

Colorado Springs City Council

April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022



Report to the Citizens



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IN REVIEW

(Note: This Annual Report to the Citizens covers April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022)

2021 brought City Council another challenging year full of change and new opportunities. This year City Council welcomed four new Councilmembers and said farewell to a couple of treasured colleagues and friends. The transition to a permanent hybrid model for City Council meetings highlighted the need for technology upgrades to Council Chambers in City Hall. For six months City Council held meetings in the Colorado Springs Utilities' Blue River Boardroom at the Plaza of the Rockies while construction was underway. In addition to technology upgrades, City Council also continued to tackle the ongoing issue of affordable and accessible housing. The City Council also considered several legislative issues including carports, wildfire evacuation, and humane pet stores. In the last year, City Council passed over 296 ordinances and resolutions, grew valuable relationships with community organizations, and propelled the City Strategic Plan forward.

The newly sworn-in City Council following the Swearing-In Ceremony on April 20, 2021



FAREWELL AND THANK YOU TO DAVE GEISLINGER AND RICHARD SKORMAN

During 2021 City Council gave a fond farewell to two Councilmembers as Dave Geislinger lost his bid for reelection of the District 2 seat in April of 2021 and Richard Skorman resigned at the end of 2021 to return focus to his businesses amid the ongoing pandemic. Both Dave and Richard accomplished countless initiatives to usher Colorado Springs forward and continue to be steadfast advocates for the City of Colorado Springs.

Dave Geislinger

During his four years on City Council, Dave was an early adopter of affordable housing, and spearheaded issues in his district including education and support of establishing an expanded Briargate General Improvement District (GID) to solve tax inequities. Dave's career as an attorney served him well on City Council giving him a unique perspective of considering multiple viewpoints of issues at hand. Although District 2 is located on the north side of Colorado Springs, Dave was eager to look at the city as a whole and worked on making housing equity a priority for all citizens of Colorado Springs. During his time with City Council, Dave served on many Boards, Commissions, and Committees including the Human Relations Commission, Public Art Commission, and the Pikes Peak Rural Transportation Authority. As a Colorado Springs Utilities Board Member, he also served on the Strategic Planning Committee.



Councilmember Dave Geislinger speaking at the Colorado Avenue Ribbon Cutting



Police Chief Vince Niski and Councilmember Dave Geislinger at the City Council Farewell Reception

Richard Skorman

Councilmember Richard Skorman was elected to City Council in 2021. He was previously elected to City Council in 1999, 2003, and 2017. During Richard's time on the City Council, he was a strong advocate for the Trails, Open Spaces, and Parks (TOPS) program as well as for fire mitigation especially in the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI). Due to unforeseen challenges from the pandemic, he made the difficult decision to resign from the City Council in December 2021, to devote his full focus to his downtown businesses.

In addition to being Council President (April 2019 to April 2021), he also served and chaired numerous Boards, Commissions, and Committees including Board Chair of the Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments. Plus he was involved in many land protection efforts, and served as the and the Co-Director of the Trails, Open Space, and Park ballot initiative.



Councilmember Skorman meeting with then Governor Hickenlooper at the State Capital



Mayor Suthers with past and current Councilmembers wishing Richard Skorman farewell following his resignation from City Council. (From Left: Bernie Herpin, Jill Gaebler, Nancy Henjum, Tom Strand, Richard Skorman, Dave Geislinger, Patricia Seator (Richard's Wife), Randy Helms, Yolanda Avila, Mike O'Malley, and John Suthers)

WELCOME TO OUR NEW DISTRICT COUNCILMEMBERS

The 2021 Colorado Springs Municipal Election in April brought City Council three new Councilmembers. Dave Donelson was elected in District 1, Randy Helms in District 2, and Nancy Henjum in District 5. Following Councilmember Skorman's resignation, City Council appointed Stephannie Fortune to the District 3 seat in January of 2022.

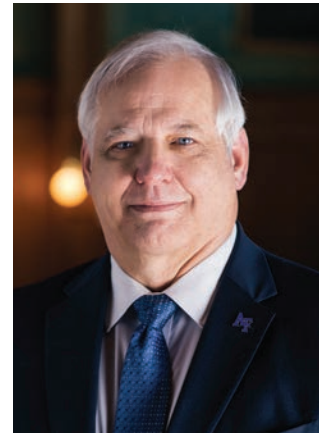
Dave Donelson

Dave and his wife, Holly, have lived in Colorado Springs District 1 for 22 years. He served his country for 21 years in the U.S. Army, first in Military Intelligence as a Russian Linguist, then in the Green Berets as a Special Forces Medical Sergeant, and finally as a Commissioned Officer and Physician Assistant. He retired from the Army in 2010 after reaching the rank of Major. Dave has a bachelor's degree in political science from the University of New Mexico, and a bachelor's degree in Physician Assistant Studies from the University of Nebraska School of Medicine. On City Council, Dave serves on the El Paso County Board of Public Health, Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, Lodgers and Automobile Rental Tax (LART) Citizens' Advisory Committee, and others.



