just had a couple of points. The thing I noticed when you did the presentation is that there was plenty of imagery of the existing creek and only that map or imagery of what you have in mind. If one of your issues is trying to bring a broad array of people in your community, neighborhood residents, businesses, and other components, I was thinking of a couple things. One is, in the very short term, I think you could get imagery from other places, just photos and say, it could be something like this. So, for instance, I think the one example in Denver that applies somewhat to this is Cherry Creek in Denver.

Tony Zeiss: Yeah, we've done some of that. We have it. We just didn't bring it. We do it in presentations all over in every city club there is.

Cynthia Girling: Then the other issue is have you done any kind of design or conceptual design that you can use to begin to sell this?

Tony Zeiss: We did that also. It's a good point.

Cynthia Girling: With regard to the underpasses again, I think what we in Eugene, Oregon, do is not ideal, but we do have a two-way system along the creek where we go under grade-level streets with the bike and walking path, and it comes close to the edge of the water at those points. In certain points of the winter it floods, so the bike path then becomes impassible, which is a problem. We have gates that are closed and the bike traffic is then directed up and over the street, just in those rare instances where it actually floods out.

Mayor McCrory: We have that in the Freedom Park area. That's a good point.

Cynthia Girling: Also, Cherry Creek in Denver has some beautiful examples of how to treat the undersides of those street crossings. You should probably get imagery of that.

Mayor Torrey: As far as size is concerned, one of our major road beltlines, a four-

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

land highway with 85,000 cars a day, you go right underneath that with a bike path. And in the center of the city, another one, 65,000 cars a day, you go under that on both sides of the river. Is it ideal? No. But I have yet to have a complaint. I know they like the connectivity of it. It's much better than having to go clear around.

Bob Searns: I'm interested in these people of the unclean water and what made them unclean. It'd be interesting, on the humorous side, in these murals to talk about what was there in the past and depict that in the mural so that you could walk along and see what Charlotte was like a million years ago, a hundred years ago, so there's some interpretive relevance to what the murals are.

We've also designed underpasses with a floodwall so that the creek can actually go above the level of the trail and then you just take the water and pipe it downstream so you can use it year round and not have to close it. They've done this in Boulder. Without seeing it I can't say that would work or not but you might look at having a little floodwall.

Tom Fox: The involvement of the property owners adjacent to it is important. There are volumes of information on how greenways affect real estate values, and they have a stake in the area, it increases real estate values, and it increases your tax base.

Mayor McCrory: To tell you the truth we're not getting opposition on this concept. We've just got to win some battles and get the funding. But there's no one who says this is a stupid idea like they did 30 years ago to a city council member who brought this up.

Tom Fox: Using the college, where you have bikers, hikers, the environmentalists, the painters, and the performance folks, and if you spent the next two to three years focusing on the river and bringing every type of activity to the university you could down there, it

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

would perhaps show the environmentalists and the university folks who want the hardscape how it would work. If you got hardscape and you want to create soft space, you better be able to minimize the cost of keeping that hard space so that you can do the environmental restoration and things like that.

So you can start looking at the fact that maintaining that existing hardscape would allow more money to go in from the public offers into restoration of the natural areas. And you have mural contests under the bridge, studios in your various classrooms on how to treat the interiors of the bridge. When I was a kid I in Brooklyn, I was in a do-wop group, and we always searched for arches to have harmony, because under bridges it sounds pretty interesting depending on the volume of traffic on top. Have your water quality experts determining where that fecal material comes from? Is that the unclean water, and was it what people are dumping in the water? You can involve every range of student from the university in this restoration over the next three or four years by doing workday clean-ups, special concerts, or tours, for example.

The bicyclists, who are going to be one of your biggest sets of advocates, can sponsor a bike race along the river showing them what it's going to be like if you get the opportunity to take the river. Can you take the roadway up topside and can you make it into a boulevard? Can you actually look at that road as property you were taking on one side of the road, and then a road, and then green space? Could you move the road over 50 feet? When you're doing your capital budgeting, if you got 10 years and that thing is in the capital plan within the next 10 years for reconstruction, can you relocate it when you're reconstructing it?

Mayor McCrory: Quick question. The county is buying all this property. The old

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

Ramada Inn, for example—should he re-develop any of that or just leave it open? A lot of cities have turned things around back toward the creek. I'm just curious, Wayne, do you want to re-develop that or just keep it completely green? Is that a debate?

Wayne Weston: We're looking at it. Within our regulations we can re-develop within the same footprint. So we will be working with our consultants to identify those particular economic development opportunities that would exist from those former businesses that we are taking out.

Mayor McCrory: I would like him to re-develop some of it. By the way, from a financial standpoint, in the short-term it will take a lot of money off the tax base. I'd like to return some of that back but design it in such a quality way where people enjoy having cocktails and drinks and dinner.

Tom Fox: Re-develop it as retail, as something that sells to your students.

Mayor McCrory: Right now what we have are Taco Bells right along the creek with the dumpster back to the creek, and McDonald's, the typical strip that we have in every one of our American cities.

Mayor Harris: But you're looking for nodes of commercial development too?

Mayor McCrory: Absolutely.

Mayor Harris: I don't get the sense though that you're controlling what type of commercial...

Mayor McCrory: I would hope to place an overlay district along that so a total design could be done so I don't get caught in a situation where it's zoned that way, so we have no choice. By the way, not only the land we own but the land around it then. We'll have the

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

same issue with our trolley and light rail line.

Grover Mouton: We did things in Knoxville to get people on the river, on the site. We didn't do it to make any money. I was worried that no one was going to go to the riverfront because there was nothing to do. Can that become a rationale for you? It's a different kind of objective to look at. It can become a development piece. I believe in having people around, not just on the trail but really making a place work. I don't think you'll have much trouble. I don't know the history of your city but I'm sure the history is rich even with the Native Americans. Peoplize your places through this development piece.

Mayor McCrory: And you could do that through retail if you wanted to.

Wayne Weston: And I think that's the type of synergy that we want to put it in.

Andrea Riner: Well, one of the things to consider is that it's not just a greenway. It is, in essence, a park. One of the critical things we look for in park safety issues and ownership is having eyes on the park, as many days as possible. Retail uses may end at 5:00 pm, and restaurants may close at 9:00 pm. But if you have residential uses mixed in with that, maybe on the second and third floors, that makes it safe. That means it's active and it's a vital place.

Mayor McCrory: That's similar to a transit line where you have retail on the first floor and residential above.

Andrea Riner: The other thing is, we're looking at a redevelopment of one of our riverfront areas. We don't have a good connection with our river and we're having this battle of preserving the river's edge and worrying about the Endangered Species Act with the salmon listing, but we're also looking for an opportunity for economic development. So we've been scanning the globe looking for a good example of what would make our business

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

people and our environmentalists happy. We've pretty much concluded that this doesn't exist, so you need to create your own model.

Look at a case study, a small project, where you have the best thing possible, a champion in the community. That's 80 percent of it. The money will come from that. And look for a small part. Don't try and sell the 10-year plan. Do something in the next 24 months that is going to ignite that interest and carry the project. Have a success story.

Mayor Masiello: On the elevated highway again, what if there were high winds?

Mayor McCrory: The beltway going parallel to it is highly elevated which is just off the creek. The bridge is crossing it but it's a huge infrastructure.

Mayor Masiello: Is there any way you can green it? I know Charlotte already is a city of trees, but could you plant more trees, vines, ivy, and things like that to soften that up?

Mayor McCrory: I think there is limited space in certain areas, but we can do the best we can. You're talking about a lot of pavement in the area near the university. I think we could do what Bob was talking about down below. It's going to be up above. By the way, these were the days when the state didn't build sidewalks.

Bill Klein: As a first option fallback, do a real strong, take no prisoners overlay, where you have urban design control and make everything a conditional use. Maybe even do a forms-based overlay. It lets people know in advance what you're looking for.

Mayor McCrory: We've got examples of that because we're doing four transit corridors right now, so we can just lift that onto this. We're building a light rail system right in now in Charlotte. Maybe we ought to treat it the same way as we do our light rail corridor where we're the doing the overlay districts.

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

Cynthia Girling: Who owns the land under the elevated highway?

Mayor McCrory: I assume it's a state highway right-of-way going over primarily a floodplain.

Cynthia Girling: And where does the stormwater coming off the highway go?

Mayor McCrory: All the water from that area goes into the creek.

Cynthia Girling: So, it seems to me, here's another opportunity. If you were to conceptually expand the boundaries of the project to include the elevated highway, you could do some interesting and creative storm water treatment under the elevated highway that would treat the water coming off that road and maybe some surrounding impervious surface areas. Make it artful, creative, but also obtain some public land that way. In a sense, widen the area of the creek, since storm water is a major component of this project. There are a few really wonderful examples around the country of extremely creative approaches to storm water filtration and management. There's several in Denver. In Portland there's a water pollution control lab that Robert Murase designed, which is absolutely striking. So there are opportunities to really be creative about that and garner that as public space rather than as lost space.

Mayor McCrory: Good point. That's great feedback. Thank you all very much. Really appreciate it.

Mary Eysenbach: Really quickly, to summarize. In terms of the hardscape versus softscape issue, one idea is to identify the ecological criteria and then have eco-professionals assess that, and perhaps do one side soft and the other side hard. Another idea was to build an interpretive center and make it a trailhead, and you could interpret a number of things.

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

You might link it to the Discovery Center that's already nearby. You might also interpret native cultures that lived in Charlotte years ago. In conjunction with creating that interpretive center you would create an overlay district that may end up a conditional-use situation only. And in conjunction with that overlay district, establish strict design guidelines.

A way to promote the greenway would be to make use of the imagery that you're already using but to promote that even harder. And to start to think larger than what you're thinking now. Expand the conceptual boundary of this project to include the elevated highway, do some creative stormwater management with that, as well as to start thinking about converting adjacent routes to boulevards. Don't limit yourself to that greenway corridor. Also, instead of thinking in terms of just retail development, start thinking in terms of mixed-use development where you've got residential on top of your retail development so that you have eyes on the greenway 24 hours a day. Also peoplize your park, as Grover said.

Most importantly, take the money that you have now and instead of looking at it in a 10-year timeframe look at it in a very short timeframe. Invest all that money in the short term because once you have that kind of success longer-term funding will follow.

EUGENE: SANTA CLARA COMMUNITY PARK

Mary Eysenbach: We're going to start off today with a presentation from Mayor Torrey.

When Eugene brought this case problem to us, we were a little concerned because most states don't have the urban growth boundary issues that Oregon does, and we weren't sure how well the problem would translate to a nationwide problem. Yet their problem really is about finding creative ways to preserve open space for the communities that we serve.

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

Mayor Torrey: Mary, thank you very much. I want to first thank the APA for allowing us to participate in this. We're a relatively small city, and this is a problem unique to the State of Oregon because of some of their land-use laws. But, as Mary indicated, it is a problem that I think all of us mayors face. That is, do we have the vision to look into the future and anticipate the needs of the community, or do we just take on the problems day by day and try to put out fires as they come? We're trying to get ahead of the curve.

The people that have come with me today include Andrea Riner, director of the department of parks and open space for Eugene. She does a wonderful job and I'm proud of what we've done in the City of Eugene. But I will also say that there are some holes that have to be filled and that's one of the main reasons we're here today. Also, Cynthia Girling is here, who represents the University of Oregon, one of the major resources in our city.

The problem that we've got here is that in Oregon we have a mandatory urban growth boundary. We all know what our city limits are, but in Oregon we also have a boundary around the city that you allow it to expand into, you plan for, you zone for, in most instances you allow the city that's at the core of that urban growth boundary to do the planning and zoning and to provide the permitting. We are bumping up against the edge of that urban growth boundary. What we need to be able to do in areas where there has been dramatic growth in recent times is to be able to provide resources and services to those folks.

The City of Eugene has buttes. Skinner Butte is where Eugene Skinner came to town and built a cabin and decided to found the City of Eugene. The other butte is Spencer Butte. And between Skinner and Spencer Butte, we've done a wonderful job of providing parks and open space. So, from the perspective of the urban growth boundary these folks are well taken

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

care of.

What we're challenged with is on the northwest section of the city we are right at the urban growth boundary, where you take one step and you have now gone as far as you can go in being able to develop until you can prove that you no longer have a 20-year supply of housing inventory available in the community. It also applies to commercial and industrial. But when you run out of a 20-year supply, then you can expand beyond the urban growth boundary into something called the urban reserve. The Santa Clara Community Park site that we're going to be talking about today is actually outside of the urban growth boundary.

In the southeast is an area of Eugene called the South Eugene South Hills. It's a wonderful area. People in that area don't want to see it developed but it is inside the urban growth boundary. What we're going to be talking about today is making a trade, a no net increase trade. It's unique, and it's plowing new ground.

The Santa Clara area is a low density, rural residential development area. It is typical, I would imagine, of most cities in the Northwest where the area outside of the original city was farmland and small communities cropped up around some sort of small grocery store. It's made up of primarily seniors and families with young children because it is the affordable housing area in the city.

A problem that we have that we need some help with is there is a tremendous disconnect between those people who live in the upper north end of that map and the people who live between the two buttes. The theory is the people between the buttes get all of the services. The people up in the north end were Johnny-come-latelys and don't get anything. But we want to make sure that that's not the case. Frankly, I don't think it is the case but

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

we've got a public relations problem there and it is under-served by parks and open space.

