

RESOLUTION NO. 52 - 23

A RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE CITY COUNCIL'S ANNUAL REPORT TO THE CITIZENS FOR APRIL 1, 2022 TO MARCH 31, 2023 PURSUANT TO CITY CHARTER §3-10(D)

WHEREAS, City Council is required by City Charter §3-10(d) to provide for an annual "Report to the Citizens" in order to maintain accountability to citizens; and

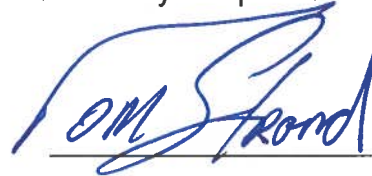
WHEREAS, City Council appreciates its role as the legislative body of municipal government and values the citizen input it receives during the course of its regular business and during town halls and other special meetings; and

WHEREAS, City Council is proud to adopt its annual Report to the Citizens, outlining City Council's activities and achievements from April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2023, and providing citizens with information about its responsibilities.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COLORADO SPRINGS:

Section 1. Pursuant to City Charter §3-10(d), City Council hereby adopts the City Council's Annual Report to the Citizens from April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2023, attached as Exhibit A and made a part of this Resolution.

Dated at Colorado Springs, Colorado this 11th day of April 2023.



Council President

ATTEST:



Colorado Springs City Council



Report
to the
Citizens



April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2023

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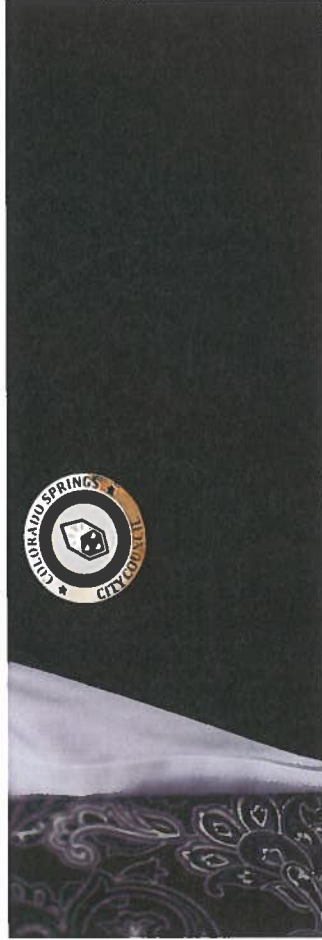
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IN REVIEW

(Note: This Annual Report to the Citizens covers April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2023)

In 2022, City Council looked to the future as Colorado Springs came back to normal following the pandemic of the previous two years. In March of 2023, City Council said goodbye to four Councilmembers as our District 3 and At Large Members transitioned out of City Council. Major decisions impacting the City through City Council this year were, wildfire evacuations and revamps of City code such as ReToolCOS (the update to the City's Unified Development Code) and the City's major transportation plan, ConnectCOS. We had our longest City Council meeting of all time (17 hours!) plus significant community issues that had important impacts. This year, City Council passed over 338 ordinances and resolutions and propelled the City Strategic Plan forward.



The Colorado Springs City Council in 2022

(From left: Wayne Williams, President Pro Tem Randy Helms, Bill Murray, Nancy Henjum, Mike O'Malley, Yolanda Avila with Puma, Stephannie Fortune, Dave Donelson, President Tom Strand)



FAREWELL AND THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE TO THIS COMMUNITY

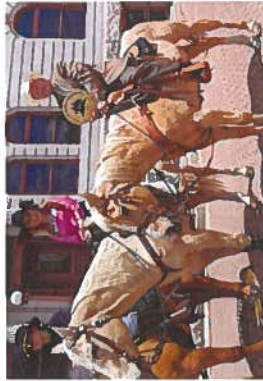
In April 2023, City Council gave farewells to four of our Councilmembers as the terms ended for our three At Large Councilmembers, Bill Murray, Tom Strand, and Wayne Williams and District 3 Councilmember Stephannie Fortune.

Bill Murray

As a term limited At Large Councilmember, Bill was a strong advocate for responsible growth, oversight of Metropolitan Districts, attainable and affordable housing and watching out for the residents of Colorado Springs. Mr. Murray always asked for accountability and data when it came to vital position appointments and oversight of departments in the City. During his time with City Council, Bill served on many Boards, Commissions, and Committees including the Audit Committee, Public Safety Sales Tax Committee, Budget and Special District Subcommittee, and the Investment Advisory Committee. As a Colorado Springs Utilities Board Member, he also served on the Strategic Planning Committee and the Finance and Program Management Review.



Councilmembers Bill Murray and Tom Strand speaking to constituents at a 2019 Townhall in Council Chambers.



Councilmember Bill Murray with the Pikes Peak Range Riders and the Girl of the West for the 2019 Western Street Breakfast Token Presentation.



Tom Strand

Council President Tom Strand was elected to City Council in 2015 and served two full four-year terms as an At Large Councilmember. He labeled himself as “Your Neighbor” on City Council and was always an advocate for finding middle ground in difficult decisions, often finding himself as the swing vote to contentious decisions. During Tom’s time on the City Council, he served as the Council President and President Pro Tem as well as the Colorado Springs Utilities Board Chair and Vice Chair. In addition, he served on numerous Boards, Commissions, and Committees including Pikes Peak Regional Building Commission, Visit Colorado Springs Board of Directors, 2C Advisory Committee, Audit Committee, and more. As a Colorado Springs Utilities Board Member, he served on the Finance and Personnel Committees as well as others. During his time as Council President, he strongly advocated for retail pet store legislation in hopes of stopping out of state puppy mills and inhumane treatment of animals.



