

Colorado Springs City Council



April 1, 2020 to March 31, 2021

A close-up photograph of a wooden gavel resting on a wooden surface. The gavel has a brass head with the words "PIKES PE" visible. The background is a blurred courtroom setting.

Report to the Citizens

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IN REVIEW

(Note: This Annual Report to the Citizens covers April 1, 2020 to March 31, 2021)

2020 was a year of unparalleled challenges that upended the ordinary day of the City, County, State and globe. As the world locked down, it was essential for City Council Meetings to transition to a virtual platform. Council staff took the lead and facilitated City Council Meetings in a hybrid format. Staff coordinated hybrid meetings on both Microsoft Teams and in City Council Chambers allowed for the continued function of the legislative body, providing uninterrupted service to the citizens of Colorado Springs. In addition to supporting virtual meetings, Staff worked to safeguard citizens' ability to provide public comment to the City Council. While the COVID-19 Pandemic was a monumental change to the everyday function of local government, the City Council continued to work, advocate and listen to the priorities of the citizens of Colorado Springs. City Council passed over 295 ordinances and resolutions, established the Law Enforcement and Transparency Commission, advocated for affordable housing and propelled the City Strategic Plan forward.

City Council and Mayor John Suthers at the City's Swearing-In Ceremony on April 16, 2019



THANK YOU DON, JILL, AND ANDY FOR 8 GREAT YEARS ON COUNCIL

This April, we gave a fond farewell to two of our term limited Councilmembers, Don Knight and Jill Gaebler, with Andy Pico vacating his seat in January as he moved on to the Colorado House of Representatives. The trio accomplished many great things for Colorado Springs during their time on City Council.

Don Knight

Throughout his two terms on City Council, Don Knight was a steadfast steward to his district and small business in Colorado Springs. Don's 26 years in the United States Air Force made for a detail-oriented focus on legislation while on City Council. Don served District 1 and all of Colorado Springs with great integrity and passion while also being a champion for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) programs in local schools. He has lived in Colorado Springs since 1990 with his wife, Elaine, and raised their three children here. During his time with City Council, Don served on many boards and committees including the Military Liaison Committee, Public Safety Committee and the Budget Committee.

As a Colorado Springs Utilities Board member, he also served as the Utilities Finance Committee Chair as well as served on the Program Management Review Committee.



Councilmember Knight addressing school students on the steps of City Hall.

Jill Gaebler

Councilmember Jill Gaebler represented District 5 for two terms and served on Council for eight years. In addition to being President Pro Tem of City Council (April 2017 to April 2019), she also served as the Colorado Springs Utilities Chair (CSU) in her final two years. While serving as Chair for CSU, she helped shepherd the Electronic Integrated Resource Plan process thereby setting the long-term strategic plan for energy consumption in the Pikes Peak Region. Councilmember Gaebler was a champion of improved road infrastructure that supports all modes of transportation within in the City of Colorado Springs.



City Councilmember Gaebler being interviewed by a news reporter; one of many over her 8 years on Council.

Her advocacy propelled the addition of road calming measures in busy downtown neighborhoods and the launch of PikeRide, a community bicycle program that promotes accessible and healthy forms of mobility for all. In addition to her other duties on City Council, she served as Chair for Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments, and liaison to various Boards, Commissions, and Committees. (LART, Food Policy Advisory Board, Commission on Aging, Strategic Plan Committee)



Andy Pico

During his eight years of public service on City Council, Andy served as both the Chair and Vice Chair of the Colorado Springs Utilities Board of Directors, Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments and the City Audit Committee, along with serving as the Council representative to the Airport Advisory Commission and Investment Advisory Committee. His consistent leadership, integrity and



Councilmembers Pico and Knight following a swearing in ceremony at the Pioneer's Museum.

transparency have made an indelible mark on the City of Colorado Springs. On January 1st Andy Pico resigned his District 6 seat following his election to the Colorado House of Representatives.



Welcome to Mike O'Malley

In a January Special Meeting, City Council voted to confirm Mike O'Malley to fill the remainder of Andy Pico's term in the District 6 seat through April. Mike



O'Malley represents the Office of the Secretary of Transportation at NORAD & USNORTHCOM. He has extensive experience with the Department of Transportation and is a retired Captain in the Navy Reserves.



Mike O'Malley is sworn in as the District 6 City Councilmember to fill the remainder of Andy Pico's term.

STRATEGIC PLAN

City Council Strategic Plan Objectives 2020-2024

Communication

(Building Community and Collaborative Relationships)

Increase communication with constituents at all levels of interaction in order to promote a culture of civic engagement

Communication Initiatives

- A.** Develop a Constituent Response Specialist to increase responsiveness and consistency in public messaging
 - ▶ **Progress: Accomplished 7 actionable items**
- B.** Increase methods of communication to constituents through opportunities such as town halls, policy briefs, email announcements, social media messaging, etc.
 - ▶ **Progress: Accomplished 10 actionable items**
- C.** Develop a Civics 101 training for new City employees to explain the role of City Council, the legislative process and methods of civic engagement
 - ▶ **Progress: Accomplished 4 actionable items**
- D.** Increase the value of Boards and Commissions with an emphasis on action items and annual reporting requirements to City Council
 - ▶ **Progress: Accomplished 8 actionable items**
- E.** Increase methods and frequency of communication between Executive staff and City Council through quarterly reports and staff planning lunch updates
 - ▶ **Progress: Accomplished 11 actionable items**

PlanCOS

(Promoting Job Creation)

Facilitate the implementation of the City's Comprehensive Plan, Plan COS

PlanCOS Initiatives

- A.** Support the Executive Branch's hiring of a Planning and Land Use consultant to review and provide recommendations on City Code Chapter 7
 - ▶ **Progress: Accomplished 6 actionable items**
- B.** Actively participate in thoughtful discussion and drafting of legislation related to PlanCOS and other planning priorities
 - ▶ **Progress: Accomplished 4 actionable items**
- C.** Incentivize developers to build in underserved areas of Colorado Springs, such as Southeast, and support general infill policies and programs through development of URA criteria
 - ▶ **Progress: Accomplished 1 actionable items**
- D.** Work with the Planning Department to develop a more complete and comprehensive understanding of the processes of Special Districts, including GIS map visualizations and debt issuance overview
 - ▶ **Progress: Accomplished 4 actionable items**

