

mDNA Planning Meeting

Meeting Minutes

March 10, 2016 @ Denver Botanic Gardens – Waring Room

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

Announcements

For the Parking Lot...

1. Bart Berger, Ed Nichols – He has been pushing to reactivate the Denver Mountain Park. Olmstead put Denver Park aside and it has 14 view sheds, including Red Rocks. Very much looking for a group similar to mDNA. They are interested in utilizing this land. Ballaret Director is interested in expanding into the parks so that every student could attend a session. Jennifer shared that they just completed a report on bison – will share with Scott before the meeting.
2. Adam Beenstalk talk generated excitement within mDNA members at the last meeting– there is a possibility of creating a nature park outside of DMNS. An idea for the location would be just north of the museum, down the hill from an old grove of trees. Also have considered putting in some outdoor classrooms.

Data Dive!

Goal is to walk out with top 2-5 priorities at this point for each result area.

Indicators- how do they rate? We have three categories:

1. Communication
2. Proxy power – does it tell us about the thing itself
3. Data – do we confidence that we have quality of data, on a timely basis. From the Discovery process, we had two people offer to assist with data:
 - DrCOG, Brad Calvert:, Brad shared that the collect and analyze data at the regional scale. They are working on a new revised plan. In that plan, there is significant attention given to performance measurement and collective impact. Could integrate mDNA work into a shared vision and a place to report and share out on data. Plan might be done in the next 8-9 months. Public review draft is posted. We consider the plan to be a continuous conversation. E.g., 12 months down the road if there are new ways to measure access to amenities because of new focus/areas then we can integrate and build in data access and

collection.

- Susan Alden Weingardt – Forest Service: They have a research and development branch that collects a lot of data – they have social scientists, climate scientists, GIS mapping all done at a large scale.

Access

- We can measure current parks but not other public spaces.
- Population Density - Density helps TPL focus their work. E.g. higher density has greater impact.
- Equity Candidates: Population, kids, income and health TPL: These are current equity indicators. As equity indicators they are pretty solid.
 - Any project that we embark on we should look at equity.
 - Does it have high communication? For general public, this is a moving indicator.
 - There are a lot of people moving in. I think people do understand that with Tabor we have lack of support for structure. There are many people and few resources. How do we communicate our tax dollars and the need?
 - Is it widely understood by the general population? Number 1 candidate does, the equity ones are data driven and perhaps not as appealing to general population.
 - Maybe they should be used together – stronger as a package. Don't see the correlation between population density and access to nature.
 - Is it more of a snapshot of progress? Or a means to an end? Might make more sense to use these on a large scale, bigger picture – about densification. High population density can be super positive when it comes to access to green spaces. Vertical build for people. If great density, more families and then more numbers walking to the park!
 - TPL: Kids, income and health are factors that we equate to equity. TPL is extremely focused on working with populations that need us most. Maybe not be high on mDNA list but encourage that we do focus on this.
 - Often in data conversation we want to know two levels – 1) interesting to know and 2) is it an impactful, data specific point? Is this a filter across all indicators?
 - Safety- Missy shared that she is concerned about this one as she has learned that crime that does not have an address when called in are booked to parks. On the other hand, the crime still occurred in the neighborhood so does it really matter. Emily shared that not feeling safe is a main reason people do not go to parks. If they live in a dangerous neighborhood they don't feel safe to walk to the park and then they don't feel safe in the park. Even now, City Park has that perception based on past events. Do people still feel that way?
 - Can we influence this? Emily feels this is possible. They are working with Groundwork to bring people to the Park. Do an intervention – what impact does that have on perceptions of safety. TPL is working to figure it out. Scott shared story about the park that was activated with programs; kids playing and using playgrounds act as a deterrent to negative activity.

Candidates (Orange font means that candidate was selected)

1. Levels of Activity

- TPL has used Sopark to track levels of activity. It is a great tool but hard to get the data. Livewell uses Sopark a lot but there is no central database (could be an mDNA project)
- Spotty data
 - Communication – this is easy to understand but the data might be a 1.

2. % of people within a 10 minute walk to nearby nature – Yes, keep.

- Communication: 3
- Proxy: 3
- Data: 2

Equity Lens conversation

Rating: Equity – more of a filter so will not rate them here. (Population density, kids and income. Socio emotional not very reliable.)

- Communication: Low communication to general public; high interest for mDNA. -
- Proxy:
- Data:

3. Rating: Safety – Yes, Keep

- Communication: 3
- Proxy: 2-3
- Data: 2.5

4. Levels of Activity Rating: Moved to Engagement (how many people are using the park on a regular basis)

- Communication: 3
- Proxy: 3
- Data: 1

5. Health – included in equity filter (reframe obesity as health and tuck in food and quality). We won't rate this one.

6. Obesity rate

- Jennifer asked if this could this be an equity issue? TPL has used health. Have not used food access. Bill – is health an overlay to access to nature?
- Is social/emotional health under health? Data source not the best.
- There is a role for cultural members to indicate or share data in a way that is local and understandable to people. We have ways to explain complicated data in a way that makes sense to general public.
- What we might be lacking in engagement; we might raise it to a performance level?
- We should add an internal vs. external column – items that we need vs. what works externally.