Randy Helms

Colonel Randy Helms is a 1979 United States Air Force Academy (USAFA) Graduate and a longtime resident of Colorado Springs District 2. Randy had a lengthy and illustrious Air Force career as a pilot and instructor among other roles which culminated in 2008 when he served as Chief of Staff for the National Defense University. Following his retirement, Randy worked on the civilian side of the USAF Air Staff, National Defense University, and USAFA Foundation. Currently, Randy is the President of the USAFA Association of Graduates Class Advisory Senate and a Board Member of the Association of Graduates. His wife of more than 42 years, Donna, and Randy have three adult children and five grandchildren. On City Council, Randy serves as the Council President Pro Tem as well as on the Airport Advisory Commission, Law Enforcement Transparency and Accountability Commission, Pikes Peak Rural Transportation Authority (PPRTA), and others.



Dave Donelson is sworn-in as the District 1 City Councilmember during the 2021 City Council Swearing-In Ceremony.



Randy Helms alongside his wife, Donna, is sworn-in as the District 2 City Councilmember during the 2021 City Council Swearing-In Ceremony.

Nancy Henjum

Nancy Henjum is a 30-year resident of City Council District 5. She received her Master of Social Work from Loyola University in Chicago, where she worked as a clinical therapist before moving with her husband to start a family in Colorado Springs. She and her husband, Steve, have raised two children, now grown. Nancy's professional life has included being the Chief Operations Officer for a public-private partnership that managed behavioral health services for 43 of the 63 counties in Colorado. She was also a faculty member at the Center for Creative Leadership, engaging in leadership development and executive coaching. She runs her own leadership consultancy business, working with a wide variety of organizations, both large and small, including energy companies, arts groups, non-profits, and civic entities. On City Council, Nancy is the Chair of the City Council Strategic Plan Subcommittee and also serves on the Downtown Development Authority, Public Art Commission, the Health Foundation, as well as others.



Stephannie Fortune

In January of 2022, following a robust vacancy fulfillment process, City Council voted to confirm Stephannie Fortune to fill a partial term in the District 3 seat through April of 2023. Stephannie is a 16-year resident of Colorado Springs and has shown a passion for public service. She has had an exhilarating career in public policy, government, community development and business. Among her accomplishments are working early in her career for the White House in Presidential Advance, serving as Chief of Staff for a Colorado Congressman representing the western slope and Pueblo, as well as ascending to Assistant Director at the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. Stephannie has been blessed with incredible experiences that gave her the opportunity to have a positive effect on the communities that she is very proud to have served.



Newly sworn-in Councilmember, Nancy Henjum, addresses attendees during the 2021 City Council Swearing-In Ceremony.



Stephannie Fortune is sworn-in as the District 3 City Councilmember to fill a partial 15-month term.

STRATEGIC PLAN

CITY COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN 2021 UPDATE

REGIONAL COLLABORATION

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

- 25%** 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
- 50%** Conduct an annual meeting with County Commissioners, and quarterly meetings between City Council and County Commissioner leadership
- 100%** 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
- 100%** 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 Council Member as the military affairs liaison to increase direct communication with military installations

COMMUNICATION

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

- 75%** Increase the value of Boards and Commissions with an emphasis on action items and annual reporting requirements to City Council
- 100%** Develop a Constituent Response Specialist position to increase responsiveness and consistency in public messaging
- 100%** Increase methods of communication to constituents through opportunities such as town halls, policy briefs, email announcements, social media messaging, etc.
- 100%** Develop a Civics 101 training for new City employees to explain the role of City Council, the legislative process and methods of civic engagement
- 100%** Increase methods and frequency of communication between Executive staff and City Council through quarterly reports and staff planning lunch updates



SAFE AND RESILIENT COMMUNITIES

Identify legislative opportunities to enhance long range objectives with meaningful impacts

- 50% Encourage connectivity across the city through innovative approaches to transportation solutions
- 75% Support Public Safety initiatives through funding and the annual budget process
- 75% Support the City's financial resiliency through work with Executive Staff to develop a budgetary resiliency plan and associated metrics
- 75% Increase public awareness and encourage legislation that proactively support issues of affordable housing and homelessness
- 100% Increase public awareness and support around issues of the Urban Tree Canopy and Wildland Urban Interface

PLANCOS

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

- 25% Incentivize developers to build in underserved areas of Colorado Springs, such as the Southeast, and support general infill policies and programs through development of URA criteria
- 50% Actively participate in thoughtful discussion and drafting of legislation related to PlanCOS and other planning priorities
- 100% Support the Executive Branch's hiring of a Planning and Land Use consultant to review and provide recommendations on City Code Chapter 7
- 100% 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



CITY BUDGET

Overview

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.

