

THE GREENING OF CRESCENT PARK

Allow me to introduce myself. I am a park — or, perhaps more accurately, I will be a park. My name is Crescent Park, and I am the newest, biggest, and most important member of the Platte River Greenway family. (Modesty is not one of my virtues.) My story is a dramatic one which I hope will interest you.

It all began over six years ago when certain humans, who have respect and appreciation for the earth and waters with which we live, formed the Platte River Development Committee. The PRDC, most ably chaired by Joe Shoemaker, accepted the challenge of developing

negotiations were undertaken with officials in the Mayor's Office, Land Office, Public Works Department, Election Commission, Public Service Company, and several state and federal agencies. Three applications were submitted to the city's Capital Improvements Fund to match Gates' \$250,000, eventually netting \$25,000. Five applications were made to the State Parks Board for federal Bureau of Outdoor Recreation funds, resulting in no more than disappointment. Negotiations were ongoing with the State Highway Department over public park access and numerous other issues.

CHAIRMAN
Joe Shoemaker

TREASURER
Ted Bendelow

Dana Crawford
Hiawatha Davis
Marjorie Hornbein
Pat McClearn
Philip Milstein
Dan Trujillo
John Zapien

MAYOR OF DENVER
William McNichols, Jr.

STAFF
Rick Lamoreaux
Bob Seams
Joan Mason
(Urban Edges Inc.)

"A
river
is more than
an amenity;
it is
a
treasure."
Justice Wm. O. Douglas

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ten miles of river through Denver. The major goal was to provide urban dwellers with a pleasant, beautiful, challenging environment which is only rarely found in such places as the center of a large city. Significant river park development was considered essential to the overall plan, which is, of course, where I come in...

It may be useful at this point for you to know more about my vital statistics. I am 13 acres in size; my best side fronts on the river. I am tall enough to have marvelous views of the downtown skyline, much of metro Denver, and those wonderful Bronco fans as they go to and from my next-door neighbor, Mile High Stadium. Some 145,000 commuters pass by me every work day. Imagine! Such visibility, and those people are forced to look at me in a condition of which I am not particularly proud. Although used by the city for storage of huge sandpiles, public works equipment, and even voting machines, at least this is better than the early days of the city when I was nothing but a bottle dump!

Thank goodness for those of you who have cared! In October of 1975, my pride began to restore itself when I was chosen as the key site of the city-wide Platte development program, heart of the regional Greenway concept. Application was made to the Gates Foundation for \$780,000 in funding for river improvement programs, of which sum \$250,000 was especially for me, Crescent Park. In June of 1976, the Gates people thrilled us all by awarding the entire amount, their largest grant ever, along with excited comments about my potential benefit to the city.

Now begins the obstacle course which took nearly five years to complete. The Committee's most important task was to locate an alternative site for the existing uses at Crescent, particularly the Public Works maintenance yard. This issue, although requiring great perseverance and patience, was pursued successfully by Joe Shoemaker, Ted Bendelow and executive director Rick Lamoreaux from the Greenway, along with Ed Sullivan and Larry Borger, aides to Mayor McNichols. Meanwhile, high level

Concurrently, the process of designing the park was key on the Committee's agenda. The staff created a conceptual design which centered around a grassed area large enough for field sports and concerts, accomodating 10,000. A children's play structure, volleyball courts, a par course, picnic areas, and parking were all included. In January, 1978, based on these initial concepts and design proposal competition, Wright-McLaughlin Engineers and EDaw Landscape Architects joined the effort destined to transform me into a useful and beautiful addition to the Greenway.

One of the most exciting and important elements of my development concerns the Children's Museum of Denver. In 1978, 1/5 of me was set aside for construction of a new, \$2 million museum within the boundaries of Crescent Park. The Museum board had decided that my location was preferable to any other within Denver; their alternative was to go suburban. The efforts of Ted Bendelow, Pat McClearn and Marjorie Hornbein from PRDC were instrumental in bringing the Greenway and Children's Museum together.