This park site that you see here comes about as a result of a 1998 Park and Open Space bond measure. Our city really did a wonderful job until about the mid-1970s. We're not an old city. We started in about 1850. Between 1850 and 1970 I would give our city fathers and mothers a lot of credit for how well they did in preparing us for the future. But in 1970 we just stopped. We didn't put one measure of funding before the citizens from 1975 until 1998. As a result you can imagine what happened to all of that land. Developers bought the land, developed it in housing, and so on, and we didn't have the capacity. The people in Virginia Beach should be thankful for a mayor and city council that thought enough to buy 1,500 acres of land. I don't know where I would have found that but I would have loved to have had the opportunity.

One of the things that we did when we passed the bond measure in 1998 was to identify for the public the need to have a major park facility in the Santa Clara area. The problem we're having is we can't find any sizeable chunk of land in which to acquire within the urban growth boundary to do that. Once again, the neighbors of Santa Clara are saying see, we told you. They'll help us put this measure forward and they'll do all of these things all over the City of Eugene but they won't take care of us.

The lack of land in this area is a dramatic impact on us. What we're planning to do is unique. It will actually probably set a precedent in the State of Oregon because, with the exception of the Portland Metropolitan area, the three big counties up near Portland, communities haven't run out of their 20-year supply. We're the first ones that are coming up against this issue. We haven't run out of the 20-year supply but we have run out of the

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

capacity to find park and open space area.

So, the proposal that we have is, there are 197 acres just north of Santa Clara, owned by one individual. That individual wants us to move forward with his proposal to do a land swap. He's got 120 acres of land in South Eugene that's inside the urban growth boundary. His proposal is to take that outside of the urban growth boundary, and the 197 acres would be pulled into the urban growth boundary. Now that's not a one for one swap. But when you take the 77 acres of land that he would be donating for a park, the developable land would be a one for one swap, 120 acres for 120 acres.

The concept we're working on right now is 120 acres would be developed with residential and smart development in the northern area of the city. This is an area of the city that is under-parked, under-open spaced. Now to the north we have a lot of open space. But inside the community we do not have the capacity to provide these residents with the services we're talking about here. Cynthia is going to talk in a few minutes about our concept of smart growth. When she describes how we want to proceed with this we're talking about smart growth all over the City of Eugene, not just this one area. In fact, the area she's going to describe is quite a ways away from this particular site.

We are not going to increase the developable land. And that is going to be the challenge that we're going to be asking you to help us with, in addition to what this might look like. The South Eugene site has a lot of good quality characteristics that the citizens of Eugene want to maintain. We want a green belt and not just a small green belt. We want a major green belt around our city with the exception of Interstate 5, which divides Eugene from the City of Springfield, a city of roughly 50,000 people.

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

The rest of the area surrounding Eugene we want meaningful green space, either agricultural or timber. We want a buffer between our community and the next closest community. We recently talked to people all over Lane County, the county we are in, about their number one concern between now and the year 2050, taking into consideration the growth that we anticipate having there. And the number one issue was make sure we do not allow our cities to grow together. So, one of the issues with the urban growth boundary is not to allow that to happen.

The site in South Eugene has significant natural resource value. The neighbors who live in this area do not want to see it developed. And we have the ability to use this site as a link for a ridgeline trail. It's not a mountain, but there are large, high hills there. We want to develop or continue to develop it because we've already started, as part of this park and open space bond measure that we talked about, a ridge line trail that actually goes all around Eugene, at least on the southern and western part of it.

Eugene is a community with diverse points of view with regard to growth. There will be people in this community who will say absolutely that the urban growth boundary should not be touched. And we need to be able to deal with issues like this when we realize that 20-some years ago when the urban growth boundary was put in place it wasn't a scientific line that was drawn. It was a politically placed line. Twenty years later hopefully politicians can put their new information to work. We want to promote smart growth.

We also want to make sure that we get the people who live in the Santa Clara area to think they're part of the City of Eugene and we must provide them with services equal to what the other parts of Eugene get.

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

This transaction involves a modification of the urban growth boundary. It hasn't been done in Eugene to this point. It is something that is going to have to take place throughout the State of Oregon. Most of the states don't have this land-use law. It has tremendous benefits, but every once in a while there are unintended consequences. We think that you could be helpful in assisting us with communicating why it makes sense; or if it doesn't make sense, we're open to hear that from you also.

In promoting smart development, Eugene needs an example for future situations that will come up in our community over the next year. As was discussed yesterday with Charlotte, do something small and make it a success but do it. We'd like to do something with this particular project and do it and show how it works. We want to deal with the challenge of compact growth but making sure that the resources and the services that are needed in that area are available in that area. We force people too often in our community to drive long distances. We have the opportunity to provide a significant park setting for an area of our community that is under-parked.

At this time I'd like to ask Cynthia to come up and talk about smart growth.

Cynthia Girling: What I want to do is emphasize how Eugene and Oregon, in fact, are implementing the principles of smart growth and what that means to us in our community. Basically, there are four principles that are absolutely fundamental to what we try to do in these smart growth developments.

The first is what we call compact development. In the situation that we're talking about today, which is in a more residential area at the edge of the city, generally what we are trying to do is target a net density of 12 dwelling units per acre. That is probably three times

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

what most communities experience at these suburban areas of town. So, we really are looking at a much higher level of density even out at these edges of the community.

The second is that there's a commercial service center that serves the residents of these neighborhoods, and that the vast majority of the population in this neighborhood lives within a one-quarter mile walk of that commercial service center. It's not necessarily a big shopping mall. It is just something that serves the daily needs of the people that live in the neighborhood. Surrounding that is a higher density housing area, usually 12 dwelling units, maybe in some places as high as 20 dwelling units per acre. It's mixed use. It allows some other uses besides housing, and it has a mix of different housing types in it. Then surrounding that is probably about six dwelling unit per acre, usually single family residential.

A couple of other important points about the way that we've been planning these communities is wherever we have resources that require us or allow us to make interconnected, linear greenways that pass between the neighborhoods and interconnect the neighborhoods, those are recognized as valuable resources. We try to make sure that they're in public ownership wherever possible, and they have trail systems aligning them wherever possible. The school and the neighborhood park are adjacent to each other and within that neighborhood. Again, that's another goal, trying to make sure that those neighborhood parks and schools are carefully located and that there are pedestrian connections to them.

One example is a neighborhood that is currently being planned in Eugene. It's on the west extremity of the urban growth boundary. Similar principles to what I was explaining are being used there. There is a commercial service center surrounded by higher density housing. There are basically three sub-neighborhoods in this whole development area. And there are

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

greenways that are interconnecting it. Into the center of Eugene is a regional bike route. So, the idea with these green spaces is to connect into the regional bikeway system and take people all the way back into Eugene.

So, that's basically to show you that we are working on these things. We do have some examples, but are still in the planning stages in Eugene. Nothing yet built that quite meets our expectations for smart development.

Mayor Torrey: We talked about the relationship between the city and the area, community pride and connecting the neighborhood with larger parks and open spaces. Next is a concern that we have and we do a lot of this in Eugene, and that's one of Andrea's primary goals and efforts, is to have public meetings. And with this park we will bring in the community around what they want and where they want it and how we want it. I'm confident that they'll be no shortage of comments there. Connect Santa Clara with the City of Eugene, this is a way to show we care and is a way to connect it.

Right now there isn't the capacity in the Santa Clara area to provide outings and events and recreational activities that exist elsewhere. This is an example of something we could accomplish here with our park and open space money. I'll quickly throw something in. I told you yesterday about coaching. The doctor who made the presentation the first night talked about making sure kids could walk from place to place. I coach a little kid's team, a group of sixth-grade boys. They only play 12 games. The closest game from their grade school to the park that they played in was 7 miles. We don't have recreational facilities in that area to provide close access to those kids. I think that will be a good selling point.

Next are the different groups that have been involved. We've involved all of the major

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

players in this area, two different school districts, the Department of Land Conservation and Development, and the University of Oregon. Lane County is the area that this property currently is within. They're involved in this process too.

Other organizations that we have to make sure get a say as stakeholders are listed here [reference to presentation]. I think you can see how helpful it is to have a school like the University of Oregon and a resource like Cynthia to assist us on this. The university works with our planning and development Departments, both the public planning department in the city, and the park and recreation planning. They're a tremendous resource. For the APA folks, I think she and her school might be a tremendous resource at some point for you.

Criteria for success. Setting a precedent for future partnerships with developers. If we can show this works, not only for the developer but for the community, it will help us as we run into this issue again in the future, and we will run into it.

Integrating the park into the neighborhood. I'm confident we will do that. We've got to convince Santa Clara residents that we're there to help.

Successfully applying smart development principles to a new residential area. That is a challenge. Developers don't always see the benefit of that. But if we can make this work we can use this as an example for future such developments. And maximize the public benefits for the people who live there.

Next is the plan of action. There are some people who believe you should never touch that urban growth boundary. There are some that would be willing, I believe, based on the no net increase in developable land, and of course there are some that say who cares, just build it. So, if you're going to make this work you can't just take the easy route. You've got to find

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

a way to get some consensus in the community.

Then it goes to our neighbor partners. In this metro area that includes Springfield and Lane County, they have to buy off on this concept also. Then the purchase agreement, I'm interested in getting some comments from you all on how we might proceed with the purchase agreement with the developer. And implementing a public involvement process and we will do that. We will make sure that the public understands what we plan to do. We have groups in the community that have strong concerns about the quality of life in our city. I believe everyone does. But these folks are really concerned about what we do and how we do it and we need to bring them into it.

And then we've got to complete the annexation and the re-zoning of those properties. When I ran for mayor I had a really simple agenda. We needed a new library, we needed to break the cycle of 20 years with no parkland acquisition, and we had to have a city where when my grandchildren were 25 years old they would want to live in this city. The only way you get that to happen is if you plan in advance so that they will want to live here. Protecting the quality of life is important for every one of the eight counselors in the city of Eugene and for the mayor, and I believe it is for the entire community. Some people have different opinions on who can accomplish that.

Finally, is the partnership proposal a good deal for the city of Eugene? You folks will make a great jury for us right here today. What needs to be included in the partnership to ensure that the maximum public benefit is realized? Remember, we have a developer here who wants to do something. So, it's nice to be in a position with a little bit of leverage. Who are the important project partners and what key steps should be taken to engage them in this

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

process? Thank you very much.

Mary Eysenbach: Thank you, Mayor, very much. We have a question from Mayor Harris?

Mayor Harris: Does the developer own both parcels?

Mayor Torrey: Yes, he does.

Mayor Harris: And do you have a park dedication ordinance, so that whenever a developer develops he has to dedicate so much land per unit?

Mayor Torrey: No we don't.

Mayor Harris: So, a developer can do a housing project and not provide any parks?

Mayor Torrey: He will provide system development, charge fees that are allocated to parks, which could go anywhere in the city.

Mayor Harris: He can give money but he doesn't have to provide for it?

Andrea Riner: He passes it on to the person who purchases the house to pay those fees and they're very low. They're about \$800 a residential unit.

Mayor Harris: So, this is really a transfer of development rights issue then?

Andrea Riner: Very similar.

Mayor Harris: He actually has development rights on a 120-acre parcel.

Andrea Riner: But we haven't looked at developable land or density issues or anything. It's just really a flat acre per acre assessment.

Mayor Harris: That was going to be one of my comments. In a situation like this we would usually do a value-for-value. In many cases the value of one property may have to be 10 times the size to equate to the value of the residential land that the guy wants. So, is the

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

120-acre parcel developable?

Andrea Riner: I think one of the issues we find in negotiating with developers is the value for residential development is one thing and the value for parks and open space is another. In terms of residential development, the Santa Clara site is of much higher value. They'll be able to realize a significant return on this investment. The South Hills piece will result in fewer homes and fewer dollars return.

Mayor Harris: What is the zoning on the south site?

Andrea Riner: Well, currently it's probably low density residential and then there's some outside the urban growth that's exclusive forest use. But our value on the South Hills site for open space is very high, and I think that's one piece we will be looking actively to acquire a significant portion of the 120 acres.

Cynthia Girling: Could I just add one thing to that? It's unlikely that the South Hill site would have commercial or higher density housing on it, so it's pretty much going to be low density residential in a hilly landscape. The proposal on the north site includes some commercial and also some higher-density housing development. So it might be possible to have the value for value from the developer's perspective as well as the city's.

Mayor Harris: How much of the 120 acres is within the urban growth boundary?

Andrea Riner: Actually, the entire site is 240 acres, 120 is inside.

Mayor Harris: Well, that would be my first recommendation. If you're going to do the deal, do it on value.

Mayor Torrey: One thing I'd also point out. There is no question that there will be substantial opposition to the development of the South Hills property. Not that it would

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

necessarily have legal standing but that will not stop it from taking on the legal appeals and land use update and land use board of appeals actions on the state level.

Mayor Harris: So, he gets a slam dunk that he can develop that, and you don't really want that 120 acres in developed park land. You want it in wilderness.

Andrea Riner: Correct.

Mayor Harris: Well, I think one of the concerns you're going to have to face and I'm sure you're already aware of this, is the precedent-setting nature in changing the urban growth boundary. Not for you but for everybody else in Oregon. While your transfer of development rights may make perfect sense, there's probably going to be a great deal of resistance that this could be the beginning of the trickle that starts the flood waters of every community and every developer having his eye on a piece of property and coming into that neighborhood.

Mayor Torrey: And there is another boundary outside called the urban reserve. Once we get to the 20-year supply hurdle, the first area that's going to get developed is going to be this area, because it's so easy to develop. If we don't protect ourselves we're going to have more residential development and still not have any park and open space resources.

Tony Zeiss: These projects are always multi-dimensional, and I know you're thinking about all of them at the same time. But it sounds to me like the political dimension is the one you need to be really concentrating on. The technical and legal dimensions don't even matter if you can't settle that problem. Where's the press on this issue?

Mayor Torrey: I'm not sure that it's even on their radar screen.

