

Glen Park Master Plan Palmer Lake, Colorado Parks and Recreation



2019

Presented by the Palmer Lake Volunteer Parks Commission as authorized by the Palmer
Lake Town Council
2018

Glen Park was described in the 1890's as "there are winding roads and babbling brooks, beside a small forest of trees, permeating one with a delightful sense of rest. " and "In the openings of these canons and scattered over the park are many shady, secluded nooks, with easy seats, inviting you to rest and 'commune with nature, and each other'."

"A 1894 promotional article spoke of 'cliffs and chasms, of sunlit glen and fairy dell and flowery vale, of stream and wood and dashing cataract, of gaping caverns and pillared palisades.' " ⁱ

Glen Park Master Plan – September 2019

Purpose / Plan Overview

A *Glen Park Master Plan* provides a framework for the future maintenance, management, and development of the park. The plan seeks to address issues and concerns, and identifies priorities for future improvements at the park.

Why Glen Park and not all the Town parks? It was decided by the Commission that without adequate funds and in an effort to save the Town money, we would address Glen Park as a Commission responsibility to assess and develop a master plan. Once the Master Plan for Glen Park was developed and approved by the Town Council, the Commission would then move on to develop a Master Plan for all the Town parks. It was further decided that Glen Park was a manageable project compared to Centennial Park, and had more users than the neighborhood Columbine Park. Glen Park has also not benefitted from attention over a great many years.

While there is focus on Glen Park, Centennial Park continues to receive needed attention from the Commission as documented by the first Parks Department report of May 2019. The Parks Commission has reached out to and heard from a representative of the Columbine neighborhood. The representative was invited to participate on a regular basis in the Parks meetings but has not chosen to. Two other Columbine neighbors have also been invited in the last month (June 2019) to participate. At the August 19th, 2019 meeting another Columbine resident attended and presented the Committee with a Plan for Columbine Park. The Committee was able to immediately help with the purchase of some requested items and inclusion in the forthcoming Volunteer in Palmer Lake Park day. There was a commitment from both to communicate and work together to upgrade Columbine Park.

The *Glen Park Master Plan* provides a 5-10 year vision for the management, maintenance and development of the park. The plan is the product of public engagement and the Town of Palmer Lake Parks Commission. It embodies the community's vision to provide active and healthy year-round recreational opportunities while preserving important natural resources for future generations.

The vision statement embodies the community's vision for the next 5-10 years at Glen Park. It is a compilation of the contributions made during the master planning process by members of the Parks Commission, Glen Park neighbors and users, and survey respondents. The vision is the guiding theme of the design development process for the future of Glen Park.

Glen Park is a safe, outdoor recreation destination for Palmer Lake residents that balance its natural green space and accessible waterway with a variety of unique, year-round activities for people of all ages and abilities, providing the community a natural oasis within the context of residential development.

Format (Chapters)

1. History and Description of Glen Park including Topography, soil, wildlife, and vegetation
2. Past Master Plans and Surveys
3. Creation of the Parks Commission/Department Committee
4. Vision
5. Mission
6. Goals
7. Objectives
8. Current Conditions/use/assessment of needs, findings
9. Access and Connections
10. Utilities: lights, water, sewer, storm water drainage
11. Specific Goals of the Master Plan for Glen Park
12. Specific Objectives for Glen Park

13. Summary of Recommendations in general terms

14. Detailed list of proposed Park Commission activities as it relates to Glen Park by priority for a 5-10 year vision

History and Description of Glen Park

The Glen and Glen Park were identified on plat maps and named in 1886. Glen Park became a part of Palmer Lake when the town was incorporated in 1889. ⁱⁱ "This section... (along Lover's Lane and North Monument Creek) was purchased by the Town in 1896 ...for a public recreational park."ⁱⁱⁱ Glen Park was used during the height of the Rocky Mountain Chautauqua Assembly from 1886 to 1910.

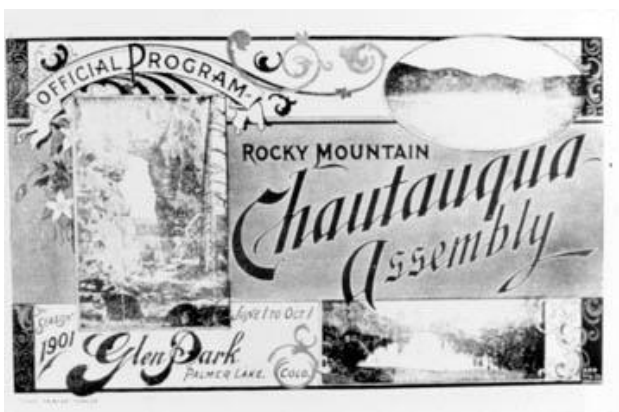
"The original Chautauqua Assembly came to Palmer Lake in 1886 and was an annual summer event for more than two decades. Palmer Lake hosted one of the first Chautauqua Assemblies in the Rocky Mountain West. The purpose of the Chautauqua Assembly was to provide entertainment, education, inspiration and outdoor recreation to enrich people's lives. The Chautauqua Movement flourished in the U.S. from 1874 into the 1920s. At its peak, over 400 locations around the country held an annual summer Chautauqua Assembly.

The Rocky Mountain Chautauqua Assembly made Palmer Lake a destination point for many. People from Colorado Springs and Denver, as well as elsewhere in Colorado and Midwestern states, arrived on the Denver & Rio Grande Railroad. Palmer Lake's Chautauqua took place in Glen Park centered around an auditorium built on what we now know as Chautauqua Avenue. Chautauqua activities included lectures, debates, concerts, campfire gatherings and burro excursions up to the reservoirs.