Councilmember Strand meeting a delegation from Taipei in Council Chambers in 2019.



Tom Strand during the 2015 City Council Swearing In Ceremony.



Councilmember Strand at the groundbreaking for the Legacy Loop in 2019.



Councilmember Murray sits at the dais with all his colleagues. The first meeting in 2022 with all nine Councilmembers in person.

Wayne Williams

Councilmember Wayne Williams was elected to City Council as an At Large Member in 2019. Prior to being on City Council, Wayne was an important leader in Colorado serving as the Secretary of State, an El Paso County Commissioner as well as El Paso County Clerk and Recorder. Wayne has been committed to promoting affordable housing solutions along with road and infrastructure projects. During Wayne's time on City Council, he served as the Colorado Springs Utilities Board Chair and served on numerous Boards, Commissions, and Committees including Pikes Peak Rural Transit Authority, Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments, and the Law Enforcement Transparency and Advisory Commission. As a Colorado Springs Utilities Board Member, Wayne served on the Personnel and Strategic Planning Committees among others.



Wayne Williams with other Councilmembers during the 2019 Bike to Work Day.



Stephannia Fortune

Stephannia Fortune was appointed to fill a partial term in the District 3 seat until the next municipal election in April of 2023. During her time on City Council, Stephannia was a strong advocate for District 3 and the residents that live in it. She played a vital role during the negotiations regarding the process of how to properly run the Westside Community Center. Her goal was to find a solution regarding management of the property and keeping it fully operational so it could remain a valuable part of the westside community. After receiving a difficult health diagnosis, Stephannia made the hard choice to not seek reelection for the remaining unexpired 2-year term for District 3. We wish her the best and know that she will continue to be a large part of District 3 as well as continuing to serve all of Colorado Springs.



Councilmember Fortune meeting with constituents on the steps of Westside Community Center. Photo credit: Sallie Clark



Stephannia Fortune is sworn-in as the District 3 City Councilmember.



Councilmember Williams speaking at the PPRTA event for the Platte Avenue Bridge reconstruction in 2022.

City Council Strategic Plan 2023 Update



Strategic Plan Update



Promoting Job Creation

City Council Initiatives

1.3 PlanCOS: Facilitate the implementation of the City's Comprehensive Plan, PlanCOS.

Performance Measures	Percentage Completion		
	Actual 2021	Estimated 2022	Projected 2023
1.3.1 Support the Executive Branch's hiring of a Planning and Land Use consultant to review and provide recommendations on City Code Ch 7.	100%	100%	100%
1.3.2 Actively participate in discussion and drafting legislation for PlanCOS.	50%	75%	100%
1.3.3 Incentivize developers to build in underserved areas of COS.	25%	75%	100%
1.3.4 Work w/ the Planning Department to develop a more complete and comprehensive understanding of the processes of Special Districts	100%	75%	100%



Building Community & Collaborative Relationships

City Council Initiatives
3.3 Regional Collaboration: Partner with local governments and regional agencies to share knowledge and increase efficiencies in the Pikes Peak Region.
3.4 Communication: Increase communication with constituents at all levels of interaction to promote a culture of civic engagement.
3.5 Safe & Resilient Communities: Identify legislative opportunities to enhance long range objectives with meaningful impacts.

Performance Measures	Percentage Completion		
	Actual 2021	Estimated 2022	Projected 2023
3.3.1 Conduct an annual meeting with County Commissioners and quarterly meetings between City Council and County Commissioner leadership.	50%	75%	75%
3.3.2 Continue coordination between COS and CSU for Public Works and Streets projects w/ a reduction in duplicative street repairs.	100%	100%	100%
3.3.3 Continue engagement w/ military installations through community and direct communication opportunities.	100%	100%	100%
1.1.1 Organize an annual meeting and greet program with regional municipal partners to identify areas of mutual concern.	25%	50%	50%
3.4.1 Develop a Constituent Response Specialist position to increase responsiveness and consistency in public messaging.	100%	100%	100%
3.4.2 Increase methods of communication to constituents through town halls, policy briefs, email announcements, social media, etc.	100%	100%	100%
3.4.3 Develop a Civics 101 training for new City employees.	75%	100%	100%
3.4.4 Increase the value of City Council Boards, Commissions, and Committees	50%	75%	100%
3.4.5 Increase methods and frequency of communication between Executive staff and City Council.	75%	100%	100%
3.5.1 Support the City's financial resiliency through work w/ Executive staff to develop a budgetary resiliency plan and associated metrics	75%	100%	100%
3.5.2 Support Public Safety initiatives through funding and the annual budget process	75%	100%	100%
3.5.3 Encourage connectivity across the city through innovative approaches to transportation solutions.	50%	75%	75%
3.5.4 Increase public awareness and encourage legislation that proactively supports issues of affordable housing and homelessness.	75%	75%	75%
3.5.5 Increase public awareness and support on issues of the Urban Tree Canopy and Wildland Urban Interface	100%	100%	100%



CITY BUDGET

The City Council Budget Subcommittee is comprised of five Councilmembers (Dave Donelson, Randy Helms, Bill Murray, Mike O'Malley, and Tom Strand) and representatives from the Executive Branch. The group met frequently as part of the collaborative effort to create and present a balanced City budget.