At this point, I would like to tell you about the generosity of some people you know, because it is truly one of the most positive elements in this endeavor. Initially, of course, the Gates Foundation contributed greatly to the enhanced quality of life for all Denverites with its quarter-million dollar challenge grant. Subsequently, Ken Valis of Colorado Paint Company donated the paint for the mural project and refurbishing of the Parks maintenance building within my boundaries; the First of Denver and others contributed for needed recreational equipment. Just a few months ago, I was delighted to learn from PRDC's Phil Milstein that Central Electric Supply Co. would donate 25,000 cubic yards of fill dirt, worth more than \$137,000, for a landscaped berm to lesson noise from the Valley Highway. And finally, in July of this year, the Piton Foundation contributed \$250,000 to complete financing for Public Works' relocation and begin funding for the second phase of construction. I can only

say "Thank you!" by becoming the most inspired of all Denver parks.

Please indulge me for a moment while I become nostalgic. The most joyous day of my entire life was April 20, 1980: **Earth Day on the Platte**. All of the people most concerned with my rebirth, including Mayor McNichols, the Gates Foundation, city officials and, of course, my own PRDC and their staff took part in the groundbreaking ceremony which signified my new beginning. It was a special time for me, to be surpassed only by my actual completion and celebration by my friends in metro Denver.



Now, about the final series of events which was to decide my future. One of the most dramatic moments occurred last May when my team, aided by Community Development director Lou LaPerriere, together with Gail Shoettler, Tony Arguello and Richard Steckel from the Children's Museum, requested \$825,000 from the Mayor's Advisory Council for the relocation project. The MAC considered all the issues, including the Museum's offer of \$200,000 for the portion of my land they would occupy, and voted its approval.

The request, with strong backing from Mayor McNichols, was then channeled to the City Council. At that time, the office of Budget and Management suggested instead that I be sold by the city to private developers. I was truly shocked at this idea, particularly since so much had already been done to insure my transformation into a major metropolitan park. To make matters more complicated, Council requested reconsideration by the MAC of its funding decision, and the Public Works and State Highway Departments withheld permission to begin

construction pending resolution of the issues.

In-depth meetings continued for weeks. At the height of the controversy, Council scheduled a public hearing on my fate. The entire PRDC and several private citizens spoke on my behalf, while few dissenting opinions were registered. After much heated discussion and a bit of hand wringing on our side, the Council passed my funding on first reading. The following week — July 28, to be exact — the decision was made. With an extra push from strong neighborhood forces, City Council gave the final go-ahead for my rebirth. At long last, after nearly five years of

discussion and negotiation, of raised hopes and disappointments, my existence as a park had progressed from a wished and worked for dream to **reality**.

Now that the battle has been waged and won — **Phase One is finally out to bid** — consider with me the future of our city as it can be seen in the microcosm of Crescent Park. The union of the Greenway effort with that of the Children's Museum gives me great hope for exciting private redevelopment encouraged by this example and the rejuvenated environment along the river's banks. From the construction of fine multi-purpose parks like me will come public support to do more of the same. Think of the fun — a picnic on your way to a Bronco game, tennis on Sunday, a white water raft ride after work. And think of the benefits to Metro Denver as we all work to keep our core city thriving.

Most importantly, the future looks bright because of the dedication of those who care about our quality of life, the people like you who are helping to make the Greenway — Denver itself — "a people place."

A GREENWAY NEWS UPDATE...

As we approach the autumn of another season, the completion of the Platte River Greenway as originally conceived is well in view. It is one of the country's most unique inner-city recreational and transportation resources. We now have ten miles of continuous hike-bike trail through the heart of Denver, 500 acres of parkland on the river, and convenient connections to nearly all residents of metropolitan Denver.