Many homes in "The Glen" neighborhood began as rustic tent cottages, where Chautauqua-goers stayed for the six-week long assembly. Several Chautauqua cottages eventually evolved into permanent homes where some descendants still live today."^{iv}

The Glen and Glen Park has experienced its shared of natural disasters. "In May 1946, four bridges were washed out by a cloud burst, a section of the road in reservoir canyon was destroyed and basements flooded. Except for the rustic foot bridge, (across North Monument Creek) all the others were replaced."^v

In June 1965 "wind whipped rain tore at houses and buildings from every direction followed by hail. Signs, house and garage roofs sailed through the air. Trees, electric light and telephone poles crashed, blocking all roads. The creek became a raging torrent 10 feet wide, carrying boulders, trees and bridges along with it. It is estimated that 4,000,000 gallons of water a minute rushed down stream. Pine Crest and Glen Park were isolated."^{vi}



Original Cover for 1901 Assembly



Crowds thronged to the Assemblies

Chautauqua Mountain and Glen Park are considered "one of the most important visual resources in Palmer Lake" according to the 2003 Comprehensive Plan.

A partially developed social trail through the park has emerged over the years; signs erected at both ends identifying it as Glen Park; a swing set was erected 30+ years ago as was a metal slide supported by a wooden structure, and a metal balance beam. Some long-time residents remember there being a monkey bar at one point in the last 40 years. 1978 two tennis courts were constructed off Lovers Lane. A fundraising by a local teenager, Morgan Day, in the 2013 timeframe allowed the tennis court to be somewhat improved. In the 1980's Glen Park saw further development with the addition of a restroom and in the late 1990's the construction of the Creekside Trail by volunteers and spearheaded by Tom and Cindy Allen.

Description of Glen Park, Reservoir Trailhead, North Monument Creek Greenbelt

Glen Park is a 24 +/- acre park located along the North Monument Creek Greenbelt in the Glen Park neighborhood of Palmer Lake. The park is classified as a community rustic park and is comprised, for the use of this Master Plan, of five distinct, individual parcels/use areas linked together by the surrounding vacated roadways, all owned by the Town of Palmer Lake, managed by the Town of Palmer Lake, and the Parks Commission. Each use area is unique and varies in the level of development and types of facilities it contains.

Glen Park features both developed facilities and natural areas providing visitors with a variety of recreational and natural experiences in one easily accessible location. While Glen Park has well-used facilities some of the most popular features at the park are the relatively undeveloped Creekside Trail along N. Monument Creek, the playground area, trail to the Reservoirs, the Glen Park Woods Walk loop trail within Glen Park which is approximately ½ mile long, the tennis courts, the picnic tables, and the natural areas, especially behind and west of the tennis courts. In addition to providing opportunities for recreation, the park provides valuable habitat for birds, fish, and wildlife.

Glen Park is bordered by North Monument Creek on the North Side of Lovers Lane (north of the Creek is private property), (Creekside Trail runs west to east just within the town boundary and on the south side of the Creek); west to the Pike National Forest along Walnut, and extends farther west of Walnut Avenue to encompass the Reservoir Trailhead area; south along Walnut, Alamosa, and private property; east to the intersection of Virginia Avenue and Lover's Lane.

It is rustic and mostly wooded, with some mitigation of ladder fuel through out the years opening the views to head height. The further east you go the more topsoil with grasses dominant as opposed to gravel found at the west end.

Residents identify Glen Park as a valuable community asset as the largest community use park in the Glen neighborhood, Glen Park provides important opportunities for active and passive recreation in a quiet natural environment in an increasingly suburbanized Palmer Lake. The park also offers convenient connections to the Creekside Trail and the Reservoir Trail systems.

Topography, Vegetation, Wildlife

The area East Area of the tennis courts presents nicely wooded areas with the Park's only aspen grove and some Ponderosa pine, where grass grows well. It is undeveloped, save for a small seasonal pool, a wildflower garden, a bathtub planter, and a couple of picnic tables.

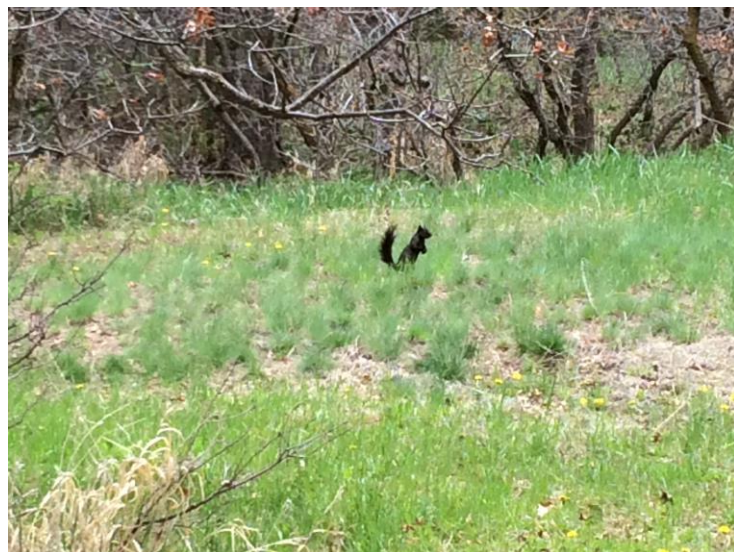
The Middle Area is dominated by Ponderosa pine and Gamble scrub oak that is younger and creates a natural barrier between the west and central areas. Behind (south of) the tennis courts and near the southern boundary there are mature cottonwoods and grassy areas.

The West Area is gravelly in nature dominated by open areas shaded by older Ponderosa pine. During heavy rain the area will experience runoff from Crescent Ave. and Walnut Ave. with gravel collecting and fanning out through this section.

The Reservoir Trailhead section west of Walnut, south of Old Carriage, and north of the Pike National forest's steep slope where North Monument Creek flows most of the year is extremely gravelly in nature with almost no topsoil and dominated by Ponderosa pine and some Gambel scrub oak. The trail from the trailhead at Old Carriage to the Town fence at the culvert is 700' +/- long.