Andrea Riner: Our discussions with council have been in the executive session

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

because it's property acquisition. So, this may be one of the first ways it'll trickle out.

Tony Zeiss: My suggestion is sit down with the publisher of the paper and get a feel for where they are and convince them this is the best thing to do. The first thing they're going to say is isn't there an alternative some place? Have you thought through all of this before we get into this battle? But I'd get them on your side before you even talk about it publicly.

Mary Eysenbach: Tom, what do you think?

Tom Fox: It's a matter of spin control, of you being able to spin the positive benefits for the city of Eugene, and it is a public relations and electoral problem that transcends your physical problem. The Santa Clara folks, do you have any mechanism where they can feel invested in the decision-making processes?

I'll give you an example. On the west side of Manhattan there was a 25-year battle over the future of the waterfront, and there were always citizen representatives but they really didn't represent the voice of the local community. Two or three sensible members of the local community joined who had to suffer the slings and arrows of their colleagues saying oh, you've given in. You're on the dark side. You're really dealing with the devil. But they became the translators who brought that information back down to the local community. It took two or three years but eventually the community began to feel like they had a voice in the process and were being heard.

Mayor Torrey: We actually have a number of neighborhood associations throughout the city, and Santa Clara has their neighborhood association, even though 35 percent of the people who live in Santa Clara are citizens of Eugene and 65 percent are county residents. This urban growth boundary is a development boundary, and the older facilities that existed

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

prior to this development of the urban growth boundary captured those folks.

Now the problem they have is they don't want to come into Eugene because of the tax differential. They want to take advantage of the services that are provided, and we all know about that. Our goal is to find a way to provide service for the citizens who do live in Eugene in that area—and by the way, they're the ones right against the urban growth boundary.

Then there's a new development that are Eugene citizens. And then there's another area of Santa Clara that are just adamant that they not be forced into the city. Anything that comes up like this they sense that well maybe this is another effort to get us to be forced to go into the city. Andrea, you might talk about some of the meetings we've had.

Andrea Riner: We have started initial discussions that are towards annexation. But really what we're doing is reviewing all the different services that are provided by Lane County and the city because it's fractured, it's really problematic. But there's been a group of citizens appointed to this committee. I don't think any of them are friends of the mayor. It has combined folks inside the city that are paying the taxes and not getting the services that they're paying for, and then people in the county that are getting the services but don't want to pay more. And they have been a wonderful group to really spend the time to learn about the issues. I think when they find out about what Eugene is planning to provide for parks they are almost ready to annex if they can just get the parks part. So, we have that group and I think they will be a really important link to this effort.

Bob Searns: I was wondering, is there a balance sheet that shows the financial impacts of these two alternative scenarios? Because I'm seeing one scenario where you acquire the land down in the other corner and, if you had to, acquire and develop this park

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

land in the north corner, assuming you can find some property to do it, plus the physical impacts of that not having smart growth. Is there some way to present that out so people can understand what the actual dollar cost is of doing it one way versus doing it the other way and what the benefits might be?

The second part of my question is are there other instances in Oregon where this question has come up, vis-à-vis the urban growth boundary? And is there some kind of precedent or procedure for dealing with this, because this has to come up all over the place to where there are opportunities. Is there some process and precedent statewide for that?

Mayor Torrey: Well, the first question is a great suggestion. We need to show the financial impact. We haven't done it but we can do it. The second question, the only area in the state that I'm aware of that's come up against this and dealt with it is the Portland metropolitan area, and that's because they're well within their 20-year supply.

And they had, I think it was a three-year process. They've come to a conclusion but they're still now in the courts as to how you're going to impose it. And one of the reasons we want to do this is we can show how project-by-project it might make sense. If we were to try to deal with the entire urban growth boundary area of Eugene we wouldn't get it done. And that's the problem they're having in the Portland metropolitan area.

But some cities have expanded the urban growth boundary area. Springfield did. And three of our council members were adamantly opposed to Springfield doing that. Now because we're in the same metro area, Springfield, Eugene, and Lane County, if you were to expand our urban growth boundary it includes Springfield, and within the two cities there's some unincorporated county area; we all get a vote. Now the council ended up voting, I think

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

it was five to three to allow it to happen.

But the three who were opposed were adamantly opposed to expanding the urban growth boundary, and it even got to be a bigger problem when they didn't shrink it someplace else. My recommendation to the Mayor of Springfield is find a place to shrink it. It was only 27 acres. But just keep consistent until you get to the 20-year problem, the value of the urban growth boundary because there are tremendous values of that.

Mayor Harris: Is the current urban growth boundary in this area ecologically based in any way? Is it a watershed?

Andrea Riner: I would say that in the South Hills, that line is basically our ridge line. So, that has a relation to a physical boundary. The northern parcel we feel is much more politically based. It actually scoops down to exclude some properties.

Mayor Harris: Can we go back to the plan for a second? If a developer within your city was going to develop a subdivision such as this, wouldn't they be providing a park within it as an amenity just to market their project?

Andrea Riner: Absolutely not. I don't have any developers that have been pro-active at all. If they're not required to, they just look at that as a loss of revenue.

Mayor Harris: They don't realize it enhances the value of the property?

Mayor Torrey: As progressive as Eugene is, we are also very independent. Oregon controls what you can and can't mandate what development rules are. We were able to get system development charges for parks. If you try to mandate that they put parks in there, we'd lose at the state level.

Mayor Harris: But usually developers fight to be able to put a golf course in their

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

projects even if they're going to just turn it over and give it to the city, so they put a golf course in front of homes because they sell for twice as much as a home that sits backed up to somebody else's backyard.

Andrea Riner: I think that may be one of the unintended consequences of the urban growth boundary is that every piece of land inside that line is seen as the only place you can put housing. So everything on the other side, that's your open space.

Mayor Harris: I was wondering about the design of the park. It's bifurcated by a road, so it's difficult to get from part of the park to the other. I didn't know if there was a reason for that, and I didn't know if Santa Clara was going to feel like this was really their park, or this was for this development only. It feels to me more like a neighborhood park within an exclusive subdivision as opposed to a truly regional park for the whole community, and I don't know enough about Santa Clara to adequately judge, that but that's the feel I'm getting from that design. Is there a reason why it's bifurcated?

Andrea Riner: Well, basically it's trying to make sure that park is spread out through the community and I guess it does look bifurcated. But there are significant chunks, about 40 acres on the west side that we saw as a more developed site with really active recreation, and then about 30 acres of more protected natural area and some passive recreation. And then there's some narrow part. We would certainly want to have a street that's friendly and a comfortable crossing and wouldn't be a high traffic road. We haven't done the assessment on the traffic, but we did have traffic folks participate that led to this design.

Mayor Harris: And the developer would pay all development costs under your plan?

Andrea Riner: We have not started negotiating down to the cost of development, but

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

there would be some shared costs. But that's something we'd certainly take input on.

Bill Klein: It strikes me that you're in a position where you have a lot of leverage. Here's a developer who's facing the prospect of being tied-up in court with this southern alternative. And right now this site is zoned very low density. It's outside the boundary. He needs a decision. You're in a really good position to cut a deal in the form of a development agreement that has him provide some open space or park for the benefit not only of his new community but also the adjacent community, which you're trying to reach peace with.

The fact that you don't have anything in your ordinances now that requires developers to provide park land is unfortunate, but I think this should be carved out as a different kind of deal. This is something you've never done before, and you just need to sit down at the table and say look, we've got two very different valued pieces of property. You have a lot to gain here. Let's talk.

Mayor Harris: You're conveying enormous value on that property by putting it within the line. The approach we would take is determine what's the value today when it's outside the line and what's the value tomorrow when it's inside the line? Then try to get as much of that "under increment," as we call it, for the citizens as you can in negotiations. We call it a unilateral agreement.

Mayor Torrey: Mayor, do you have a process you go through to determine the value for value?

Mayor Harris: We appraise it as whatever you can do with it. You must be able to farm it, something, right now.

Bill Klein: You get two appraisers to appraise both properties, before the boundary

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

move and after the boundary move. And then there's the question what are you going to zone it as after it gets put inside the boundary. That would be another benefit of leverage that you have in cutting the deal.

Mayor Torrey: I do agree we have lots of leverage. Somebody said it's a political question. The political question is the big challenge. These are great suggestions and we're going to use them.

Susan Rademacher: A point on the neighborhood perspective on the political question for the people of Santa Clara. In looking at the plan it looks like the most intensive part of the recreational development is closest to the people who are not paying the taxes and who are outside the growth boundary. It seems to me that the weight of the park development ought to shift closer to the people who are now within the city. If I were a resident of either side and really concerned about the annexation issue, to me this would be a real transparent grabbing because it just looks like you set something up to serve a newly annexed area because of the way its development is.

So, it would seem like if your plan brought that closer, you could still have some natural area or greenway connectivity that leads to the other people of Santa Clara and allows it to come in and benefit from this. Maybe people don't want to live next to really intensive uses, which typically, when people look at park space, what they'll see is the places that are really magnets for lots and lots of people which are all of your athletic fields and all of that. So, they're going to feel pushed a lot by where you put that.

Andrea Riner: I think that's a good point. What we did do is really try and get that out of those backyards. We have existing residences that said I don't want those uses built

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

there because it's next to the farm and so trying to protect that as much as possible and also recognizing that's the only part of the site that has any real natural resource value. There are some remnant streams and wetlands through there, and so that was the natural. But there needs to be a way of communicating that balance that you see. I think that's really important.

Susan Rademacher: Maybe I don't understand. Did the developer designate the acreage that would be available for park, or is all this your plan that you've generated?

Andrea Riner: This plan was developed after or following a charrette that we did with in-house staff in transportation, planning and parks, and the developer and their planners. And then actually one of my landscape architects pulled those thoughts together and developed this. This is not a long planning process. We just wanted us all to sit down and talk to people about it. I think it'll look a lot different when we're done.

Mayor Harris: How many units is it?

Andrea Riner: Well, we haven't done the residential development. We really just did that as a zoning plan. We didn't want to be looking like we were doing residential development and have focused on the park plan.

Mayor Harris: How many units will the developer put in there?

Cynthia Girling: Typically the yellow will be about six dwelling units per acre if we manage to succeed in doing smart growth. So we're trying to not allow lower density. There might be some larger properties and some smaller properties. But the average of the light yellow should be about six and then the orange should be higher density, probably 12 to 20 dwellings per acre.

Mayor Harris: But we're talking maybe 1,200, 1,500 units.

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

Mayor Masiello: It appears, Mayor, that you have a lot of leverage but not a lot of allies. You need to begin to put in place a strategy and develop those allies as Tony and others have mentioned. The media could be a major ally for you on how they present this to the public. You need also to figure out how you can establish some friends of the plan, so to speak. Andrea mentioned that the plan was developed inside. In looking at the plan on the board you have four baseballfields, four tennis courts, there appears to be four soccer fields. Is that what the public wants? Is that what the public needs? Have you gone to the public and asked them to be part of the planning process to develop consensus and stakeholders in that plan? I think it's important because that gives the people a sense of ownership in the plan.

Also, in looking at the size of your city population-wise and looking at this plan, do you need a park this big? I don't know your situation but maybe the size of this is threatening to everybody. Maybe you may want to look it at after you do an inventory and a series of summit meetings with the people in Santa Clara. Perhaps they may want something different, you may want something smaller. I don't know. That may soften the opposition. You may also want to think about trading annexation for a park. If they're threatened by annexation, maybe you want to give up on that issue in exchange for the support for the park

Grover Mouton: I'd like to follow on that. I think this is a fantastic opportunity for you, without a doubt. I assume that everyone loves Oregon and really wants to come here from Los Angeles and the other places. So, the density marketing of this site is correct.

The way that I would approach this is I would pick up on what the mayor of Buffalo is saying, and I would say that probably the greatest asset you have is Ms. Girling. The fact that you have the head of the Department of Landscape Architecture at a prominent

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

university willing to substantiate what you are attempting to do is a phenomenal asset to you.

Now if you can, move this into a design discussion in the political process, with Ms. Girling leading the discussion. You have broken some sensitive and important boundaries, which is how life goes. It throws everybody a little bit. But because of the background, the sensitivity and the correctness of this individual, they're willing to listen. It's a process that takes some time. But I think it's a doable deal, and she's obviously smart enough to be able to do it. It becomes a design issue first. It diffuses the politics that all of you know about. I think this is the only way that you're able to do this, because she will do this with you.

I think you can do this, because moving this boundary is unbelievably difficult. That's the problem to me, is the boundary. And then the value that the mayor of Honolulu mentioned is very important to know. But if you can't move that boundary you're dead meat. And the only way you're going to be able to do it is to go gently and softly with Ms. Girling leading the show, and you have to give that university something really fantastic for doing this. Because the reward to the city is going to be enormous and she's the only one that's going to be able to do it.

I've seen this happen before. I think that boundary is really important to be moved, but you're breaking a big, serious rule and you've got to have a big, serious person who's not political do it. She will diffuse the community if you do it correctly. This is not going to happen overnight. I would put the capital in this individual and then plot out that agenda carefully. But she needs to direct the workshop that the Buffalo mayor is talking about.

Mayor Masiello: I don't mean to jump in here, but I need to concur with Grover because when we have had several problems like this in Buffalo, we bring somebody else in.

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

In many cases where we've been successful, the university in Buffalo played a huge role in monitoring our neighborhood summits, our downtown summits, and that moved the politics off the table and moved a microphone to somebody who had more credibility or neutrality.

So, I think Grover's point is an excellent one. If you're the lightning rod or whatever the case may be politically, you may want to go to the university. It has a higher standard, a higher image of neutrality to be the negotiator or lead the conversation. It has worked in our city, and I'm sure it'll work in your city.

