

Thank you to ULI and all the development community here today who are committed to improving public health and the quality of our environment. It's an honor to be on the panel.

We are thrilled to be a week away from completion of a transformational plan for the future of the High Line Canal.

The Final Plan provides a road map for how we can work together to honor, enhance and repurpose a landmark of our agricultural heritage, a 71-mile irrigation canal, into a large scale green infrastructure system and one of our region's premier green spaces connecting neighborhoods, people and nature. This initiative, a result of over three years of regional collaboration, reflects the advice of Daniel Burnham: "Make no little plans. They have no magic to stir men's blood."

To understand the project, share a bit about the CANAL

- The 71-mile Canal -commercial idea to bring needed water to farmers in 1859.
- 1883: Canal construction completed
- 1924: HLC purchased by Denver Water
- 1970: Restrictions lifted to allow recreational uses

- Begins in Douglas County at the mouth of Waterton Canyon ends miles from DIA – and the aerotropolis!
- Passes through 11 jurisdictions
- 71 miles long and approximately 100 feet wide
- Total of over 800 acres that connects 72 different greenspaces ranging from state parks to pocket parks
- Threads together over 8,000 acres of green space throughout the region.
- Not sustainable -- 60-80% of water evaporates or leaks out
- Filled in – some 60 at grade crossings Trail gaps and safety
- Demand: Colorado's population is projected to grow to 8.5 million by 2050
- Over 350,000 residents within 1 mile and 500,000 users annually

HISTORY OF PROJECT - WHO WE ARE

- Our nonprofit created with mission To preserve, protect and enhance the 71-mile long Canal in partnership with the public.
- Inspirational National models
- doing more for the Canal and the community than the jurisdictions could on their own

How to move a project forward – HLCC Strategy

Partnerships

- Getting everyone to the table: giving a voice to all
- developing elected officials as champions
- engaging major civic orgs from DRCOG to DBG and GOCO
- Focused on harnessing community commitment to speak with real power of the people to Denver Water and local gov't

Capturing the Imagination

- Create a compelling vision – capture the imagination of the public and electeds

- “make no little plans for they have no magic to stir mens blood” Daniel Burnham
- Public Outreach to all who would listen-collect names of supporters of vision
- Raise profile of project – quality marketing materials
- Engage philanthropic community to raise private funds

Soon after formation HLCC asked to be the lead in vision planning and then Masterplanning
 UNCOMMON FOR NONPROFIT TO BE IN THE LEAD ON PLANNING
 RFP process more flexible than gov't
 SASAKI and now AGENCY-GINA FORD
 LIVABLE CITIES MEREDITH WENSKOWSKI
 AMAZING STAFF AND BOARD

THE PLAN

With a 15-year horizon, The Plan prioritizes over a 100 capital projects from benches, crossing safety to stormwater transformation, stewardship and management priorities supporting the hundreds of thousands of people who use the Canal each year and cherish this slice of nature in our rapidly growing region.

So what are lessons learned and challenges along the way **PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS**

Advantages of Nonprofit

- harness community voice and commitment to speak with power of the people – get people to meetings!
- No question about motivation – not financial
- For betterment – DO GOODING TRUSTED by community and partners for motivation
- NOT TIED TO one COUNTY OR GOV't Trusted Outside facilitator can better break down silos
- Planning from a regional perspective, rather than 11 distinct plans
- Bring Private philanthropic dollars for project
- reviewing private development proposals for consistency with the community vision
- not bound to procurement –
- more nimble in use of funds to leverage quickly

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- Disadvantages

- uncertain of relationship because of nonprofits lack of accountability to govt,
- Capacity of new organization outside of govt structure
- Need for continued meetings to bring all parties together and communication
- Public LAND Private MONEY issues
- Sometimes a Lack of complete understanding of the govt processes

- A nonprofit holds values and identifies benefits “externalities” that are not measured in gov’t funding or policies
- Working to Break Down Silos for the Canal
- Trying to transform Canal into Large Scale Regional Green Infrastructure System –
- Incentives and policies must change
 - Also an advantage – to shake things up – look at something in a new way
 - SILOs
 - Measuring impact

- Background on THE PLAN FOR THE HIGH LINE CANAL New Life for a Regional Legacy – Objectives of Plan

The Plan lays out clear guidance to collaboratively promote:

- Public health through improved access, safety, and quality of experience,
- Environmental health ensuring the Canal is a thriving natural corridor,
- The Canal’s new life as a green infrastructure / stormwater management system
- Honoring the Canal’s history and educational potential.
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- Additional open space/parks and trailheads with user amenities
- Canal branded directional and interpretive signage
- Crossing safety and trail gap design solutions
- Environmental guidelines for landscape, tree planning and stormwater
- Health and education programs for increased access and use
- Long-term permanent protection and maintenance

STORMWATER

UDFCD two major studies – canal transformation from irrigation to sw management as a major regional green infrastructure system

Canal wet 100 more days a yr

40 percent cleaner

- **Conducting** the stacked benefits analysis
 - Guided the group through the identification and agreement of benefits and metrics to measure the environmental and social benefits.
- Reduces stormwater runoff, therefore:
 - decreases water treatment needs
 - improves water quality
 - relies less on traditional gray infrastructure needs (therefore costs)
- Increases groundwater recharge
- Reduces salt use contamination
- Reduces energy use
- Improves air quality
- Improves wildlife and natural habitat
- Improves aesthetics
- Increases recreational opportunities
- Reduces noise pollution
- Improves community cohesion
- Cultivates public education opportunities

- Potential project sites in NE Aurora