Regional Collaboration

(Building Community and Collaborative Relationships)

Partner with local governments and regional agencies in order to share knowledge and increase efficiencies in the Pikes Peak Region

Regional Collaboration Initiatives

- A.** Conduct an annual meeting with County Commissioners, and quarterly meetings between City Council and County Commissioner leadership
 - ▶ **Progress: Accomplished 3 actionable items**
- B.** Continue coordination between the City of Colorado Springs and Colorado Springs Utilities for Public Works and Streets projects with a reduction in duplicative street repairs
 - ▶ **Progress: Accomplished 3 actionable items**
- C.** Continue engagement with military installations through community opportunities such as Military Affairs Council with the Chamber of Commerce and the Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments, and establish a Councilmember as the military affairs liaison to increase direct communication with military installations
 - ▶ **Progress: Accomplished 3 actionable items**
- D.** Organize an annual meet and greet program with regional municipal partners including Manitou Springs, Fountain, Pueblo, Monument, etc. and attempt to identify areas of mutual concern
 - ▶ **Progress: Accomplished 2 actionable items**

Safe and Resilient Communities

(Building Community and Collaborative Relationships)

Identify legislative opportunities to enhance long range objectives with meaningful impacts

Safe and Resilient Communities Initiatives

- A.** Support the City's financial resiliency through work with Executive staff to develop a budgetary resiliency plan and associated metrics
 - ▶ **Progress: Accomplished 3 actionable items**
- B.** Support Public Safety initiatives through funding and the annual budget process
 - ▶ **Progress: Accomplished 5 actionable items**
- C.** Encourage connectivity across the City through innovative approaches to transportation solutions
 - ▶ **Progress: Accomplished 4 actionable items**
- D.** Increase public awareness and encourage legislation that proactively supports issues of affordable housing and homelessness
 - ▶ **Progress: Accomplished 7 actionable items**
- E.** Increase public awareness and support issues of the Urban Tree Canopy and Wildland Urban Interface
 - ▶ **Progress: Accomplished 4 actionable items**

City Council and El Paso County Work Together to Help Local Restaurants with Sales Tax Relief Program

In February, Colorado Springs City Council voted unanimously to approve the Sales Tax Relief Program for Local Restaurants that was proposed in December. This joint effort by The City of Colorado Springs and El Paso County aimed to grant a much needed boost to restaurants that have experienced sales declines due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Along with the Sales Tax Relief Program with City also took initiative to help local restaurants by accommodating outdoor dining provisions and curbside pickup parking meters.

CITY BUDGET

Overview

The City's Budget Committee comprised of four Councilmembers (Bill Murray, Andy Pico, Don Knight, and Tom Strand) and representatives from the Executive Branch (Mayor's Office, Finance Department, and City Attorney's Office) that met frequently as part of the collaborative effort to create a fair and balanced City budget.

2021 Budget Highlights:

- \$2.0 million of increased funding for ten new sworn Police positions and eight new sworn Fire positions and equipment, including re-establishing a dedicated Hazardous Materials response team and the transition of a medical squad to an engine company for the Fire Department
- \$600,000 of increased funding for park maintenance, tree planting and initiation of the street tree inventory per the Urban Forest Management Plan
- \$1.7 million continued funding for the City's Americans with Disabilities Act operating and capital programs
- \$2,000,000 of increased funding for City fleet and equipment replacement
- \$500,000 of continued funding to support shelter bed operations for the homeless population
- \$760,000 increased funding to Mountain Metro Transit, including a route to the Airport and Amazon to be established in the 2nd half of 2021
- \$1.6 million continuing support to address Information Technology core infrastructure, applications, and cybersecurity improvements and sustainment
- \$2.0 million for Police and Fire sworn step increases, pay progression for civilian employees, and full-year funding for the portion of compensation that was phased in during 2020
- \$1.1 million increased operating and capital funding for snow/ice removal operations
- \$2.2 million for critical facility maintenance - spread across the City's many facilities including police and fire stations, parks facilities, public works facilities, and fuel infrastructure
- \$670,000 increased funding for City-wide Capital Improvement Projects
- \$850,000 increased funding for the state-mandated 811 utility locate team

2020 Ballot Issue 2A – TABOR Revenue Retention and Limitations

In November, registered voters of Colorado Springs were asked to consider allowing the City to retain and spend \$1.9 million in revenues collected over the City's Taxpayer Bill of Rights (TABOR) limit for public safety. Also within Issue 2A, voters were asked to allow the City to maintain their 2019 TABOR limit rather than a severely reduced 2020 limit as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The ballot issue passed with approval from 58.84% of voters.

2020 Ballot Issue 2B and 2C – Parkland Conveyances

In November, registered voters of Colorado Springs were asked to consider two ballot issues amending the City Charter concerning City owned parkland conveyances (transfer of ownership). Issue 2B required the City to gain voter approval for each conveyance while Issue 2C permitted a supermajority (seven of nine votes) of City Council to allow the conveyance. Issue 2B received 59.34% votes in favor while Issue 2C only received 51.74% in favor. Since Issue 2B received more votes in favor, the 2B City Charter changes were adopted.

VIRTUAL COUNCIL

Strategic Plan: Communication

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, City Hall was closed to the public. Council Staff performed a monumental challenge of adapting City Council Meetings to an all virtual environment. Upgrades included a new Chambers computer, installation of partitions and facilitation of City Council Meetings through Microsoft Teams. Staff supported City Council using new technologies by providing individual trainings and guidebooks. Councilmembers had the option of continuing to be in Chambers for meetings or logging in from home. Although City Hall was closed to the public for much of 2020, City Council and Staff prioritized citizens' ability to engage with City Council during citizen comment at Regular Meetings and through electronic correspondence.



Partitions with plexiglass separate Councilmembers as they sit at the dais during City Council Meetings during the Covid-19 Pandemic.



City Council Administrator, Emily Evans, managing a hybrid in-person/virtual council meeting.



City Council hybrid in-person/virtual meeting.