2023 Budget Highlights:

- \$926,000 of increased funding for 15 new sworn Police positions that will be added towards the end of 2023, as well as vehicles for positions added during 2022
- \$1.63 million of increased funding for 32 new sworn Fire positions for 2 new fire stations scheduled to become operational in early 2024 (Fire Station 24 in the Northeast part of the city and the inclusion of the existing fire station in Colorado Centre as Fire Station 25 in the Southeast part of the city) and related one-time and ongoing operating costs
- Continued funding of \$928,000 for the 11 new positions that were added as part of the Keep It Clean COS campaign that was initiated last spring; in 2022, the City expended one-time funding of \$2 million for new equipment to combat litter and clean up streets and medians and will continue funding the positions on an ongoing basis to help keep our city beautiful
- \$3.1 million for increased staffing across several city departments to address expanding demand for services, including additional staff for Parks, Recreation and Cultural services to provide 2 positions for Garden of the Gods park and 4 Rangers for urban park and trail safety, and for Public Works to provide 12 positions to address State mandated utility locates and address increased service demands related to city growth
- \$1.57 million continued funding for the City's Americans with Disabilities Act operating and capital programs, including a new Language Access Coordinator
- \$500,000 of continued funding to support shelter bed operations for the homeless population
- \$1.2 million additional funding to Mountain Metro Transit for increased contract and other operating costs to sustain transit services



Councilmember Williams speaking at the PPRTA event for the Platte Avenue Bridge reconstruction in 2022.

BY THE NUMBERS

1,888
Constituent Responses

239
Resolutions adopted by City Council

64
Board Appointments

9
Town Halls

99
Ordinances passed by City Council and signed by Mayor Suthers

1
Mayoral Veto Overridden

THE CITY'S COMMITMENT TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING

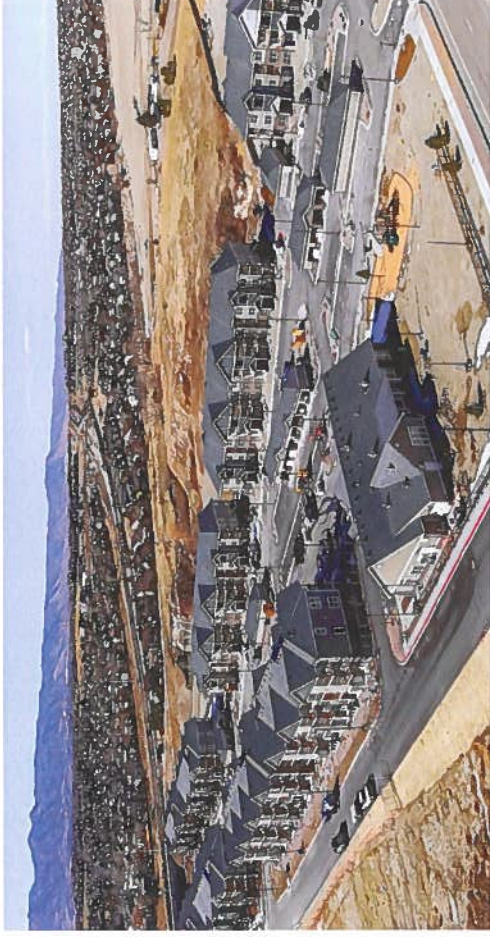
As Colorado Springs continues to grow, City Council is committed to adding more affordable housing units throughout the City. This year City Council implemented rebate programs for construction of affordable housing and received briefings from the Affordable Housing Coalition to help support those goals.

Affordable Housing Collaborative - Housing for All Presentation

Continuing work from last year's two workshops with the goal of brainstorming new initiatives and concepts to address the affordable and attainable housing crisis in our community, the Affordable Housing Collaborative (AHC) came together with new ideas and a presentation to City Council called Housing for All. The AHC is made up of local developers, housing advocates, governmental stakeholders, and non-profits among others. In April 2022, the AHC presented their "Solutions That Make Sense" final report. The report lists many different ideas and priorities that will begin to ease the affordable housing crisis in Colorado Springs. Some of the ideas include increasing sustainable funding for affordable housing projects, recommendations for sales tax rebates, and increasing the availability of land to be used for affordable housing.



Construction taking place on an affordable housing development in 2022.



Newly built housing community built in 2022 at the Creek at Cottonwood.

Resolution adopting a land use fee and sales tax rebate program for Affordable Housing

On June 28th, 2022, the City Council approved a new program that offers development fee rebate incentives to developers building affordable and attainable multi-family rental housing. The program makes funds available to rebate development charges accrued by qualified multi-family rental projects. The development charges include Land Use and Engineering, Stormwater and Drainage, Parks and School Land Dedications, and Utility Infrastructure tap and impact fees. Projects are evaluated for alignment with local housing priority needs and the City's Strategic Plan. Projects are awarded the rebate as a percentage of assessed fees.

At the same Regular Meeting, City Council also approved the addition of a new section to the Sales Tax Code that allows the owner of a qualifying Affordable Housing project to be eligible for a refund of City taxes paid for the purchase or use of construction materials. By approving the rebate, this will provide additional incentive for Affordable Housing projects.

Paloma Garden

The Village at Solid Rock is an affordable housing development with 77 units that is planned on South Circle. City Council approved this project to move forward in the fall of 2022.



Proposed project layout of the Paloma Garden Development.