Grover Mouton: And let me just say one thing. This plan needs to be re-done with a soft touch, which I'm sure she has. It must relate to the community because it speaks sportsy. I don't know how sportsy all these people are. It may be so important to these people. But she can do it. But the plan needs to be completely re-done.

Cynthia Girling: I just wanted to say that we also have had similar experiences. The Department of Landscape Architecture has done a lot of community service work, and we have found that communities see us as more of a neutral party than city government, particularly in this neighborhood. City government is seen with suspicion, so it might be a useful thing to have the university and the students who are much less threatening to many of the groups than the city staff even are to take a look at this and actually come up with some design suggestions in workshop-type environments.

Grover Mouton: That is not it. It's not students. You're not going to get the gravity of this. You can't tell students what to do. They're in an academic environment. It's not the students. It's her with Andrea, and the Mayor, and the Lieutenants.

Mark Beede: My comments are pretty much questions. You've got some difficulties

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

politically or at least in terms of public relations with the community of Santa Clara. I heard that some of the concerns from the people in Santa Clara are that Eugene doesn't really do enough for them. So that's part of the reason for their feeling somewhat disenfranchised. I'm also hearing that there are concerns about annexation, a complaint that you're not including us enough.

Another complaint is we don't want to be included. What I'm asking is, are those the same people who are making those complaints? Are the complaints about the fight against annexation because they really are independent, or are they saying well, we don't want to be included because you haven't done anything for us so we're not so sure you're going to do anything for us in the future?

My question really arose from Susan's comments about the proximity to the park. If you bring that park in, are the people complaining the same people or different groups? Is there contentiousness within the community itself so that there may be some groups within Santa Clara that might tend to fight amongst themselves, and it just so happens it's your big brother that's down in the valley or whatever? What is the situation, what are the dynamics?

Mayor Torrey: There's a split answer to this. The annexation question, you can go back to—Lane County came to the City of Eugene and asked them to implement mandatory sewer lines in that area. Now again, I'm not going to take credit for that because I wasn't on the city council. What the city should have done is made Lane County do it. But we became the bad person and see all this expense associated with sewers. That was the genesis of the upheaval. And when you look at the votes that take place we don't do well. Whenever we have a citywide vote, for a new library for example, we get killed in the north area, the Santa

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

Clara area. In the south area we win 70 to 30. In that area we lose 70 to 30.

Now from the standpoint of who makes the voice here, we have neighborhood groups. I don't know how your neighborhood groups are in your communities, but small factions of people take over those neighborhood groups and they become, for all intents and purposes, almost as powerful as the elected official from that ward. And they speak without having been elected citywide or even ward wide.

We aren't hearing from the folks. And please don't take this as me bragging about myself, but I do very well in that area, 75 percent of the people vote for me in that area. So, I absolutely agree with taking the politics out of it. But I can go into that community after you have developed a plan and say I really think this is in the best interest of the kids of this community—that's really what we have. We have seniors who are concerned about their fixed income and will this cost them more money.

This is actually a tremendous benefit to them in that regard, and to those parents with little kids who are really segregated from the rest of the resources in the community. So, it's not an easy question to answer, but there is this one group that will pound the drum, annexation will cost you more money and you're never going to get anything from it anyway. And the other group that is now raising a family is saying I don't have time to get involved.

Tom Fox: I don't doubt that you don't do well in that area because you're a regular guy. You seem more cut from the same cloth as opposed to Santa Clara. You're a straight-talking individual.

When you said the closest ballfield was seven miles from where they had to go for your local team, if you got four ballfields all stuck in the same area and you're looking at this

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

as if it does have a fixed boundary, if you're really going to include it into the city is there anyway of breaking through that boundary and bringing some of those facilities actually into the neighborhoods?

When they see that their children are benefiting from that, then they're more likely to support your pitch. But as Susan said earlier, you've got everything shoved up in the furthest corner away from everyone, and it's all in one spot. So, if you don't live proximal to that, you still have the problem that your kids have. They have to find a way to get all the way up there. So, maybe if you broke up those facilities, looked at where there were schools along that edge, looked at where there were maybe opportunities for sites that were underutilized so you can begin to knit that into the local neighborhoods, that might help.

Mayor Oberndorf: I just want to thank Eugene for bringing that problem, because believe it or not, we are about to approach what you all are now dealing with. For instance, we couldn't get an urban growth boundary politically through the general assembly. So, we did two things. We adopted an agricultural reserve program, where we go in and buy up the development rights from willing farmers to protect that area, to keep it in cultivation, so that we can say we have open space. In order to appease the people in the more populated part of the city, we adopted the \$50 million "let's buy open space where the people actually live." And then we did one other thing. We created transition zones, one, two, and three. The closer you get to that urban development boundary, which we call the green line, you have to prove that the development has more worth as open recreational area. And just a golf course is not enough anymore, because you can't have mothers rolling their baby carriages while people are driving golf balls.

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

So, we're looking for the type of recreational area that legitimately belongs to those neighborhoods that already exist nearby. The other thing you must be careful about is if my citizens walked in here, not knowing this was Eugene, Oregon, they would immediately sit down and say city hall's doing a fast deal with the developer to get that boundary moved, and I don't care how you try to describe this open space or this recreational plan, they aren't going to buy it, because they see it as we were here last, we're lowering the gate, and we don't want anybody else in. So, for instance, parking in that plan. Every neighborhood fears somebody else will come into their neighborhood, park and use the facilities.

You know, even if it's a regional park, they don't want anybody else in there. That's their community, their land, even though it belongs to others. Is it possible for you all to get a park there before you even start to talk about the transfer of development rights? In other words, could you prove to the people that you want to give them this amenity, separate from being able to make a land swap with the developer to create another subdivision? That would be the question we would be asked. Is there any way for us to get the amenity first? Then, if you show good faith to us, the citizens, we'll consider supporting you. That was one reason the city of Virginia Beach did not adopt the transfer of development rights. I have a brilliant woman, who has since lost her seat on council, who came up with the transfer of development rights. She lives in the rural area.

And I kept saying to her, the people stuffed into Kempsville, where I live, and there's close to 160,000 of us, will not understand why you can still have your open space and transfer that density to where we're living. But we could support the purchase of development rights, meaning the city will hold them in perpetuity to some date, 25, 50 years

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

in the future, where the entire council would have to vote in front of the public to do away with the open land to allow it for development. But I can see, just from the people that I live with in my city, and they are equally as vociferous about two things. They do not want to be eaten up in annexation by a poor city, because they have excellent schools, excellent roads, excellent recreation, and a lower tax rate than the folks who live in poor cities.

And number two, making sure that it does not appear that any developer is getting consideration for what they feel is basically their right.

Malcolm Tom: I don't know much about urban growth boundaries. But I was wondering, could you develop parks outside the boundary, and if you can, why not just buy the land and build a park?

Andrea Riner: I'll try to answer that quickly. One, the developer basically walks away from the table and we would be looking at a condemnation process, which we have not done for parks yet and don't have a good sense that that would be supported. So, we probably would be left with not providing a park. That's been the feedback we've gotten from council. We could do a nominal level of development, open space, benches. But we couldn't extend any city services, water or sanitary sewer, out beyond the boundary to serve a park.

Malcolm Tom: Didn't you just pass a bond measure?

Andrea Riner: The bond measure was for \$25 million and that covered 53 separate projects, park development, acquisition, and there was approximately \$1 million targeted for this acquisition with no site in mind and no sense of what we'd be doing.

Mayor Harris: My question is following on what Malcolm was asking. I think before you can do anything, you need to calculate what it would cost you to meet your goals without

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

doing this deal at all, which is buying a piece of property for a park and buying either property on the south side or buying the development rights on the south side if you want that preserved. Then you'll have a baseline of what the cost would be if we don't deal with this developer at all. But are you saying that your city hasn't condemned property for parks?

Andrea Riner: Correct.

Mayor Harris: Well, then I would choose a piece and go condemn it for a park.

Tom Fox: Yeah. Well, it isn't easy to change the boundary.

Mayor Torrey: But let me tell you what the big problem is. Remember, this is outside of the urban growth boundary of the city of Eugene. The entity that would have to do the condemnation is the county, and there's no way they would do that.

Mayor Harris: Is there no other piece of property within your growth boundary?

Mayor Torrey: Well, but your first comment, I think it's part of that valuation, that what is the value due to the financial analysis. I think that's one more step that we ought to go through. Let's identify 75 acres and place a value on that inside the urban growth boundary.

Mayor Harris: If you don't have the authority to buy this property.

Mayor Torrey: If the seller would sell it, we can buy it. But if we have to condemn it, it's the county that must condemn it, and they don't condemn.

Mary Eysenbach: Okay. In conclusion, we're sending the good folks from Eugene back to do quite a number of accounting procedures, and that is to do a fiscal impact calculation on the value of the properties, the taxation revenues and the costs, as well as the cost of services. They're going to have to do some calculations on the cost of not developing

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

in a smart way, the cost of purchasing the TDR's for the 120 acres in the south, as well as purchasing the parkland as part of the north piece if that could be done. So from that perspective, they will do those calculations, find out just how much leverage they do have, which we think that they have a tremendous amount, given the flatness of the north parcel versus the slopes on the south, and talk the developer into kicking in the difference.

At the same time they're doing this, they are going to be looking at the political and the public relations process of how to sell this to the public. I can just sum it up by saying Cynthia is going to lead the charge. At the same time, you will be enlisting the support of the press and any alliances that you can find in the Santa Clara neighborhood. That may take a new public planning process outside of what you've done so far, but you want this to happen, so you can make it happen.

PARKS AND URBAN DESIGN

Mary Eysenbach: Our final faculty presentation is going to be Grover talking to us about parks and urban design. We all know that parks standing by themselves are certainly one subject area. But what's really critical is how parks interact with the total fabric of urban design. So, Grover is going to dispense at least part of his knowledge on that subject for us.

Grover Mouton: First of all, I want to say several things about this conference. I've attended a lot of mayor's institutes because I started the one for the south, the regional institutes. I've had about 55 mayors go through my program. And I have to say that I have not seen such a well-organized program as what the APA staff has done. I'm not meaning to be a pep leader. But I'll tell you this. If they had not prepared you and the staff correctly, this

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

would have been no value to you whatsoever, and they really have done it so well, and you were able to get immediately to the problems.

Then secondly, I haven't really seen such a group of mayors who really know what they're talking about. This is unbelievable, because a lot of mayors sometimes are off somewhere else half the time, and they're not focused on the issues. This group has been really well focused and has an enormous amount of credibility in office, which is just so wonderful to see, particularly at this time in our country where everybody's questioning their values. It's just great to see public officials taking their roles seriously. So since you're so good, maybe you'll run for Senate, which is what I hope you'll all do, because we need mayors in the Senate.

Now, let me tell you a little bit about parks and urban design. Urban design is a profession that people really don't understand, and I don't even think that the academics and the professionals really understand it. It changes. It's a roving profession. But it really focuses on cities and urban environments, and it deals with a group of blocks, that is the simplest way to look at it.

And always the prime person in urban design is the mayor. I've taught urban design and the community leaders are extremely important. But if there's a mayor that can really move things and become sensitive to the issues, the city really rocks, as my students say. So, I think that you are the actual urban designers of the city. And that's a testament to the way that you're looking at these problems. So you must always remember that, that you are the urban designers of the city, and you have the role and you have the responsibility.

So, what I want to do is just talk to you about a few little projects that I've worked on,

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

which may not inform you but maybe will amuse you. They're highly important projects, and the role I played, as an urban designer, was as a minor candidate in a major program, because the mayors and others took faith in this obscure individual, from southwest Louisiana.

All my jobs have involved parks and public open space, which is so important in cities. You really are the individuals that maintain these parks. I want to tell you these two stories just to show you the importance of the landscape and the landscape designer in parks.

The first job I was asked to do was go into Seneca Falls in upstate New York for the Women's Rights Memorial and straighten it out, because [Senator] Moynihan had dropped a tremendous amount of money into this park, and the National Park Service had done the same, and no one knew where it was going. And so, they called me up and they said you have to go to Seneca Falls. And I said, where is Seneca Falls? They said, upstate New York. And then what's this project about? They said, we've got a real problem. I said, well, you better get somebody else. I said I don't know anything about women's rights. Well, the Women's Rights Memorial has become an important site in the nation, and it's one of the most popular and really well used sites in America for the National Park Service. So, I went up there.

Now, I arrive and they tell me the first thing is that this one woman was married to an abolitionist and her parents were so upset they sent them to the furthest mill they owned in Seneca Falls. They were a very grand family. And they showed us the house. They had bought everything in sight, because they had so much money. They had just bought everything. All they were doing was acquiring and acquiring and acquiring. And so, I saw Kitty Stanton's house, which was very beautiful. And I said, well, this is great.

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

Then we saw some other houses, which were not so great. This was 15 years ago. There was one house that had columns on it and I said, oh, this is very nice, at last. I'm from the south, and we like temple architecture, Romans and you know. So, I said, well, that's very nice. And the woman says, well, that was added on in the forties and it's coming off. I said, well, it'll be just as ugly as the rest of the houses. Finally, they said, oh, my. What have we got—who is he? I said, I promise to never say another word.

Now, this is how the Women's Bill of Rights happened. This woman, Mrs. Kitty Stanton, had realized, because she was married to an abolitionist, she had less rights than slaves. This is a fact. They sent out an invitation to write the Women's Bill of Rights, and they did it in a church, in a park. And I said, well, what religion were these people? They said, well, we're not quite sure what religion they were. I said, what do you mean? I've never heard of such a thing. They said, well, they were Unitarians. I said, what did they do? They said, well, we're not quite sure. We then drive down the road in front of a Ford dealership and they tell me that the chapel is encased in the Ford dealership.