A resource for health fitness endeavors, the Greenway includes facilities for kayaking, canoeing, bicycling, hiking, running, skating, large gatherings, concerts, events, child play, picnicking, commuting... physical exercise of all forms. All are within minutes of downtown Denver and the city's neighborhoods.

CONSTRUCTION REPORT:

Substantial development activity is taking place on the river this year. The irrigation and landscaping at **Pasquinel's Landing** near Evans Avenue are currently being installed, a product of the Boettcher Foundation's concern for the river and the quality of life for Denver residents. Just upstream, the **South Extension** project's new concrete trail extends into Grant-Frontier Park near Wesley Avenue. A wooden pedestrian bridge is now being constructed spanning the river to a new park on the west bank. Area property owners have been particularly helpful in our relocating a portion of Platte River Drive to make room for the expanded open space. A parking lot has been installed, but funding for irrigation, landscaping and picnic improvements is yet being sought. Johns-Manville and Mission Viejo have recently contributed funds to begin extending the trail one-half mile southward to the city limit. More of their corporate neighbors are needed to complete funding for this \$300,000 project.



Overland Pond at Florida Avenue has also been receiving some new treatment. A fly casting pad and boat dock, sponsored by the American Sportsman's Association, is now in place along with a new paved parking area and dry-land plantings. A new rest area with drinking fountain, bench and bike rack provided by the O'Fallon Foundation, together with a picnic table for the handicapped from Zonta International, are now under construction at **Habitat Park** near Exposition Avenue. And finally, four years after initial construction began, **Globeville Landing** at 38th Street is now a completed park. Picnic

areas, parking facilities, a gazebo, boat docks and more make up this 7-acre area near the Denver Coliseum in north Denver.

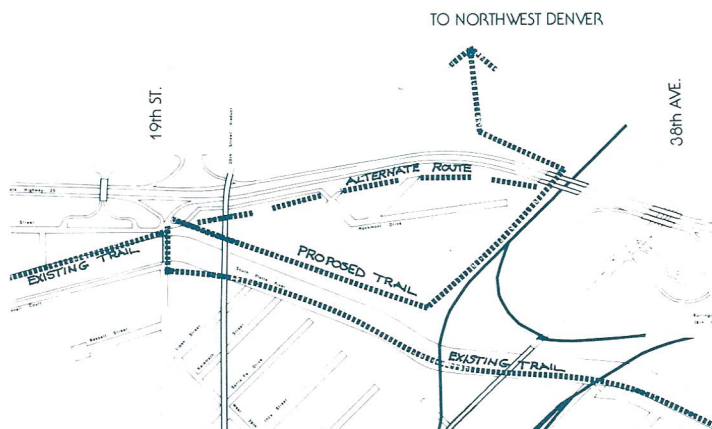
CENTENNIAL PARK AND VELODROME

In a continuing effort to support exciting and innovative inner-city revitalization, the Mountain Bell consortium recently announced a \$25,000 grant to begin development of Centennial Park on the river's east bank near Speer Boulevard. In conjunction with this fall's construction of nearby Crescent Park, work at Centennial will include regrading of the riverbank, a trail connection to the Confluence, and a children's play structure courtesy of the Denver Foundation.

Matching private funding to these grants, plus substantial foundation and government support, is being sought to complete the Centennial Park project — to include the only recreational/competition velodrome (bicycle racing track) between Chicago and the west coast. Centennial will also feature rollerskating and skateboarding, tennis facilities, and a playing field suitable for such sports as soccer, football and ice hockey. A full-service athletic center is planned directly across the river, but funding is needed. If these ideas excite you, please respond to the enclosed questionnaire and 1981 Greenway Foundation membership invitation.