The North Monument Stream Corridor and Creekside Trail is home to important natural resources, Ponderosa pine, aspen, cottonwood, numerous wildflowers such as Wild Salsify, Lupine, Indian Paintbrush, Yarrow and Sweet pea to name a few, and is generally less developed except for one bench at the Eastern end. The Trail is 2000' +/- long.

Wildlife throughout the Park has an abundance of varying species. The area provides excellent habitat for mule deer, mountain lion, black bear, fox, black and gray squirrel, porcupine, and raccoon. It is not uncommon to see turkey, ravens, magpies, bluebirds, chickadees, nuthatches, jays, and flickers in the Glen Park area. Some raptors are also present: falcons, hawks, owls but are not as common.



Black bear and mountain lions roam the park, as does the occasional black squirrel.

The majority, if not all, of Glen Park is in the December 2018 FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map floodplain delineation.

Noxious weeds have been present in Glen Park but efforts from 2014 to 2017 by the PL Noxious Weeds Team in cooperation with Boy Scout Troop 17, D-38 Civics classes, community members, and Mile High Corp with some matching funds from the Town has kept them in check. Over 8500 pounds of Myrtle Spurge and Orange Hawkweed were removed along with 10000 pounds of ladder fuel plants: thistles, Knapweed, Teasel, Common Mullein, Poison Hemlock, Downey Brome, and Common Burdock.

Master Plans / Surveys

There have been no master plans for Glen Park specifically, and has only short mentions in the February 2003 "Palmer Lake HWY 105 Streetscape Plan" as an update to the July 1994 Pikes Peak Council of Governments report, which is an update of the Town's Comprehensive Plan of 1982. There is no mention or plan for Glen Park in surveys conducted in 2008, 2014 or 2015 by Palmer Lake groups, nor any mention in the 1992 survey or "El Paso County Parks and Recreation Advisory Board summary of 2008" (this was also titled "Town of Palmer Lake, Master Plan update, Palmer Lake Recreation Area"). Glen Park specifically has been ignored as a recreational facility and valuable Town asset for years. This despite residents who claimed the Glen as their residence having the highest percentage of response of any area in Palmer Lake in the 2003 Comprehensive Plan.

In the survey conducted as part of the Comprehensive Plan 2003, 6 questions relating to "Parks and Recreation" were asked. None addressed Glen Park specifically, and only one addressed it peripherally "Would you like to see recreational programming expanded? If yes please specify:" That is it! Glen Park ignored.

One might argue that this is because residents didn't value parks, hence little mention. In evaluating the survey further residents were asked "List three projects you feel should be made priorities by the Town." Of the 15 categories offered "Parks and Rec" was ranked #5 by the resident responders, yet still has not received the attention the residents feel it should.

In the 1999 citizens advisory group stated the vision or goal for Palmer Lake "to provide traditional public services while maintaining the Town's historical, small-town atmosphere."

This *Glen Park Master Plan* provides a guiding vision for the management, maintenance, and development of Glen Park by aiming to balance recreational uses with the preservation of important natural resources. This master plan identifies current and future needs, addresses issues and concerns, and establishes a framework for future development, management, and maintenance consistent with a 5-10 year vision for Glen Park which is long over due for some attention. It is a "living" plan and will update constantly.

It is the hope of the Parks Commission that, unlike past surveys, studies, budgets, comprehensive plans, Palmer Lake Parks, and specifically Glen Park for this Master Plan's purpose won't be ignored, and is given the attention it deserves and is developed into a premier Town Park.

Creation of the Parks Commission and Glen Park Master Plan

The "Parks and Recreation Commission" was approved in 1983 and various sections over the years, 1991 and 1992, revised. Ordinance 12.20.010-12.20.100 Parks and Recreation Commission approved by the Town Council 4/9/92 outlines the duties.^{vii} In the 2003 Town of Palmer Lake Comprehensive Plan three community recommendations were made that directly impact parks within Palmer Lake.

There were:

1. "Parks: Investigate the development of a Parks Association or District for the purposes of acquiring, developing, maintaining park land and coordinating recreational activities and programs for the Town."
2. "Bicycle/Pedestrian Trail System: Encourage civic groups to become involved with the trail development program."
3. "Open Space: Establish an Open Space Committee, composed of local interested citizens, to identify potential open space areas, sources for public acquisition and coordination with bicycle/pedestrian trail development program."

Fifteen years later little has been done to address these recommendations. The Parks Commission intends to do so.

In the October 12, 2017 Council Meeting the formation of the Parks Advisory Group for Town Parks was discussed as a future agenda item. In January 2018, the Palmer Lake Board of Trustees heard a report on the formation of the Parks Committee and its beginning activities. The Parks Commission has been charged with developing the master plan, policy reviews, possible programs, and facility needs for all Palmer Lake Parks.

The Palmer Lake parks are: Centennial (around Palmer Lake itself), Columbine Park (a small neighborhood park near the old Pine Crest site), and Glen Park. The Commission began meeting every two-week in March 2018. It is composed of two Town Council Trustees, and 7 community member/volunteers. The meetings are open to the public. The Commission began addressing all the needs of the various parks and programs for the parks (all of which were designed to raise funds for park facilities/equipment and the maintenance of them), identify other sources for funds, and prioritize projects that would be the focus for the 2018 budget

expenditures. The Commission didn't just establish the guidelines but also developed, organized, and ran various programs to achieve the tasks.

In May 2019 the Parks Commission submitted their first Department Report to Town administration (at their request) before the Council meeting summarizing the first year of activities. The Commission doesn't have a paid department head like fire, police, roads, and water departments. The duties of developing and presenting the monthly (from now on) report is done on a shared basis by the Commission members. The May 9th report outlined the 44 different activities, events, proposals, and meetings the Parks Commission had participated in or accomplished in its first year. Even more impressive is the number of volunteer hours performed by the Parks Commission, summer 2019: May – 155; June – 267; July – 71.5; August – 170.5. The Parks Commission has developed agendas and taken meeting minutes, and will post them on the Town website beginning September.