One piece of the Fountain Creek Vision plan.



Concrete Couch presentation to City Council showed the value to their community.

LEGISLATIVE SERVICES UPDATES

Presentations to City Council

Throughout the year, the City Council is given many presentations with updates from City Departments, local stakeholders, and community organizations. These presentations are invaluable to continue our partnerships throughout Colorado Springs, and to bring awareness to critical issues and efforts in our community.

- April 11, 2022 – Public Art Master Plan and Public Art Commission Updates
- April 11, 2022 – City of Colorado Springs Electric Vehicle Plan
- April 11, 2022 – 2022 Affordable Housing Update
- April 25, 2022 – Silver Key Senior Services
- April 25, 2022 – Housing for All Presentation from the Affordable Housing Collaborative
- May 9, 2022 – Amtrak Southwest Chief & Front Range Passenger Rail Station Location Study
- May 23, 2022 – Fountain Creek Watershed Vision and Implementation Plan
- May 23, 2022 – 2021 City-Wide Strategic Plan Update
- June 20, 2022 – Assessment of Colorado Springs Police Department Use of Force Report
- July 11, 2022 – Ranked Choice Voting/Instant Runoff Voting Presentation
- July 25, 2022 – An Overview of the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Community Center Operations
- August 8, 2022 – Zonehaven Overview and Update
- August 8, 2022 – City Financial Report – 2021 Wrap-Up, 2022 Update, 2023 Outlook
- August 22, 2022 – Home Front Military Network
- August 22, 2022 – Colorado Springs Airport Master Plan Update
- September 12, 2022 – 2021 Annual Coroner's Report
- September 12, 2022 – Voices of Grief Support and Education Center
- September 12, 2022 – Pikes Peak Suicide
- October 10, 2022 – UCHealth Annual Report
- October 10, 2022 – Children's Hospital Colorado Update
- October 24, 2022 – Update on the Colorado Springs Branch Regional Medical Campus for the University of Colorado School of Medicine
- October 24, 2022 – City Auditorium – Colorado Springs Community Cultural Collective Project Briefing
- October 24, 2022 – “Zero Fare for Better Air” Program Report
- November 21, 2022 – Shared E-Scooter Pilot Program Update
- January 9, 2023 – Community Plan Program Update
- January 23, 2023 – Outdoor Pikes Peak Initiative
- February 13, 2023 – Informational Presentation on the Work of Concrete Couch
- February 27, 2023 – Presentation from Humane Society of the Pikes Peak Region regarding Dangerous Dogs
- February 27, 2023 – Platte Avenue Corridor Study
- February 27, 2023 – Downtown Multimodal/Transit Center Update
- February 27, 2023 – Presentation regarding Permit Partner, the City's new business permit tool to help new businesses start and thrive
- March 27, 2023 – Colorado Springs Police Department Transparency Matters report update and progress
- March 27, 2023 – Prospect Lake Aeration Project Update
- March 27, 2023 – 2022 Financial Update

Community Events

Councilmembers regularly attend events throughout the community during the year. The relationships that develop from attending community events are invaluable in providing accessibility to constituents. The events Councilmembers attend include everything from presentations with school students to ceremonies for the Colorado Springs Police Department. Councilmembers welcome the opportunity to engage at different events and meetings with the community.



Joint meeting with Colorado Springs City Councilmembers and the El Paso County Commissioners.



Councilmember Avila speaks at the Colorado Springs Deaf and Blind School 2022 Graduation Ceremony.



Councilmember Williams addressing members of the public during a Public Safety Townhall in April of 2022.



ConnectCOS Open House for District 5 showing various transportation projects throughout the district and City.



Councilmembers Handy Helms, Nancy Henjum, and Yolanda Avila speak to residents about the commitments and what to expect about possibly becoming a Councilmember in the 2023 Municipal Election.



The iconic 25-foot flag was displayed on Historic City Hall for two weeks following the horrific tragedy that took place at Club Q nightclub in November of 2022.



Councilmember Henjum speaks during the Sacred Cloth pride flag unfurling at City Hall.



Councilmember Helms giving a presentation to Elementary School Students in September of 2022.

NOTABLE LAND USE DECISIONS

In 2022, City Council engaged in two Public Hearings of great interest to the community. As part of the City's explosive growth over the past decade, City Council reviewed applications for two development projects for parcels located in the north part of the City. The first application was for an infill project located off Dynamic Drive. The project proposed creating 251 apartment units and was named the Allaso Apartments. The second development considered by City Council was The Spectrum Loop Apartments, which proposed creating 344 apartments at the southeast corner of Spectrum Loop and Voyager Parkway in Northgate.

Both projects received large amounts of community feedback. Between the two proposals, City Council devoted 9 hours of Public Hearing time to review and consider these applications. Legislative Services Staff worked proactively with the neighborhood stakeholder groups for each hearing to ensure accurate information regarding City Council processes and procedures were being disseminated to all interested residents.

The City Council approved the zoning change and concept plan for the Allaso project on a 6-2 vote. City Council also approved the zoning change and concept plan for the Spectrum Loop Apartments on an 8-1 vote.

New Outdoor Amphitheater

At the first Regular Meeting of 2023, City Council heard an appeal from a group of residents concerned about an 8,000-seat outdoor amphitheater that had been proposed by a local entertainment company in the Northgate area of the City. Legislative Services Staff worked proactively with the appellants to ensure accurate information regarding Public Hearing processes and procedures.