RULES AND PROCEDURES REWRITE

In August of 2020 the City Council, Council Staff, City Attorney's Office and City Clerk embarked on the first major City Council Rules and Procedures rewrite since 2013. The intent of updating City Council Rules and Procedures was to mirror current City Council practices and remove outdated and obsolete rules. The working group met eight times to discuss City Council requested rule changes and review staff proposed variations. To ensure accuracy, Council Staff met an additional eight times to provide a line-by-line review, consistent language, terminology and formatting throughout the entire document. The final City Council Rules and Revision were adopted by Resolution at the March 9th, 2021 Regular City Council Meeting.

Major revisions to the City Council Rules and Procedures

- Public Participation
- City Council Recognitions
- Reconsideration of Vote
- Boards, Commissions, and Committees
- Public Hearing Time Limits
- Quasi-Judicial Ex Parte Communications
- Waiver of Attorney-Client Privilege
- Code of Conduct & Decorum

COMMISSION ON AGING

Strategic Plan: Regional Collaboration

The Commission on Aging (COA) transitioned to the Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments (PPACG) in November 2020 to expand and better serve seniors through a regional approach. The Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments is a voluntary organization of 16 counties and municipalities that serve the Pikes Peak Region. This expansion of service area allows the Commission on Aging to provide ongoing, and embedded advocacy for older adults through a regional lens. The Commission will continue to support older citizens who are assets to the community, and whose experience and perspective benefit the operations of all government entities.

CITY GROWTH & ANNEXATIONS

Continued growth in El Paso County has created both opportunities and challenges for urban-level development. At the March 2021 Work Session, discussions began regarding a formal Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with the City of Colorado Springs and El Paso County. The purpose of the IGA is to establish mutually beneficial procedures and regulations for annexations into the City of Colorado Springs. This agreement improves planning coordination, promotes healthy development, and supports orderly extensions of municipal infrastructure and services. This includes the equitable transfer of ownership and maintenance responsibility associated with public improvements.

REAL ESTATE SERVICES MANUAL

In 2007, the original Real Estate Services Manual was approved by City Council. After 13 years and three amendments it was time to completely review, revise and update the RES Manual. A committee composed of representatives from the City Attorney's Office, Colorado Springs Airport; Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services, Public Works, SWENT, and the Planning Department; Colorado Springs Utilities, and Councilmembers Don Knight and David Geislinger, began meeting in 2017 and completed the project in 2021. On March 23, 2021, The City of Colorado Springs Procedure Manual For the Acquisition and Disposition of Real Property Interests, Revised 2021 was approved by City Council. This new Real Estate Service Manual will be a guiding resource for years to come.

COLORADO SPRINGS AIRPORT IMPROVEMENTS

Strategic Plan: PlanCOS

Peak Innovation Park and Amazon

Despite the pandemic year of 2020, the Colorado Springs Airport fared well. The 900 acre Peak Innovation Park continued with construction of the almost 4 million square feet Amazon Fulfillment Center which plans to open in mid-2021. The Airport was successful in executing approximately 86 acres of additional land transaction in 2020, to include over 400,000 square feet of office to house a technology innovative campus and the expansion of Aerospace Company. Additionally, almost 300,000 square feet of Industrial distribution space is under construction to include an additional Amazon facility and is planned to be completed in 2021. The Peak Innovation Park continues to boost the economics in Southeast Colorado Springs, and has become a major employment center and gem for our community. It is anticipated that Peak Innovation Park will have continued growth in 2021 with more development of hotels, industrial space, retail and other business interest in discussion. It is expected that Peak Innovation Park will employ almost 5,000 people by 2022 and will continue to be a powerful economic engine for our community.

Southwest Airlines

Starting in 2020, the aviation community and our Airport quickly fell into a major decline due to the COVID-19 pandemic. After losing over 50% of the passenger volume throughout 2020, the Airport with the help of numerous community partners was successful in attracting Southwest Airlines late in the year. Southwest Airlines has executed an agreement with the Airport and began service on March 11th, 2021 to five destinations with 13 flights a day connecting Colorado Springs to the entire Southwest network in 2021. The Southwest Airlines service is expected bring lower cost airfare and more than 500,000 passenger seats to the Southern Colorado market for 2021. This influx of air service will bring the Airport passenger traffic back to the pre-pandemic level. The Airport projects that almost 1.6 million passengers will go through the Airport in 2021, compared to less than 800,000 passengers in 2020. The addition of Southwest Airlines has been a 20 year effort that is certain to have a large impact on our Airport and the City's economy. City Council contributed to landing Southwest Airlines by funding \$300,000 in start-up and marketing costs through their Lodgers, and Automobile Rental Tax Fund.

LAW ENFORCEMENT TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY COMMISSION

Strategic Plan: Safe and Resilient Communities

In June, City Council created the Law Enforcement Transparency and Accountability Commission. City Council received over 800 applications from people wanting to serve on the Commission. After a thorough and time consuming review process, 11 members and two alternates were appointed in September. This Commission was tasked with assisting City Council with budget, appropriation, and resource allocation recommendations utilizing data driven audits of law enforcement performance. They also provide a conduit to share the concerns and needs of both citizens and the Police Department, while also analyzing and providing feedback to City Council with policy recommendations and promoting improved understanding and relationships between the Police Department and the public.



Mayor Suthers and Councilmembers stand on the City Hall Rotunda steps with some of the LETAC Commissioners following their appointment.

INVESTING IN COLORADO SPRINGS' FUTURE

City Council's main workload pertains to land use items, but their job as the Legislative branch of our City's government doesn't stop with zoning. Despite the challenges of 2020, City Council passed 277 pieces of legislation to build upon the City's Strategic Plan.

Strategic Plan: Plan COS

Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)

Beginning in 2019, with extensive input at public meetings, town halls, and online comments, the City Planning Commission gave many presentations regarding ADUs at City Council Work Sessions. On June 23, 2020, City Council approved three ordinances pertaining to accessory dwelling units and accessory family suites in single-family zones and multi-family zones. The approved ordinances went into effect on July 6, 2020.

Ordinance Amendments

- Accessory Family Suites
- Definitions and Accessory Dwelling Units
- Accessory Dwelling Unit Overlay

For more information visit: coloradosprings.gov/adu



Councilmember Knight addressing constituents during this 2020 Town Hall.