2022 Budget Highlights:

- \$10.5 million for public safety infrastructure and fleet, to include construction of and equipment for Fire Station #24 in the Northeast part of the City
- \$700,000 of increased funding for 17 new sworn Police positions that will be added towards the end of 2022
- Funding for the Fire Department for the addition of 4 civilian positions and related operating and capital outlay, which will allow for the establishment of 2 Alternate Response Teams (ARTs) within the Community Response Team (CRT) Program. The Law Enforcement Transparency and Accountability Commission (LETAC) recommended the City expand the CRT program – the addition of the two Alternate Response Teams fulfills this recommendation by broadening the response to behavioral health calls for service regardless of level of acuity.
- \$2.5 million for increased staffing across several city departments to address expanding demand for services, including additional staff for the Neighborhood Services Quality of Life program and 4 civilian C-Med tiered response teams in the Fire Department
- \$2.15 million continued funding for the City's Americans with Disabilities Act operating and capital programs
- \$1.7 million of increased funding for city fleet and equipment replacement
- \$500,000 of continued funding to support shelter bed operations for the homeless population
- \$934,000 additional funding to Mountain Metro Transit for increased contract and other operating costs to sustain transit services
- \$1.5 million increased funding to address Information Technology core infrastructure, applications, and cybersecurity
- \$9.1 million for market increases for all civilian and sworn (Police and Fire) employees, step increases for sworn, pay progression for civilian employees, and pay for performance for civilian employees
- \$14.4 million for full-year funding for the portion of compensation and added positions that were phased in during 2021
- \$5.4 million reinstated budget that was reduced during 2020 for most departments and carried forward into 2021, due to the economic shutdown and revenue loss as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic
- \$2.2 million for critical facility maintenance - spread across the City's many facilities including Police and Fire headquarters, Parks facilities, Public Works facilities, fuel island infrastructure, and the Robert Isaac Municipal Courthouse
- \$500,000 increased funding for city-wide Capital Improvement Projects
- \$700,000 increased funding for animal law enforcement
- \$415,000 for expansion of forestry management and mitigation within the city

BY THE NUMBERS

2,302
Constituent
Responses



191
Resolutions
adopted
by City
Council



64
Board
Appointments



5
Town
Halls



105
Ordinances
passed by
City Council and
signed by
Mayor Suthers

HOUSING FOR ALL: CITY COUNCIL'S COMMITMENT TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING

As Colorado Springs continues to grow, City Council is committed to adding more affordable housing units throughout the City. Mayor John Suthers stated a goal of 1,000 affordable units per year, and City Council supports that goal through approving affordable planned unit developments (when a company invests their own money in affordable housing) and aiding construction through government funding.

Affordable Housing Collaborative – Housing for All Workshops

Building on initial work from the Colorado Springs Chamber of Commerce/CDC, the Colorado Springs Housing & Building Association, and the Downtown Partnership, the Affordable Housing Collaborative and Colorado Springs City Council held two workshops in July and September of 2021 with the goal of brainstorming new initiatives and concepts to address the affordable and attainable housing crisis in our community. Community stakeholders came together with new ideas on financing, legislative avenues, and funding of affordable and attainable housing projects. Many aspects of how to combat housing needs were considered including accessibility, advocacy, and ease of development. Many different ideas were presented and discussed among attendees which included local developers, housing advocates, governmental stakeholders, and non-profits among others. There is no easy solution to addressing housing needs for all, but if conversations and workshops like this continue to happen, affordable and attainable housing solutions will begin to come to fruition in our community through legislative changes from City Council.



Councilmembers Williams and Skorman brainstorm housing relief ideas with local housing stakeholders



Councilmember Henjum addresses the participants at the Housing for All Collaborative event

Bentley Commons

Bentley Commons is a development located off Hancock Parkway that perfectly aligns with the City’s plan for more affordable housing. There is a plan for 192 units with veteran and transitional housing making up approximately 25% of the units. City Council approved this project unanimously at their May 11th, 2021 Regular Meeting.



