

## AGENDA

### Open Space and Trails Advisory Board Meeting

Bijou Conference Room – 6934 S. Lima Street, Suite A, Centennial, CO 80112

Microsoft Teams Meeting ID: 283 227 520 237 Passcode: J87rML

Meeting Dial-in Number: 719-569-5048 Conference ID: 144 887 020#

October 28, 2024

5:30-8 p.m.

#### Call to Order

#### Roll Call

#### Items of Interest from the Public

#### Meeting Summary – August 26, 2024 (A)

#### General Discussion/ Staff Reports

- High Line Canal Stewardship Grants - Funding Recommendations (A)
- Updates: Previous OSTAB Recommendations (I)

#### Managers' Report and Sales Tax Update (I)

#### Upcoming Events

- 17 Mile House Farm Park Volunteer Appreciation Event: Oct. 26 (9-11 a.m.)
- 17 Mile House Open House – [How the 1859 Gold Rush Put Colorado on the Map](#): Nov. 2
- [Visit the Village](#): Dec. 7
- [CSU Extension events](#) added regularly, including:
  - High Elevation Baking: Oct. 23
  - Easy Care Landscapes: Oct. 24
  - STEAM Club: Oct. 29
  - Cottage Food Safety Training: Nov. 1
  - Understanding Credit Freezes: Nov. 13
  - Happy Houseplants: Nov. 21
  - Beauty and the Bees: Dec. 19

#### Board Member Comments

#### Adjournment (A)

(A) Action Item (I) Information



## **Arapahoe County Open Space and Trails Advisory Board (OSTAB) Meeting Summary – August 26, 2024**

### **Call to Order**

Dala Giffin called the meeting to order at 5:38 p.m.

### **Attendance**

OSTAB members: Dala Giffin, Amie Hulet, Mike Mojica, Jack Swartz (via Teams), and Josh Vanderschuere (via Teams at 5:40 p.m.)

Staff: Gini Pingnot, Michele Frishman, Roger Harvey, Brenda Lucero, John Christofferson (via Teams), and Ray Winn (via Teams)

Guests: David Anderson with Mile High Flood District (MHFD), Lisa Knerr with Arapahoe County Public Works and Development Department (PWD), Ceila Rethamel with PWD, and Josh Phillips with High Line Canal Conservancy (HLCC)

### **Items of Interest from the Public**

N/A

### **Meeting Summary from June 17, 2024**

Amie Hulet moved to approve the June 17, 2024, meeting summary as presented. The motion was seconded and passed (4-0).

### **General Discussion**

#### **Joint Project Funding Request: High Line Canal Stormwater Transition and Management Plan**

David Anderson (MHFD) presented information about the Stormwater Transition and Management Plan (STAMP) for the High Line Canal. The STAMP will serve to guide current and future stormwater management and risk mitigation on the High Line Canal. The total cost for the STAMP is expected to be \$657,500, and Arapahoe County's \$150,000 share represents 22% of the total cost of the STAMP. Lisa Knerr (PWD), Ceila Rethamel (PWD), and Josh Phillips (HLCC) also attended to support the STAMP presentation and answer questions.

Jack Swartz moved that OSTAB recommend to the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) approval of \$150,000 from the \$4 million High Line Canal Working Group pledge within the Open Space Acquisition and Development Fund to support the STAMP. The motion was seconded and passed (5-0).

#### **2025 Open Space Grants Cycle Funding**

Michele Frishman presented information on the 2025 Open Space Grants cycle and recommended keeping the total grant allocation at \$5.5 million, with maximum award amounts at

\$600,000 (standard grants) and \$150,000 (small and planning grants). These amounts were first introduced in 2023 in response to grantee feedback about rising costs. Keeping the total allocation at \$5.5 million will ensure we can fund an adequate number of projects while maintaining the higher maximum award amounts.

