



HIGH LINE CANAL

CONSERVANCY

PROGRESS REPORT | August 2017

- › Framework planning to begin this fall, kicking off work to develop a 5- to 10-year implementation plan
- › Conservancy efforts to plan for programming in the northeast as part of the awarded Colorado Health Foundation grant begins
- › New partnerships are forming between the Conservancy and the Denver Botanic Gardens and Urban Land Institute
- › Stormwater modeling and demonstration projects continue progress and anticipate construction later this year
- › An underpass at Yale Avenue has been proposed as part of the Denver GO Bond, and other significant infrastructure projects move forward
- › Thanks to collaboration between the Conservancy, Denver Water and leadership from the jurisdictions, a comprehensive tree care plan has been initiated
- › Greenwood Village's Harrison Oaks development is underway and a detour along the Canal is in place
- › Be a High Line Hero membership is now over 300 members!
- › Summer is winding down, but there are still plenty of excuses to get out on the trail, including a variety of community walks

Dear Partners and Friends of the Canal,

We hope you have had a chance to enjoy some terrific days out on the Canal this summer. Here at the Conservancy, we've been walking and biking along its 71 miles – with Walk2Connect, the Front Rangers Cycling Club and other local partners – and getting out to hear more from all of you. We still have numerous community events and tables planned on the Canal to fill our end-of-summer calendar.

We've also been hard at work in the office and are close to selecting a planning consultant team for comprehensive implementation planning, which includes framework, landscape and signage plans. We've engaged multiple volunteers with our budding volunteer program and we are looking forward to developing new Canal programs and outreach strategies for folks in the northeast as part of a grant from the Colorado Health Foundation.

More and more, High Line Heroes are joining as members (over 300) and we've reached our generous match goal of \$40,000. Thank you for all of your support! If you're not already a High Line Hero – joinhighlinecanal.org today.

Along with our invaluable and critical partners, Denver Water, Arapahoe County and all the jurisdictions along the Canal's reach, we continue to move forward enhancement projects along the Canal's 71-mile reach. Projects include comprehensive tree care planning and management, underpasses at Colorado and Hampden Blvd., trail and bridge improvements in Bible Park and a potential tunnel under Yale Avenue as part of Denver's 2017 GO Bond.

Thank you for your continued support of our efforts to preserve and enhance the High Line Canal!

Sincerely,

Harriet Crittenden LaMair



Executive Director

The mission of the Conservancy is to preserve, protect and enhance the 71-mile long Canal - in partnership with the public.



Front Rangers Cycling Club from Sun Valley Recreation Center biked 65 of the 71 miles along the High Line Canal in July.

Programs + Planning Update_____

PLANNING INITIATIVE

The Conservancy and its planning selection committee have undergone an extensive proposal review and interview process to engage a planning team to lead the upcoming Framework Plan – a comprehensive implementation plan, which includes framework, landscape and signage plans. We are working toward an agreement and scope of work with the selected teams, which we hope to announce by mid-September.

The first step of this next phase of planning will dive deep into existing conditions and current planning efforts of the various jurisdictions. We look forward to working closely with the parks and recreation departments as we develop this long-term plan. Framework planning is anticipated to begin in October.

For more information on the Framework Plan, visit highlinecanal.org/framework.

CANAL INITIATIVES

The following are a list of activities and initiatives the Conservancy is leading. We would appreciate your help in spreading the word.

Connecting the Canal:

Our partner Walk2Connect has led 8 of 14 segment walks along all 71 miles of the Canal, passing the halfway point. Starting at mile 0 in Waterton Canyon, they are making their way to mile 71 in Green Valley Ranch. So far, 89 walkers have joined this summer and 26 are on their way to completing all 71 miles. For more information on the summer walks, visit: highlinecanal.org/walk2connect.

In addition, there are other community walks that happen weekly and monthly, including a new walk in Aurora hosted by our Girl Trek Walking Movement Leader ([more here](#)). Find out about all of these walks by checking out the [High Line Canal calendar](#).



Connecting the Canal Segment 7, deKoevend Park

What is the Framework Plan?

The Framework Plan is a 5- to 10-year comprehensive implementation plan for the High Line Canal. Using the Community Vision Plan as a lens for the 71-mile system, it will serve as a greater investigation of the physical properties and opportunities of the Canal to identify areas of enhancement and investment, develop model infrastructure typologies, identify high impact projects, develop a phasing plan for implementation and investigate funding and management models. The plan will address the following:

- › Existing conditions analysis,
- › Zone (or Sub-Area) definitions,
- › Landscape design guidelines
- › Green infrastructure opportunities including stormwater,
- › Broad recommendations for the Canal overall and by zone,
- › Recreational opportunities,
- › Connectivity and crossings,
- › Activity nodes,
- › Economic development opportunities,
- › Historic resources, and
- › Programming opportunities for community users on the Canal.