Public Art Master Plan

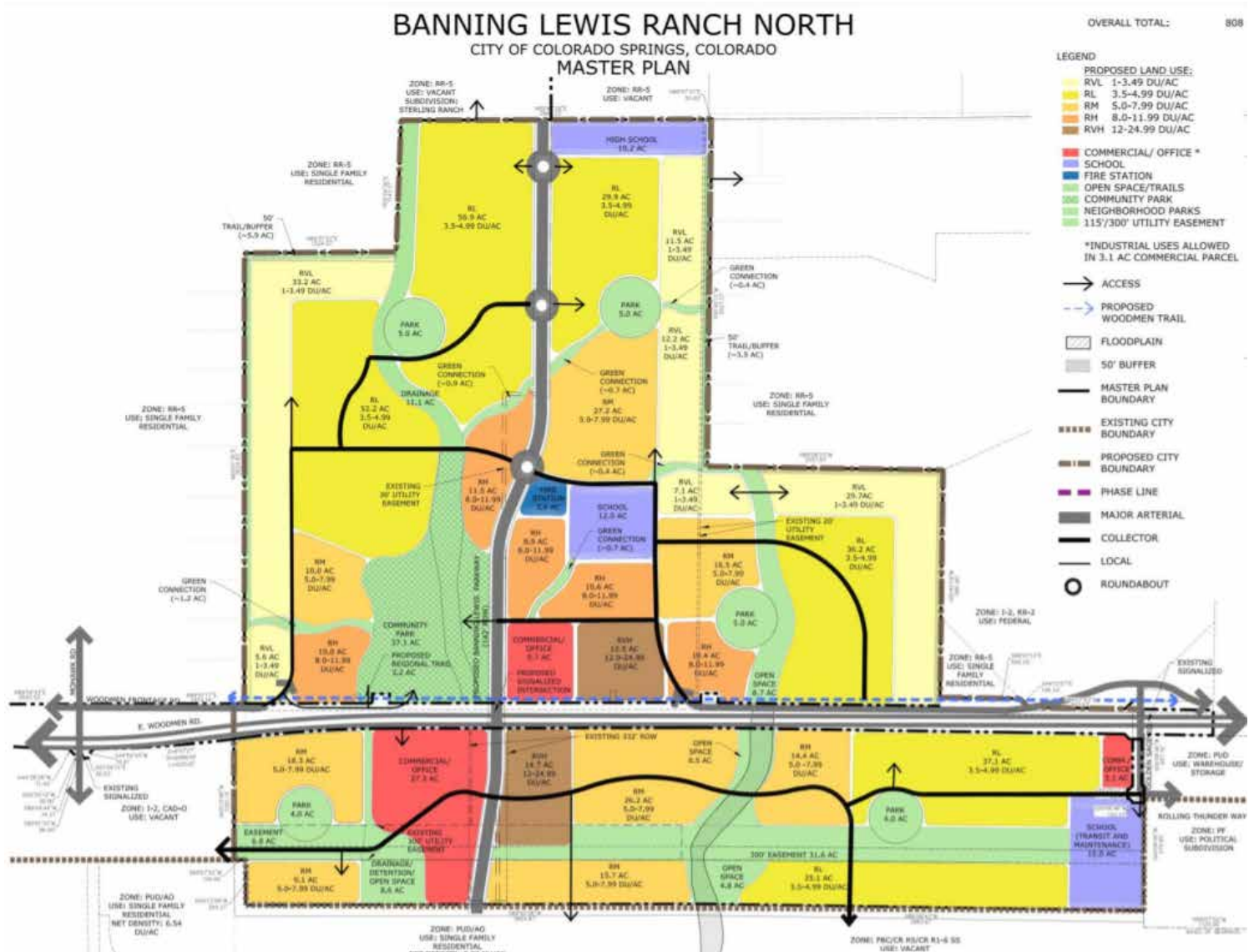
The adoption of Public Art COS by City Council follows endorsements by the Public Art Commission, Planning Commission and Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Advisory Board. Central to Public Art COS is a mission to build a robust, impactful and more widely accessible public art program. The community-based and action-oriented document aims to better educate and inform residents on the importance of public art as a place-making tool for creating and inspiring community identity. It also provides numerous, prioritized goals and strategies for the growth and sustainability of the public art program.



The sculpture "I've Been Dreaming to be a Tree" by artist Byeong Doo Moon. Located downtown on Cascade Avenue, the sculpture was donated to the City's art collection by Community Ventures in 2018.

Banning Lewis Ranch North

At their January 12th Regular Meeting, City Council unanimously approved the annexation of 887 acres worth of land in Northeast Colorado Springs known as Banning Lewis Ranch North. The master plan for this area includes vibrant neighborhoods, activity centers, and 60 acres of new parkland dedicated to the City.



Banning Lewis Ranch North Master Plan

CONTINUING CITY COUNCIL'S COMMITMENT TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Strategic Plan: Safe and Resilient Communities

