

Former Park Hill Golf Course to open for access to the public

BY ELLIOTT WENZLER

EWENZLER@DENVERPOST.COM

The 155-acre former Park Hill Golf Course will open to the public for limited park use starting Oct. 28 after Denver formally acquired the land this month.

Mayor Mike Johnston first announced that the city would acquire the land in January after his administration came to an agreement with the property's owner, Westside Investment Partners. Under the deal, officials agreed to swap a city-owned parcel near Denver International Airport in exchange for the former golf course.

Johnston celebrated the start of public access in a news release Thursday morning.

"We welcome Denver to see this park not for what it is today but what it can be," Johnston said in the release. "For years, we have heard from the community about not only what this land means to northeast Denver but the value it brings to our entire city. Our work will continue until the park, and every improvement that comes with it, reflects the wishes and needs of a neighborhood that has fought tirelessly for this day to come."

At the time of the land-swap announcement, Johnston said the city planned to open access to the park during the summer. But the complicated deal took longer to conclude than anticipated.

The park, which still needs "extensive renovations," including lighting, will be open only during daylight hours, the release says. Parkgoers will be limited to passive use of the park, including walking and jogging, according to the city's announcement.

The property would receive \$70 million of improvements if voters approve the Vibrant Denver bond package on November's ballot. Denver Parks and Recreation officials are still deciding which features and amenities they will construct at the park.

The property has long been a source of tension among Denverites, some of whom wanted to see the land — one of the last plots of undeveloped land in the city — partially developed with housing. Others pushed to keep it as open space.

Westside purchased the property for \$24 million in 2019 and intended to develop it, incorporating a park with some housing and other uses, but voters handily rejected that plan in 2023. It has been closed to the public ever since.

The former golf course is set to become the city's fourth-largest park.