In addition, the selected teams will lead planning for a signage and wayfinding system. The signage and wayfinding plan is aimed to develop a consistent identity for trails and pedestrian routes to easily and safely guide users to and from the High Line Canal and nearby landmarks, facilities and community services. The plan will improve community health by promoting multimodal forms of transportation including walking, bicycling and connections to public transit. Additionally, the plan will investigate interpretive and educational signage along the Canal corridor.

Volunteer Program

This summer we've been out on the Canal and at community events talking to users about the future of the Canal and the challenges it faces today. After hosting our first volunteer orientation on June 27th, we've engaged a number of volunteers to help in this effort. We will have additional volunteer opportunities this fall. If you are interested in supporting the Conservancy as a volunteer, please email volunteer@highlinecanal.org.

Colorado Health Foundation Grant

The Conservancy recently received a grant from the Colorado Health Foundation - the state's largest foundation - through their Activating Places and Spaces funding area. The grant will enable the Conservancy to perform extensive outreach with a focus on diverse communities along the Canal in Aurora and Green Valley Ranch. The goal of the grant is to increase trail use in these areas and help people connect to the Canal as a source of recreation and exploration. The Conservancy will be convening community leaders, surveying community members and piloting programs to get people outdoors and active on the Canal.

ULI

The Conservancy is working in partnership with Urban Land Institute (ULI) to plan a ULI developer's forum focused on development opportunity areas along the Canal's 71-mile reach.

Denver Botanic Gardens

A growing partnership is developing between the Conservancy and the Denver Botanic Gardens. A comprehensive botanical inventory is planned for 2018. The two organizations are jointly seeking grant applications for this project.

Our Progress takes Flight Stewardship Award

In June, Arapahoe County Open Spaces awarded the Conservancy its annual *Our Progress Takes Flight Stewardship Award*. The award recognizes an individual, local government or organization for displaying outstanding leadership, cooperation and stewardship to ensure the conservation and protection of the great outdoors.

"The High Line Canal Conservancy didn't wait for opportunity to be forgotten and for neglect to set in along the High Line. They got ahead of the game to preserve a valued resource and bring vision to its potential," said **Nancy Sharpe, Arapahoe County Commissioner, District 2**. "Boulder, Jefferson and Larimer counties have the mountains – WE have the High Line Canal! It is one of our keystone land features in the western half of the County. It is a way of life. The Conservancy has worked tirelessly to ensure that the High Line Canal will reach its greatest potential as an environmental, recreational, social, historic and economic asset along all of its 71 miles."



Arapahoe County Commissioners with HLCC Board Members

Media/Press

The urgent need for planning for the Canal's future and the importance of community support continue to be dispersed through various media channels. If you missed these in the past few months, take a moment to read/watch:

- › Village Crier June 2017 "High Line Canal Tree Inventory Summary" ([click here](#))
- › Aurora News Weekly "High Line Canal Vision Plan Released" - min. 10:29 ([click here](#))
- › Colorado Mountain Club Magazine "Best Urban Hikes in Denver" - page 26 ([click here](#))
- › Village Crier July 2017 - page 7 ([click here](#))
- › USAJ Realty "High Line Canal: Denver's Premier Urban Trail" ([click here](#))
- › Greenwood Village August Newsletter "High Line Canal Conservancy Moves Planning Forward for Future Protections and Enhancements of the High Line Canal" - page 16 ([click here](#))
- › Centennial Connection "The High Line Canal, Preservation Through Partnerships" - print fall newsletter, front page ([click here](#))
- › CBS Denver Channel 4 "High Line Canal Trail Future Uncertain: 'It's Part Of How We Live'" - aired August 9th, 6pm news ([click here](#))
- › Denver Post "Get on your bike and hit these 3 Denver trails" ([click here](#))

We've greatly appreciated the opportunity to be highlighted in a host of local newsletters including Centennial, Cherry Knolls, Denver District 4 and Denver District 11. If you'd like to include a piece in your next newsletter, please contact Suzanna: suzanna@highlinecanal.org.

In the Works

Though the Conservancy continues to focus its efforts on the next phase of planning, the work of the High Line Canal Working Group, Denver Water and the jurisdictions continues to push through some very important projects.

STORMWATER PROJECTS

Denver Stormwater Project

The Denver Department of Public Works, with the Conservancy as a key stakeholder, continues to work on plans for the proposed stormwater demonstration project near Eisenhower Park.