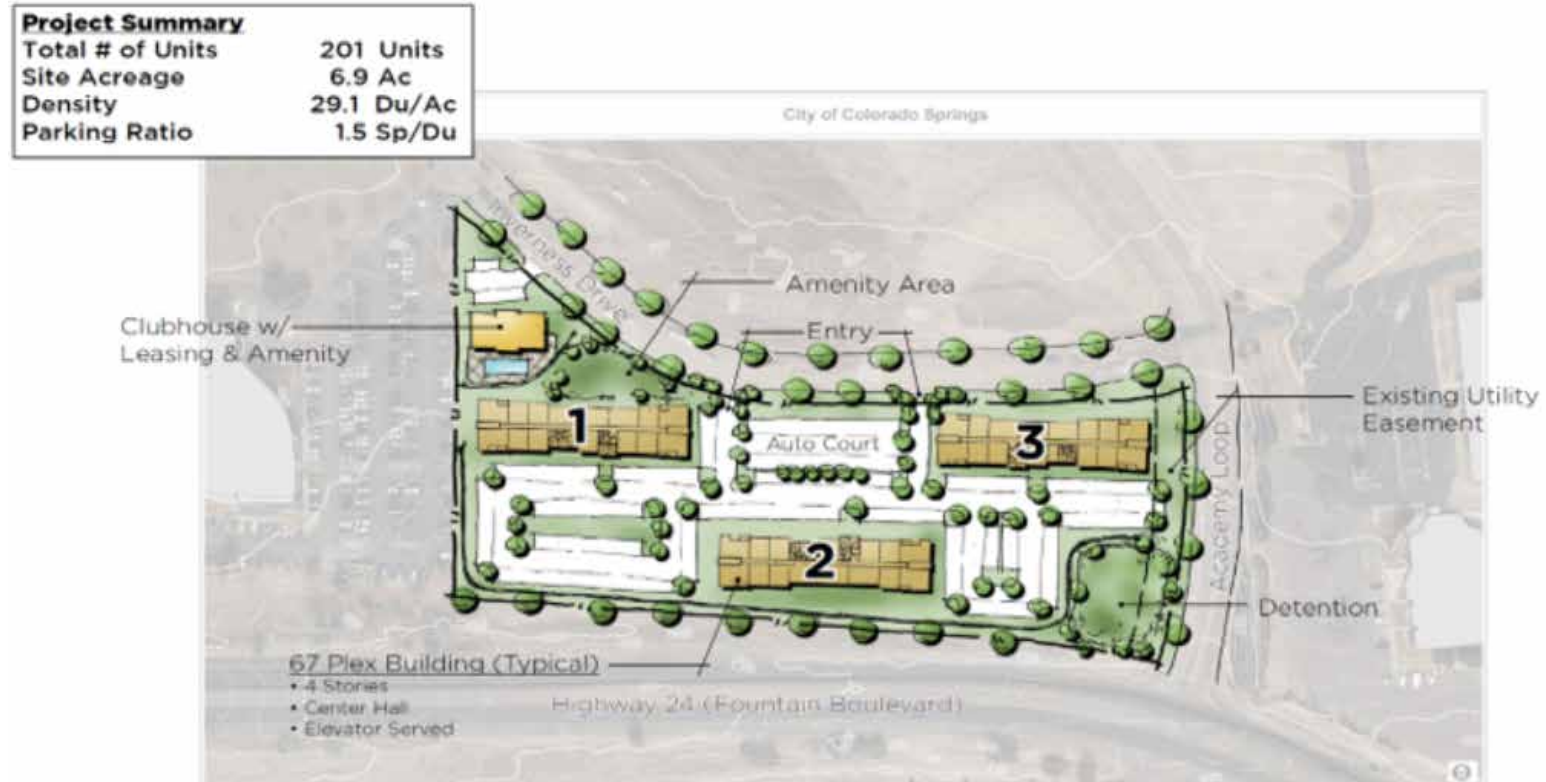
City Council is committed to adding more affordable housing units throughout the City as Colorado Springs continues to grow (see City Council's 2020-2024 Strategic Plan). The Mayor has a goal of 1,000 affordable units per year. City Council hits that goal through approving affordable planned unit developments (when a company invests their own money in affordable housing) or aiding construction through government funding.

2021 Annual Action Plan

The Annual Action Plan (AAP) guides the use of grant funds the Community Development Division receives for the coming program year. The plan is the result of consulting with various stakeholders, including agencies responsible for carrying out eligible projects and activities, local government representatives, interested community members, and advocacy groups. As well as other stakeholders for disadvantaged populations such as the disabled, individuals and families experiencing homelessness, and low-income seniors. The AAP lays out specific strategies that the City and its partners will employ to meet the community's priority needs. City Council adopted the Annual Action Plan Resolution in their February 9th Regular Meeting.

Academy Heights

Academy Heights is a special development that perfectly aligns with the City's plan for more Affordable Housing. City Council approved this project to move forward at their March 9th Regular Meeting. This development will provide 201 affordable apartment units in South Colorado Springs.



Academy Heights Design Plan

BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, AND COMMITTEES UPDATES

City Council and Council Staff completed a comprehensive review of all Boards, Commissions, and Committees. A new master list was created that placed each Board, Commission or Committee into one of four categories: City Council Appointed, President's, City Council Subcommittees, or Councilmember Appointments. These categories, along with the interview process for new appointments, annual reports, and recertification, were codified in the newly adopted Rules and Procedures of City Council. Council Staff leveraged existing technology to ensure public facing information about each City Council Appointed Board, Commission and Committee was accurate and up to date.



Fire Chief, Randy Royal, sworn-in at February 9, 2021 City Council Meeting



City Auditor, Jacqueline Rowland, sworn-in at January 26, 2021 City Council Meeting

DECISIONS IMPACTING THE CITY

Apr20

Approves rezoning of 170 acres east of Tutt Blvd. known as the Greenways of Sand Creek Park for housing development in place of privately owned golf course.

Jun-Sept20

The Law Enforcement and Accountability Commission was created and Commissioners were selected through a rigorous application and interview process.

Sept20-Jan21

City Council Rules and Regulations Revision.

Nov20-21

City Budget is passed.

Jun20

Amends Ordinances allowing for Accessory Dwelling Units.

Resolution approving the acquisition of 341 acres known as the Mountain Shadows Open Space the Trails, Open Space and Parks Program.

Aug20

Ordinance appropriation of \$3,700,000 to the redevelopment construction of Panorama Park.

Nov20

Adopts Colorado Springs' first public art master plan.



Feb21

Approved an ordinance granting sales tax relief to local restaurants that have been severely impacted by the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Fire Chief Randy Royal sworn-in on February 9, 2021 City Council Meeting following a unanimous Council approval.

Passed a six-month Moratorium on the enforcement of certain zoning code violations related to carports in front-yard setbacks.

Jan21

Voted unanimously in favor of appointing Jacqueline Rowland as City Auditor and prescribing her duties, compensation and tenure in office.

Annexation of 887 acres of land known as Banning Lewis North into the City.

Mar21

Academy Heights affordable housing complex approved.