The Commission is requesting a seat at the weekly town department meeting (at least once a month) so as to facilitate communication and cooperation between departments. There have been a number of situations where representation would have facilitated smoother and timelier operations, thus greater efficiency, and helped develop safer, more efficient, facilities for the public. In lieu of that, regularly scheduled meetings with the Town Administration would suffice.

Palmer Lake Parks Department Vision Statement

The vision of the Palmer Lakes Parks Department/Commission is to be a premier Town parks and recreation facilities and service provider on the Colorado Front Range while enhancing the quality of life for residents and adding value to Town visitors' experiences within the historical, small-town atmosphere.

Palmer Lake Parks Department Mission Statement

The mission of the Palmer Lake Parks Commission is to ensure the responsible stewardship of Palmer Lake Parks and Palmer Lake Parks funding. Ensuring that Palmer Lake parks are well maintained, safe, and begin to meet the current and future needs of the public; to provide high quality year-round recreational amenities and opportunities for residents and visitors. Our values include access for all; promotion of healthy lifestyles for youth and adults; support for Town economic vitality through recreational facilities and programs.

Palmer Lake Parks Department/Commission Goals

The goals of the Palmer Lake Parks Commission are as follows:

1. Provide safe, well maintained park space and facilities for youth and adults
2. Meet the parks and recreational needs of our growing and historic community
3. Enhance and support current amenities while looking toward future needs
4. Advocate and plan for sufficient recreational amenities and no loss of recreational amenities during times of growth
5. Develop and manage park space with respect for the natural environment
6. Identify and develop public – private partnerships for fundraising.

Palmer Lake Parks Department/Commission Objectives

The objectives required to reach out goals are as follows:

1. Meet and exceed safety standards set forth by parks and recreation industry and known best practices
2. Remain in touch with Town needs and trends in recreational programming and facilities while remaining responsible to fiscal realities

3. Continue to apply long term vision to short term needs. Not every eventuality can be anticipated, but a well-planned parks program will best serve the neighbors and Town at large.
4. Participate in Town Council meetings to be aware of parks and recreation opportunities and challenges associated with future development and budget restraints.
5. Participate in Town Council and department meetings so as to foster communication and cooperation between departments.
6. Monitor environmental risks and mitigate those risks through appropriate vegetation mitigation, weed control, drainage issues, and use of native plants where appropriate. Current and future park space should complement and enhance existing natural settings.

Current Condition Assessment and Usage of Glen Park by area

Community priorities for the future of Glen Park range from improving maintenance and restoring damaged natural areas to investments in new facilities and safety improvements.

Starting from the West: **The Reservoir Trailhead Area** sees a higher concentration of users, both residents and visitors; parking on most nice days is a safety issue for smooth travel into or out of the Glen down Old Carriage and up South Valley Roads. Emergency vehicles should anticipate possible problems if they need to access the Glen at those times. In August 2019 one Parks committee member, a Town Trustee, and neighbors concerned with the parking issues have met on two occasions to begin the process of planning a strategy to relieve some of the parking and traffic issues in this area. A number of suggestions have been put forth by all parties but time and opportunity have not allowed the development of a formal report to present to the Council and Town as of this writing. It is a serious situation and cannot be neglected.

At the August 22, 2019 Town Council meeting, Mayor John Cressman appointed a liaison for each Town Department, Glant Havenar for Parks and Patricia Mettler for Roads. It is vital that Parks Committee members be involved in all the discussions and decisions involving the parking (current and potential) areas surrounding the Town Parks, including the Reservoir Trailhead.

There have been discussions of increased parking space during 2018 Town Council meetings, but no action or plans have been presented or seriously considered as of this writing. Caution must be taken so that the natural/forest environment is maintained as much as possible.

There have also been problems with hikers bringing dogs, leashed and unleashed, into the area. The problem stems from dogs being allowed by their owners to defecate along the trail and in the reservoirs, leaving it where deposited. A resolution to this problem is being sought. There have been a couple of proposals but none have been feasible as they were dependent on a part-time Town employee to perform extra duty to pick-up the deposits. The Town Council imposed a "no dogs allowed" ordinance in the early fall 2018 but attempts to enforce the ordinance have been unsuccessful as of this writing. There is also a shortage of trashcans and pet waste stations in which to pick up and leave waste.

The **West Playground and Picnic Area** is family and children oriented; the only play equipment in Glen Park is here: 2 regular swings and 2 child swings. There are 3 picnic tables and a stand-alone bench. There is poison ivy in the NW corner of the park where Walnut and Lover's lane connect and the GP Walking Trail converge. The wooden structure that once "held" the slide needs to be repurposed once safety issues are addressed. There are numerous large rocks that randomly exist through out the area, and some stone/dirt piles and depressions that present hazards. The only bicycle rack is in the parking area along Lovers Lane.

In June 2019 a new playground structure with chip cushioning and curbing was installed mostly with volunteer Parks Commission labor. A second new structure, a Two-Person swing, was added in August. Both have been received very positively.



There are currently 7 parking spots along Lovers Lane, but on busy Reservoir Trailhead days they are often taken up by hikers not playground users. Visitors have begun parking informally along Walnut near the playground and then walking to the Reservoir trailhead. The area along Walnut was left unfinished with the installation of a fire hydrant in 2017.