- › Status: Design of this stormwater project is 65% complete. The team is working diligently to complete necessary contractual work to begin construction in November of this year.

(Denver Stormwater Project cont'd)

- › Funding: Total projected cost of \$750,000 from the City and County of Denver

Greenwood Village Stormwater Project

Greenwood Village entered into an intergovernmental agreement with Urban Drainage Flood Control District (UDFCD) to develop a conceptual plan to repurpose the High Line Canal for stormwater treatment and conveyance.

- › Status: The IGA was approved by GWV City Council in 2016. Working with RESPEC, the team is 90% complete with the study.
- › Funding: \$40,000 with \$20,000 from GWV and \$20,000 from UDFCD

INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

Yale Crossing

Councilwoman Black has advocated for a bike and pedestrian tunnel at Holly and Yale, which is currently on the list of projects that would be funded by the 2017 GO Bond. Denver voters will see the GO Bond on their November ballots.

Hampden and Colorado Underpass

The City of Denver, Arapahoe County and Cherry Hills Village have come together to create a safe connection where there currently is a significant gap in the Canal trail. The Conservancy is working with the City of Denver to advocate for the inclusion of a robust public art component to the underpass projects.

- › Location: S. Colorado Blvd and E. Hampden Ave., Denver CO
- › Status: Fully funded, design underway
- › Cost: \$5.4M, with \$4.32M coming from Federal Sources and \$1.08M coming from Cherry Hills Village, Arapahoe County and the City and County of Denver.

Parker and Mississippi Underpass

In partnership with Arapahoe County, the City and County of Denver is funding the design and construction of an underpass at Parker and Mississippi. This project is expected to start construction in 2019.

- › Location: E. Mississippi Ave and S. Parker Road, Denver, CO
- › Status: Funded
- › Cost: \$3.2M Faster Funds, \$400,000 from the City and County of Denver, and \$400,000 from Arapahoe County.

Arapahoe County Enhancements:

In 2014, Arapahoe County Open Spaces purchased Long's Pine Grove, a 2.8-acre site that abuts the High Line Canal located at Uinta Street and Florida Avenue in the Four Square Mile Neighborhood. Master planning is underway to develop a park focused on passive, open space related experiences. For more information, [click here](#).

Bible Park Enhancements:

Three of the four High Line Canal bridges were closed this spring at Bible Park. City engineers, upon inspection, discovered that the steel was rusted and the bridges were unstable and unsafe. Thanks to the work of Councilwoman Black and the community, all three bridges will be replaced with construction beginning in the late fall.

In addition, Councilwoman Black is working with community members, the Conservancy, Denver Parks and Recreation and other organizations to add crusher fines, or compactable gravel, to the Canal service road around the park. This enhancement will prevent the tire ruts and muddy surfaces that currently impact users.

South Suburban Parks and Recreation District Enhancements

- › The Franklin Street New Bridge: complete.
- › Milliken Park Restroom: after anticipated SSPRD Board approval of a contract, construction would start early fall with completion at the end of October.

Aurora Enhancements:

- › Metro Center Trail – connection from the City Center RTD light rail station to the High Line Canal is complete.
- › Triple Creek Trailhead – new trailhead at the junction of the High Line Canal, Sand Creek Greenway and the Triple Creek Greenway. Funding for construction is in place and the project will be completed in 2018.
- › High Line Canal Trail north of Colfax – Aurora is selecting a consultant to design the trail between Colfax (Triple Creek Trailhead) and the Green Valley Ranch neighborhood in Denver. This will add approximately 3 miles of trail and connect one of the longest gaps along the corridor.



Summertime walkers in Cherry Hills Village

HIGH LINE CANAL TREE CARE

The High Line Canal Conservancy, Denver Water and leadership from each of the jurisdictions along the Canal's reach (all part of the High Line Canal Working Group) are working together to take an important step to improve the Canal landscape: initiating a comprehensive tree care plan for all 71 miles. The tree care plan prioritizes safety for users and long-term health of the trees. This tree care plan will be followed by the creation of landscape guidelines and implementation plans (through the Framework Plan outlined on page 2), including drought tolerant plantings and other landscape enhancements.

Background: During the summer of 2016, the High Line Canal Working Group completed a comprehensive tree inventory project. This project identified, mapped and assessed all trees with diameters greater than six inches along the High Line Canal corridor. Data was collected on 23,677 trees throughout the High Line Canal corridor, which has served as a valuable tool in assessing the health of the tree canopy.