Staff would allocate the \$5.5 million in total funding for three grant categories:

- \$4,000,000 for Standard Grants: \$150,001 to \$600,000, 25% minimum cash match
- Up to \$750,000 for Small Grants: \$1,000 to \$150,000, 10% minimum cash match
- Up to \$750,000 for Planning Grants: \$1,000 to \$150,000, 10% minimum cash match

Minimum match amounts are calculated based on total project cost. Depending on the application pool, funds may be moved between categories (e.g., unawarded funds from the small and planning grant categories could support additional standard grants).

Grant awards will support Arapahoe County's funding priorities for outdoor recreation: park, trail, and open space improvements; land acquisition; planning; and environmental/cultural education.

Amie Hulet moved that OSTAB recommend to the BOCC approval of the proposed \$5.5 million allocation for the 2025 Open Space Grants cycle. The motion was seconded and passed (5-0).

### **OSTAB Elections**

Mike Mojica moved to recommend Dala Giffin as the Chair of OSTAB for the next year. The motion was seconded and passed (5-0).

Mike Mojica moved to recommend Amie Hulet as the Vice Chair of OSTAB for the next year. The motion was seconded and passed (5-0).

### **Managers' Report and Sales Tax Update**

Gini Pingenot presented the managers' report.

### **Board Member Comments**

Board member comments were discussed.

### **Adjournment**

Jack Swartz moved to adjourn the regular meeting at 6:39 p.m. The motion was seconded and passed (5-0).



## **STAFF REPORT**

**Date:** October 28, 2024

**To:** Open Space and Trails Advisory Board (OSTAB)

**Through:** Gini Pingnot, Open Spaces Director

**From:** Michele Frishman, Grants and Acquisitions Manager  
Sandy Bottoms, Grants and Acquisitions Administrator

**Subject:** **High Line Canal Stewardship Grants - Funding Recommendations**

**Purpose and Action Requested:** Staff will present the results of the grant proposal evaluation for the High Line Canal Stewardship Grants pilot program and request that OSTAB make a funding recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC). A BOCC study session is scheduled for November 12, 2024.

**Background:** Arapahoe County acquired 45 miles of the High Line Canal in June 2024, including portions in Arapahoe, Adams, and Denver counties. As a result of the acquisition, projects on County-owned portions of the High Line Canal are no longer eligible for the regular open space grant program. However, the County, the High Line Canal Conservancy (Conservancy), and the municipalities and special districts that care for the property recognize the need to improve its condition. To help meet this need, Open Spaces offered a pilot grant program this year to fund High Line Canal stewardship projects in Arapahoe County, including major tree pruning, hazard tree and invasive species removal, tree and shrub planting, seeding for native plants and wildflowers, irrigation, and trail resurfacing and replacement. The projects must be completed by the end of 2026.

In November 2023, the BOCC approved an allocation of \$1 million from the grants fund for the pilot program. Applications for the program were due in August 2024.

**Discussion and Analysis:** Four agencies submitted grant proposals requesting a total of \$925,734. Matching funds were not required, however, all applicants committed matching funds ranging from 10% to 67% of the total project cost. The total match commitment was \$784,500 (46% of the overall total project cost of \$1,710,234).

Open Spaces staff recruited a team of peer evaluators consisting of one representative from each eligible grantee that is a member of the High Line Canal Collaborative (the cities of Aurora,

Centennial, Cherry Hills Village, Greenwood Village, and Littleton, and South Suburban Park and Recreation District). Peer evaluators, two County staff members, OSTAB’s liaison to the High Line Canal Collaborative, and a representative from the Conservancy reviewed the applications, discussed them as a group, and collectively made funding recommendations. Considerations included scope, goals, and expected results of the project; current condition of the project area; project timeline; and impacts to future maintenance needs in the project area.

