Parks and Trails as Cultural Icons

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National Outdoor Recreation Conference
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The Saguaro Hotel | Scottsdale, Arizona
• Why should parks and public spaces celebrate culture?

• How are stories of culture communicated through parks?

• What connects people to their community and parks?

• A couple case studies.
Why?

Culture in Parks

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What Makes a Great Place?

- key attributes
- intangibles
- measurements

Who?

- number of women, children & elderly
- social networks
- volunteerism
- evening use
- street life

What?

- fun
- active
- vibrant
- special
- real
- users
- indigenous
- celebratory
- sustainable

Where?

- local business ownership
- land-use patterns
- property values
- rent levels
- retail sales

Why?

- sociability
- access & linkages
- comfort & image
- uses & activities
11 principles for Creating Great Community places

1. The Community is the Expert
2. Create a Place, not a Design
3. Look for Partners
4. You can see a lot just by observing
5. Have a Vision
6. Start with the petunias: lighter, quicker, cheaper
7. Triangulate
8. They always say, “It can’t be done”
9. Form supports function
10. Money is not the issue
11. You are never finished
Engaging your park users and beyond...

- A process that encourages people to work together
- Understand what is special about where we live
- Make connections that reach both inside and outside
- Function in multi-purpose ways
  - Use
  - Aesthetic
What connects people to their communities and parks?

- Social Offerings (entertainment venues, places to meet)
- Openness, Welcoming, Purpose
- Area Aesthetics (physical beauty, greenspace)

- Gallup and Knight Foundation Soul of the Community Project
Seven Pathways to Whole Health

- **Natural**: Water, vegetation, air, soils, plants & wildlife
- **Built**: What we have built – from infrastructure, building to Icons
- **Human**: Happiness, well-being, access to work, learning & play
- **Cultural**: Link to human history, cultural heritage, arts and the way we interact
- **Social**: “Social glue” — how we come together to form community & connections
- **Political**: Access to power and policy
- **Economic**: Financial Resources
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Cultural Significance
• **10,000 BC to 1800’s:** 30 million bison migrate from Texas to Manitoba through Oklahoma’s tall grass prairie.

• **1850’s to 1880’s:** Chisholm Trail drives cattle north from Texas to railheads in Kansas along the bison trails.

• **1882:** Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad is completed through Indian Territory and the Unassigned Lands along the Chisholm Trail route. The railhead camp ten miles south of North Canadian River Depot is called Verbeck.
• **1889**: First of many Land Runs into Oklahoma Territory brings thousands of settlers. Many settlers are eager urbanites riding the overflowing train from the south to the North Canadian River, now Oklahoma, Depot. Some get off the train at Verbeck.

• **1893**: City of Moore incorporates under the adopted name of [Al] Moore, a railroad worker who lived at the camp next to the tracks in a boxcar with his name painted prominently on the side.

• **1934**: Town of Moore covers 20 blocks centered on Main and Broadway. Moore remained quiet for the next thirty years.
• **1960’s:** Interstate I-35 follows the Santa Fe tracks, I-44 and I-40 follow route 66 and all intersect in Oklahoma City.

• **1961 and 1962:** Moore annexes 22 square miles, incorporates, and begins to rapidly grow.

• **1970’s to 2000’s:** With vigorous population growth and a thriving economy, Moore becomes one of the largest cities in Oklahoma. Success brings the enhanced civic expectations of it’s citizens.

• **November 2012:** Citizens of Moore vote to approve a bond issue to acquire land for a signature city park and build amenities that aspire to improve the quality of life for residents. An opportunity emerges to create a legacy that will change the City of Moore for generations.
Citizens of Moore approved a bond referendum in fall 2012 to fund the capital costs of completing the initial construction phase of the Park. Program elements to be built and open to the public by fall 2015 include a recreation center, outdoor aquatic center, amphitheatre, farmers market, and trails.
Historic Character | The inventory and visual listening process of railroad depots and train stations provided critical feedback and direction that began to inform the development of built environment categories and families of forms and materials to be incorporated in the design of the Park and major facilities.
Stream Bed and Crossings

Long-Range Master Plan | Design aesthetics throughout the Park integrate character elements from the historic railroad industry.

Central Park | Integrating Elements
STREAM BED & CROSSING
STREAM BED & CROSSING

Central Park | Integrating Elements
STREAM BED & CROSSING
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Rail

Long-Range Master Plan | Design aesthetics throughout the Park integrate character elements from the historic railroad industry.

Central Park | Integrating Elements
RAIL
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Long-Range Master Plan | Design aesthetics throughout the Park integrate character elements from the historic railroad industry.
Central Park | Integrating Elements
Canopy

Long-Range Master Plan | Design aesthetics throughout the Park integrate character elements from the historic railroad industry.

Central Park | Integrating Elements
CANOPY

Central Park | Integrating Elements
Central Park | Integrating Elements
CANOPY

Central Park | Integrating Elements
ENGAGING CULTURE
ENGAGING CULTURE
ENGAGING

EVERY CHILD'S PLAYGROUND
ENGAGING CULTURE
ENGAGING CULTURE

Central Park | Integrating Elements
ENGLISH CULTURE

Central Park | Integrating Elements
ENGAGING CULTURE

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The Canvas: High Trestle Trail Bridge
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Thank you!

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