Conclusions drawn from the tree inventory have led to immediate (Phase I) and long-term planning (Phase II) to preserve and enhance the Canal tree canopy. On the immediate side are the highest priority trees, which need to be removed or pruned due to dead and unsafe conditions. Certified tree service professionals assigned categories of tree conditions based on the severity of health of the trees, which includes recommended actions to improve tree health along the Canal. Visit highlinecanal.org/tree-inventory for more details on the tree data.

The High Line Canal Conservancy is working closely with Denver Water and the jurisdictions to:

- › Establish and monitor standards for removal and pruning that fulfill the Community Vision Plan for the High Line Canal.
- › Coordinate the accounting of each jurisdiction's investment in the project.
- › Leverage private funding to ensure long-term, high-quality care of the entire tree canopy.
- › Manage the tree data gathered along the Canal corridor.

Removal and pruning of trees as part of Phase I are expected to begin in fall 2017/winter 2018. We appreciate your understanding, as there may be some disruptions in the trail during this time. If you have any questions related to the tree care, please contact the High Line Canal Conservancy: hello@highlinecanal.org or (720) 767-2452.

Harrison Oaks Development Detour

Harrison Oaks is a new development consisting of eleven single-family residential lots. Access to the development will be achieved via a pedestrian and a vehicular bridge installed over the High Line Canal. To allow for safe bridge installation and access for the development, Harrison Oaks will be removing trees on the High Line Canal in the immediate vicinity of the project. In addition, construction will require a short detour for High Line Canal users, as shown below.



When: The detour is currently in place and anticipated to continue for 6 months.

Impact: Detour routes will be implemented for the High Line Canal bridge and trail construction.

Trees: As a result of the Harrison Oaks development, approximately forty trees along the High Line Canal will need to be removed. The High Line Canal Conservancy is working with Denver Water and other partner jurisdictions, such as Greenwood Village, to develop a master plan for long-term tree care, plantings and management that aligns with the recently adopted Community Vision Plan.

For information related to the Harrison Oaks development, contact:

Greenwood Village Community Development
comdev@greenwoodvillage.com, 303.486.5783

For information related to the High Line Canal, including tree management, contact:

High Line Canal Conservancy:
hello@highlinecanal.org, 720.767.2452

Operational Update



FUNDRAISING

We are thrilled to have completed our \$40,000 membership challenge fund! Thank you to our inaugural members for their commitment to this long-term, regional project. We have over 300 High Line Hero members so far and have raised over \$45,000 in new membership contributions since the launch of the program on April 28, 2017. Thank you for your support and please spread the word to help grow this passionate community of Canal users and supporters: joinhighlinecanal.org.

Since our last progress report in May, seven new Founding Partners have joined the Conservancy. We now have commitments for 31 miles, or \$775,000 over the next five years. *71 Miles Supported by 71 Founding Partners* is a campaign to raise \$1,775,000 of catalytic funds through the generous support of 71 Founding Partners, each committing \$25,000 over 1, 2 or 5 years.

ADMINISTRATION




The Conservancy has enjoyed working with Jack Ammons as our summer intern, a lifelong Canal user and Colorado College student. He's been involved in all sorts of projects including marketing support, data collection and research, presentations and photography. We will miss him as he launches a semester study abroad adventure in New Zealand this fall.

Open positions at the Conservancy include:
Planning Manager - [click here for more](#)
Fall Intern - contact hello@highlinecanal.org

Upcoming Happenings

- » Connecting the Canal Walks ([click here for more information](#))
 - Segment 9 Eisenhower Park to Cherry Creek: 9/5, 6pm
 - Segment 10 Cherry Creek to Expo Park: 9/17, 7:30am
 - Segment 11 Delaney Farm to Creeks of Aurora: 9/23, 7:30am
 - Segment 12 Crossing Colfax and Delaney Farm: 10/1, 7:30am
 - Segment 13 Colfax Connections and the Arsenal: 10/7, 7:30am
 - Segment 14 The Northern Terminus at Green Valley Ranch: 10/14, 7:30am
- » Community Walks
 - First Sunday Girl Trek Walk ([more here](#))
 - Bi-weekly Star K Ranch Walk ([more here](#))
 - Saturdays Aurora Amble ([more here](#))
 - Saturdays Expo Park ([more here](#))
 - Tuesdays Delaney Farm ([more here](#))
- » Anschutz Block Party September 13th, 11am – 2pm
- » Cherry Hills Village Barn Party September 16-17th
- » Highlands Ranch Historical Society Picnic, Fly'n B Ranch September 27th 11am - 1pm
- » High Line Canal Conservancy Open House: first Thursday of every month from 4-5pm (next one: September 7th). Drop by our office at 915 S. Pearl St. to chat with us and learn more about our work to protect the High Line Canal.
- » Stay informed with our monthly newsletter ([click here](#))

Follow us on social media:

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