The **Central Area** contains two tennis courts and a two picnic tables in very poor condition; the existing tennis courts are in generally good condition but currently under-used. The heavily wooded area just west of the tennis courts is in need of mitigation and re-seeding as the old bathrooms were removed in the fall 2018 but the area was left as bare ground. There is also a pipe sticking out of the ground and a large stone "fire-ring" that present opportunities for injury or illegal activity. The area behind, south, of the tennis courts is rarely used except by walkers. Mitigation of dead vegetation is badly needed especially on the south slope as it rises to meet private property. This situation creates ladder fuel that could ignite resident's homes on the slope above the Park.





The **North Monument Creek Greenbelt/Creekside Trail** is one of Palmer Lake's and Glen Parks most used trails by residents. The Trail provides safe access to Glen Park from both the East and West areas as it parallels North Monument Creek, connecting use areas within the Park. It is an important recreation destination and natural area offering a quiet, intimate experience in nature that changes with the seasons. The trail is a single track, soft surface, 2-3 feet wide, and is designed for walking and enjoying the stream and inhabitants. The stream is bordered on the north by private property and is undeveloped. There are entrances at both the East and West ends, parking at the East end for 3-4 cars, a bench along the trail, and is defined by a rock border most of its length. A dog waste bag dispenser is located at the Trail's West entrance. There are no trashcans anywhere along the trail. It is becoming increasingly overgrown and the creek clogged.



The **Glen Park Woods Walk Trail** (change to **Glen Park Loop Trail**) is a pedestrian only (no bicycles, horses, or motorized vehicles) circles the East, Central, along Lovers Lane, and West Areas and does not cross any

perimeter roads. It is approximately ½ mile long. Various portions of the trail meander through the park with a very loose pattern. Some sections are in good shape and well defined others almost nonexistent. There are a number of social trails that aren't useful and take away from the natural setting or could be used for picnic tables or benches. The trail also intrudes on areas where other users might appreciate less trail activity in their vicinity i.e. cutting through picnic areas, located immediate along the tennis court fence, converging in the playground area.



The **East Area** is at the intersection of Virginia and Lovers Lane entrance has a sign announcing the Park and Trail but little else. The sometimes ill-defined trail divides here, the right side heading west along Lovers Lane, the left side going west along the southern boundary. The random trail is cut by numerous social trails, no trashcans, benches, or picnic tables exist. There is a sometimes-maintained wildflower garden, a bathtub planter, and a seasonal pool between the trail and the south boundary that needs cleaning and possibly a name. There is one pet waste dispenser at the East entrance.



Seasonal pool in East Area

General poor conditions: Split rail fences and some stones define the parking areas along Lovers Lane and Walnut – need repair, replacement as there are areas where cars could drive into the Park unimpeded. On weekends there isn't enough parking near the playground as many Reservoir Trail users park there. Many users park along the road, in non-designated areas creating congested roadways, hence potentially dangerous situations for all users and emergency vehicles.

The entire Glen Park has only one trash can (at the Reservoir Trailhead). A second one was added at the playground area in late August.

Access to Glen Park, Connections to the Glen neighborhood, and upper Palmer Lake

Vehicles and Parking: Vehicle access to Glen Park, Creekside Trail, and the Reservoir Trailhead is generally from Old Carriage Road or Spring Street. Glen residents can access the Park areas along Lovers Lane, Walnut Avenue, Crescent Avenue, or Virginia Avenue.

Visitors arriving by vehicle can park at one of seven small parking areas located at the periphery of the park and trailheads. This includes three small parking areas along Lovers Lane, (6, 11, and 7 vehicles with 90 degree parking), one at the Creekside Trailhead at the base of Spring Street (3-4 vehicles with 90 degree parking), and three at the Reservoir Trailhead at the base of Old Carriage Road (2, 2, and 18 with 90 degree parking). There is informal parking along the north side of Old Carriage Road where it turns east at the Reservoir Trail Area accommodating about 7 cars parked parallel, but when parked at 90 degrees poses a severe safety hazard for pedestrians and any emergency vehicles.

Traffic has seen an increase the past few years with the popularity due in part to the listing of the trail in [The Best Colorado Springs Hikes^{viii}](#) of the Reservoir Trailhead. The Town Council and Town management began addressing this issue in 2018 by looking at adding parking to accommodate the Reservoir Trailhead parking needs. Vehicles often park along Lovers Lane, along the corner of Walnut, South Valley, and Old Carriage (informal), and Walnut Avenue (informal parking area) as a solution. This poses safety issues for Glen residents and Glen Park users, as the informal Walnut parking is adjacent to the playground area. This also limits the parking for playground and picnic area users. Additionally it presents problems for emergency vehicles trying to access the Glen.

During August and September of 2019 there have been some resident comments about the playground attracting non-residents and adding to the parking problem. Informal survey conducted by face-to-face interviews with playground users have found these comment to be inaccurate. Almost all playground users are Glen and Palmer Lake residents. In fact many who don't live in the Glen but live in Palmer Lake don't know about the playground. Also many of the users who aren't from Palmer Lake have some connection to Palmer Lake and the Glen i.e. grandparents, day care users, nannies, former residents.

Pedestrian and Bicycle: Pedestrians and bicyclist can access Glen Park from the surrounding areas and adjoining neighborhoods by any of the streets described above, and down the path extending into the Park from Alamosa Avenue on the South side.

All pedestrian and bicycle routes (except for the Alamosa entrance) are shared with vehicles as there are no designated bike paths or sidewalks. There is a bicycle rack located at the West end Lovers Lane parking area. Within the park, informal paths connect trails and facilities for pedestrians. At this writing there are no rules pertaining to Glen Park Loop trail bike users.



Trail up to Alamosa from the south

Utilities: Some utilities run throughout the Glen Park area, providing access to sewer, water, and power. Currently there are no utilities connected in the Park.

Lighting: There are no streetlights along the Park's perimeter streets and none within the Park itself.

Water: Water is available along Walnut, Virginia, Old Carriage, and South Valley but currently undeveloped within the park. Palmer Lake water department maintains a water line from Walnut to Lovers Lane through the Park just East of the playground area.