Based on these criteria, the quality of applications, and funding availability, evaluators recommended all applications for funding. Grant awards are recommended for the following projects:

Applicant	Grant Request	Cash Match	Total Project Cost	Project Name
City of Centennial	\$343,000	\$59,000	\$402,000	High Line Canal Hazard Tree Mitigation
City of Cherry Hills Village	\$49,734	\$5,500	\$55,234	Trail Resurfacing in Cherry Hills Village
City of Greenwood Village	\$300,000	\$600,000	\$900,000	High Line Canal Irrigation System
City of Littleton	\$233,000	\$120,000	\$353,000	High Line Canal Irrigated Tree Planting Pilot
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$925,734</b>	<b>\$784,500</b>	<b>\$1,710,234</b>	

Funded projects will undergo additional review by the County (Open Spaces, Public Works and Development), the Conservancy, and Denver Water to ensure that the proposed work aligns with long-term goals for the property and does not conflict with the conservation easement or reserved rights. Additionally, each grantee will be required to enter into a funding agreement and obtain appropriate authorization from the County to complete the project on its property.

**Recommendation:** Based on evaluator feedback and funding availability, the team recommends funding all four proposals totaling \$925,734. The unspent allocation of \$74,266 will remain in the grants fund.

**Suggested Motion:** I move we recommend to the BOCC approval of funding for four projects, totaling \$925,734, through the High Line Canal Stewardship Grants pilot program.

**Alternatives:** Recommend approval, conditional approval, or denial of each grant project.

**Fiscal Impact:** 12% of annual revenue from the Arapahoe County Open Space Sales and Use Tax is dedicated to the grants program pursuant to the County Open Space Resolution. The fund balance exceeds the recommended awards.

**Attachments:**  
Presentation



# HIGH LINE CANAL STEWARDSHIP GRANT AWARD RECOMMENDATIONS

OCTOBER 28, 2024

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# PROGRAM OVERVIEW

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Eligible projects include:

- major tree pruning
- hazard tree and invasive species removal
- tree and shrub planting
- seeding for native plants and wildflowers
- irrigation
- trail resurfacing and replacement

**\$1,000,000** allocated for pilot program in 2024

**4** applications received & evaluated

**\$925,734** grant funding requested

**\$784,500** matching funds committed

# RECOMMENDED AWARDS

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Applicant	Grant Request	Cash Match	Total Cost	Project Name
City of Centennial	\$343,000	\$59,000	\$402,000	High Line Canal Hazard Tree Mitigation
City of Cherry Hills Village	\$49,734	\$5,500	\$55,234	Trail Resurfacing in Cherry Hills Village
City of Greenwood Village	\$300,000	\$600,000	\$900,000	High Line Canal Irrigation System
City of Littleton	\$233,000	\$120,000	\$353,000	High Line Canal Irrigated Tree Planting Pilot
<b>Total Requests</b>	<b>\$925,734</b>	<b>\$784,500</b>	<b>\$1,710,234</b>	



# RECOMMENDED GRANT PROJECTS

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## High Line Canal Hazard Tree Mitigation

City of Centennial

**Grant: \$343,000**

Total Project: \$402,000

Partnership with SEMSWA

Removal or mitigation of 63 medium hazard trees identified in 2022 Tree Inventory/Risk Assessment along 5 miles of the Canal

Continuation of Denver Water's work to remove or mitigate high hazard trees



# RECOMMENDED GRANT PROJECTS

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## Trail Resurfacing in Cherry Hills Village

City of Cherry Hills Village

**Grant: \$49,734**

Total Project: \$55,234

Resurface 3.8 miles of trail between Belleview and Hampden, to include:

- Filling ruts to smooth out trail surface and reduce water pooling
- Adding new crusher fine material mixed with a binding agent to reduce dust and better maintain a compacted surface



# RECOMMENDED GRANT PROJECTS

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## High Line Canal Irrigation System

City of Greenwood Village

**Grant: \$300,000**

Total Project: \$900,000

Design and construct an irrigation system along 5.6 miles of the Canal

System will support 200 recently planted trees and an additional 50 planned trees

Trees are currently watered by truck, so the project will reduce staff time for maintenance as well as vehicular traffic on the trail



# RECOMMENDED GRANT PROJECTS

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## High Line Canal Irrigated Tree Planting Pilot