And I went, oh, really? I said, well, maybe that's where you ought to keep it, because women have been treated pretty horribly. Having a wife in business, I thought, why don't you just keep it in there and just show how really bad women have been treated? Well, they hated it. I said, well, let me tell you what you've got to do. You've got to hire some people and just take everything away and tell me what's left of that building. So they did. They came back and said, well, we have one board and we've got one sidewall and we've got a timber and we've got something else. I said, well, that's fabulous.

Well, then the National Park Service says, we're going to make a little chapel and

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

everybody's going to get to come in and we're going to tell the big story and we're going to have an altar. I said, oh, no, you're not, because I said, you know what? Those women could have been dancing on the altar. You have no idea what that religion was about. You can't do any of that. So, I said, what you have to do is just put a roof over the little sticks, and we'll buy the building across the street, you can tell the big story over there. They said, well, what happens in the winter? I said, I don't know, because I'm never coming back here again.

But you have to do the right thing. And they did it. They did the right thing. The interpretation is across the street in this fabulous building and it's a huge success. Now, if there had been a weak soul there, they would have let the National Park Service do this. So, you must absolutely be so correct in everything you do. You really do, because in the long run, it's going to pay off. They get upset with you, but they get over it. If you don't know what you're doing, you have to get someone near you that really does, and then you have to really listen to them.

I had this one mayor who called me and said, I just got elected. I want you to do my city. I said, okay, Eddie. Sit down. I said, listen, if I do your plan, you have to do it. You can't just run around the golf course saying, Grover Mouton is doing my master plan, which is what he wanted in the first place.

And so, what happened was, this guy, who knew zero about design, I went into his town, he has this fantastic little city, it's a beautiful gridded city, it's a new town that was founded in 1840, I said to him, Eddie here's your problem. It's not what you do. It's what you don't do. That's it.

But you know, Eddie, we can't tell anybody that, because they'll think you've lost

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

your mind, they'll think I've lost my mind, but that's the deal here. It's not what you do, it's what you don't do. Get it big time. This is your problem. You've got everybody leaving New Orleans because the education system is so terrible there and they can't afford to put their kids in school. It's \$10,000 a whack. So, everybody's driving over here and they're buying a house. If they're really loaded, they're here. The school system, the top 20 percent are at Harvard. Unbelievable. Over here, they're eating fried chicken in the back of the room and putting knives through the teacher's hands.

I'm not kidding. I hope our new mayor can do something about it. I said, your problem is everybody's getting in their car and they're all driving on the same road and bumping into each other, in their Lexuses and their Mercedes and everything else, and on their cell phones. I said, this is your problem, pal. But we can't tackle this problem in your first term, because that's who put you in office. So, I drove around and I see this fantastic trail, like he does, and I see it connecting all these little towns. So, I said, there it is. Here's our anchor tenant, Fry Development, we'll do a trailhead. So, I took the program, I did the one in the Civil Rights District for Victor Ashe, and I took the program, reworked it, and designed this beautiful little trailhead on the trail. I got the engineer and we put a \$3.6 million budget on it, and I said, go see Mr. Livingston, and we got the money.

We got \$3.6 million. Then I did a district. We turned this into a park. We wrote design guidelines. So, Eddie is now the super winner, and we're going into design guidelines on every major corridor in the city. This is a guy whose goal in life is Pebble Beach and all those kind of golf courses. Now he's like the mayor of Charleston—he's the Joe Riley of Louisiana. Can you imagine, this guy who is just a major golf guy? Because he's seeing the

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

value of a park, this is a children's park now, which is amazing, and the design guidelines.

Now, part of the problem, which was so good for Eugene, is that our design guidelines are too stringent. We have to go back and rewrite them, and it's a design issue. So, you get into those issues relative to this.

The next project was Birmingham and the Civil Rights District. So I'm sitting next to the mayor of Birmingham and he says, do you know what happened in 1963? He said, Martin Luther King came here. I said, oh, my God, that's worth \$30 million, easy. I said, this is one of the most significant movements. I said, I just finished the women's rights memorial. I said, do you have the church that they all went in? He said, I got the church. I said, oh, my God. How fabulous. You've got the whole church? Well, I took the whole movement, the entire civil rights movement, and did an urban design plan based on the movement, and brought great pride to the community, to the African American community.

I said to the mayor, I see the image of the policeman with the dog biting the back of the little boy. I go, oh, my God, this is Andy Warhol's image, who was a great friend of mine. And I went, holy moly. I said this is so powerful. So I did this suite of drawings to show the transition, that you can move between city, urban design, and concept.

The mayor's lieutenants are looking at me, like, God, where did they find this guy? And, of course, my team is saying, you can't show any of those drawings. You'll confuse them so much. You know, this is a big contract and how can you possibly begin this imagery business?

And I said listen, let me tell you what this is all about. Martin Luther King knew exactly what he was doing. He came here because Bill Connor was a nightmare, and the rest

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

of the town was a nightmare. He busted the whole movement. He embarrassed the Kennedys. He set it up and the images went all over the world. They went to Scandinavia and London and Paris and Bogotá, and America looked like horrors, and he did it.

So, the image is the face of the urban design problem. Can you imagine saying that to a mayor? He said, you're right. So, what we did is we took an entire movement and moved it to the park, to the church. I built a museum here, interpreted the whole thing, and interpreted it all over the city, and gave ownership to a community. This is where the children were blown up, where that man just went to jail. So, if you take the storylines and you impregnate them into the urban design fabric, you really move them. This won a national trust award. By the time this was finished, I'd been off the job eight to nine years. This is typical of an urban design. It doesn't bother me. Didn't make any difference.

Parks in an urban setting can become real anchor tenants if you look at them correctly. Then you have someone like Andrea whose whole life is public open space, you have someone like me who's really half developer and half designer, who really can see the development piece, because I want that revenue for the city, I want the tax base. When we do design guidelines, I say if this is going to stop development, we're going to rewrite it, and then everybody calms down.

But look at a park as not just public open space and a place to play, but as critical assets to the community by just putting a simple facility in there, which is absolutely correct to the historic notion of the town.

I'm also working with the only mayor on the Gulf Coast that doesn't have gaming, which means he's totally broke. I'm not knocking gaming, because the per capita income has

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

doubled in 10 years on the Gulf Coast, and the benefits are phenomenal. But this one little town called Long Beach simply is not going to have it. So, we have created a park on the beach, and we're putting a little interpretative center to get people there. They do have a great history because it's pre- New Orleans. It's an 18th century town. We're interpreting the little barrier islands, we're doing the islands and the woods. We're going to go to Senator Locke next week with the program all designed out, and they want to pump the money on this. I said, listen. You're wonderful, you're honest, and you don't have gambling. They're going to give you whatever you want. And they're all, like, we want to grow up.

I'm, like, oh, my God. Who cares if you want to grow up? I don't care if you want to grow up. You've got to get some money, man. You've got to get some money and we've got to get you an interpretive center. We've got to get an anchor tenant. Once we get the anchor tenant, we're going to get a developer in here. We'll start playing your game. But until we have that anchor tenant, we don't have any measure or any way to bring the tenant in. And then we've got this great canal system, drainages, and that's going to connect the city. And we're doing the rails to trails. It's all relative to parks.

These are the projects that I've worked on, and all of you have similar situations in your city, and you can do the exact same thing if you want to. Thank you.

BUFFALO: OLMSTED PARKS AND PARKWAY SYSTEM

Mary Eysenbach: Thank you, Grover, amusing and educational, as usual. Our next presentation is, as our last presentation, a little ironic, because we're looking at a park system that is one of the oldest in the United States, created by one of the premier designers in the

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

United States, Frederick Law Olmsted. We were interested in this case problem, because it is a problem not necessarily of Olmsted's designs, but certainly for cities on the East Coast and in the Midwest that are built out, have aging park systems and aging infrastructure, and need to know how we retrofit those systems using private partnerships to continue to serve the communities in which these facilities are. So, Mayor Masiello.

Mayor Masiello: Thank you very much, Mary. Let me preface my remarks by certainly thanking Mary and Megan and Jerome for the wonderful opportunity for myself and the other mayors this past several days to interact with one another, but also interact with many people here today that have some very helpful information and some significant ideas on how to help us work through some of our problems. Also, it's awfully tough to follow Grover, but I'll do my best in that regard.

Our Olmsted park system is one of the oldest and one of the best in America. Frederick Law Olmsted started it in the late 1860's, finished it in the late 1890's, and left us with a significant park system that I'm going to talk a little bit about, and also share with you some of the challenges of having this magnificent system. I have with me today our commissioner of public works, streets and parks, Joe Giambra, and also our great partner with the Olmsted Conservancy, Deborah Ann Trimble, who has been a strong ally for us and with us in our city.

The problem statement is a clear and simple one. We're looking for combined city conservancy and community mechanisms to restore and revitalize and maintain this historic Olmsted Park and Parkway system. Today, we're going to talk a little bit about vandalism and graffiti. But I must admit to all of you that I could probably take a day and go through a

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

whole host of issues that we're faced with and challenges that we're faced with that deal with maintenance, capital investment, and restoration of past mistakes made in our system. And with that, I invite all of you back to Buffalo, perhaps even next year, where we could have this forum in Delaware Park in a restored lodge, where you could see hands on some of the issues and some of the magnificence, but also some of the problems that we face.

Today we're here to discuss a myriad of those kinds of issues. Let me also say I wore this green shirt today because I'm green with envy in listening to the other mayors talk about the amount of resources, the amount of personnel they have in their parks departments. We have almost 1,300 acres of parkland in Buffalo, New York, and we have 70 parks. But our budget annually is \$4.8 million. That includes parks, recreation, and forestry, and we have a combined total of 62 employees, believe it or not.

The Olmsted Parks and Parkways are considered the first such system in the country by Olmsted. It represents one of his largest bodies of work. It's listed in the National Register of Historic Places, of which we're very proud. Of our 70 parks and 1,300 acres, it amounts to almost 75 percent of the total parkland in the city. It's a huge quality of life factor in our city.

Every morning, you can pass many of our parks at 7:00 in the morning and people are walking, jogging, and interacting with nature and their dogs and what not. Late at night, you can see people playing soccer or baseball. Our parks are heavily used, and we want that to be the case. Also, we have been strong on having a cleaner and greener city. As a matter of fact, through the Olmsted Conservancy, this city administration, and many volunteers, we've planted thousands of trees in our parks over the last several years.

I listen to many mayors talk about creating a green necklace, waterway, or trailway

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

around their park system. With our park system, we already have that. We're very blessed. Not only do we have six Olmsted parks, but we also have seven circles and seven parkways that comprise our Olmsted park system. Let me also say, within the system, besides Olmsted, we're blessed to have significant architecture in our city. Frank Lloyd Wright has five homes in Buffalo, several of which are contiguous to Delaware Park and other parks. H. H. Richardson has a phenomenal former mental health facility that is in the National Historic Register also that's adjacent to the system. Louis Sullivan, E. B. Green, Joseph Allicot, many phenomenal architects have left wonderful treasures in our city along with the park system.

Let me share with you some of the qualities of our parks. Delaware Park is our premier park. It's 350 acres and contains 42-acre Hoyt Lake, which is in my back yard—I'm very fortunate—and major cultural resources, including Albright Knox Art Gallery, one of the premier modern art facilities in America, the Historical Society Museum, and the zoo. It is heavily used, from walking and jogging to baseball fields, soccer fields, basketball courts, and an 18-hole golf course, which should be a 9-hole course, but very difficult to change.

Also, in Delaware Park we have the corporate challenge, which is the third largest corporate challenge in America. We also reinstated the Fourth of July celebration, where we had 60,000 people in that park three weeks ago. The park and the events were phenomenal. Unfortunately, there was some graffiti vandalism after that event.

Martin Luther King Park, 51 acres in size, was originally intended by Olmsted for formal civic displays, including military drills and parades. This park includes a museum of science, a magnificent casino that needs work, and a science magnet school constructed in the park. It is in the heart of the African American community, and it poses some significant

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

problems for us because we have an abandoned wading pool, four acres in size.

We have not been able to restore the wading pool or find a new alternative to it because of the significant cost involved, and because of our need to adhere to the requirements of the state historic preservation office and the county and the state health department. We do have a master plan that's been created in working with the community. Those are some issues that we are faced with Martin Luther King Park.

Front Park, another wonderful, beautiful park. My parents were born and raised near that park. When I was a kid, I spent a lot of time in it, it was a magnificent park that unfortunately today is just a shadow of its past. It's 26 acres, was our most formal park, featured stunning views of the Niagara River, Lake Erie, and the Canadian shoreline, and it was a heavily used park. Today, it is not, and the reason is that it's adjacent to the Peace Bridge, the main entrance and gateway in and out of Buffalo and western New York. It's fallen into disrepair. It's adjacent to a toll plaza which thousands of trucks and cars a day go by. Currently, the good news is that we are building a new Peace Bridge. There is a significant effort to do an EIS that will include not only the bridge and the plaza, but we have forced the Peace Bridge authority and our neighbors to form a strategy that will include the restoration of this park in the future.

South Park is 163 acres. It's right on the southern boundary of Buffalo's 42 square miles. It has an arboretum and with a 21-acre lake, tree and shrub specimen garden, and conservatory. This is a magnificent facility. It currently is in full use. Erie County has invested in that particular facility. Here again we have developed a master plan with the conservancy and in the neighborhood for this particular location. It also includes a 9-hole

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

golf course, and it is not as heavily used as the other parks in our city. It's probably the least vandalized, and it has the most natural aspect as its original design included.