Sewer: Sewer is available but currently undeveloped within the park. PL Sanitation maintains a sewer main running parallel to Lover's Lane on the North side of the Park. A second sewer main runs along Virginia Ave. at the East end of the Park. A third line runs through the Park from Walnut/Crescent Avenue to Lover's Lane.

Stormwater: North Monument Creek provide valuable ecosystem services through the conveyance of storm water from properties adjacent to the North side of the Creek. North Monument Creek also receives storm water and planned discharges of water from the Reservoir. Maintenance of those systems is critical to maintaining the health of riparian and stream habitat.

Runoff from Crescent Avenue under Walnut into the Park's south side near the playground area with little control is untreated and forms an undirected streambed and alluvial fan of sand, gravel, and road residue that flows almost 300' across the Park. This area is left undeveloped because of the potential damage to any Park facility erected in that area, hence wasted Park recreational space.

On July 27th and July 30th, 2019 one of the Parks Committee members witnessed the effects of a thunderstorm dumping almost one inch of rain and hail in 45 minutes on this area. There was a fast moving stream moving to the North from the above culverts across the Park toward Lovers Lane and a second stream turning East behind the Dalrymple property. It flooded the picnic area and the trails all the way to the area just west of the tennis courts. Additionally storm water runoff from Walnut Avenue flowed forcefully into the playground area under the wooden slide structure to the swings flooding the area. It remained muddy for the next 48 hours. The playground area is one of the most heavily used areas of Glen Park. This is dangerous. It needs to be addressed by the Water Department, with assistance from Roads, as they have created part of the problem when they installed a new water line in 2017 or 2018.



The Palmer Lake Town Council voted in April 2019 to not pursue any storm water/drainage repairs or mitigation as recommended by GMS Engineering. They choose to continue doing what they could through normal road maintenance. This presents major safety and use issues for a large area bisecting Glen Park.



Goals of the Master Plan For Glen Park

- Understand community recreation needs as it relates to Glen Park
- Identify and prioritize improvements consistent with the community vision for the park
- Balance the development of new facilities with the preservation of existing natural areas
- Suggest much needed investment and upgrades at the park
- Improve access, connections, and circulation to address areas of congestion and minimize conflicts between park and trail users
- Address community safety concerns such as condition and maintenance of the facilities and equipment.
- Identify and develop strategic partnerships with public and private organizations to better manage, maintain, program, and invest in Glen Park
- Create a tool for future fundraising
 - * Protecting the natural environment
 - * Providing new opportunities for outdoor education
 - * Develop budget and request adequate funding to meet the annual needs for facilities, programs, and maintenance of the Parks.
 - * Provide adequate staffing, especially during the summer to accomplish the tasks at hand.
 - * Advocate for and Involve the Parks Commission/ or a representative from it, in the absence of a paid Parks Director, in the interview process for hiring of Parks full or part-time staff for the summer and have them directed by the Parks Committee through the Town Manager as to weekly tasks.

Challenges and Opportunities

The planning process revealed numerous opportunities and challenges that this master plan seeks to address. The following objectives and attached spreadsheet punch list is based on research and site inventory over the passed 18 months, and was used to help identify and prioritize design, programming, maintenance and management recommendations.

Objectives For Glen Park

Assessment of Needs, Assessment Findings listed below are proposed improvements to existing facilities and proposed new facilities to enhance the overall use of Glen Park. Each improvement will be contingent upon available funding that may consist of public funds, grants, fundraising, and donations, and approved by the respective governing body, the use of volunteers and available resources. As development of the Park moves forward, it will be important to balance development of new facilities with the preservation and restoration of existing natural areas.

It is proposed that the west area be dominated by the playground and picnic areas, and one terminus (the other being at the east end) of a loop trail in the Park, and the transition area from Glen Park to the reservoir trail and/or Creekside trail.

1. With volunteers the trails can be redefined using existing rock borders, mowing outside the border rocks, defined trail base, woodchip footing, and a pattern that would loop inside the boundaries with occasional spur trails into picnic areas and benches. (Started 7/2019)
2. 6 picnic tables – 4 are barely useable, 2 need repair to the table and benches (done early September 2019), add 1 by the tennis courts – west side (done 7/2019), add another further west in a grove of oak near the parking area, and lastly another a bit further west in another grove of oaks before you get to the alluvial fan of gravel.
3. Two tennis courts – further assessment and collaboration with tennis/pickle ball groups is needed. Continue general maintenance until a detailed “to do” list can be developed.
4. Playground at the west end that is focused on younger neighborhood children: 4 swings, playground structure, and two-person swing. Use the existing wooden structure to offer additional playground opportunities.
5. Bring existing wood structure up to safety standards. Resurface the existing wood structure with redwood, Trex, or similar, add cushioning and curbing, using volunteer help and donation of materials.
6. Expand the Creekside, Glen Park trails (at least through signage) to connect with the reservoir trail system west of Walnut to the Creekside and Glen Park Loop Trails
7. Switching to 4” or 5” round treated 2-rail fencing or large rocks moved from within the Park would be more economical and require less maintenance over the years. Cooperation between departments is needed.
8. Porta Potty near the tennis court is the only bathroom facility in the Park. Add another near the west end – perhaps only during the summer months. Construct tasteful wooden enclosures. Make sure one is ADA compliant.
9. Clean up and make safer park areas by: (many can be done with volunteers)
 - a. Removing a stone, dirt pile near the west end playground or clean it up and make it a mound which can be played upon;
 - b. Look into creating an art piece or flower garden out of the fire ring just west of the tennis court;
 - c. Make sure the manhole cover west of the tennis court is secure; (completed 4/2019)
 - d. Define and secure the drainage off Crescent into the park that may require building a retention or collection “pond” that is fed by a defined “stream” using existing rocks from the park after a streambed is dug;
 - e. Repurpose random rocks strewn all throughout the Park – volunteers and town equipment could easily collect them and repurpose them as trail boundaries or parking area boundaries for the bigger ones. Some could be used as stepping stones/islands for play and seating.
 - f. Cutting mitigated tree stumps at ground level, especially behind and East of tennis courts
10. Secure or remove a water spigot near tennis court and the spigot near the playground
11. Improving overall maintenance – mowing, tree trimming, addressing parking areas & boundaries. Regular maintenance provides for a clean, healthy, and enriching experience. Recommended: regular trash pick-ups, restroom, pet waste stations (3 added 8/2019). This will help instill community pride and ownership, decrease vandalism, making the Park safer and more enjoyable for all.
12. Leave the area south of the tennis courts and north of the southern boundary as natural as possible after some mitigation. The area of the cottonwood, aspen groves, small scrub oak clusters.
13. Install new playground structure, curbing and safety cushioning (completed 6 and 8/2019)