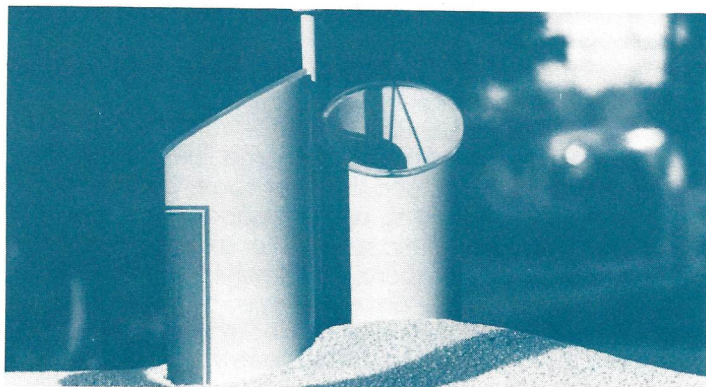
NORTHWEST NEIGHBORHOOD TRAIL:

The Mayor's Advisory Council and City Council recently earmarked \$155,000 in Community Development funding for a hike-bike trail connection from the Greenway to the neighborhoods of northwest Denver. This safe and easy access is a cooperative design and construction effort between residents of the area and the Mayor's Platte River Development Committee/Greenway Foundation. Beginning in a new plaza at Our Lady of Guadalupe church in the Highland neighborhood, the route will travel under the Valley Highway near 38th Avenue to connect with nearby Riverfront Park. If approvals are forthcoming from the Colorado & Southern and Denver & Rio Grande Railroads — original donors of land for the park — the trail will skirt the river's edge along its west bank, affording excellent views of the white water kayak run, before joining existing improvements at 19th Street.



COMFORT STATIONS:

The innovative structure in the photograph is scheduled to begin spelling relief to Greenway users next spring. Designed by the staff and John Anderson Associates, the restroom facility features the revolutionary waterless Clivus Multrum disposal system. A pioneer application in an urban recreation area, the units planned for the Platte this year will save hundreds of gallons of water. In this vandal-resistant system, human wastes are converted through a biological process into a compost suitable for garden use. This winter, restrooms will be constructed at Fishback Landing near the Confluence and at Pasquinel's Landing near Evans Avenue. Both rest areas will include a drinking fountain, bench and bike rack.



RAFTING PROGRAM:

A public rafting program was initiated through the heart of Denver by the Greenway Foundation this summer. Trips were taken each weekend by Denver residents from Frog Hollow at 8th Avenue to Riverfront Park at 19th Street. Thanks to the First of Denver, this program was a great success and you can count on it to be back next spring.

Although the river was closed by the city because of high water earlier this season, a new boating safety program and signage system developed by the Foundation are being installed along the boating trail. The river will thus remain open all year except for periods of extreme hazard. Watch the spring issue for more details and a self-guided tour of the Greenway.



GREENWAY CONCERT SERIES:

My Brother's Bar recently sponsored an outdoor concert in Confluence Park by the Centennial Brass Quintet. It was an exciting event which Brother's has offered to repeat in a three-part series next summer. Organized by Joan Mason,

Foundation grants coordinator, a classical choir, community orchestra and chamber ensemble are among those being considered. A sponsor is also being sought to expand the series to include folk, jazz and rock ensembles. Upon completion of Crescent Park, well-known entertainers and groups such as the Denver Symphony will be invited to participate in the series.

GREAT RELAY RACE/USE SURVEY:

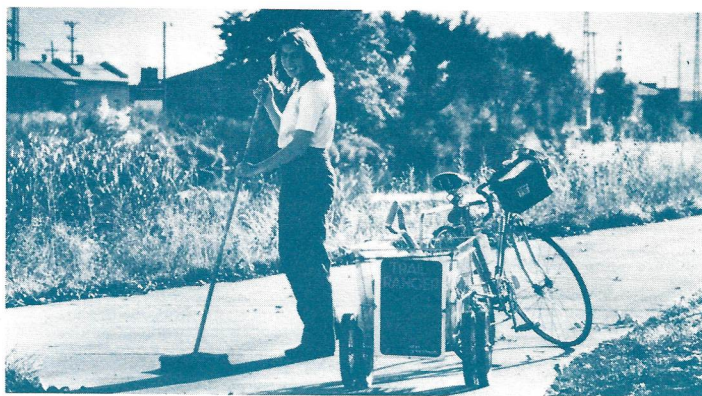
On April 20th, the first 50-mile **Great Relay Race** along the Platte was held from Waterton to Barr Lake as a part of Earth Day 1980. We need you to tell us and the other Earth Day sponsors, including Roger Williams of the Environmental Protection Agency, if you want to see the event repeated and expanded next year.