- Communication: na
- Proxy: na
- Data: na

7. Candidate: MultiModal availability (remove density)

- If it is just bike paths and trails, this would rate a lower score. But if it includes all kinds of alternative transportation, it would rank higher.
- TPL – bike paths, trails; we can map them and we can map gaps. Most cities have this kind of data. Bob has the seven hubs mapped through the Denver metro region. Data will be spotty when it goes beyond Denver.
- Having a demand for data from a group like this might drive the availability up.
- This would be critical if we were about us becoming a sustainable city. Is this about access to nature? We have to balance the availability and reliability with how close it gets to measuring what we need to really effect change?
- As we progress through this conversation, Emily suggested we also look at what can we do well? What can we affect?
- Does multi modal link to safety? If there is good access to public transportation, does it relate to safety?
- How does this stack up from an equity lens?
- How does this relate to “10 minute walk”?
- This will be mapped.

Rating: MultiModal availability – (probably not going to make it but here’s the scores)

- Communication: 1
- Proxy: 2
- Data: 3

8. % of pollinator gardens

- Definitely internal metric

Rating: % of pollinator gardens

- Communication:
- Proxy:
- Data:

Final Outcome

- Percentage of people within a 10 minute walk
- Safety
- Keep equity across the board

QUALITY

Candidates:

1. **Functional Ecosystem - Combine number and acreage of natural habitat with Functional Ecosystem**

- Colorado Natural Heritage Program – (NHP) will have a lot of data; they have done a recent inventory of the Platte watershed. TPL does not have a lot of data here.
- Missy has data that might be available.

2. Number and acreage of natural habitat – e.g., prairie, tree canopy, etc.

- Is it about diversity? Or the candidate? Brian says diversity does not speak to how well the ecosystem is doing. If the data is available we should keep it.
- Is this an internal indicator?
- Not sure how good the data is. There is the possibility of course data or more specific depending on the city. At a minimum we have the land cover.
- People can identify with quality of natural habitat.
- This connects really strongly with “functional ecosystem.”

Decision – Combine number and acreage of natural habitat with Functional Ecosystem.

Acreage could be a proxy. But not tree canopy because that would be a lost opportunity.

- Communication: 2
- Proxy: 3
- Data: 2

3. **Species Assemblage**

- Can be measured pretty easily? How does it differ in Jefferson County vs. Aurora? This is citizen science.
- A lot of the data about species can be done but how helpful is it?
- This goes to what we want but it is so subjective, it would be difficult to get everyone to agree.
 - Communication: 2
 - Proxy: 3
 - Data: 2

4. Appropriate for what exists - is difficult. Decided to take it out.

- There could be something happening but what should really be there?
- Appropriate is hard to identify.

5. Water Quality – moved to equity

- Are we talking about watershed? Drinking water? We kind of need both.
- Public works has mapped the entire basin and have prioritized water basins.
- Can we really affect this by what we are doing in a measurable way?
 - Communication: 3
 - Proxy: 1

- Data: 3

6. Air quality – moved to equity

- Can we really effect this by what we are doing in a measurable way?
- Is this the equity lens? It is definitely an equity issue.
 - Communication: 3
 - Proxy: 1
 - Data: 3

Decision – move air and water quality to equity lens.

7. Tree Canopy

- Tree canopy is different than air quality. This is much more of a local issue that we can affect.
- Might be hard to communicate at first but it will take some education. On the other hand, presence or absence of trees is easy to communicate.
 - Communication: 3
 - Proxy: 3
 - Data: 3

8. Mitigation Rate/Restoration Rate

- Not sure what this means?
- Decision: to remove this candidate.

9. Green Infrastructure

- What do we mean by green infrastructure? It could be as complex as dealing with storm water or as simple as what is pervious vs. impervious. Pervious vs. impervious is an interesting and easy to measure data point.
- Nature Conservancy is very focused on this and would like to collaborate with mDNA to connect on projects.
- TPL – this is a component of Denver Smart Cities Climate work. This is not just about engineering.

Action: Missy will take this back to NC and develop this candidate with a new title, definition to bring back to this group for discussion.

10. Level of Connectivity

- How will we affect this?
- Not something we will effect in a big way.
 - Communication: 1
 - Proxy: 3
 - Data: 1

Decision: to remove this candidate.

11. Number of native/good species

Decision: Move to Functional Ecosystem

Engagement

- Engagement is critical but is this the right way to evaluate it.
- The data is probably a 1 across the candidates because we would have to gather it.
- **Move Level of Activity over to Engagement from Access.**
 - The ability for the public to identify trees and nature has plummeted. Knowledge of nature can be a proxy.
 - We have to have a baseline for the attitudinal level and then we can work on how to shift the cultural perspective.
- If we know we have to do a survey, let's prioritize the candidates below for survey tools.
- Can one tool capture attitudinal piece (depth of connection, not "care"), knowledge of nature?

1. Attitudinal – care (depth of connection) about nature, essential value of nature.

Rating. All on data development agenda

- Communication: 2
- Proxy: 3
- Data: 1

2. Usage rates of nature

- Is it more depth of connection with nature? Do people overlap with nature (venn diagram)? This can be measured over time?
- You can be 3 minutes from a park but will people use it?

Rating:

- Communication: 2
- Proxy: 3
- Data: 1

3. Resident Ownership and Leadership

- Feels a little grassroots for what we are trying to do.
- Doesn't belong as a measure - it's a principle.
 - Communication:
 - Proxy:
 - Data:

Decision - Remove

4. Economic Benefit (engaged businesses)

- Value of policy impact – is that a part of economic benefit or separate?

- Water is a big issue. Where will the lottery funds to?
- Who has the economic data?

Rating:

- Communication: 2
- Proxy: 3
- Data: 1

5. Knowledge of nature – survey question

- Communication: 2
- Proxy: 3
- Data: 1

Next meeting:

- 1. Potential: Turn the Curve activity**
- 2. Values Discussion**
- 3. Preliminary draft of Discovery Report**