

## mDNA Planning Meeting

### Meeting Minutes

February 25, 2016 @ Denver Botanic Gardens – Waring Room

1. Brian Aucone, Denver Zoo
2. Missy Davis – Nature Conservancy
3. Susan Daggett – Rocky Mountain Land Institute at DU
4. {*New member!*} Olga Gonzales – replacing Kelli Perez for Livewell
5. Jim Peterson - Trust for Public Land
6. Emily Patterson -Trust for Public Land
7. Jennifer Henderson, Denver Zoo
8. Brian Kruzell – National Wildlife Federation
9. Tina Martinez – Boys and Girls Club of Metro Denver
10. Kelly Perez – Livewell
11. Stephanie Stohl – Denver Zoo
12. Alyssa Von Lehman Lopez – Denver Museum of Nature and Science

Civic Canopy – Bill Fulton, Ana Soler

Welcome and time for what's Good and New:

- Museum hosted a fabulous speaker who addressed how to have young people experience nature through play.
- Missy adopted a five-year old dog, Arnold!

Data Update and Resources

1. Bill shared the STAR system (Sustainability Tools for Assessing and Rating Communities - handout). If people are interested in exploring this we can focus on one indicator at our next meeting. Bill attended the Piton Data Days with over 150 people from public entities and nonprofits. STAR community is a US based initiative that is designed to wrestle with sustainability (broadly defined). Closely tied to League of Cities work. Fort Collins was one of early pilot communities in 2012.
  - a. Natural Systems walk through – you can score yourself or be scored by others
  - b. Points – based on overall sustainability level designed on a body of evidence. You can receive: no, partial or full credit.
2. Second resource was on ISOs - One session was on sustainability indicators and the speakers walked through the International's Standards Organization.

Thoughts from the group on STAR:

- Like the overall structure – starting at high level and then drilling down.
- Would we choose what our top tier indicators are and then hone in? mDNA could be the mechanism for introducing this.
- Last three are where we have been focused – let's start there and move on to others later.

- The first four are relevant but beyond the scope. There might be parts in the first four that are key to success.
- mDNA is focused, as an entity, on the last three.
- Have to be disciplined and focus on those that we have the ability to change, rather than a smorgasbord or buffet of broad indicators.
- Missing piece is the animals and biodiversity. Somewhat addressed by the invasive species point.

#### Moving Forward:

- Could have a session on STAR to the field at Susan's conference as a way to ease and educate into this framework.
- Over time, if we work on these metrics, it could support future policy action.
- Use STAR as a starting point.
- Encouraging Denver to use this feels a little removed from what we had hoped mDNA might be doing. What is the benefit of using this? What is the benefit of being a 3 star community?
- This doesn't exactly capture our focus.

#### *Overall group sentiment:*

- Like the idea of stealing the framework and then substituting in what we have identified as important to this group.
- Like the idea of aligning with something that has already been proven, accepted as a best practice.
- Connects us with other avenues and fields.
- Reminder – we are still at planning to plan phase so this doesn't have to be completely done.
- Should we identify what we want to do first (the brainstormed list from the last meeting also at the end of today's minutes) and then match to boxes?
- Are we getting feedback on indicators? Emily shared what might be discussed around this table: economic, cultural, social. Should we identify 3-4 indicators that we have data for in each area?
- Can we choose one to take as a starter for next week?
  - Feedback avenue could be the upcoming Focus Group that is scheduled for March 22 – 2:00 – 3:30 pm.
- Group discussed mDNA vision and mission as a point of reference for indicators.

#### Results brainstormed wide open ideas for results:

##### Social / cultural

1. Denver / Access engaged
2. Invest in healthy people love nature
3. Resident leadership
4. stewardship

##### Environment

1. Nearby nature quality diverse resident spaces
2. Connectivity comprehension
3. Functioning regional
4. Clean water quality / quantity

Then further refined that brainstorm in to three results areas:

1. Access to nature: All people in metro Denver area have access to quality, natural spaces.
  - i. Ten minute walk to nearby nature (parks, trails, open space - we are already at 86%)
  - ii. Safety – crime rate
  - iii. Income
  - iv. Population of kids
  - v. Crime rates
  - vi. Social emotional health
  - vii. Health indicators
    1. Levels of activity
    2. Obesity rates
  - viii. Population density
  - ix. Multimodal transportation
  - x. Some indicator of quality
  - xi. Specific measurement to equity?
  - xii. Food access and quality - Increase pollinator gardens
  