Councilmember Avila and Mayor Suthers at a Peak Vista Community Health Centers COVID-19 Vaccination site.

Village at Solid Rock

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.



Village at Solid Rock Preliminary Site Plan

Copper Rose

This is a special affordable housing development on the Northeast side of Colorado Springs in the proposed Copper Rose Apartment Complex. City Council approved this project to move forward at their July 13th, 2021 Regular Meeting. This development will provide a proposed 182 affordable apartment units in a variety of sizes up to four bedrooms to accommodate many different family types. The proposed site is near Powers and Stetson Hills.

Draper Commons

Draper Commons is another unique development that was presented in several phases at City Council in 2021. This housing project will provide 280 apartment units, 95 affordable and 185 attainable, just south of Downtown Colorado Springs. City Council approved this project unanimously each time it was presented by the City's Community Development Division.



Draper Commons proposed design plan

*Draper Commons
Summer House Design Rendering*

CITY COUNCIL HAPPENINGS

COUNCIL CHAMBERS RENOVATION

The historic Council Chambers underwent substantial renovation from April through September 2021. During that time, City Council meetings were held at Colorado Springs Utilities' Blue River Boardroom in the Plaza of the Rockies building. Renovations were necessary to update the aging dais and technology. Upgrades improved access for constituents both in-person in Council Chambers and joining



Council Chambers before the renovation



City Council meetings virtually. The most significant updates include a reconfiguration of the dais to the longer, southern wall and replacement of the aging and obsolete audio and visual equipment. This overhaul will vastly improve the quality, reliability, and overall effectiveness of hybrid meetings which were highlighted as a need during the COVID-19 pandemic.



Council Chambers after the renovation

City Council Retreat – The Words of Councilmember Nancy Henjum

“In June, Councilmembers met at the Hillside Community Center for a retreat during which we learned more about each other as people and what we care about as we strive to serve our City. Many of the policies, regulations, and ordinances we debate and enact have important implications for the kind of growth we see in our region. I left the retreat feeling encouraged: While of course we don’t all share the same views, if Councilmembers are going to form an effective team that serves everyone, we must listen respectfully, find common ground, and understand why we diverge when we do. I believe there’s widespread recognition that the issue of responsible growth will color virtually everything City Council will do over the next number of years. And we don’t have many chances to get it right. Let’s keep talking, listening, and learning!”



City Council retreat at Hillside Community Center

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 12, 2021 – Colorado Springs Police Department (CSPD) presentation regarding enforcement of illicit sexual activities in massage businesses.
- May 24, 2021 – Presentation about Pikes Peak Small Business Development Center Programs and Economic Impact.
- June 21, 2021 – City Traffic Engineering and Planning presentation on the Electric Scooter pilot project.
- June 21, 2021 – Presentation about the Home Front Military Network with an overview of their services, community, collective impact, and ways to connect.
- July 26, 2021 – Civic Engagement Program representatives gave City Council a brief history of the program and gave an update on the Community Engagement Program's work in the community.
- August 23, 2021 – City Community Development gave a presentation about the Affordable Rental Housing Fee Offset Program.
- August 23, 2021 – Presentation from Colorado Springs Fire Department (CSFD), CSPD, and the Office of Emergency Management regarding the Public Safety Evacuation Process.
- September 13, 2021 – City Finance Office lead a presentation regarding the planned uses of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) fund allocations.
- September 13, 2021 – City Community Development lead a presentation regarding American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding to address homelessness and Affordable Housing.
- September 13, 2021 – Update from the Downtown Partnership of Colorado Springs.
- September 27, 2021 – Presentation regarding Downtown Development and Parking Update.
- September 27, 2021 – Representatives from the Springs Recovery Connection gave a brief history and overview of their mission, vision, services, and programs.
- September 27, 2021 – Presentation from Diversus Health with an overview of their program and partnerships with CSFD and CSPD including their crisis walk-in center, evaluators, and acute treatment unit.
- October 11, 2021 – Representatives from Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) of the Pikes Peak Region gave an overview of CASA and the community impacts of child abuse, dependency, neglect, and the need for the program.
- December 13, 2021 – Colorado Springs Airport Master Plan Presentation
- January 24, 2022 – Presentation from the Housing & Building Association of Colorado Springs regarding Careers in Construction.
- January 24, 2022 – A representative from Pikes Peak Habitat for Humanity gave a presentation with a recap of the previous year, who the organization serves, and updates on many programs and services they offer.
- January 24, 2022 – The National Cybersecurity Center gave a presentation on their background, missions, programs, and other initiatives.
- February 7, 2022 – The City's Office of Innovation presented an update on the Smart Streetlights pilot project.
- February 7, 2022 – Presentation regarding Member Outreach for the Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments.
- February 22, 2022 – Update from CSPD, CSFD, and the Office of Emergency Management regarding Fire Mitigation and Emergency Evacuation Planning.
- February 22, 2022 – A presentation from the City's Transit and Public Works department regarding the plans for a new Downtown Transit Center.
- March 7, 2022 – Pikes Peak Regional Building Department presents City Council their annual report.