In our last newsletter, we asked you for your feelings about the Greenway. The number of responses, although substantial, must be increased if we are to respond accurately to your ideas and comments.

Please take a moment to complete the survey — and join the Greenway movement by filling out the enclosed 1981 membership invitation. We can't do it without you...

THE TRAIL RANGERS:

The Foundation's "small is beautiful" approach to maintenance, designed by Joe Shoemaker and project director Bob Searns, is working well on the Greenway. With assistance from the Parks Department, our bicycle-mounted Trail Rangers are now responsible for



maintaining the entire river channel through Denver. This unique program is possible in part because of innovative thinkers like executive director Scott Tucker and chairperson Cathy Reynolds from the Urban Drainage and Flood Control District board who believe that a drainage course like the Platte River can and should serve multiple needs, including those for parks and recreation. Although mowing, sweeping and earth moving equipment is used as needed, our human scale approach provides another valuable benefit: the Rangers are there to make your experience more enjoyable in many ways, including personal interaction. Look for an expanded program next season, possibly including Cherry Creek. And "Thanks!" to all members of the Foundation for funding 1979's innovative pilot program, demonstrating that there was a better way.

THE GREENWAY FOUNDATION

1981 Membership Invitation

- Prime Sponsor:** A major park in your name. \$100,000+ ☐
- Participating Member:** Major improvement, such as three rest stops, 200 trees, or ten picnic tables and benches. \$ 10,000+ ☐
- Sustaining Member:** Support all of our efforts toward building and maintaining the Greenway. \$ 500+ ☐
- Commemorating Member:** Have a tree planted in the name of a friend or loved one. \$ 50+ ☐
- Individual/Family Member:** Become a part of the exciting process taking place on the Platte. \$ 25+ ☐
- I pledge \$_____ for next year to help complete the Greenway.

- All donations are tax deductible.
- All donations of \$25 or more will receive a watercolor poster depicting the exciting life of the Greenway, as well as the newsletter, staff assistance when requested, special invitations to Greenway events, and a good feeling inside.
- All donations over \$500 will receive a limited-edition watercolor print of the river by noted artist William Condit, in addition to all other benefits.
- Thanks! We can't do it without you...

Name _____

Address _____

_____ Phone _____

Commemoration (if any) _____

Please tell us who else might like to receive **The Greenway News**:

Name _____

Address _____

Name _____

Address _____

(Please note Use Questionnaire on reverse side. Detach and return with your check for 1981 membership in the enclosed, postage paid envelope. Thank you.)

USE QUESTIONNAIRE

	Yes	No
Would you like to see The Great Relay Race/Earth Day celebration repeated and expanded in 1981?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

How do you presently use the Greenway?

Commuting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bicycle recreation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Running/jogging	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rafting/kayaking/canoeing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Walking & reflecting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Picnicking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Roller skating	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fishing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Field Sports	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

How often do you use the Greenway? _____

Would you use the following planned river resources?

Velodrome racing track	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(The Velodrome will accommodate bike racing, recreational riding, and roller skating, and more.)		
Children's Museum of Denver	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Volleyball courts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Team field activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tennis courts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ice skating	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Athletic fitness center	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
White water raft rides	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Concerts and events	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Thank you for taking the time to respond and join us as we help Make the Platte a People Place — for you. Please give us any additional comments or suggestions you may have.