2. Engagement with nature: All people in metro Denver area
  - a. Are engaged in and invested in nearby nature. {Sustainability - nature}
  - b. Integrate nature into their daily lives.
    - i. Attitudinal – care about nature – essential value of nature
    - ii. To be filled in -- GOCO is doing research on barriers to family accessing nature
    - iii. Usage rates
    - iv. Resident ownership and leadership
    - v. Economic benefits – businesses engaged?
    - vi. Knowledge about nature
  
3. Quality of nature: The metro Denver region has (supports) a functioning, healthy and connected natural system. {Sustainability - people}
  - i. Functional ecosystems
  - ii. Appropriate for what exists
  - iii. Species assemblage
  - iv. Water quality (particulate runoff, etc.)
  - v. Mitigation rates / restoration rates
  - vi. Air quality
  - vii. Increase the number and acreage of natural habitat – whatever it might be – prairie, trees canopy, etc.

- viii. Green infrastructure
- ix. Increase connectivity
- x. Increase native species/good species

#### Reflections:

- Quantity can be assumed or measured in the indicators.
- These all circle back to health.
- Equity is inherent in access but it does need to be called out. This will also come out more in the Values conversation.
- Have to have a suite of indicators/outcomes so not a one is overworked. E.g. Strive in Cincinnati does a good job of this. What is inspirational? What is achievable?
- When we prioritize these we need to look at available data? Validity? Communication power? We don't throw the ones out we don't have data for but we will need to figure out where to get the data. If we need the data, we could pitch it to resources – CU, DU, etc., who can take on finding the data. The provost conference this year features a speaker who is addressing equity and sustainability. The audience is all – community, researchers, etc. – we could throw out ideas for data that we need and solicit academics to take on this topic. Book: Just Sustainability. Date: April 26, 2016
- Who is this audience?
- What else do we want out of these?
- Portland – has the big vision and metrics they care about. Whenever any project is done in the name of the Portland Intertwine, partners fill out a form and the outcomes are reported on as well as measurements are tracked that come out of the work. The system allows them to capture what is happening and make sense out of it.

#### Next steps:

Review the STAR objectives - Do we have access to data experts that can analyze these?

#### Announcements

Canoe mobile has been floating along! Dates are May 9-14 (Saturday, May 14 is the community day). The other days are for Cole, Westwood and Northeast locations. Wilderness Inquiry has been reaching out to develop programming and locations.

#### Locations:

1. Barr Lake (NE)
2. Sloans Lake (Westwood/Cole).

#### On the ground programming:

1. ELK
2. Groundwork Denver
3. Rocky Mountain Arsenal
4. Barr Lake
5. Citywild
6. Boys and Girls Club

Schools

1. Castro Elem - Westwood
2. Wyatt - NE
3. Annunciation - NE
4. Denver School of Science and Technology (DSST) – Cole
5. Adams City Middle School – Adams County

Need transportation costs. Need clarity on costs.

Coalitions are trying to set on dates. Our individual organizations can attend any day.

We need to wrestle with how we want to present ourselves as a group? At next meeting might have more details.

For Discovery / Focus Group: Head of Denver water – Jim Lochhead - ACS reach out.

Time frame: undefined

<b>Results (population level)</b>	<b>Indicators</b>
Access to nature within 10 minutes	Distance on maps to residents Inclusive of all ethnicities Accessing nature
Community Engagement	Academic performance Outdoor stewardship Afterschool – increased attendance
Public Health	Obesity Asthma Hypertension Suicide Unintentional death by opioids ADD/ADHD Crime data Access to quality food Poverty Increased commercial activity
Attitudes	Improved attitudes across ethnicities Nature is for everyone Cultural norm Policy support Increased sense of connection
Improved environments	Diversity of nature (might be better explained by functional healthy ecospecies) Crime data/safety Pathways/places Air quality

	Water quality # of native species (pollinators) Signage Tree canopy Multi modal Acres of quality green space
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Emily and GIS team will review and improve draft. This should set us up to work on or with a Conservation vision.

<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Performance Metric</b>
Expanded network and benefits	# of agencies and types of agencies Diversity of Actors – Because of our work, which systems are now engaged, e.g., education is participating, government, business world – how are the systems participating? On the flip side, is there a system that we should engage that could change our metrics?
Marketing materials and impressions	Use of maps Brand recognition Likes on FB E-blast open rate
Funding to support goals	Dollars raised Infrastructure funded Membership Community participation
Participation	# Of young people participating in n.b. programs # Of young people and adults – time spent doing physical activity Increase biking and walking
Policy impact	Policy changes
Environment	# Of safe spaces to recreate