City of Littleton

**Grant: \$233,000**

Total Project: \$353,000

Design and implement an irrigated tree planting pilot project on a 0.4-mile segment of the Canal between W. Euclid Avenue and Broadway

Project site was selected for its canopy condition, “tree equity score,” and designation as a Safe Route to School

City will assess implications for tree establishment and health, water use, cost, and feasibility for expanding this approach in the future



## ANTICIPATED GRANT OUTCOMES

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<b>\$925,734</b>	total funding recommended
<b>\$784,500</b>	matching funds committed
<b>4</b>	projects funded
<b>6.0</b>	miles of newly irrigated trail corridor in Greenwood Village and Littleton
<b>3.8</b>	miles of resurfaced trail in Cherry Hills Village
<b>60+</b>	hazard trees mitigated or removed in Centennial
<b>300+</b>	recently planted or new trees supported with irrigation

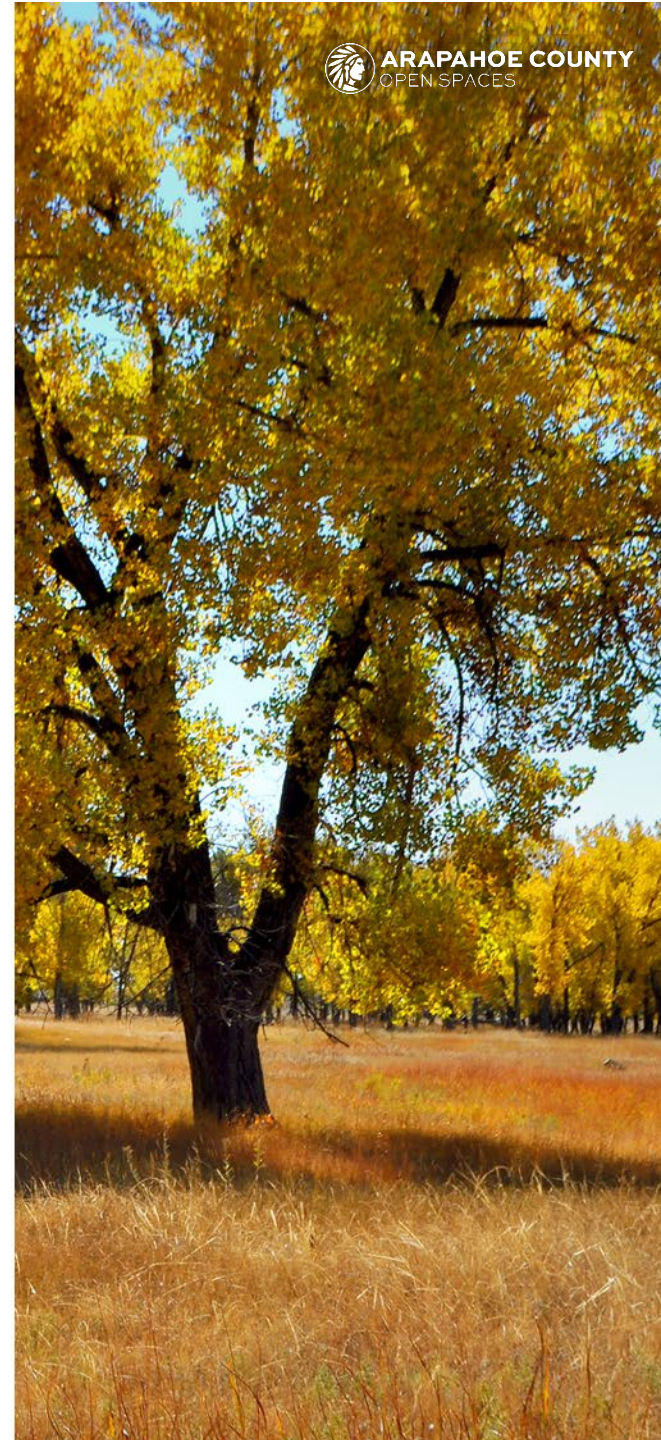
## SUGGESTED MOTION

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I move we recommend to the BOCC approval of funding for four projects, totaling \$925,734, through the High Line Canal Stewardship Grants pilot program.

