



University Park • Denver, Colorado

UPCC General Meeting October 4, 2023

General Meeting

UPark Elementary
October 4, 2023
6pm - 8pm

Board Members Present

Steve Hick
Mike Cox
Kristin Kleimann
Elise Maskell
Laura Garcia
Rosemary Stoffel
Tyler Kiggins
Kate Winn

6pm- Steve opened the meeting.

1. Safety Related

Mike Cox delivered a Safety Report overview on behalf of Rob (Please see October Meeting Slides) Overall crime is down but not gone.

DenverTrack Vehicle Tracking. Usually, a stolen car is used for 10-14 days. Then it's totaled out. You can register at DenverTrack and get a sticker to put on your car. Thieves tend to recognize the sticker as it is advertised in the jails etc,

Kate Young (DPD) Community Resource Officer (CRO assigned to our district) is introduced. She has been our CRO for the past 3 years.

Kate talked about the Prevent Bike Theft Project529 (created by the creator of the X-Box). It is a National program, where you register your bike, take pics, import your contact info, and DPD will send you a sticker with a QR code to put on your bike's a-frame. People can report stolen bikes on the app and search for recovered bikes.

Prevent Bike Theft with Project529.com

REGISTER. REPORT. RECOVER.

The DPD is encouraging all residents to register their bicycles with Project 529.



Street Racing issues. Neighbors can report street racing at this TIP LINE:
reportstreetracing.com

DPD is trying to track street racing patterns, but it is happening all over Denver, and not just this neighborhood.

Street Racing

- If you see or hear street racing, you can submit an anonymous tip at: **reportstreetracing.com**



Kate Young, kate.young@denvergov.org (contact info)

UPCC is down 11% for crime and down in everything. UPark is one of the only neighborhoods that is down in ALL categories.

Key things to be aware of: Garage door openers are being stolen out of cars and we are seeing a big uptick in these thefts.

Make sure the registration and insurance cards you keep in the car are the versions that do NOT include your home address.

There is now a homeless outreach team. It is only a 2-person team and they have to cover a large area. If you see an encampment: please report it through 311, or report it online with a photo.

Upcoming Events

“Neighborhood Watch” training meeting in October. Will be on October 24, at 6pm at District 3. There will also be a Halloween carnival on October 29 from 1-3 at Veterans Park.

1st Wednesday of each month is “Coffee with the Cops” at Dixon’s Coffee on Louisiana and Buchtel.

CAB meeting is the 1st Wednesday of the month at 6pm at District 3 on University Blvd.

Kate answered neighbor’s questions. (See slide with Kate’s email)

2. Parks Survey

Tyler Kiggins discussed the parks survey in which we are trying to collect information about the neighborhood parks and what areas need improvement. The survey will be up for 3 months or so. There are 18 questions and it can be completed pretty quickly.

Parks & Open Space Survey

- The University Park Community Council (UPCC) is looking for your input on the trees, parks, and open spaces within University Park.
- The UPCC parks include Observatory Park, McWilliams Park, Buchtel Centennial, Prairie Park and Harvard Gulch East. Our trails include Harvard Gulch Trail and Buchtel Trail, but don't forget about the median along Evans, Harvard Gulch, or any other open space areas.
- This survey will help us get a pulse on the state of the parks within our neighborhood and the feedback will help us prioritize events and requests to Denver Parks and Recreation (DPR).



3. UPCC Board Overview and Election

Steve Hick provided an explanation of how the UPCC Board is finally getting “back to normal.” Due to the unusual circumstances of the last couple of years, we will be holding a special election to fill 2 of the 4 Executive Board seats tonight. The President and Secretary positions will be voted on at this meeting while the Vice President and Treasurer positions are still open. If anyone is interested in either of these positions, please contact Mike Cox at President@UParkCC.org. UPCC will go back to a regular election cycle at the Spring General Meeting as dictated in the bylaws.

Elections should normally occur in the Spring. Within the Board, 4 positions are elected positions (President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer.) These are ALL volunteer positions. Other positions are often appointed by the Board. Currently the Vice President and Treasurer positions are vacant. Steve asked for a call for any self-nominations. There were none. The role of the Vice President is to sit in in the President's absence.

FULL VOTE CALLED TO ORDER for President and Secretary Positions.

President- Mike Cox. All in favor, say AYE. There were no NAYS. Mike Cox is officially elected as UPCC Board President.

Secretary- Kristin Kleimann. All in favor say AYE. There were no NAYS. Kristin Kleimann officially elected as UPCC Board Secretary.

Mike Cox said a few words about how he is excited to fill the President position. He noted he was zoning chair prior to becoming President. He has lived in the community for 10 years, is a DU graduate, and is embracing the opportunity to get involved,

Mike thanked Steve for doing an amazing job through the pandemic, and thanked the other Board members who collectively pushed to hold the traditional neighborhood events. He recognized that this was a huge challenge especially for an all-volunteer board. A big thank you to Steve for not letting the ship go down. A gift was then presented to Steve on behalf of the Board.