After a six hour public hearing, the City Council ultimately denied the appeal and approved the amphitheater on an 8-1 vote. The entertainment company hopes to host its first concert in the summer of 2024.



Presented renderings of the Sunset Amphitheater project.

LEGISLATIVE ISSUES Ordinance Illicit Massage Parlors

City Council voted unanimously to approve an Ordinance requiring any massage business within the city limits to be licensed through the City Clerk's Office. The legislation was initiated by Councilmember Dave Donelson who received complaints from the legitimate massage industry. The new regulation was brought forward to eliminate illicit massage businesses, who trade sex acts for money, from operating within the City of Colorado Springs. Colorado Springs Police Department believed that 30 or more illicit massage businesses were operating within the city. The passage of the ordinance requiring a massage business to obtain a license, provided police with more tools to shut down illicit businesses by giving them the ability to inspect those without a license.

Amending the City's Emergency Evacuation Procedures

An Ordinance amending Chapter 8 (Public Safety) of the City Code was brought to City Council in May of 2022. This ordinance created new sections in City code to include Emergency Evacuation Procedures (Section 108) and Emergency Evacuation Plan (Section 206). These sections and plans were presented by both the Chief of Police and Fire Chief as well as the Director from the Regional Office of Emergency Management. They provided an over-view of the all-hazard emergency response, evacuation zones, and emergency evacuation plan.

This evacuation plan separates the City into over 600 zones that can be strategically activated in order to provide safe communication and evacuation notices in the event of an emergency such as a wildfire. In August, COS Ready was introduced to City Council and the public was encouraged to "Know Your Zone" as well sign up to receive important community alerts in the event of local emergencies or disasters. Visit ColoradoSprings.gov/Ready for more information.

Urban Agriculture Ordinance - Goats

This item was brought to the attention of Councilmember Nancy Henjum and President Pro Tem Randy Helms by two constituents requesting a change to the current code regarding the number of pet goats allowed on a residential property. Previous City Code stated only two pet goats were allowed per residential property. City Staff, Councilmembers, and the Humane Society began holding meetings to determine the benefits and possible regulations of allowing more goats. Urban farm-steading has been surging the last couple of years due to the impacts of COVID, supply chain issues, and overall inflation of food costs. City Council saw this as an opportunity to allow residents the right to be involved in their own food production and ease the burden of increasing costs. Working with Staff and the constituents it was determined that four (4) goats would be allowed in residential zones if certain criteria was met. This includes setbacks from neighbors and structures for the goats to seek shelter. The draft Ordinance was presented to City Council at the February 27th Work Session and at the Regular Meeting on February 28th and March 14th. The Ordinance passed on a unanimous vote.

CSPD Use of Force Study

In June, 2022, City Council received a special presentation from the Colorado Springs Police Chief, Adrian Vasquez, with a report from the agency Transparency Matters that was an assessment of the Colorado Springs Police Department Use of Force. The report outlined the scope of work, report overview, research questions, and the findings from the case

review of 140 instances of the pointing of a firearm by an officer. Following a lengthy discussion there were proposed recommendations and key observations that were outlined in the report. City Council's Law Enforcement Transparency and Advisory Commission also was briefed on the report and advised the Colorado Springs Police Department to implement the recommendations brought forth in the report from Transparency Matters.

RetrofitCOS - Update to the Unified Development Code

In February 2023, City Council, in collaboration with the Planning and Community Development Department, passed a complete overhaul and update of the City's Unified Development Code. The process, known as RetrofitCOS, began in December 2019. Over three years, the RetrofitCOS project staff met with City Council in Work Sessions and Regular Meetings 24 times to seek guidance on proposed changes. The City's zoning and subdivision ordinance had not been comprehensively updated since the late 1990s. RetrofitCOS passed, establishing a new, modern, and more user-friendly Unified Development Code.



Colorado Springs Police Chief Adrian Vasquez being sworn in in April of 2022.

LEGISLATIVE ISSUES (cont'd)

ConnectCOS Master Transportation Plan

In February and March of 2023, the culmination of many hours of work by the City Planning and Public Works departments was finalized by City Council in an 8-1 vote. ConnectCOS is a very comprehensive multi-modal transportation plan that covers the entire City for the next 20 years. This plan looks at many different projects for future roadways as well as improving the transportation corridors we currently use. It also takes into consideration people are becoming more transportation-aware and alternate forms of travel are being utilized more, including bike trails and mass transit. There were numerous open houses in every City Council district to explain the

different facets of ConnectCOS. As the project began coming close to a City Council vote, there was also a townhall hosted at Stratton Elementary in District 1 and another at Wasson Academic Campus in District 5 regarding the possibility of a study that would look at extending Constitution Boulevard to I-25. After considerable feedback from the residents who would be most impacted by that change, City Council ultimately decided to limit the scope of the study to exclude any possible Constitution extension and instead explore other options for the existing right of way to turn into a permanent greenspace.



The first of two Townhalls hosted by Councilwoman Nancy Henjum regarding the East-West Mobility Study in the ConnectCOS Master Transportation Plan.

BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, AND COMMITTEES UPDATE

As part of the 2020-2024 Strategic Plan, City Council and Legislative Services prioritized improving and reviewing all City Council Appointed Boards, Commissions, and Committees to ensure they are serving City Council. The review aimed to assess the following objectives:

- Evaluate membership criteria
- Define legislative purpose of each Board, Commission and Committee
- Ensure alignment of each Board's mission and actions with the City Council Strategic Plan
- Bring forth recommendations to City Council as needed for ratification

Programmatic

- Evaluate and formalize Board Member processes related to recruitment efforts, interviews and appointments
- Better define Councilmember Liaison role as a conduit to Boards, Commissions and Committees
- Increase training and support for Staff Liaisons, Executive Departments and Board Members

As part of the review process, City Council hired a temporary Program Assistant in the Summer of 2022 to survey all current 144 Board Members. The survey received an overwhelming positive response rate of 79%. The survey results are currently being used to make improvements to the program specifically in the areas of Board training and orientation.

Board Member Appreciation Night

In February 2023, City Council and Legislative Services held a Board Member Appreciation event. Board Members from the 19 City Council Appointed Boards and Commissions attended to meet other

Board Members, learn about other Boards and Commissions, and be recognized and appreciated for their service.

Investment Advisory Committee Dissolved

In September 2022, after a thorough review and stakeholder process, City Council voted to dissolve the Investment Advisory Committee as it no longer served a function for City Council. City Council will still seek citizen comment and public input when proposed changes to the City's Investment Policy are brought forward on the City Council agenda.

The Transition of City Council Appointed Committees to the Mayor's Office

City Council voted to dissolve the Public Safety Sales Tax Oversight Committee (October 2022) and Development Review Enterprise Citizens Advisory Committee (February 2023) as City Council Appointed Committees. Both Committees transitioned to Mayor's Office where they are better aligned with the Executive Branch's oversight.



In February of 2022, City Council hosted our wonderful board volunteers in our Board Member Appreciation night in Council Chambers.

BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, AND COMMITTEES

City Council Subcommittees

City Council forms subcommittees, comprised of Councilmembers, on specific subject matters and meet outside of Work Sessions and Regular Meetings.

- Budget
- Personnel
- Special District
- Strategic Plan
- Military Liaison

Councilmember Appointments on Boards

Councilmembers serve on City, regional, and intergovernmental Boards, Committees, and Commissions as required by law and intergovernmental agreements.

Ex Officio (Non-Voting) Members

- 2C Road Improvements Advisory Committee
- Colorado Springs Health Foundation Board
- Wildfire Mitigation Advisory Committee

Voting Members

- Audit Committee
- Downtown Development Authority
- 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)
- Region 16 Opioid Abatement Council
- Visit Colorado Springs Board of Directors

City Council Appointed Boards

City Council appointed Boards, Commissions, and Committees are generally advisory in nature to assist City Council by preparing recommendations for City Council decisions. City Council appointed Board, Commission, and Committee Members are selected in accord with the provisions of the ordinance or resolution establishing the Board, Commission, or Committee.

Sales Tax/Fee Allocation – Provides recommendations on allocations of dedicated sales tax or fees

- Lodgers and Automobile Rental Tax Citizens' Advisory Committee (LART)
- Stormwater Advisory Committee
- Trails, Open Space, and Parks Advisory Committee (TOPS)

Advisory – Provide recommendations on specific policy assignments

- Art Commission of the Pikes Peak Region
- Audit Committee
- Citizens Transportation Advisory Board (CTAB)
- Council District Process Advisory Committee
- Initiative Review Committee
- Law Enforcement Transparency and Advisory Commission (LETAC)
- Sustainability Advisory Board

Action/Appeal – Provide recommendations on applications and appeals based on City Code

- Airport Advisory Commission
- Civil Service Commission
- Downtown Development Authority (DDA)
- Downtown Review Board (DRB)
- Fire Board of Appeals (FBA)
- Historic Preservation Board
- Independent Ethics Commission
- Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services Advisory Board
- Planning Commission

Special Districts – Provide recommendations on allocations of funds collected in the District

- Briargate Center Business Improvement District
- Briargate General Improvement 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 Action - Outside agencies conduct the operations of these Boards, Commissions, and Committees, while the City Council is the appointing body

- 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)
 - o Regional Building Advisory Board
 - o Regional Board of Review
 - o Regional Building Department Technical Committee
 - o Regional Building Department



TRAILS, OPEN SPACE, AND PARKS

Wildhorse Ranch Land Acquisition

On Tuesday, March 14, the Colorado Springs City Council approved by unanimous vote a major addition of open space property for the Trails, Open Space and Parks (TOPS) Program. This approval allows the City to expand its open space network by 1,018 acres with the addition of the "Wild Horse Ranch" Property. The property is located in the Corral Bluffs Candidate Open Space on the city's eastside and lies directly south of State Highway 94 near South Franceville Coal Mine Road. The \$7.5 million purchase will be funded with revenues from the TOPS sales tax program. Once purchased, the Wild Horse Ranch property will undergo a master planning process with opportunities for public input on wildlife, future recreation, and public access.



City Council approved a land exchange in Garden of the Gods that corrected an encroachment with the Garden of the Gods Trading Post in February of 2023.



Photos from Wildhorse Ranch that was acquired through the TOPS fund.



Councilmember Avila speaking to the attendees of the Panorama Park Grand Opening.



Acacia Park in Downtown Colorado Springs with the new playground area opening in 2022.