Community Events

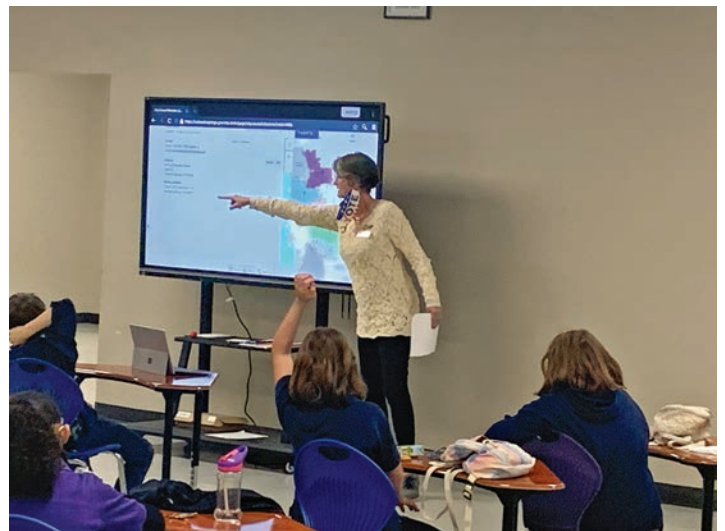
Councilmembers regularly attend events throughout the community during the year. The relationships that develop from attending community events are invaluable to providing accessibility to constituents to reach out to their Councilmembers. The events Councilmembers attend include everything from presentations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



City Council wears Western clothing during a June meeting in support of the Pikes Peak or Bust Rodeo.



Council President Strand gives remarks during a press conference honoring frontline workers of the COVID-19 pandemic



Councilmember Henjum gives students at the Coperni 3 School a presentation about City Council

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Councilmembers and Mayor Suthers enjoy a carriage ride following the token presentation for the Western Street Breakfast



Councilmember Avila speaking to members of the public at the Colorado Springs Juneteenth Festival.



Councilmembers Richard Skorman and Mike O'Malley attend the grand opening of Ed Robson Arena



Councilmember Randy Helms engages with students in the Leadership Pikes Peak Program

CONTENTIOUS LAND USE DECISIONS

In the summer of 2021, City Council engaged in two Public Hearings of great interest to the community. As part of the City's expansive growth over the past decade, City Council reviewed applications for two development projects for parcels located in the city. The first application was for an infill project at the old MCI building at 2424 Garden of the Gods Road in District 1. The project proposed creating 420 apartment units. The second development considered by City Council was Kettle Creek North which proposed expanding the existing North Fork Neighborhood in District 2 with an additional 247 single family homes.

Both projects received large amounts of community feedback. Between the two proposals, City Council received communications from close to 700 concerned residents before the Public Hearings began. City Council Staff worked proactively with the largest and most organized stakeholder groups for each hearing to ensure accurate information regarding Council processes and procedures was being disseminated to all interested residents. For the 2424 Garden of the Gods proposal, the identified group was the Mountain Shadows Homeowners Association. For the Kettle Creek North proposal, this was the North Fork Homeowners Association. As a result of these partnerships, between the two hearings, City Council received close to four hours of public testimony.

The City Council ultimately denied the 2424 Garden of the Gods Application in a 5-4 decision. City Council sent the Kettle Creek North Application back to the Planning Commission for further study in an 8-1 decision.

NOTEWORTHY LEGISLATIVE ISSUES

Humane Pet Store Ordinance

In response to growing awareness about the puppy mill industry and perceived lack of protections for the adult dogs in commercial breeding facilities, Council President Tom Strand proposed an ordinance that

would prevent puppy mill puppies from being sold in local pet stores. This ordinance was brought forward for a vote at the November 9th, 2021 Regular Meeting and ultimately failed on a 5 to 4 vote of City Council. This legislation garnered robust public input from stakeholder groups on both sides of the issue.