(Please see over to join the Greenway Foundation)

SPECIAL FRIEND OF THE RIVER AWARD:

William H. McNichols, Jr., Mayor of the City and County of Denver, for his farsighted vision in seeing the potential of the South Platte River as a unique open space, recreation, and transportation area for the region's citizens; for his making available the initial seed money for the Greenway project and assistance in securing funds from private and public sources; and, for his leadership and cooperation in helping the Platte River Development Committee and Greenway Foundation to bring his initial concept to reality toward a better quality of life for Denver and Colorado. Award presented to the Mayor on April 20, 1980 by Governor Dick Lamm.



1980 FRIENDS OF THE RIVER AWARDS:

In recognition of selected businesses, groups, individuals and governmental entities who have made unique, innovative and ongoing personal efforts to enhance and improve the environment and quality of life along the South Platte River Greenway.

Platte Valley Awards

Gene Armstrong/General Air Service and Supply
Potts Berglund/Denver Wood Products
Brannan Sand and Gravel
Colorado and Southern Railway
Public Service Company of Colorado

Services and Special Efforts

First National Bank of Denver
Grant Junior High School
Keep Colorado Beautiful
Partners, Inc.
Ken Valis/Colorado Paint Company

Governmental Entities

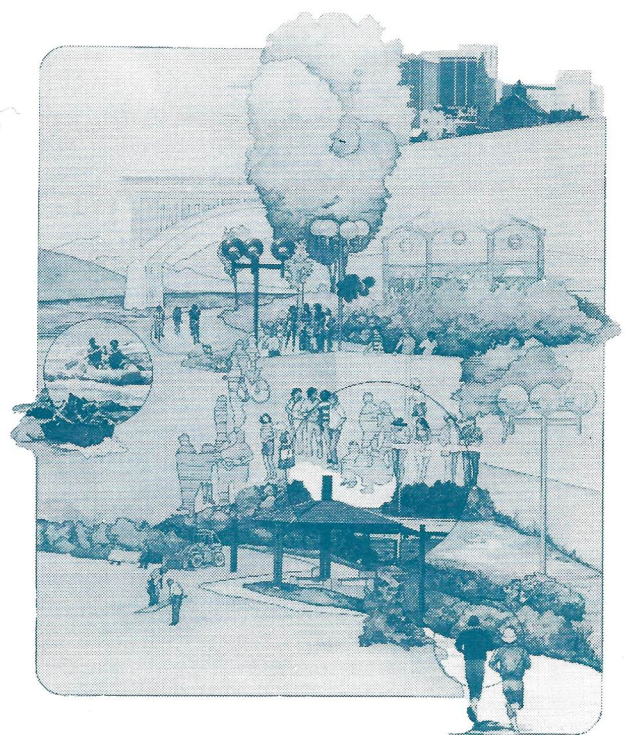
Colorado Department of Highways
Denver Environmental Health Service
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service
City of Littleton
Urban Drainage and Flood Control District

A BOOK ABOUT THE GREENWAY:

Have you ever wondered how this nationally acclaimed project came about and what has made it flourish? A book telling the Greenway story is about to be published, written by the Greenway Foundation's chairman, Joe Shoemaker. The early drafts have proven to be exciting reading for the general public and specialists alike. Watch the next issue of *The Greenway News* for details on how to order your copy.



This full size, watercolor poster of life along the river can be yours simply by joining the Greenway Foundation for 1981. Please respond to the attached membership invitation.



Although the city, state and federal governments have been extremely generous in the development of the Platte River Greenway, please realize that this project is being conceived, built, used and maintained by the people of metropolitan Denver. Your help is crucial. The funding and activity to bring the Greenway dream to fruition is being generated by the non-profit, tax-exempt Greenway Foundation. The concept is a unique and successful union of private/public initiative, and it requires your participation to prosper. Thank you.

MAKING THE PLATTE A PEOPLE PLACE DEPENDS UPON YOU

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