BALLOT ISSUE UPDATES

Extension of Pikes Peak Rural Transportation Authority Sales and Use Tax

In August 2023, City Council approved a Resolution endorsing the extension of the Pikes Peak Rural Transportation Authority (PPRTA) Capital Program with a unanimous vote. The project list included improvements to Marksheffel Road, extending Powers Boulevard, and improvements to the Midland Trail. After the Resolution was passed, PPRTA referred the item to the November 2022 ballot. The voters overwhelmingly approved the extension with 79.37% in favor with only 20.63% opposed.



Councilmember Williams addresses constituents during the Marksheffel Widening and Improvement Townhall in March of 2022.

City Council approves Resolution Opposing Ballot Issue 300/301

In October 2022, City Council passed a Resolution opposing Ballot Issue 300 and Ballot Issue 301 regarding the legalization and taxation of retail/recreational marijuana establishments within the City of Colorado Springs by a vote of 6-3. At the November election, the citizens of Colorado Springs denied Ballot Issue 300 related to legalization of retail establishments with 45.57% in favor and 54.53% opposed, but approved Ballot Issue 301 related to taxation with 52.93% in favor and 47.07% opposed.

COLORADO SPRINGS UTILITIES BOARD

City Council also has the responsibility to act as the governing body for Colorado Springs Utilities. The Utilities Board has fiduciary responsibility for the 1.6 billion dollar a year, 4 service, citizen owned enterprise. The Utilities Board is responsible for appointing the CEO, ensuring customer service excellence, competitive rates, and high reliability. The Utilities Board typically meets on the third Wednesday of each month at 1 p.m. in the Blue River Board Room on the fifth floor of the South Tower in the Plaza of the Rockies located at 121 S. Tejon Street.



The Utilities Board recognized National Preparedness Month in August with Colorado Springs Utilities Emergency Management staff, Erin Duran, and Tobj Blanchard.

Leadership Transition

In November 2022, Aram Benyamin announced his retirement as Chief Executive Officer of Colorado Springs Utilities. In his four years leading the organization, he led several key initiatives including:

- Implementation of a robust Integrated Resource Plan with an eye on intentional and responsible planning for growth
- Conservation efforts around energy and water
- Construction of a citywide fiber network
- Continuation of efforts to bridge Colorado Springs into a new era of power generation

Travas Deal, Chief Operations Officer, was named acting CEO effective Dec. 1, 2022 and, after a national search, was sworn in as the new CEO on Feb. 24, 2023. He was named Chief Operations Officer in April 2020 in which he was responsible for the safe, reliable operations of the utility's four services.

"I am honored to be selected by the Colorado Springs Utilities Board as CEO of this organization. Serving on the officer team for the past three years has given me great confidence in the vision and direction we are headed, and I look forward to continuing that important work," said Deal.

New Strategic Plan

In August 2022, Colorado Springs Utilities adopted new organizational mission, vision, and values statements.

- Mission Statement: Provide safe, reliable, competitively-priced electric, natural gas, water, and wastewater services to the customers of Colorado Springs Utilities
- Vision Statement: Ready for today, prepared for a sustainable future
- Values: Safety, People, Trust, Responsibility, Collaboration, and Continuous Improvement.

The six 2023 strategic objectives are: Deliver Quality Utilities, Focus on the Customer, Financial Accountability, Support our Community, and Enable Employee Empowerment

Fiber Optics Communications Network and Smart Meters

In August 2022, Colorado Springs Utilities broke ground on a multi-year project to enhance its fiber communications network around the city to meet customers' utility needs, improve monitoring of its own infrastructure and position the city for the digital future. The utility has significantly offset the cost of building the network through a lease agreement with a national fiber internet provider and other organizations on a non-exclusive network. Colorado Springs Utilities will not be serving as an internet provider but will contract with private companies that provide that service.

The speed, reliability and security of this network will enhance Colorado Springs' ability to attract and retain new businesses and jobs, pursue new educational opportunities and enhance connectivity in every neighborhood.

Colorado Springs Utilities is also updating its metering equipment and software to Advanced Metering Infrastructure. The Utility is working with a provider to connect 590,000 new electric, natural gas and water meters to an integrated network management and data collection system.

Southwest Power Pool

On August 1, 2022, and with the support and guidance of the Utilities Board, Colorado Springs Utilities formally entered the Southwest Power Pool (SPP) Western Energy Imbalance Service (WEIS). Becoming a member of SPP provides Colorado Springs Utilities customers with three main benefits:

- Helps insulate our organization from an increasingly volatile energy market
- Enhances the current and future reliability of our electric grid
- Expands our ability to meet our clean energy goals

Along with the addition of our own generation resources, from new solar projects to the installation of six modular natural gas units at the Drake Power Plant site, the entry into the SPP WEIS is a major milestone in our quest to become more energy resilient and broaden our energy portfolio.



Board Members Murray, Fomune, Donelson, and Avila joined Chief System Planning and Projects Officer, Lisa Barbato, and General Manager of Planning and Design, Joe Awad, to tour Marm Drain Power Plant and see the progress of our natural gas generators in May 2022.



Board Members Helms, Donelson, Strand, and Williams visited the Kettle Creek gas main replacement project in December 2022. The upgrade included the replacement of a 26-inch diameter high pressure natural gas main beneath Kettle Creek, near Old Ranch Road and Interquest Parkway in northeast Colorado Springs.

Closure of Martin Drake Power Plant

On September 1, 2022, and after nearly 100 years of reliable operation, Colorado Springs Utilities permanently closed the downtown Martin Drake Power Plant as we pursue a more sustainable energy future.