Steve spoke and thanked the current board and encouraged others to get involved. Mike introduced Kate Winn, events chair, Elise Maskell, Communications, Tyler Kiggins, Parks and Open Space, Kristin Kleimann, Secretary, Laura Garcia, webmaster, and Rosemary Stoffel, Historic Preservation.

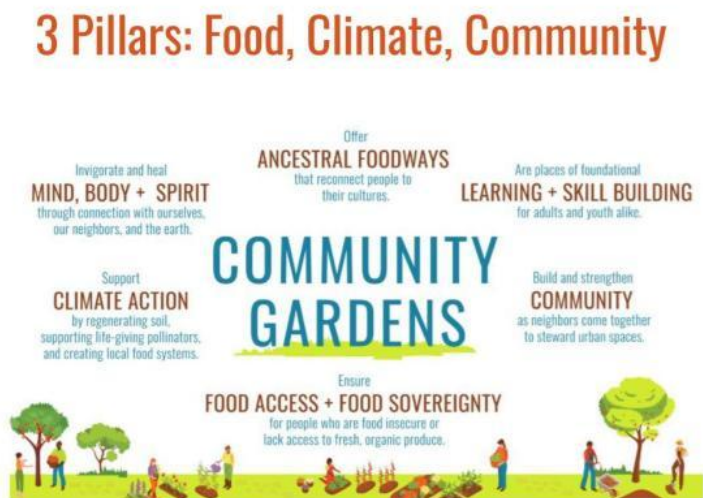
4. Denver Urban Gardens (DUG) Presentation

Next was the Denver Urban Gardens (DUG) Presentation given by neighbor Jess Wilke. Jess signed up for the master composting program through the DUG master composting program. Outreach included teaching composting and this year outreach is related to the pay as you throw (PAYT) program.

Everyone is getting a green compost trash bin, though probably in 2024.

There is now a weekly recycling collection.

For now, basically only Food and Yard Debris can go in the Compost bins. (No paper products even if they say compostable)



[See slides from meeting for more information.](#)

Questions:

Is there any concern about raccoons getting into the bins? Answer: The bin lid is pretty heavy
Are you concerned about contaminants? Like fruit stickers on fruit? Answer: yes, somewhat.
Has there been discussion of fining people? Answer: Hard to do as other people have access to the bins once they are put out for collection.

Jess mentioned she is happy to teach a composting class within the neighborhood, if there is interest.

DUG offers many different classes, register at: www.dug.org/compost

DUG is currently accepting applications for the master composter program

5. What UPCC has been working on

Mike Cox mentioned a few of the big items UPCC has been working on including the neighborhood Historic District. He noted there was a UPCC history book for sale in the lobby.

We have a new website at www.Uparkcc.org and are trying to push people to the website to get information. We are trying to reach more people in our community. We know there are about 2600 doors in our neighborhood, 1700 are primary residences. Participation (membership) is only at 10-15%.

We are an RNO (registered neighborhood org)

UPWORDS is our newsletter and it was how we communicated with the neighborhood using a paper newsletter that volunteers hand delivered. This method doesn't work as well for disseminating timely information. The website works better to disseminate and receive TIMELY information.

We also have an E-newsletter that goes out about once a month now. If you provide your email, we can alert you to newsworthy items, and can direct neighbors back to the website for additional information.

Some other things we are working on:

Connection with Chamberlin Observatory. The Observatory is owned by DU, which is responsible for maintenance of the building. It sits on Denver Parks land. Denver Astronomical Society (DAS) uses the Observatory for stargazing and helps maintain some of the astronomical equipment.

Interested in Joining the UPCC?

- Vice President and Treasurer are **OPEN**
- Other committee chair positions are appointed
- Contact Mike Cox at President@UParkCC.org
- UPCC will go back to a regular election cycle at the Spring General Meeting as dictated in the bylaws.

[See slides for more information](#)

UPCOMING UPCC NEIGHBORHOOD EVENTS

Sing and Sleigh (will be back to Observatory this year) on Sunday Dec 3, 3:30-6:30

We might be able to offer a quick tour of the Observatory

Please bring cookies, to share, label any with nuts.

We would love to have MORE volunteers.

If you would like to volunteer, email Kate Winn.

6. Paul Kashmann, City Council

Paul Kashmann has been paying attention to the UPCC organization for the past 45 years.

Budget

Mentioned that it is budget season at city hall, and that is what current focus is. 1.47 billion dollars comes from a general fund budget (from taxes), and there are 3 more which adds up to 4 billion total.

Mayor Johnston's team jumped in and did some tinkering on the budget. There is a 700 page budget book to review and then 6 days of budget hearings where people discuss what they want, how to spend money, and then another 2 weeks to propose amendments and present a letter of recommendation. Then, City Council votes on items and sends a letter to the mayor. We can override the mayor's decision, but it is impossible to force the mayor to spend money, so we all try to work together with the mayor.