Approves the creation of the Gazette-St. Francis Improvement



BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, AND COMMITTEES

City Council Subcommittees

- Budget
- Special District
- Strategic Plan
- Military Liaison

Councilmember Appointments

Ex Officio

- Colorado College Student Government Association
- Colorado Municipal League Board of Directors
- Colorado Municipal League Policy Committee
- Colorado Springs Chamber & Economic Development Corporation Board of Directors
- Colorado Springs Continuum of Care
- Colorado Springs Convention & Visitors Board of Directors
- Workforce Development Board

City

- 2A Advisory Committee
- 2C Advisory Committee
- Audit Committee
- Downtown Development Authority

Regional

- El Paso County Board of Public Health
- Fountain Creek Watershed Flood Control and Greenway District
- Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments (PPACG)
- Pikes Peak Regional Building Department Regional Building Commission
- Pikes Peak Rural Transit Authority (PPRTA)

City Council Appointed

Sales Tax/Fee Allocation

- Development Review Enterprise Customer Advisory Committee
- Lodgers, Campgrounds and Automobile Rental Tax Citizens' Advisory Committee (LART)
- Public Safety Sales Tax Oversight Committee (PSST)
- Stormwater Advisory Committee
- Trails, Open Space, and Parks Advisory Committee (TOPS)

Advisory

- Airport Advisory Commission
- Art Commission of the Pikes Peak Region
- Audit Committee
- Citizens Transportation Advisory Board (CTAB)
 - Active Transportation Advisory Committee
- Council District Process Advisory Committee
- Human Relations Commission (HRC)
- Initiative Review Committee
- Investment Advisory Committee
- Law Enforcement Transparency and Accountability Commission (LETAC)
- Parks and Recreation Advisory Board

Action/Appeal

- Civil Service Commission
- Downtown Development Authority (DDA)
- Downtown Review Board (DRB)
- Fire Board of Appeals (FBA)
- Historic Preservation Board
- Independent Ethics Commission
- Planning Commission

Special Districts

- Briargate Center Business Improvement District
- Briargate Special Improvement Maintenance District
- Colorado Avenue Gateway Special Improvement Maintenance District
- Greater Downtown Colorado Springs Business Improvement District
- Norwood Special Improvement Maintenance District
- Old Colorado City Security and Maintenance District
- Platte Avenue Special Improvement Maintenance District
- Stetson Hills Special Improvement Maintenance District
- Woodstone Special Improvement Maintenance District

Regional – Advisory

- Food Policy Advisory Board

Regional – Action

- City/County Subdivision Drainage Board
- El Paso-Teller County 911 Authority Board
- Pikes Peak Area Council of Government Community Advisory Committee
- Pikes Peak Library District Board (PPLD)
- Pikes Peak Regional Building Department (PPRBD)
 - Regional Building Advisory Board
 - Regional Board of Review
 - Regional Building Department Technical Committee
 - Regional Building Department Licensing Committee

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

LAND ACQUISITIONS

The Pikeview Quarry Frontage Property and the Black Canyon Quarry Property:

In June, City Council voted unanimously to approve the \$8.9 million Trails, Open Spaces, and Parks (TOPS) program acquisition of more than 315 acres of open space properties near the Cedar Heights and Oak Valley Ranch neighborhoods. The acquisitions include the following properties:

- Black Canyon Quarry, which is approximately 162 acres of property adjacent to Williams Canyon and located to the west of the Cedar Heights neighborhood and Garden of the Gods Park. From a regional perspective, this property offers future potential to provide trail access to the Pike National Forest's Waldo Canyon area.

Black Canyon Quarry



- A 153-acre frontage property of the Pikeview Quarry, which features rolling hills and oak brush. It connects to the south boundary of the City's Blodgett Open Space west of Allegheny Drive and the Oak Valley Ranch neighborhood.

Corral Bluffs Inholding Property:

In November, City Council unanimously approved a strategic purchase of 40 acres in the heart of the Corral Bluffs Open Space. The purchase of this inholding property further protects and conserves the Corral Bluffs Open Space which is the home of unprecedented fossil discoveries that date back 66 million years. The new parcel was purchased for \$470,000. This purchase aligns perfectly with the 375 acres known as Jimmy Camp Creek located on the City's eastern boundary.