Carports

In January 2021, City Council, as a result of appeals of Notice and Orders issued by Neighborhood Services, instituted a moratorium on enforcement of carports located in the required front yard setback. City Council at that time requested staff to develop an ordinance that would permit carports to be placed in the required front yard setback. In late May 2021, Neighborhood Services Manager, Mitch Hammes, met with a group of approximately thirty residents under a front yard carport in District 4, with Councilmember Yolanda Avila, to discuss the initial version of the ordinance. Feedback was received from the neighborhood group, and several revisions were made to the ordinance to incorporate feedback from residents. After additional neighborhood meetings, a final draft was proposed to City Council. City Council passed the ordinance in January 2022, to go into effect February 1, 2022.

Expanded Pedestrian Access Act

Early in 2022, City Council received a presentation from the Colorado Springs Police Department with a proposal to expand the Pedestrian Access Act which impacts sitting or lying-in public access ways in and around downtown Colorado Springs. City Council heard the reasons for the proposed change including unsafe conduct, new proposed boundaries, citizen generated calls for service, and police officer initiated calls by area. After much discussion and public input, the motion was passed on a 7-2 vote.

BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, AND COMMITTEES UPDATE

City Council and Council Staff continue to evaluate and review of City Council Boards, Commissions, and Committees. In 2021, a new master list was created that placed each Board, Commission, and Committee into one of four categories: City Council Appointed, President's Board, City Council Subcommittees, or Councilmember Appointments. These category definitions, along with the interview process for new appointments, annual reporting requirements, and recertification process, were codified in the Rules and Procedures of City Council.

Recommendation from the Law Enforcement Accountability and Transparency Commission (LETAC)

LETAC spent 2021 listening and learning from Colorado Springs Police Department in the four areas of racial bias, use of force, communications, and crisis response. They made their first formal recommendation to City Council in July 2021 to expand Community Response Teams (CRT) in Colorado Springs. City Council approved funding for the Fire Department for the addition of four civilian positions and related operating and capital outlay, which will allow for the establishment of two Alternate Response Teams (ARTs) within the Community Response Team (CRT) Program in the 2022 budget.

Combining Transportation Boards

In November 2021, City Council voted to expand the membership of the Citizens' Transportation Advisory Board from 11 to 13 members as well as dissolve the Active Transportation Advisory Committee. The consolidation of these two groups into the Citizens' Transportation Advisory Board more accurately reflects the multimodal transportation projects the City currently implements.

Combining Transportation Boards

In November 2021, City Council voted to expand the membership of the Citizens' Transportation Advisory Board from 11 to 13 members as well as dissolve the Active Transportation Advisory Committee. The consolidation of these two groups into the Citizens' Transportation Advisory Board more accurately reflects the multimodal transportation projects the City currently implements.

Food Policy Advisory Replaced with Sustainability Advisory Board

In March 2022, City Council determined to replace the Food Policy Advisory Board with the Sustainability Advisory Board. This expanded the Board's work, mission and goals while providing a benefit to the Sustainability & Innovations Department.

In its seven-year tenure, the Food Policy Advisory Board advised City Council on creating the Cottage Food/Farm Stand Permit to allow individuals to sell homegrown produce or homemade, non-perishable products such as honey, jams, and teas etc. to the public. Additionally, they aided City Council on expanding the number of beehives a homeowner can have from one to two supporting the dwindling honeybee populations.

The new Sustainability Advisory Board will advise City Council on sustainability issues and policies focusing areas such as food access, energy, and economic development.



Councilmember Avila is interviewed by a reporter regarding the LETAC Recommendation.

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

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

City/Regional Ex Officio (Non-Voting)

- 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/Regional Voting

- 2C Advisory Committee
- 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)

City Council Appointed

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

- 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 – 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
- Human Relations Commission (HRC)
- Initiative Review Committee
- Investment Advisory Committee
- Law Enforcement Transparency and Accountability Commission (LETAC)
- Sustainability Advisory Board

Action/Appeal – Provide recommendations on applications and appeal 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

LAND ACQUISITIONS

Fisher Canyon

In October 2021, the City Council approved by unanimous vote a proposal for the City to acquire 343 acres of open space known as Fisher Canyon. The property, located in the City's southwest foothills, borders Cheyenne Mountain State Park to the south, the Broadmoor Bluffs neighborhood to the east and the Pike National Forest to the west. The estimated \$4.2 million purchase will be funded with revenues from the Trails, Open Space, and Parks (TOPS) sales tax program with the assistance of acquisition partner The Conservation Fund. The Fisher Canyon property will unlock multiple significant trail connections.



