As cities become more populated planners are taking a new look at parks and how they can be designed to improve urban life.

Benefits of Parks

Improve Health
- Reduces crime
- Recreation activities can improve mental and physical health
- "Maintaining a healthy weight saves $1,500 per person in healthcare costs per year."

Reduce Costs
- Less health care costs
- Lower infrastructure costs
  - "In Atlanta they are saving at least $16 million by investing in green infrastructure instead of gray infrastructure."

Economic Benefits
- Increase property values
- Attracts businesses and residents
- Strengthens social equity
  - "The more walkable, bike able the better quality of life."

Environmental Benefits
- Urban trees reduce air pollution and provide shade
- Storm water management

Guthrie Green – Land Made For You and Me

Guthrie Green is a 2.7-acre park located in Tulsa's arts district and it serves as the central hub for the arts and community engagement. The park was designed to be at the heart of a much larger public/private investment that will eventually include a ballfield, an arts center, a communication/media center, a new hotel, as well as urban housing and street improvements.

Features of the park include:
- 11,000 sq. ft. pavilion
- Performance space
- A café
- Water fountains
- Gardens
- A central multipurpose lawn

Green Technologies
- Geothermal wellfield – results save 60% of heating and cooling costs
- LED lighting
- Bio swales
- Solar voltaic panels

Funding
- $8 million in private funds
- $2.5 million from an AARA stimulus grant from the Energy Reduction Department
- $125,000 brownfield development grant

The park is operated by a team of 10 who see to programming and maintenance. Regular events include concerts, food truck days, symphonies, film screenings, art performances, markets, and festivals. All events hosted at Guthrie Green are free to the community.
1. **You mentioned measuring civic honor and pride when looking at the benefits of parks. Can you name any examples or case studies speaking to that metric?**

Measuring civic honor and pride is not a straight forward idea. Determining things like the investment opportunities, tax incentives, and amenities can help estimate a dollar figure. On an ethnographic qualitative side they look at community identity, community enhancement, and community engagement. This is about creating opportunities to reclaim an area to help a community form an identity. This measurement is about the pride and honor of being attached to your community. It isn’t always measured in dollars, but it speaks more to why citizens want to be there. The idea is to take a look at the mapping around these anchor locations and how they add to retaining members of their community.

2. **Are there any details you can share about how you stay funded?**

Funding for Guthrie Green is provided under the umbrella of the Tulsa Community Foundation. The annual operating budget is $1.5 million, with $400,000 going toward programming. Current funding efforts are seeking to offset costs through sponsorship and obtaining grants.

3. **How do you maintain all of your sustainable technologies?**

Maintenance is overseen by the park staff, but the work is done by a third-party source. This does take a lot from the operating budget, but power generating technologies also helps move the park toward a low-cost net zero energy design.

4. **How do you develop your programming? Can you describe the visioning process?**

They reach out to all communities in Tulsa to find programming to bring all members to the park. They work hard to teach residents about their sustainable technologies, and encourage feedback from park users. Guthrie Green’s partnership design enables the visioning process to be incredibly collaborative.

5. **Other than the ones you have managed, can you name the favorite parks you have visited?**

Millennium Park is a favorite, but Heather’s all-time favorite park is A Gathering Place for Tulsa. For Dale, any park where children and families are feeling safe and enjoying the space that parks provide is a winner for him.