14. Eradicate poison ivy in NW corner & along Lover's Lane, continue removal of noxious weeds.
15. Re-vegetate existing social trails after removing them to minimize further trampling and erosion.
16. Maintain & clean up vegetative buffers between each of the designated use areas.
17. Look at repairing/welding the original metal slide.
18. Mitigation along Creekside Trail and North Monument Creek clean-up should be addressed soon.
19. Address parking and traffic flow issues to Glen Park and The Reservoir Trailhead area.

New Facilities: **estimated cost per new facility – see attachment 2**

1. Add bear proof trash cans, at least 3, the length of the park **(one added 8/2019)**
2. Look to building an ADA compliant bathroom in Glen Park
3. Expand parking along Lovers Lane perhaps on the north side of the Lane.
4. Expand / create parking at the corner of Walnut and Old Carriage on the west side.
5. Expand / create parking along Walnut near the playground – there is room for about 9 cars, some parallel and some straight in. This would be a nice number as it doesn't overwhelm the area, doesn't encroach too close to the residents just to the east, and provides parking next to the playground.
6. Create a safety barrier (fence, rocks) between parking and playground – this might be done in conjunction with the water department that put in a new water line and removed the split rail fence. There are numerous rocks pushed off the road into the park about 30' that could be used to establish a preliminary barrier.
7. Create a small protection area (approx. 13' x 10') around the hydrant and water valves that were placed along Walnut near the playground and the intersection of Walnut and Lover's Lane. Using timbers or rocks to surround them. Wildflowers could be planted inside with the addition of topsoil. It would also serve as the boundary for a parking area mentioned in #5 above. The other end of this parking area would be defined by a large existing Ponderosa Pine.
8. Install curbs in the playground swing and wood structure area to be safety compliant using donations and volunteers – cement, landscape timbers, artificial curbs, wood logs & woodchips (possible donations from local landscape/mitigation companies, retailers).
9. Expand playground equipment offerings at least a piece of equipment each year for 4 years using budget, focus on using natural colors and materials when possible (not in any priority order).
 - a. Slack rope between two existing trees
 - b. Climbing wall and/or net designed for 5-9 year olds
 - c. Tunnel apparatus (could even be a large concrete drainage pipe section) or a repurpose of the existing wood structure
 - d. Sit-upon bouncy child's equipment
 - e. Tunnel slide
 - f. Children's mountain bike loop for learning
 - g. Stump or rock "islands" to step or hop from one to the other, or sit upon;
 - h. Climbing boulder: manufactured or natural brought in
 - i. Child's zip line using existing trees as starting and end stations
 - j. Spider web between two trees
10. Create a quiet area (meditation, wildlife, wildflower viewing area) with benches at the east and west ends of the Park
11. Change dog waste bag dispensers to pet waste stations.
12. Plant and expand wildflowers / drought tolerant perennials in the east end of the park
13. Add another pet waste station near the tennis court; replace 2 others with appropriate stations **(done 8/2019)**.
14. Look at possibility of installing picnic tables in the area west of Glen Park and SE of the Reservoir trailhead, along with a trash can near the tables. Also one or two additional picnic tables in the wooded area west of the tennis courts.
15. Create a more formal trail that connects the above area (#14) with the west end of Glen Park, minimally with signage.

16. Establish the town property lines along the southern boundary so that a trail can run along and near it to provide distance from the trail along Lover's Lane, picnickers and tennis players in the center of the area. The residences along the south boundary rest upon a high bank and are mostly screened from the Park by trees.
17. Plant native grasses in the area west of the tennis court where the old outhouse was removed.
18. Establish mileage and post signs at key trail junctions
19. Erect information, educational, interpretive signs at key points throughout the park.
20. Look to a future expansion of the Creekside and Glen Park trail along Lover's Lane east to the intersection of Walnut, along the south side.
21. Add lighting along Lovers Lane to increase visibility and deter negative activity, while not encroaching on the night sky, especially for the immediate neighbors.
22. Remove existing "Glen Park Woods Walk Trail" sign and replace with "Glen Park Loop Trail" sign.

Summary of Recommendations for Glen Park

It is proposed to leave the Glen Park in as natural state as possible with improvements to blend into the natural surroundings. New facilities and equipment should be constructed of material which is as maintenance free as possible due to dependence on inconsistent paid staff, budget, and volunteers.

Current Glen Park needs: Attached is a spreadsheet punch list, Attachment 2, of proposed improvements to existing facilities and park improvements, additional facilities and equipment to be added. It is a priority ranking of importance by the Palmer Lake Parks Commission of Glen Park needs as of August 25, 2019 without discussion of available resources or funds to accomplish each item. It has been constantly modified since then as new items emerge.