City Council will propose amendments but they have to have a balanced budget by November. Safety gets the largest part of the budget (police etc). We need to use portions of the budget to

address the root causes of crime: including for after school programs, mental health treatment, drug treatment, etc, and rental assistance programs. In addition, we now have to account for money that was previously subsidized by feds for covid, that is going away.

Homelessness

On July 18-Mike Johnston declared a State of Emergency regarding homelessness. Kashmann agrees with this decision. It's an emergency. No one should be living on the streets. Johnston's approach is similar to Houston, Texas. The City has bought a hotel and is now looking at leases on apartment spaces. Does it make financial sense to renovate office space?

There is also a controversial tiny home program. Our district proposed site is the small parking lot on Birch Street. If you care about this topic, there is a meeting at Ellis on Wednesday October 11 at 5pm specifically about that site. It would include 24 hour staffing and security, and mental health providers.

Not sure how this can be done when we don't have enough providers.

There are many different populations within the homeless population including those who work, drug abusers, those with mental health issues, etc. Think it is best to house and heal them, and not just move people. What do we do with service resistant people? We don't have the services we need for those who can't care for themselves.

For more housing info: Mayor Plan [Denver.gov/house1000](https://denver.gov/house1000)

For more budget info: www.denvergov.org/Budget

What is an RNO?

In 1979 the RNO program was established. Neighborhoods were told to form one so the city can provide neighbors with information about what's going on in the city.

We haven't given RNOs any money since 1979. Recently, Kashmann has been pushing the Office of Community Empowerment to help RNOs. We need to bring people in to educate about the policy making process early on to make this city a better place. There is a District 6 Academy, to discuss and educate about affordable housing, safety, take you behind the scenes, etc. Kashmann's office provides up to 20k grants to RNOs. They are trying to make the RNO job easier.

Sidewalk Tax Discussion

The fee structure is unfair. The length of your sidewalk determines the fee which results in condos paying pennies, and single family corner lots paying a lot more. Kashmann thinks everyone should pay, because while you don't own it, it is a community asset, but Kashmann wants it to be more fair.

They are now looking at how to restructure the fee so it is not onerous for any one population.

To speak with Paul Kashmann you can call or make an appointment.

He is at Pete's Café EVERY Thursday from 8am-12pm.

Question about will they be putting sidewalks everywhere? What will they do about trees in the way? Kashmann said they think it will take about 9 years to do all the sidewalks, which is not reasonable. As we build a connected sidewalk system, we will have to look at things like what to do about missing sidewalks, or narrow sidewalks. Eventually there will be sidewalks

everywhere. In some areas, it might be possible to go in to the streets to do sidewalks. In other areas that would not be possible due to parking, drainage, etc.

How did sidewalks get on ballot?

It originally was a citizen initiative to shift property maintenance to the city from the property owner, but not sure everyone read the whole proposal to understand how it would work, prior to voting.

DU Apartment Complex

There is a huge complex being built over by DU, just off Iliff and a neighbor wondered if there was a traffic study done as there are a lot of pedestrians. Kashmann noted that traffic studies are almost always completed but doesn't know too much more.

Tree Advocacy Group

Question about the tree canopy and tree preservation. What can be done on city owned land vs private property. There was a survey that asked people what they thought. The majority said they would be willing to pay a fee to replace trees. A 2nd survey was completed but Kashmann is confident that in the next year or two, we will have a stronger tree ordinance to keep trees.

Parking Permit Fee

There is a new parking permit fee and Kashmann also just found out about it. Parking permits were free in the past and in some areas you need a permit to park in front of your own house. Now the city is charging high fees and you have to upload docs to prove where you live. Suggestion to email Scott Burton @denvergov.org
The new rule also allows only 1 car in front of your house.

YMCA Development

On hold. Interest rates are up, and profit margins are down. The project got more complicated than the developers wanted, etc. YMCA would like to redevelop the property but the development will remain on hold for now.

Budget Comments?

To provide budget comments, send them directly to the mayor to provide comments and CC Paul Kashmann on your correspondence.

www.denvergov.org/budget

Public Hearing on October 23 on budget. People have to sign up to speak and each person gets 3 minutes each to testify. (You can sign up a week before, go to city council website to sign up)

McWilliams Park Renovation

Question about why there is still plastic fencing up? Have heard lots of complaints about the playground being for older kids now. Answer was that they tried to change the approach to the gulch and instead of reseeding, they wanted to plant it with native plants. It was a total failure and the city is working with the contractor to redo it.

In 2026 there will be a huge dredging of the gulch.

Thank you to Paul Kashmann

8pm Close meeting

Mike made a plea to neighbors that he would like to hear what is important to neighbors and to please email him. He mentioned that UPCC did get a 2k RNO grant. He also suggested bringing 5 friends each to the next meeting so we can increase participation and involvement.

Motion to close, Seconded, Adjourned at 7:55 pm