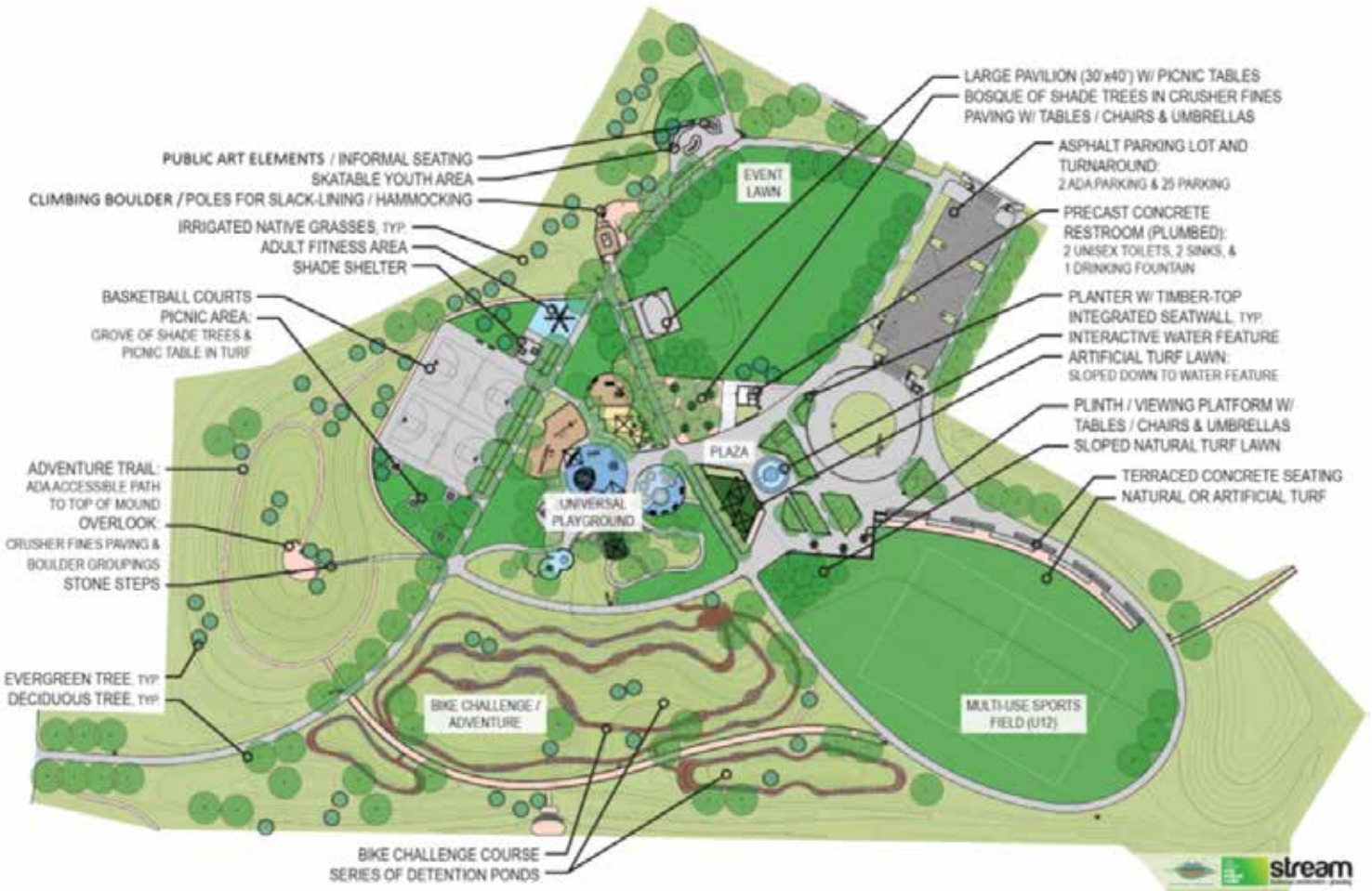
PARK IMPROVEMENTS

Panorama Park Renovation-

In August, City Council adopted an ordinance to appropriate \$3,700,000 to the renovation of Panorama Park. Panorama Park is a 13.5 acre neighborhood park located in Southeast Colorado Springs adjacent to Panorama Middle School. It will soon receive the largest neighborhood park renovation in City history.

The park renovation project aims to:

- Provide a safe, accessible, quality community destination park within a 10-minute walk for many Southeast residents
- Add new features based upon community driven needs
- Replace aging playground equipment
- Utilize recognized expert partners to advance a resident-led engagement and creative process
- Re-envision the park to address limited opportunities for play and hazardous conditions



Panorama Park Approved Master Plan

2019 Ballot Issue 2B Projects:

The Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department is continuing work to complete improvement projects in City parks, sports, and cultural facilities, and on trails. Funding for this myriad of improvements was approved by voters who passed ballot measure 2B in the November 2019 election, allowing the City to maintain \$7 million in excess 2018 TABOR revenue. Many of the projects highlight the original gifts to the City from William Jackson Palmer to celebrate the founding of the City 150 years ago this July. Completed projects include:

- New lights installed at the pickleball courts in Monument Valley Park. Monument Valley Park also received an updated irrigation system, tree maintenance and planting.
- Placement of new wayfinding signs in Palmer Park that make the park easier to navigate.
- New synthetic turf on the three softball fields at Cottonwood Creek Park. This was a cost-saving and water conservation opportunity.
- Replacement of asphalt with concrete on the Homestead Trail from Barnes Road to Coneflower Lane.
- A section of the Sand Creek Trail was replaced with new concrete trail from Wildflower Park to Nordic Drive.
- The Palmer Mesa Trail was upgraded with new concrete.
- The Legacy Loop Trail at Shooks Run was improved with new concrete. This site was upgraded with play area for kids, called Patty Jewett Junction.

Cottonwood Creek Ballpark with the new artificial turf installed.



In the future, 2B funds will improve the downtown historic parks (Alamo Square, Acacia and Antlers Parks), repave the parking lots at the Evergreen and Fairview cemeteries, work will begin on pond and pavilion restorations in Monument Valley Park, and unusable sport courts will be replaced in Boulder and Thorndale parks.

2020 PARKS LEGISLATION

POPS

POPS stands for Protect our Parks and refers to the 2020 Ballot Issues of 2B and 2C. Please see Page 7 for more information!



Pickleball Courts at Monument Valley Park

Parkland Dedication Ordinance Updates:

In February, City Council passed the Parkland Dedication Ordinance (PLDO), which requires residential developers to provide land for parks or pay comparable fees to provide parkland for new residents. This is the first major update to the ordinance since it was established in the 1970s. The update is significant because it ensures new residents have the same parkland as existing residents, proportionately across the City.



CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

As the world returns to normal, City Hall will as well. City Hall has historically been open to public and will be again once guidelines allow. Despite the challenges, Councilmembers are still accessible to constituents and eager to speak about anything happening in their districts or across the City.

- **Become more involved in your community**

There are many opportunities for citizens to engage and become more involved in the operation and decisions affecting life around Colorado Springs. Applying for a Board, Commission, or Committee is a great way to help shape the way our City operates. For more information please visit ColoradoSprings.gov/boards.

- **In the Community**

In addition to normal City Council Meetings, City Council still held other public meetings. These included City Council District Town Halls, public feedback meetings about Plastic Bag Fees and Regulation of Pet Stores. Councilmembers also attended virtual meetings with constituents, local media, and many organizations throughout the region.

- **Other Duties as assigned**

In addition to serving on City Council, the Councilmembers serve as the Colorado Springs Utilities Board. Councilmembers also serve as liaisons to the City's numerous Boards, Commissions, and Committees. In addition to these City specific roles, City Council has representation on regional boards including the Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments (PPACG), Pikes Peak Rural Transportation Authority (PPRTA), and the Pikes Peak Regional Building Department (PPRBD) Regional Building Commission.

Tour City Hall

Want to know more about one of the City's most historic buildings?

Reach out to City Council Staff and we will be happy to take groups or individuals on a tour once City Hall reopens to the public!

- **First Amendment Rights**

City Hall also serves as a gathering space for protests and other events where people congregate to recognize various public interests or concerns. City Council Meetings are open to the public, and the Citizen Discussion portion of Regular Meetings allows the public to speak about any topic not on that agenda.