Adjacent to South Park is Cazenovia Park, 191 acres. Its principal features and design include a 20-acre pond, a play area, winding drives, concert areas, formal fountain and flowerbeds, and the casino building and facilities for boat storage. This park is challenged by the fact that the casino is in disrepair. There's a lot of graffiti on that particular facility. However, this park has become a neighborhood-oriented park, very heavily used, and it requires a lot of maintenance.

Riverside Park is at the northernmost boundary of the city, and is 22 acres in size. The original features included the footbridge over the Erie Canal Fountain and a music court, minnow pools, and ballfields. It's also heavily used and serves as another neighborhood park. It is not as formal as Olmsted had designed it to be. We do have a big Fourth of July celebration in the park. It does have the Towpath Festival and does have some beautiful panoramas to it. It overlooks the Niagara River. And here again, unfortunately, a mistake of the past, I know people talk about Robert Moses in one vein, I sometimes think of him in a different vein, because he separated a magnificent park and a magnificent view with a throughway, a major highway, that disconnects the people from that neighborhood and that park from the water, a tragic mistake.

Major issues we're facing are basically maintaining the parks with diminishing resources. As I'd mentioned to you before, correcting past disinvestments and development decisions, and we're going to talk about some of the successes we've had there restoring the old and creating new parkway connections, which we're doing right now, and certainly

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

counteracting vandalism, which is a major problem, unfortunately, for us in our city.

In maintaining the parks, as I mentioned earlier, they're overextended. For recreation issues, we have a big problem, as many of you do. Soccer fields, we need more of them, and the ones we do have that are in the Olmsted parks are heavily used. They used for games and for practice. So, Joe is constantly under a lot of pressure because people want to practice on nice, pristine fields, and they want to play on nice, pristine fields. In Buffalo, New York, when it rains, you can't maintain them. You've got to wait for it to dry out. So, we have a shortage of soccer fields. Do we use the Olmsted parks to create more active recreational opportunities in them? Where do we find other places to do that? Those are some of the real challenges that we face in dealing with those venues in our Olmsted parks.

Regular maintenance of parks is difficult based on the distance between the parks and the driving time. The main facility for the parks department is in Delaware Park. However, we have to get equipment and personnel to all the parks. There's a significant time lag between where Delaware Park and the Delaware Park barns or facilities are located to where the other parks are to cut grass. Lean staff resources make it challenging. I do want to admit to you, though, that because of the conservancy, because of the significant volunteer effort in Buffalo, that we are getting more partners and allies in helping us to do special events like tree trimming or park cleanup and we're going to continue to develop those kinds of off budget resources.

Correcting past disinvestments and development decisions. Unfortunately, there have been two significant crimes created by past engineers, architects, and planners. One was putting the Scajaquada Expressway right through Delaware Park. Robert Searns, who is with

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

us today, is from Buffalo, New York, and I know he remembers the beautiful good old days of Buffalo and western New York. But the Scajaquada Expressway separates the east and west side of Delaware Park. We separated Hoyt Lake, the golf course, and the science museum from the art museum. At this particular time we have a committee together, with the cooperation of the state of New York, to downgrade the parkway to a park road, with pedestrian crossings. There have been a series of community meetings. This isn't going as fast as I would like, but there is a process in place.

I did mention to you about the Peace Bridge, and that's in the northernmost point of Front Park. There's been the disinvestment in the park, but also disinvestment in the use of Front Park. At one time, it was the most heavily used, because it overlooks the Niagara River and Lake Erie. Again, because of the EIS of the new bridge and the new plaza, we are going to demand that there be a significant reinvestment in money and resources to recreate the ambiance and the beauty of Front Park.

Restoration of old and creating new parkway connections. Nearly all our parks were once connected by parkways. The emerald necklace really connected our parks with parkways and circles. The greatest loss is Humboldt Parkway, eliminated when the Kensington Expressway was built in the 1960's, and a real tragedy. When I was a child, Humboldt Parkway was a tree lined, beautiful canopied parkway that was magnificent, with beautiful homes lining both sides of the parkways. It was marvelous. They put an expressway right through the heart of that particular community, eliminated the parkway, and destroyed the property values, just so they could get people in and out of the city faster.

We are talking about capping over 1,000 feet of this particular highway so that we

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

can reconnect the east and west sides of that particular neighborhood. Right now, you have to get in your car, drive down to the next intersection and go all the way around to get to the other side. It's divided the neighborhood and caused disinvestment in the neighborhood. We're talking with the state about capping 1,000 feet of this so that you can have a new connection between the east and west side of Humboldt Parkway.

We're also talking about restoring and creating new parkway connections. Here again, we've been successful with this. Through the good work of the conservancy, in bringing partners together, we have restored Soldier's Circle. McClellan and McKinley Circles were restored last year with state funding and some Buffalo funding. That reconnected Cazenovia Park and South Park in south Buffalo. Currently we're putting in new circles that were in Olmsted's original plan at Symphony Circle and Farrow Street. It's interesting, because while the public in the neighborhood really wanted this to happen, it is not happening without some criticism. We are now getting people complaining that it's slowing down the traffic. Why are you spending money on putting circles back and beautiful lamps which will be included with beautiful forestry and shrubs and what not, and nice statues, based on his original plan? We are getting some criticism, which we'll take because we're right.

But it really adds significant value to the people who live there. They love that traffic slowness. They love the ambiance that these circles bring to that particular neighborhood. As a matter of fact, just in south Buffalo last month, when they dedicated the circles, they had a major parade between the two circles. It really brought out a tremendous amount of enthusiasm by the people. We are going to continue to do that in our city.

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

The issue that we're here to talk about a little bit, though, is vandalism, especially graffiti. It gets repeated oftentimes. A magnificent, marvelous bridge in the Delaware Park has been tagged repeatedly. This is a constant problem we're having in our parks and around our parks, and we need to find a way in which we can use volunteers, the conservancy, and other stakeholders of our community to clean these sites up as quickly as possible. It's a major problem for us. We're doing it also in law enforcement. We have an investigation going on in our city because of the severity of it. But also, we're going to have to have a way in which we can clean up expeditiously, not only the public aspect of what it's done to our parks, but also there's been significant damage to private sector businesses and homes in our city by these criminals.

The natural beauty being tarnished by this graffiti has to stop, and we have to find a way to clean that up quickly and restore it to its natural beauty. We are fortunate to have agencies and organizations involved. The Buffalo Parks Department, Public Works and Streets are interacting closely with the mayor's impact team, which I put together. It's a collaboration of all city departments with their resources and their personnel that go into one particular area, along with Keep Western New York Beautiful, another organization that's interacting with our city government in cleaning up our city, planting trees, planting gardens, et cetera, and then obviously networking with the Buffalo Olmsted Park Conservancy.

We believe this team, along with other stakeholders, will help us expedite cleanup and create new investment. This spring we did our second annual tree planting in the Olmsted Parks, a weekend of volunteerism where trees are donated or they're paid for, whatever we can get, along with significant help from the public volunteering their time and

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

effort under the guise of the parks department and conservancy. It's a phenomenal outpouring of volunteerism. Ask them and they will come. It's amazing how many people gave their time and effort over the two-day weekend to plant trees, the second annual event that we've had.

Through the great work of Deborah Trimble and Joe Giambra in this administration, we have specific parks and circle community groups. This is not a top-down operation. We believe in building an inventory and infrastructure of allies from the ground floor up. We're fortunate because we don't have the personnel, we don't have the resources. But we do when you combine the talents of the public, the people, all these organizations that are actively involved with us, and we don't ask them to do a lot. We asked the people who live near Symphony Circle to redesign the circle, plant the trees and the flowers, and help maintain it with us. We paid some money, they paid some money, and it was a tremendous success. But if you look at this list, to me, the conservancy has fostered a growth of facilities and community steering committees for each of the six parks and seven circles in the city. That's a real credit to them. But it's also a credit to our administration, and I say that humbly, because we're not going to dictate or tell somebody what to do; we want to work with them. We don't have a pride of ownership. We have a pride of sharing responsibility and maintaining and investing in those particular parks and circles and parkways.

Our criteria for success, while there are many issues in the park management and maintenance, we want to select a specific, identifiable problem and solve it with you today, and we have selected graffiti removal as our first priority. We think we can make a difference, clean this up, and make a statement to those doing damage. But we need some

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

thoughtful dialogue on how we do that. An action plan has to be created, creating a combined city/conservancy community maintenance plan. We are working on that as we speak and we'll be having some announcements in the near future. We're encouraging renewed stewardship of the park to address graffiti removal, among other issues. We are working on an adopt-a-park program and other volunteer-based programs to ensure ongoing maintenance of our parks and we're proud of that.

How does this affect my agenda? I want the restoration of the Olmsted Parks and Parkway system to be one of the legacies of this administration. In many cases, it's very strong. In some cases, we have some reinvestment to make, both in maintenance and capital. But I really think we have to maintain, restore, and respect this important asset, and the legacy of Olmsted has to be a legacy of every mayor's tenure, because of what it means to the quality of life, the psyche, the image, and the attitude of our city. Current priorities of my administration are creating a sustainable park maintenance program for the system and wisely using the limited capital investment that we have and continuing the cooperative and legally binding relationship we have with the conservancy for the betterment of the system.

And here again, to me, cleaning and greening, our city begins with our parks and our parkways and our neighborhoods.

One of the questions I have, how can Buffalo best use the conservancy to join in the active maintenance and management of the system? Again, we have no hang-ups. We don't have any ownership. We believe we need to share that. And to be honest with all of you, we're fortunate to have Deborah and the conservancy board working arm-in-arm with us. That is a good starting point. Maybe you have some ideas in what other ways we can

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

collaborate together. How do we get the private philanthropic community to invest in the capital program? Deborah will talk about that later, because we're in the process of doing that, and she is setting that up.

Very important, there is some significant old money in Buffalo. There are some foundations in Buffalo, and we are trying to provide a compelling argument for them to reinvest in this park. But also, having six parks and seven parkways and seven circles designed by Olmsted, can we designate Buffalo as an Olmsted city? Is there merit to that? Is there value to that? Is there a way we can take advantage of that designation, not only locally, but also nationally and internationally in our ability to attract attention, but also attract resources? We're blessed to have that asset. But we need to market it, not only internally, with our own people, and many do not realize what a significant asset that is, but also nationally, so that we can get some attention to our city.

So, ladies and gentlemen, those are the challenges. Now we need to hear from you as to some of the ways in which we can deal with graffiti and some of the other issues that I've talked about to you. I'm serious about inviting you to Buffalo next year or whenever you can. I'd love to hold this forum in Delaware Park in a lodge restored by the Wallace-Reader's Digest Funds and by the conservancy, which secured the funds to do that. I think you would have a wonderful time, and a great understanding of what kind of legacy this means to a city and what needs to be done to make sure that it maintains its value. Thank you very much.

Mayor Harris: It's remarkable that a city that has such a park heritage has so few resources for its parks. One suggestion, you might look at separating out parks from public works and roads. That seems an unusual place from an organizational standpoint to lump it

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

in. Perhaps a separate parks department might make a statement of the importance of parks and that we're going to give it the resources it needs.

Mayor Masiello: You know, Mayor, that's a great comment. But we did a new charter revision several years ago. The commission put streets, parks, and public works, which were all separate departments, together in one department. The reason for that does have merit. Prior to that collaboration, because of civil service laws and other kinds of problems, we weren't able to use contractual employees to do one or the other chores. By combining the labor force into one department, now we can maximize the ability to utilize park workers where we need them or garbage laborers when we need them or other kinds of laborers. Prior to that, we were even more limited than now.

Also, the resource problem is troubling to me as the leader of the city. We just went through a difficult budget process where we reduced spending by \$30 million, that's 10 percent, that's a lot of money, because of significant loss of state revenues. But the problem we have as a city government in the northeast, and I don't know if this is relevant to your cities, is that 69 percent of my \$270 million budget now is police, fire, and fringe benefits. For both this administration and the prior administration, for the last decade and a half the reductions in personnel have come from non-uniform services, because the public sentiment is don't touch police and don't touch fire. Five years ago I laid off 32 police officers and closed four fire companies. I may not be around much longer, to be honest with you. But the fact of the matter is those things had to be made, because I couldn't cut anymore in the parks department or the streets department or the other functions of government.

Mayor Harris: Do you have the ability to contract out parks maintenance?

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

Mayor Masiello: No, we don't. But one of the things we've been successful in doing, and it's to Deborah's and Joe's credit, and it's to the other stakeholders in our community, is that we've been able to get volunteers to help us. The union would never have allowed planting trees in our city's parks five, six, or seven years ago. That's their work. Now, because of the great volunteer effort, we just go do it and they really don't fight us on it. There are other major cleanups we have in our city, from the mayor's impact team to Keep America Beautiful to Buffalo in Bloom to Greening Buffalo. We have so many new organizations that contribute their time and their resources to augment what we're doing.

Mayor Harris: Let me just make a couple comments on the graffiti. We had a huge graffiti problem. We've pretty much beaten it, and you may be able to benefit from some of these approaches. If you have particular areas that are repeatedly hit, you might want to put a video camera system in to be able to identify the culprits and make arrests. Adopt a "parents pay" program, where if you catch the kids who did it, the parents pay to repaint the bridge or repaint the community center. It's amazing how much more responsive they will get.

Mayor Masiello: You did that, Mayor? The parents paid for it?