The closure of the coal-fired plant was accomplished in only two years and was made possible thanks to the leadership of the Utilities Board. The shutdown of Drake and the planned closure of the Ray Nixon Power Plant by 2030 sets us on a path to reduce carbon emissions by at least 80% by the end of this decade.

Modular Natural Gas Units Feature Flexibility, Low Emissions and Low Maintenance

The Sustainable Energy Plan, adopted by the Utilities Board, is specifically crafted to protect rate stability and system reliability in our quest to achieve a cleaner energy future.

An example of efforts to ensure the resiliency of our electric grid is the installation of six modular natural gas generating units adjacent to the Drake Power Plant structure. Significant progress was made in 2022 and the units are due to be commissioned by summer 2023.

The gas turbine units are highly efficient and offer a small footprint, low emissions and low maintenance. They will serve as peak load generation and will remain a fixture on our electric grid in the decades to come.

Extension of Water Service Ordinance

Colorado Springs Utilities is obligated to provide utilities service to customers within its service boundaries. As part of responsible long-term planning, Colorado Springs Utilities works with the City of



Board Members Strand, Henjum, Helms, Donelson, and Fortuna touring Clear Springs Ranch Wastewater Recovery Facility in August 2022.



At the November 16, 2022, Utilities Board meeting, Chair Wayne Williams recognized Chief Executive Officer Aram Benjamin following his retirement after 7 years with Colorado Springs Utilities.

Colorado Springs to make recommendations on extending services to areas outside city limits under consideration for annexation.

Risks to our water supply, such as uncertainty around our Colorado River supplies due to on-going drought, have highlighted the need to ensure we can reliably meet future demands. Defining the specific amount of surplus water our system can deliver as a condition of annexation was proposed in an ordinance presented to City Council in January 2023.

The ordinance, approved February 14, 2023, includes three provisions for approving annexation. One of those provisions requires that our water system

can reliably meet 128% of current usage plus the anticipated demands of the service extension area under consideration prior to approval. Additional provisions in the ordinance allow City Council to make exceptions in approving annexations when there are unique circumstances, that at least 25% of the area being annexed must be contiguous with the city, and that it is the intent of City Council to form a Regional Water Task Force. The Task Force will consist of representatives from the City of Colorado Springs, Colorado Springs Utilities, El Paso County, and regional water providers to evaluate water demand and recommend water policy in the Pikes Peak area.



Utilities Board Members Henjum, Fortuna, Williams, Helms, Avila, and Strand were joined by Colorado Springs Utilities operations staff to tour gas line upgrades at the intersection of Wähsarich and Värmjlo in May 2022.



In February, 2022, Mayor Suthers signs the Extension of Water Service Ordinance with Councilmembers Nancy Henjum, Mike O'Malley, and Randy Helms.

LEGISLATIVE SERVICES

City Council is supported by Legislative Services. All nine Councilmembers are supported by a staff of eight and are tasked with doing a wide range of responsibilities including scheduling, legislative research, constituent response, media coordination, event planning, and more.

LEGISLATIVE SERVICES STAFF

- Emily Evans – City Council Administrator
- Michael Montgomery – Deputy City Council Administrator
- Carly Hoff – Senior Legislative Analyst
- Sam Friedman – Constituent Outreach and Program Administrator
- Legislative Services Employee of the Year
- Alex Ryden – Public Communications Specialist II
- Michelle Briggs – Staff Assistant to Council
- Corina Clemons – Senior Administrative Assistant
- Ashley Hughes – Administrative Aide to Councilmember Avila



Legislative Services Staff (From left: Alex Ryden, Michelle Briggs, Sam Friedman, Corina Clemons, Emily Evans, Michael Montgomery, Carly Hoff, Ashley Hughes)

LEGISLATIVE SERVICES

VISION STATEMENT

Advancing the legislative priorities of the City of Colorado Springs through collaboration with Councilmembers. Executive Leadership, and members of the public.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Colorado Springs Legislative Services Staff provides non-partisan expertise and support to the City Council to inform impactful policy-making, engage constituents and stakeholders, and promote responsive local governance.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

City Hall is open to the public during City Council Meetings or Board Meetings. Councilmembers and Legislative Services Staff are accessible to constituents by appointment and are eager to speak about anything happening in their districts or across the city.

• Become more involved

There are many opportunities for citizens to engage with local government and your elected leaders. We encourage you to become more involved in the decisions impacting 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.

• Attend a Community Meeting

In addition to City Council Meetings, City Council holds many other public forums. In 2022, these included City Council District Town Halls, and multiple Issue Specific Townhalls (such as meetings about ConnectCOS or Marksheffel Widening). Councilmembers also attended meetings with constituents, local media, and many organizations throughout the region.

• Attend a Regional Meeting

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.

• Speak at a Meeting

City Hall serves as a gathering space for demonstrations and other events where people congregate to recognize various public interests or concerns. All 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. Members of the public can also comment on specific agenda items during Regular Meetings.

• Request a Councilmember

Councilmembers enjoy visiting schools and other organizations throughout Colorado Springs to educate about local government. If you would like 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.

• Tour City Hall

Councilmembers enjoy taking time to speak with groups during tours of City Hall. Want to know more about one of the City's most historic buildings? Reach out to Legislative Services Staff and we will be happy to take groups or individuals on a tour of the majestic Colorado Springs City Hall.



Legislative Services Staff participate in the annual City 5k walk around the Legacy Loop trail during the summer of 2022.



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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