- **Request a Councilmember**

As health restrictions lift and City Hall reopens, Councilmembers look forward to taking time to speak with students on tours of City Hall. Councilmembers also enjoy visiting schools throughout Colorado Springs to teach students about local government. If you would like a tour of City Hall or want a Councilmember to speak at a school or community event, please reach out to Alex Ryden, City Council Communications Specialist, at 719-385-5986 or allcouncil@coloradosprings.gov.



Councilmembers Tom Strand and Andy Pico thanking Healthcare Workers at UHealth Memorial North Campus.



Councilmember Geislinger speaking with constituents in City Hall.

BY THE NUMBERS

32
Proclamations



152
Resolutions
adopted
by City
Council



119
Board
Appointments



3
Town
Halls



106
Ordinances
passed by
City Council and
signed by
Mayor Suthers

COLORADO SPRINGS UTILITIES BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Colorado Springs City Council members also serve as the Colorado Springs Utilities Board of Directors. Under the Board's guidance, our community-owned utility made many significant achievements in 2020-2021.

Some highlights:

Sustainable Energy Plan

On June 26, 2020, the Utilities Board committed to a new energy future that is cost-effective, resilient and environmentally sustainable. Aligned with the utility's Energy Vision, the plan achieves an 80% carbon reduction and retires all coal generation by 2030, including the downtown Martin Drake Power Plant no later than 2023. The Sustainable Energy Plan will benefit all customers by maintaining competitive and affordable rates and advancing energy efficiency.



Joint Dispatch Agreement

In March 2020, Springs Utilities entered into their first Joint Dispatch Agreement (JDA) with Public Service Company of Colorado, Platte River Power Authority and Black Hills Colorado Electric. A JDA is a real-time energy market where utilities pool resources to economically and reliably serve customers. In just three months, the agreement saved customers more than \$800,000 and avoided more than 25,000 tons of carbon dioxide emissions.

Project Canary

In March 2021, Springs Utilities became the first utility in the state to join an innovative natural gas pilot project called Project Canary. Springs Utilities will purchase certified Responsibly Sourced Gas (RSG) produced by Bayswater Exploration & Production. The certified RSG will be gathered and processed by Rimrock Energy Partners, before being delivered to Colorado Interstate Gas Company, a Kinder Morgan, Inc. subsidiary, which will transport the certified RSG to Springs Utilities. This further diversifies the utility's energy supply and demonstrates its commitment to environmental stewardship.

Renewable energy expansion and executed contract for storage

In the fall of 2020, Springs Utilities signed an agreement with Boulder-based Juwi Inc. for the Pike Solar and Storage Project, a 175-megawatt (MW) solar project coupled with a 25 MW, four-hour battery energy storage system. When complete in 2023, Pike Solar will be one of the largest solar facilities in the state and deliver clean energy to more than 55,000 homes per year. In addition, the Palmer Solar project came online in 2020, generating 60 MW and powering 19,000 homes per year. The utility also added 60 MW of wind power to its energy mix.

Advanced Technologies Campus announcement and land acquisition

Springs Utilities announced plans to construct The Advanced Technologies Campus to house testing labs for new technologies. The campus will be the home of a new solar array, the Horizon Substation, a microgrid and batteries as well as a hydrogen generator. The campus will be located on a newly-acquired 160-acre piece of land near the Colorado Springs Airport and will provide collaboration opportunities for the City of Colorado Springs and Springs Utilities. Development will begin in 2021.

Water-wise rules

In an effort to plan for Colorado's water future, Springs Utilities adopted the water-wise rules on May 1, 2020. The rules helped achieve a total of 559 acre-feet of water savings in 2020 – well over the utility's goal of 375 acre-feet. That's equal to about 500 football fields covered in a foot of water. It was a great start toward meeting the long-term water resource savings goal of more than 10,000 acre-feet per year, 10% of which will be realized through outdoor watering limits.

Homestake Reservoir Water Release Pilot

In September, Springs Utilities participated in a pilot project on behalf of the State Engineer's Office to track the journey of a measured amount of water released from Homestake Reservoir to the Colorado-Utah border. The water followed tributaries to the Colorado River under conditions that mimicked severe drought, supplying data that will inform possible future deliveries of water to downstream users. Springs Utilities, Aurora Water and the Pueblo Board of Water Works each contributed approximately 600-acre feet of water for the pilot.

Smart meter deployment

Now through 2023, Springs Utilities is updating its metering equipment and software to Advanced Metering Infrastructure. The utility is working with Landis+Gyr to connect 590,000 new electric, natural gas and water meters to an integrated network management and data collection system. This will help customers better manage their services in the future.

COVID response

At the onset of the coronavirus outbreak, Springs Utilities implemented emergency procedures to protect employees and minimize the risk of service disruption, including moving some personnel into temporary campers at critical sites.

Springs Utilities also helped customers facing financial hardship and supported the community through the gradual process of economic recovery.

- From March through mid-October 2020, the utility suspended the disconnection of services for non-payment.
- When disconnects resumed, the utility waived reconnection fees.
- To help customers better manage their past-due balances, the utility offered payment plans.

- Springs Utilities educated customers about tools to manage their utilities and payment assistance programs like Project COPE, which helped provide \$533,381 in utilities assistance to 1,178 households in 2020.

In June, Springs Utilities became one of 17 organizations across Colorado that started collecting and analyzing wastewater samples to help identify if there are infections in certain areas.

[csu.org](https://www.csu.org)

Last fall, Springs Utilities unveiled a new website that is easier to use and easier on the eyes. The new site still has the same tools and tips to manage utility use, get energy and water efficiency rebates, choose billing and payment options and more. Many hours of work went into creating an online platform that is simplified, modern and informative.

Enterprise Strategic Plan

Springs Utilities identified many Strategic Initiatives in the Enterprise Strategic Plan which was approved by the Utilities Board in June 2020. The utility continues to honor its value of Continuous Improvement by focusing on projects and programs that help fill gaps and meet the goals defined by Strategic Objectives. As a result, in the fall of 2020, leadership added several high-priority Strategic Initiatives to the Strategic Plan.





Colorado Springs City Council

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To find out what City Council district you live in visit:
[ColoradoSprings.gov/city-council-districts](https://coloradosprings.gov/city-council-districts)

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