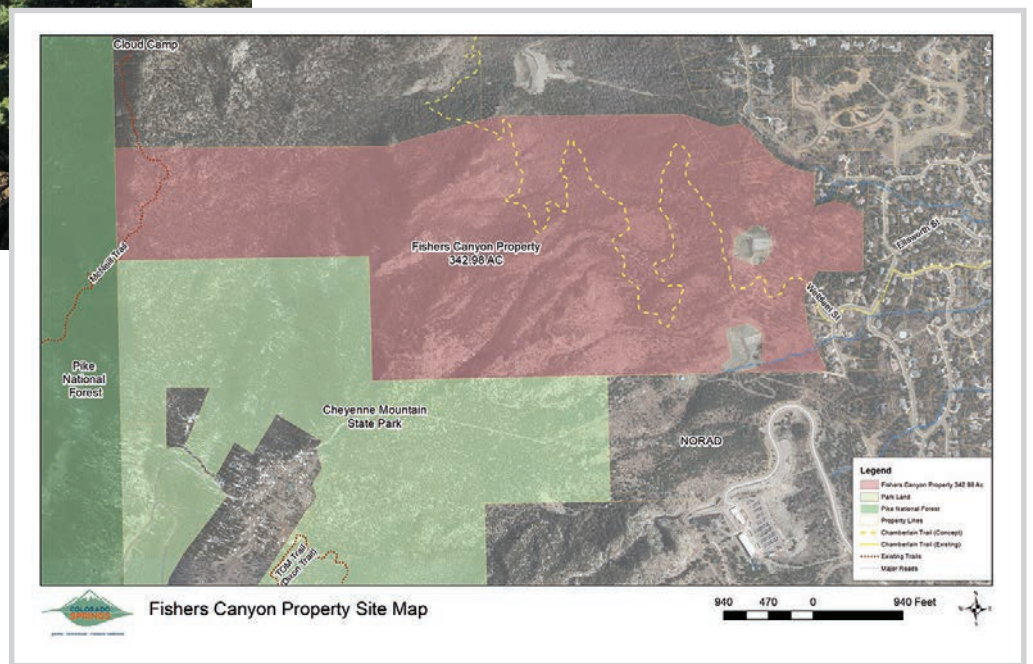
Fisher Canyon

Golden Lotus Asian Heritage Center

In December 2021, the City, in partnership with the Golden Lotus Foundation, acquired 8.48 acres through park land dedication funding for \$2.3 million for an Asian Arts and Cultural Heritage Center with a botanical garden and tea house. This wonderful new project will be located at Stratton Park which has a natural spring pond and many original trees.



Planned site for the Golden Lotus Asian Heritage Center at Stratton Park.



Fisher Canyon Property Map

BALLOT ISSUE UPDATES

Briargate Special Improvement Maintenance District

In November 2021, voters living within the Briargate neighborhood were asked to dissolve the Briargate Special Improvement Maintenance District (SIMD) to create the Briargate General Improvement District (GID). Ballot Issue 6B sought to incorporate over 2,200 properties not included in the SIMD service area. This ballot question was approved with 63.62% voters in favor and 36.38% opposed. This initiative was spearheaded by Councilmember Geislinger beginning early in his term and Councilmember Helms brought it to fruition.



Councilmember Geislinger speaking to residents about the Briargate Special Improvement District

2C TOPS Expansion

In November 2021, voters were asked to consider Ballot Issue 2C which sought to increase the Trails, Open Space, and Parks (TOPS) sales tax from 0.1% to 0.2%. The current TOPS sales tax is set to expire in 2025. Issue 2C was denied with 46.54% votes in favor and 53.45% against.

2D Fire Mitigation

Voters were also asked to consider Ballot Issue 2D asked if the City would be permitted to retain \$20 million to create a citywide and regional wildfire mitigation program with revenues over the Tax Payers Bill of Rights (TABOR) limits. No more than five percent of the fund can be spent annually. 2D was approved with 57.81% votes in favor and 42.19% against. With the passage, Mayor Suthers created an advisory board to provide consultation to the Colorado Springs Fire Department of the program funds as it relates to wildfire mitigation, prevention, and evacuation planning efforts.

COLORADO SPRINGS UTILITIES BOARD

City Council also has the responsibility to act as the governing body for Colorado Springs Utilities. 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.