Mayor Harris: We tried to go to court and have a judge provide the penalty to the parent to reimburse the city for the cost. The other thing I might suggest is restrictions on the sale of spray paint and big magic markers. Most of our tagging was spray paint cans and the great, big, thick magic markers. So the places that sold those wouldn't allow kids under 18 to buy those things, and that also helped. What we also found, at one point, we had every cabinet official with cans of spray paint in their car matching the beiges and greens and grays of the boxes and the restrooms and what not, and whenever they saw graffiti, they painted it

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

out. I remember I had one tagger in my community on my way home. He would paint the site, and it wouldn't be up but a few hours and I'd have painted it out. He'd paint it again, and I'd paint it out, he'd paint it again, I'd paint it out. After a while, he gave up. That sounds like a funny approach, but it really works, because after a while, the benefit they get from their gang members being full of pride that their logo is up there, is not there.

And the final thing that we did that was successful was we had a graffiti busters van, with the big logo, "Graffiti Busters," and all they was drive around all day painting out graffiti everywhere, wherever it was. Then, like your adopt a park program, we had community groups adopt blocks. The Lions Club adopted this block, and the Boy Scouts adopted that block. And every weekend, we would provide unlimited supplies of paint and brushes to match the various things, and they would take care of maintaining that block and just keep painting it. And after a while, the kids just gave up and quit. Then four or five years later, it peaked again, and then we did it all over again.

Mayor Masiello: We have two levels of graffiti. We have some elaborate work being done that you saw on the bridge. We believe those are art students at Buffalo State College. We're close to apprehending them and proving that they're doing it. There are also the cases where any kind of spray paint will do. Maybe the video cameras and other things you suggested, especially in dealing with parents paying for this stuff, would be helpful.

Cynthia Girling: You mentioned two things that made me wonder about some of the urban planning relationship to the parks issues. One was you mentioned disinvestment in some of the neighborhoods around some of the parks, and the second one was the transportation errors that have been made in the city. To what extent is there the flood of

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

middle class out to suburbs that we've seen in a lot of the northeastern cities, and to what extent might that be a part of what is going on with the park system in Buffalo?

Mayor Masiello: Well, in 1950 Buffalo had 600,000 people. Now we have fewer than 300,000 people. In 1950 Erie County had approximately 1 million people. Fifty years later, they still have approximately a million people. So, there's been a shift in the population. Buffalo used to be two-thirds of Erie County. Now it's one-third. Those people have left for suburbia, and it's caused significant damage because of disinvestment in neighborhoods, but also the transportation infrastructure is damaged in these neighborhoods, too. So, it's been a combination of things, not probably unlike other northeastern cities.

Cynthia Girling: So, to what extent is there work being done on the urban planning and urban design side to try to bring people back into Buffalo?

Mayor Masiello: Well, for instance, on Richmond Avenue, what we're doing is restoring the circles, as I mentioned to you. They were part of the original design of Olmsted, in south Buffalo, and in McKinley Parkway and McClellan Parkway, the same thing. Those add significant value back to those neighborhoods. As a matter of fact, just two days ago, there was a major front page which I was happy about for a change that alluded to the significant rise in housing prices and housing values in that whole Delaware central corridor, north and south, in our city. That's a result of our investment in parks, in cleaning and greening our city, in groups like Buffalo in Bloom, Greening Buffalo, the conservancy, et cetera, and reinvesting in our parks and our architecture and in just cleaning and greening the city. It's created a significant investment in housing in our city, in certain neighborhoods in our city. Certainly we've got major problems in other neighborhoods. Also, we're in the

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

process of doing a downtown housing agenda. Many of our vacant buildings in downtown are left vacant. Retail isn't coming back in high-rise and urban centers.

We're currently putting together a plan to convert many of those buildings, as Wall Street did and other cities are doing now, into downtown loft housing. That will create new investment and a new neighborhood in downtown where people are living instead of just working and recreating, because we have such a significant cultural component, waterfront component, in our downtown community. But we're challenged in many of our low-income neighborhoods because of the disinvestment and the exodus of people. Buffalo's housing stock is the oldest in America. It's made out of wood. We have the fewest new homes built since 1950; the second city in America is Rochester.

My goal and game plan is to make Buffalo a great city of 300,000. Everybody wants to be what they used to be. It isn't going to happen. What we're trying to do is stop the exodus, and in many neighborhoods it's getting people coming back in. And if I ever can you get all to Buffalo, our waterfront is phenomenal. While we do have high-end housing on the waterfront, we are looking at ways in which we can create tourism and tourist-related attractions based on the architecture of Olmsted, and the Erie Canal, which we were the terminus for, but also to create housing opportunities in those specific areas.

Andrea Riner: Well, I just want to say I don't think your problem is money. I think it's the weather. It sounds like it'd be a great place to live. I've been through there.

Mayor Masiello: I'm glad you said that. On that point, the weather isn't an issue, but it is. The weather creates a lot of wear and tear on our parks from December through March because of snow, salt, and heavy use of plows and things like that. And because of winter,

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

when spring hits, we have an awesome responsibility of getting these parks in shape. If we have a wet spring like we did this year, it sets everything back. Little League couldn't get in there as often as they wanted. It created a significant amount of problem, unlike Honolulu, Eugene, and other places where you have nice climate year around. So, we do have a problem in that regard. But our weather isn't as bad as everybody thinks it is.

Andrea Riner: Bad timing then. We're also in a public works department, and I see the benefits of the public works director leading us. That person is in a much better position to work with police and fire to get us on the map, more than a parks director would be, or recreation. Those things still seem like secondary services. So, I agree there. What I would say is that what we've done is elevate the parks to some extent, even though we're not a separate department. As the head of parks planning, I'm given a lot more leeway to not necessarily go through the chain of command. We're doing a major image campaign with a logo and outreach and promoting ourselves. I would think that might be almost more beneficial than looking at the city as the Olmsted city, because that will get you some ownership internal to the organization.

When you were talking about your active recreational facilities, one thing we did a couple years ago was go in with our school district to put in synthetic surface fields. They wanted football stadiums; we needed more soccer fields. We did one at each high school, shared the cost. We get 24/7 use on those for the communities. We negotiated a usage agreement. That was really seen as a major win in a number of areas, plus we didn't have to buy property. We put it on existing school property. That might be something for that capping project that might work.

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

And I'm sure you have lots of different funding sources that you're using, but some of the things that came to mind—we tapped into transportation funds, because a street tree is seen as a transportation infrastructure piece. So county road funds and transportation SDC's are contributing to those trees being installed and maintained.

We collect user fees for storm water based on impervious surface, and also storm water SDC's. Those go to do acquisition and enhancement and development around storm water lakes, wetlands, rivers, the parks SDC's. I would say take some of those incredible facilities you have and do a business plan and turn them into places for weddings and family reunions and Olmsted training—that would be fabulous, I would think, to get that approach.

The last thing I would add, we have a program of neighborhood matching grants, where we put matching money to any idea that a neighborhood will bring forward. And if they match us with dollars and volunteer services, we're behind them and let them do what they want, and it gets your community investment and gets projects on the ground that generate more interest. The last point I had was all those organizations that you've got going, is there somebody whose sole job is pulling them together all the time, talking about these issues? Because it does seem you need to have somebody that that's all they do.

Mayor Masiello: Some good suggestions. Some we're already doing and others are ones that we certainly have to consider doing.

Mayor Torrey: I would really urge you to look at the synthetic surface. First of all, we have been able to make a strong partnership with our schools that didn't necessarily exist before. The only complaint we have gotten on those systems in all of those high schools, some of the people who live nearby hate the fact that we use them all the time. There's too

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

much action in their back yards. Rotary clubs this year have a challenge placed to them by the head of the international organization to provide to their communities a legacy project. If you were to identify one of those aspects within your park system that you could assign to the rotary clubs—in Eugene we have seven clubs, so I’m assuming in Buffalo there must be a heck of a lot more than seven—and get them to work together on that, I’m confident you could convince them of that. And secondly, they will take a lot of personal pride in doing that, and many of those Rotarians actually don’t live in your city, they just work in your city.

In fact, in Eugene, the rotary clubs put our amphitheater in our park together, and one rotary club put our historical rose garden together. Another one, an international company, the Nike Corporation in Beaverton, Oregon, makes synthetic surfaces out of old running shoes. Beaverton happens to be right next door to the city of Portland. In Portland, Nike finished every park surface in the city, free of charge, as an example of giving back to the community. You’re a long way if you can make some contact with the Nike folks, tell them about your concerns, tell them about your needs. I’m not so sure that if you took the Buffalo Bills and the Nikes and whatever other big organizations you have, there might be somebody willing to make a big impact.

Mayor Masiello: Dunlap Tire is also in the town of Buffalo.

Mayor Torrey: In this particular case, they used old running shoes. And they’re great, wonderful surfaces. With regard to graffiti, we haven’t been able to accomplish this yet, because we’re not quite big enough, I’m not so sure that you would have this same problem, if you run your graffiti people who are doing the damage through your municipal court. We have road crews. If people do something wrong in our community, because we don’t have

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

sufficient capacity in our jail, they go to work on the weekends cleaning the roadsides. I would think it would be a tremendous opportunity to get those people, in addition to whoever had the idea of charging the parents, assuming the parents could afford it, have them go out on weekends and clean up that graffiti. Have them do it themselves, under your direction.

Another thing, we were here in Reno Thursday night when we opened a new park. Actually, it was a refurbished park. I haven't seen the final work. So, to make sure that I could at least tell Andrea that I had been there, I drove out Thursday morning, before I got on the plane to come out here, and in this new refurbished park, somebody had put graffiti on the backboards. So, I called the city councilor who's responsible for that area, and I said, you ought to call the press, have a ladder out there, and be spray painting out the graffiti on the backboard the same day. I hope he did it. He said he would do it. We'll all hold him up for it if he didn't. One thing I would suggest you not do is not one of these graffiti walls, because what it does, it ends up creating more damage.

Now, there are people in Eugene who will tell me I'm all wrong about saying that. But we looked carefully about what happened when we put a graffiti wall up there. They do paint the wall, but they also paint around the wall, and you don't need that. And I don't know if you can do this in your city. We have a real shortage of maintenance money for roads in our city, and we're anticipating putting before the citizens of Eugene something called a transportation utility fee. It is a fee that everyone in this community will pay, and the money will go specifically for maintenance of roads, not any new roads, but maintenance. We've got an existing park program. If it would be possible, maybe you could go out for a park utility fee specifically identified for fixing things. And I would urge you, if you do decide to do that,

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

to tell them well in advance that these are the specific things we're going to do. The first \$100,000 is going to fix up some of those beautiful casino things that you have there.

By the way, one of those would be great for a rotary club to take on, to bring it back and to maintain it. I could just keep going on. I wish you the best of luck. I cannot believe what it would have been like to terminate 30 police officers and still be standing.

Mayor Masiello: Well, that's a difficult situation. As mayors, when you have budget problems... I had all my exempt employees take less expensive healthcare plans. But the unions would not. We are the only city in the northeast that has all two-person patrol cars. I tried to get one-person patrol cars in low crime areas and at low crime times. They never thought I would do what I did, would get it through the council. But it's not without a lot of pain and a lot of problems. But if we can get through this, in the next couple years, we'll be a lot stronger financially and be able to build a stronger base. But I don't know if I'll be around.

Bob Searns: A couple thoughts, and maybe you're already doing this. I was thinking about how to bring the Olmsted legacy into the 21st century and make it relevant to a broader mass of people. The concept is the Olmsted greenway loop, which Olmsted was fond of doing. He proposed it to Portland and a number of other places. But if you start at Riverside Park, over on the Niagara River, I think Riverside Park can be the terminus of a cross-state greenway, the Erie Canal corridor, which has tremendous potential. And I would suggest that the mayors of Utica, Buffalo, Albany, Rochester, and Schenectady get together and redouble that commitment to make that corridor come together as both a biking and a boating corridor, because that is an awesome asset. Then you've got the waterfront trail and greenway, much

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

of which is built along the Niagara. Come down to the Tiff Farm and follow the Buffalo River, come up and curl around and come through the east side neighborhoods, and back to Delaware Park, with the other loop that comes down through the Elmwood Avenue area and coming around.

So, there's a loop within a loop. I know a lot of this is already being done and being built, but if people can visualize one day this loop with the connection to Canada and the connection going south, as a bicycle route and a pedestrian route and boulevard feature area.

The other thing I would do is celebrate that with an annual event. In New York City in May they shut down even the FDR freeway for 30,000 bicyclists that get to ride around the five boroughs. I don't know if you'd do something like that in Buffalo, but this is about a 25-mile ride, with all these cultural places along the way, so maybe it's a gourmet tour and you charge people \$50 to make that ride. That might be a way to generate some revenue and begin to celebrate this loop. Maybe you can even do a ride at night. Maybe it's a moonlight ride. But I think there's that opportunity.

The other thing I wondered about is the creation of a metropolitan cultural fine arts district that this could be part of, and maybe you guys could explore this. I know that fiscally things are difficult in Erie County. But these amenities, the Albright Knox and the historical museum and these other features, are really metropolitan features. I don't know if they're being paid for metropolitan-wise. I know in Denver we passed a metro cultural fine arts district that generates funding for these kinds of programs. That was another little side thought that I wondered about.

Are more opportunities for schools in the parks? I think the magnet school at the

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

science museum sounds like an innovative step. I notice some of those other conservatory buildings and some of those casinos could those be used as similar school facilities, maybe at Tiff Farm have a magnet school for ecological studies. So possibly having an educational nexus to this loop once you establish it. Those are just a few things that struck me.

Mayor Masiello: Those are some nice ideas. Do you want to respond to that?