Estimated cost of items for upgrading the safety and usability of Glen Park – Attachment 1
 Priority detailed punch list for Glen Park - Attachment 2
 Map of the Glen Park area, current – to come

i “The Divide,” Historic Sites & Structures, El Paso County, Colorado 1977 pp 21

ii Palmer Lake A Historical Narrative, Marion Savage Sabin, pp 49

iii Palmer Lake A Historical Narrative, Marion Savage Sabin, pp 71

iv Return of the Rocky Mountain Chautauqua Assembly, Palmer Lake Historical Society, 2018

v Palmer Lake A Historical Narrative, Marion Savage Sabin, pp 117

vi Palmer Lake A Historical Narrative, Marion Savage Sabin, pp 120-121

vii Chapter 12.20 Parks and Recreation, Town of Palmer Lake

viii The Best Colorado Springs Hikes, CMC, Pikes Peak Group, pp54



Tandem swing added 8/19



One of 3 new Pet Waste stations added 8/19

Attachment 1: Estimated cost for upgrading existing facilities and installing new facilities with an estimate of how many are needed.

1. Bear proof trashcans (3): \$240 (plastic), \$860 (steel). Still need an estimate of those made by CO. State Corrections inmates.

2. ADA Compliant bathroom/porta potty enclosure: 1 PP = approximately \$500.00; 2 porta potty enclosure approximately \$1000.00.

New Facilities items 3-7, pages 14 & 15, can be accomplished with cooperation and in-kind services from roads and water departments.

9. Expanding playground equipment over the next 5-10 years:

- a. Slack rope/rope walk – freestanding \$2500 (Gametime), using trees – less
- b. Climbing wall (5-12 year olds) – 6’ SWall \$5700; 8’ Volcano \$8300; 8’ Ribbon Wall \$8300 (Gametime); Burke #BB 1932 \$4400.
- c. Tunnel apparatus
- d. Sit upon bouncy 2-5 year old
- e. Tunnel slide – contact company reps
- f. Children’s mountain bike loop
- g. Stump or rock “islands” to step one to the other, or sit upon – use existing rocks
- h. Climbing boulder – free with town moving one in, artificial rock \$12000 (Burke)
- i. Zip Line (5-12 year olds) 75’ freestanding \$13000; using existing trees – less
- j. Spider web climber – standalone \$2600 (Burke), use existing tress – less

10. Quiet area at East end - 6’ bench (2): Leaf \$731 (Gametime), Buddy (Burke) \$817

11. Expand wildflower garden East end - \$50 for added seed, volunteers maintaining it

12. Pet Waste stations (3) add and replace existing ones - \$519 (Kirby built #VFL3045), explore recycled material poop stations: 5 for \$1300 (pet waste eliminator)
13. Picnic tables (4) at various locations in the Park - \$725-1100 each (Gametime)
14. Trail work – volunteers
15. South property line – work with owners
16. Plant native grasses near tennis court - \$50 for seed, watering is a ??
17. Establish mile/distance posts and signs (3) \$??
18. Erect information and interpretive signs or info center sign/station (\$1500) for a 2-sided.
19. Expansion of Creekside Trail – volunteers
20. Lighting along Lovers Lane - \$??
21. Repair of original metal slide approx. \$200.00
22. Restore existing picnic tables (5): replace wood tops, paint cement supports colors matching the new playground structure. Approximately \$500.00.
23. Another load of wood chips for around swings, slide, and possibly new swings set: \$500. Added curbing and leveling (\$300)

Additional information – cost estimates:

Benches: all 6’ – Pine \$304, Steel \$877, backless steel \$326

Picnic tables: 8’ – Pine \$580, Steel portable \$1054; 6’ Pine \$559, steel portable \$902. Replace the tops and benches; repaint the metal on the 4 picnic tables in the Town yard (\$300.00).

Samples of signage and other possible Glen Park facilities to be considered, as funds become available and other priorities are accomplished (next page).



Interpretive and educational signage.



Artificial grass hill



Pet Waste station



Comments from Glen Park neighbors over the past few weeks:

Jean K. 7/24 “Just wanted to express a huge thanks to everyone that brought life back to Glen Park!! My grandkids LOVE it!!!”

Angela B. 7/25 “Our kids absolutely love it! (Glen Park) Thank you for all of your hard work.”

Kathy A. 7/25. “It (Glen Park) is really nice! My 20 month old granddaughter enjoys the slide. Thank you!”

Darcy L. 7/15. “Glen Park is so much more fun with the new playground. My daughters love it! When I was growing up we only had the swings and slide. Thank you for all the work.”

Frankie B-G (5 years old) 6/25. “Dear Reid, how are you? The Park is so much fun! Thank you for your hard work.”

Carrie B. 2/22. Thanks you for your tremendous amount of work you have invested in Glen Park! I want you to know it is appreciated & keeps us families motivated! Thank you for fighting for parks.”

Anne O. 7/29. “Its (Glen Park) wonderful!”

Sue R. 8/30. “Wonderful time at Glen Park this morning with my grandsons! There were other families there that come to the Park daily. A HUGE thank you to the Parks and Rec for the great updates at the Park!”

Local, long-time couple donate \$500.00 to the Parks because of the work in Glen Park 8/19

The response from the Parks Committee to these compliments has been: “We aren’t done yet!”

Palmer Lake Parks Commission Committee Members - August 2019

Jessica Farr Alicia Gatti Glant Havenar Bob Mutu Kirk Noll Mike Pietsch
Christie Ramshur John Ramshur Darcy Schoening Matt Stephen Reid Wiecks

The Committee would also like to thank the volunteers who have contributed to the progress made in all the Palmer Lake Parks since the Commission's reestablishment in the spring of 2018. Thank you also to the many people, businesses, and neighbors who have donated money to help the Parks and who have attended the fundraisings aimed at improving the Parks.

Lastly the help from other Town Departments, Town Council, and Town Office has been greatly appreciated. We hope the relationship and cooperation grows stronger as we work to improve our Parks.

We wouldn't be where we are without you all!

And we aren't done yet!