Direct Potable Reuse Pilot

Direct potable reuse (DPR), the process of cleaning recycled water from Colorado Springs Utilities' resource recovery facilities to meet or exceed drinking water standards, was identified in the 2017 Colorado Springs Utilities' Integrated Water Resource Plan as one option to meet the future water needs of the city. In 2019, Springs Utilities received a grant from the Colorado Water Conservation Board for a Direct Potable Reuse (DPR) demonstration project. Colorado Springs Utilities collaborated with the Colorado School of Mines and Carollo Engineers to build and operate the PureWater Colorado Mobile Demonstration trailer as a public education and outreach tool to demonstrate a scaled DPR process. The PureWater demonstration launched June 2021 and provided tours for nearly 1,000 professional, educational, and general-public participants. Designated as a shared resource, it was relocated to another Colorado municipality in Spring 2022.

Martin Drake Power Plant Transition off Coal

Colorado Springs Utilities' Sustainable Energy Plan (approved by the Utilities Board in June 2020) accelerated the retirement of the Martin Drake Power Plant from no later than 2035 up to no later than Dec. 31, 2022. On Aug. 27, 2021, coal was used to generate power at the power plant for the last time. As Colorado Springs Utilities aims to reach its goal of reducing carbon emissions 80% by 2030, six new natural gas generators will be positioned temporarily onsite to continue the utility's reliable electric service. The generators will remain at the Drake site until 2026, at which point they will be moved to other parts of the system.



Army Lt. Gen. Douglas Gabram and Col. Nate Springer joined Colorado Springs Utilities Board members and staff to announce an agreement for the utility to operate, maintain and repair Fort Carson's gas and electric distribution systems beginning in early 2023. The Army post will cover all costs.

Fiber Optics Communications Network

In January 2022, Colorado Springs Utilities committed to invest in the enhancement of its fiber communications network around the city to meet customers' utility needs and position the city for the digital future. The utility plans to do this in a way that significantly offsets the cost of building the network through a lease agreement with a national fiber internet provider, Ting Internet, and other organizations on a non-exclusive network. Construction of this next-generation fiber communications network will begin in 2022 and be completed in 2028. 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. When this fiber-optic network is complete in 2028, Colorado Springs will be one of the largest gig-cities in the country.

Water Sharing Agreement

Our Water Sharing program in the Lower Arkansas Valley expanded this year to include acquisition of parcel corner shares on agricultural acreage. By partnering with farmers to install more efficient irrigation, their crop productivity remains the same and water is made available to us. These water purchase-and-lease agreements help diversify our water portfolio and support agriculture in rural communities.

Water-wise rules

To plan for the City's water future, the Utilities Board adopted water-wise rules on May 1, 2020. The water-wise rules include watering no more than three days a week, watering certain times of day and repairing leaking sprinkler systems, among others. The rules helped achieve 10.15 acre-feet of water savings in 2021. As Colorado faces drought conditions, these savings help mitigate potential drought over time. Colorado Springs Utilities provided education, irrigation tips and resources to help customers succeed and better understand the water-wise rules.

Windstorm Response

The Dec. 15, 2021, windstorm that hit the Pikes Peak region caused historic damage to the community and Colorado Springs Utilities' electric system. Approximately 47,000 customers were impacted by this storm. Most of this damage was caused by impact of the wind, falling and uprooted trees or structural elements becoming airborne and impacting the electric system. More than 600 employees and contractors worked the duration of the event and logged more than 66,000 hours to restore electric service to all impacted customers. Colorado Springs Utilities partnered with the City for debris removal, asphalt cuts and tree trimming.

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.



Utilities Board Member Nancy Henjum (left) and Colorado Springs Utilities CEO Aram Benyamin (right) look at poles that were destroyed by the Dec. 15, 2021 windstorm.



In June 2021, Councilmember Henjum participated in an Urban Water Cycle Tour to learn about water resources along Cottonwood Creek Trail



Colorado Springs Utilities is developing win-win solutions for sharing water with southern Colorado farmers, like Mark and Caleb Wertz.



Colorado Springs Utilities Board members tour a downtown Utilities Reliability Project to replace existing electric and natural gas lines for better service.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

City Hall has reopened to the public as guidelines allowed throughout 2021. The challenges of the pandemic did change aspects of our reopening but, Councilmembers are accessible to constituents and 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](https://coloradosprings.gov/boards).

- **Attend a Community Meeting**

In addition to City Council Meetings, City Council holds many other public forums. In 2021, these included City Council District Town Halls, and multiple Issue Specific Townhalls (such as, meetings about Marksheffel Widening and Regulation of Humane Pet Stores). Councilmembers also attended virtual 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 protests 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 City Council Staff and we will be happy to take groups or individuals on a tour of the majestic Colorado Springs City Hall.



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