Debbie Trimble: I just wanted to make one comment. The greenway link you just showed has even more potential, because if you continue north from Riverside Park, you will end up at the Niagara Reservation, which Olmsted designed, the first state park in the country. So, it has even more value from a regional standpoint. As far as the cultural idea that you had, the area between Delaware and Martin Luther King Park has coalesced into a geographical cultural district called the Olmsted Crescent, which we've just started, and we're using it as the heart of the cultural tourism movement in Buffalo. We have some seed money from Erie County to begin to move that forward a bit more.

Mayor Masiello: Getting back to the cultural assets, we've been pounding on Erie County to establish a cultural asset fund, similar to what they did in Pittsburgh, but every city's different and every region's different. We'd like to make the parks part of it. The museums and institutions are used by about 75 percent of those who come from the county and not the city. Now, the parks are a different story. Most of the people that use the parks live in the city. But we were successful in getting the county to look at setting up a fund, \$1.2 million is where they're starting, to help fund some of the major cultural institutions and take that burden off of our back, because we just can't afford it. We're making a little progress, so hopefully that will lead to more progress in the future. But it's not without confrontation.

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

Tom Fox: I really want to reinforce the synthetic field idea. We've installed some of them on non-park sites, even the roofs of parking facilities, and they're heavily used, and they're safe. That casino that you have there, I don't know if you're familiar with the beach chalet in Golden Gate Park, but they took a maintenance facility similar to the casino and did a restaurant up on the top which funded an interpretive center down below it, and it's extremely successful. One of the things that could help, you notice in European parks that they have food, they have more of a sense of use of the park after dark in some ways, and a lot of safety in the park comes from having more eyes on the park.

They have a "V-cops" program out of a veteran's shelter in Queens where homeless vets get these green blazers that have a bright yellow "V cop" on the back of it. All they have is a walkie-talkie. They have no enforcement power. But they go out in teams of five or six, a walking patrol, and they report any instances they see to the local police department. It gives them a way to feel like they're part of the community. It gives you people who are trained to spot things in the evening, if you will.

Another thing is your police department. Do police precincts include your park districts? You might look at the borders of your precincts. Some cities have been successful by including parks within the precinct boundaries, so that your crime statistics are not only generated by your instances of crime in the neighborhoods, but they're also generated by the instances of crime in the parks within the precinct boundaries, because sometimes if the crime doesn't happen on the city streets, it's not registered against that precinct's overall crime rate. I don't know what your precinct boundaries are, but that might be one way.

Another is something that's been successful in New York are urban park rangers

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

corps, which started about 25 years ago, that does both interpretation and enforcement, so that they have not only an educational ability, but they have a summons book in their back pocket. Not only the over 18 to buy a spray can, but in New York City spray paint has to be under lock and key, so that a lot of these kids don't buy these spray cans, they boost them. So, every art supply store and such has a little screened area where they keep stuff under lock and key, and when they sell it, they have to open it up to sell it, so the kids can't just walk through the store, stuff something in their pocket and go.

The other thing is education in your school system regarding the impacts of graffiti. Maybe involve the college in doing arts education programs and things like that in local schools. I know in L.A. and San Francisco, a lot of the handball courts and property within the school property is decorated on an annual basis by kids doing contests, by holding award ceremonies for the people with the best designs in the design classroom, then they go out and they get a chance to implement it on the courts.

And lastly, looking outside, I belong to the State Council on Waterways. We're supposedly promoting the Erie Canal, and we seem to be strong from Rochester on down. Maybe we'll turn some of these people on to you folks so that you can extend your northern boundary back into the canal. They're talking about a canal chamber of commerce and getting the canal corporation a little more interested in biking.

You have seven circles, seven parkways, and only six parks. But you've got the triple seven if you include that other park right outside.

Mayor Masiello: You know, Tom, I don't mean to pass the buck to Deborah, but I do respect her opinion. Several of you have mentioned synthetic playing fields. I'm not sure that

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

that would be acceptable to the Olmsted people.

Tom Fox: No, not within the park. Not necessarily within the park.

Andrea Riner: I suggested the school property.

Mayor Masiello: What you're saying is locating other kinds of parkland and other kinds of spaces and using synthetic turfs in those particular spaces to take the burden off the Olmsted park space. That's a good suggestion.

Mark Beede: My questions relate to the interrelationship between the city and the conservancy, recognizing what appear to be some significant difficulties with resources in the city. Looking over the information here, it looks as if the city's budget for last year was around \$4.8 million for parks and recreation. And if you look at the conservancy, Deborah, it looks like you've been kicking some butt there. In 1998 you raised \$140,000; that's increased to \$1.3 million, which would be a significant percentage when compared to the overall budget for parks and recreation. My questions are: What do you perceive the rate of growth to be for the conservancy? What is the conservancy's capacity to help, perhaps in the number of volunteers? How many volunteers do you have? What's the projected rate of growth for volunteers? Is there room to grow there? Just as I've asked, is there room to grow with the amount of funds that you might be able to generate in the private sector? Also, how is the budget of the conservancy connected or interlinked with the budget of the city? Are you working together in terms of the budget process in that regard? And also, are your priorities pretty much the same, which would allow for the interlinking?

So as a potential solution, or at least a step in the right direction for the resource difficulties that the city may have, is there room for growth in the private sector via the

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

foundation? And then, on the graffiti side of things, I've read about New York, where Mayor Guiliani really attacked the graffiti issue and made some tremendous inroads there, along the same lines as what Mayor Harris has just described. As far as I understand, the immediate removal of the graffiti seemed to be tremendously effective in helping the problem.

Joe Giambra: I'll let Debbie answer most of those questions. What I wanted to say was since I signed the agreement in 1995 with the conservancy, we had an understanding right from the start that I was going to use our scarce resources for parks, whether it be capital or O&M, to take care of the day-to-day responsibilities that we have such as cutting the grass, keeping the golf course playable, and replacing backboards. I challenged the conservancy to get the funds that they wanted to do the restoration of the Olmsted legacy, of the Olmsted ideals of the parks. So, with that said, I'll let Debbie get into the rest of that.

Debbie Trimble: What Joe obviously has said is true, and I would just add that we were also charged with community involvement, bringing the volunteers in, developing those types of programs. What we found, and Susan actually alluded to it yesterday when she spoke, is we were successful with a large grant from the Wallace-Reader's Digest Funds and then subsequent foundations matched portions of that, as did the city's generosity, as well. That allowed us to increase our budget.

The conservancy did a study and found out there was high interest in donating to the parks, but only if the investors could be guaranteed that those investments would be maintained. So, it became clear to us, especially with the financial situation for the city, that we had to try and figure out more ways that we could actually get involved in management and maintenance, which is exactly where we are now, what ways can we help out more in

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

that aspect in order to be able to do our job better as been charged by the city, which is to get those funds.

We've been fortunate to be in a partnership with the Central Park Conservancy in New York, who's really taking years off a learning curve that we would have to go through to learn how we can best do these types of things to help the city, such as equipment purchases or taking over a section of the park, and then to help us help the city with obtaining those additional dollars. We've strengthened our board quite a bit, which has gone from a grassroots community board to more of a fundraising board, and at the same time developed those committees or facilitated some that have existed for years. So we still get that grassroots input, but we're strengthening the board to raise more money.

We're embarking on a 20-year management and restoration plan that we hope will be the large vision that includes those types of greenway connections that Robert showed, but at the same time getting successful projects done right away. So, the first phase of this campaign will be an \$18 million capital campaign. We don't know what the total cost of the plan is going to be yet. It's in development now. So, there are a lot of parallel fronts moving forward. But we're hoping that we can continue to be a significant monetary asset to the city in the work of the parks.

Mayor Torrey: I don't know what the city would be willing to do with this utility fee that I was talking about, but you could leverage the benevolence of your community and tie it in with the community's willingness to provide the maintenance, if these projects were supported financially by the larger families or different organizations available with funding. When we went to this measure in 1998 and asked for \$25 million, the biggest mistake I made

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

as mayor was not asking for \$50 million. I underestimated the willingness of the community to put their money where their mouth was with regard to the parks and the quality of life.

And I don't know that a utility fee is the answer, but some maintenance that they're willing to say, yes, we think it's important enough that we're willing to do this.

Nancy MacCartney: Real quickly, three suggestions. About nine months ago, we had a graffiti summit. Everybody met together for a couple times and then it split into two groups. One group was community leaders and impacted businesses that really looked at what the cost was for dealing with graffiti, and there was a separate group of the taggers that met privately in a secure environment. They learned, plus they taught us quite a bit. I don't know the statistics, but I can tell you from my visual observation, our graffiti has plummeted. Second is to have a graffiti hotline and get on it within 24 hours. And then another thing we do is we take those budding artists who think their work is art, and we have a youth art works program, working with the Sierra Arts Foundation, which hires the artists to work with these budding artists to do murals around town.

It's a partnership with Sierra Arts, the police department, and whatever agency is willing to have a mural put up. And with the exception of one mural in the last five years, none of those murals have been tagged, and they are truly beautiful pieces of art.

Grover Mouton: I'm on the board of our botanical garden in our city park, which has no funding from the city or the state. I was brought in mainly because I know how to write grants. And I said to them, we can't do a one-shot deal. So, we created a board and I tapped into the garden clubs, which I'm sure must be very powerful in your city. And they're all mainlined into all the foundations. The next move I did was to do a little bit of camouflage

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

where we actually designed what we call an education center, which was nothing but a place to rent out for revenue, period, and it was never anything else but a place to generate revenue. It's now not only covering our debt, or our funds in the botanical garden, but we're now giving 50 percent of the revenue to the park.

You should look at one of these places to simply do it, and you embody it with one of these garden club people. We raised \$6 million in two years. But the key is that you're generating revenue, and that casino, if it doesn't cost too much to restore, could be something that that group will host parties in, Museums do it quietly, but you should do the same thing.

Mayor Masiello: We do rent out the casino.

Grover Mouton: We're talking it becoming a very glamorous place. It becomes the place. You might really want to do that.

Susan Rademacher: Mayor, I applaud your vision of making a fantastic city of a population of 300,000, and clearly there is a reduced demand on some arteries, increased opportunities for extending the Olmsted park system into some new open space acquisition over time, condemnation, what have you. I think that the idea of treating Buffalo proper as your city of first resort is really critical, the business plans and so forth. One suggestion is with that 18-hole golf course in Delaware Park, reducing it to a 9-hole executive course, which would kick it up a notch in terms of the quality, and then adding a special 3-hole children's golf course. We did just that with one of our parks, and it's successful, and the revenues are going way up on greens fees and concession sales.

The opportunity to reclaim Humboldt Park and downscale the expressway near Riverside Park and the opportunity to give Front Park meaning again is crucial, because that

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

is such a wasteland, Front Park. And you've got all this other terrific achievement along the riverfront that is probably the worst black eye, at least in my experience of the system. So, I think it's important to really cast a bold vision on Front Park and move mountains to get that imbued again with a sense of purpose and a real role and to support your economic development.

A couple of other things on the maintenance relationship between city and conservancy. I think it's really crucial that both parties operate in a glass house, that they're at the table together from concept through execution through monitoring results. We've talked a lot on the side about how to do that. But there are ways, non-cost ways that the city can help support the conservancy's ability to bring the extra level of maintenance, such as providing locking storage facilities for tools that they may have purchased and may be using for their volunteers, providing fleet service support for some surplus vehicles that could be turned into mobile tool sheds for volunteer work parties.

Then the conservancy, with continuing education and equipment purchase and those kinds of things, can augment what your own folks can do. And finally, the tag line question is an interesting one. I'm a little jealous because I'd like Louisville to be the Olmsted city, because we're the last major park system that Olmsted did, and Debbie and I always toss that at each other. But I think that it's really powerful for your capital investment and will boost the conservancy's ability to do effective capital campaigning on behalf of your park system. So I would adopt that right away and really trumpet it within your city and your region. You can use it in your external marketing also, and it would be really fascinating to imagine what impact that might have. But I think the most immediate impact would be to really urge more

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

support locally for private investment in your park system.

Mary Eysenbach: We're going to wrap it up. Let's start with the most direct issue first, and that was graffiti. We had a lot of suggestions for addressing the graffiti issue, including video monitoring, a parents-pay program, putting taggers to work to remove the graffiti, holding a graffiti summit, restricting sales on spray paint and magic markers, whether it be an age restriction or an actual physical restriction in the store, and including the taggers in a youth arts program to help them find more helpful ways to express their art.

From a design standpoint, we have creating a greenway loop using the Olmsted parks as the footprint, using Riverside Park as the terminus of a canal trail and working with other mayors, and, as Tom pointed out, the state association of waterways, to promote that greenway beyond the borders of Buffalo, to celebrate that greenway and the Olmsted parks with an annual event, maybe closing the streets, including education nodes along the loop, because there are a number of nodes along the loop which, it's going to move us to the funding issue.

One of the suggestions was to have some kind of regional tax. Other funding sources included transportation ala street trees, storm water user fees, marketing the park facilities, taking one of those casino buildings and making it the place to hold a party, and working with local garden clubs and other upscale groups to make that the most enviable place to hold a party in the city. Some talk about separating parks from public works, but maybe not separating them, but having parks create their own separate identity within that department. A couple other design issues: reducing the Delaware golf course to a 9-hole, but including a 3-hole kids course, and beginning this restoration with Front Park and having a bold vision

**City Parks Forum
Summer 2002 Reno, Nevada
Summarized Proceedings**

for Front Park and making that the poster child for the renovation of this park system, which will help fundraising.

Another thing that would help fundraising would be using the Olmsted city tag line for Buffalo, and in terms of the relationship between the Olmsted Parks Conservancy and the city of Buffalo, to make sure that both organizations are operating within glass houses and being upfront with each other about how things are going.

I think that's it. So, thank you, everybody. Give yourselves a hand. You did a fantastic job, fantastic.