THANK YOU

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Lima Plaza  
6934 South Lima Street, Unit A  
Centennial, CO 80112  
720-874-6540  
arapahoeco.gov

## DIRECTOR REPORT

**Date:** October 28, 2024  
**To:** Open Space and Trails Advisory Board (OSTAB)  
**From:** Gini Pingenot, Open Spaces Director  
**Subject:** **Updates: Previous OSTAB Recommendations**

On June 17, 2024, OSTAB, in its advisory capacity, recommended the following items to move forward for the Board of County Commissioners' consideration. This report is intended to update OSTAB members on the status of those items to date.

### Ranger Program

As requested by several county commissioners, staff developed a proposal for the creation of a Ranger Program that would have begun in 2025. The program would have focused on natural resource protection and public safety pursuant to Open Spaces' Rules and Regulations and, if time permitted, provided formal educational opportunities.

At this time, the County is not moving forward with a Ranger Program. It was determined that additional time and energy is needed to ensure consensus for the mission of the program and whether it is the right response to community concerns.

### Deferred Maintenance: Transfer Request Authorized Under Resolution No. 21-263

Arapahoe County's Resolution No. 21-263 outlines the available uses of the County's 0.25% Sales and Use Tax for open space, park and trail purposes and how unspent fund balances may be reallocated to other allowable uses based on recommendations from OSTAB.

Based on this voter-approved flexibility, OSTAB recommended reallocating \$3 million in unspent Administration funds to address deferred maintenance needs on heritage properties and the High Line Canal. Specifically, the approved projects were: (1) Fairgrounds Repaving; (2) Fairgrounds HVAC Replacement; and (3) the High Line Canal Enhanced Trail.

Project	Description	Amount	Status
Fairgrounds Repaving	Repair, replace, and overlay of asphalt roads and parking lots at the Arapahoe County Fairgrounds and Event Center	Up to \$500,000	Complete
Fairgrounds HVAC Replacement	Design, demolition of existing HVAC systems, and construction of the new HVAC systems	Up to \$1.5m	Ongoing. Designs are still under review.
High Line Canal Enhanced Trail	Design and possibly some construction costs for 1.17 miles in Holly Hills and 3.02 miles in the Four Square Mile Neighborhood	Up to \$1m	Under contract with Livable Cities



**MANAGERS' REPORT**  
**October 28, 2024**

**GRANTS AND ACQUISITIONS**

2025 Grants

- The BOCC approved funding for the 2025 open space grant cycle on September 10.
- \$5.5 million will be available in three categories:
  - \$4 million for Standard Grants (\$150,001 to \$600,000, 25% match)
  - Up to \$750,000 for Small Grants (\$1,000 to \$150,000, 10% match)
  - Up to \$750,000 for Planning Grants (\$1,000 to \$150,000, 10% match)

Closed Projects

- City of Aurora – Fulton Park Renovation (2021 standard grant)

Acquisitions

- Staff has completed negotiations of a Purchase and Sale Agreement with the Colorado State University Research Foundation to purchase 362 acres of land adjacent to Bijou Basin Open Space for \$900,000. We anticipate BOCC approval of the agreement on October 22, after which we will complete the remaining due diligence and move toward closing, which is currently scheduled for January 2025. This purchase will enable Open Spaces to expand Bijou Basin Open Space while we complete the master planning process for the property. It also will provide additional protection of important wildlife habitat and a riparian corridor as part of a larger mass of more than 15,000 acres of conserved land in the West Bijou Creek area.

**PLANNING**

Dove Valley Regional Park Phase I - Construction

- Currently 100% complete – Park is substantially complete and open to the public.
- BIKE PARK – is OPEN – main park and bike park grand opening was Oct. 11.
- Punchlist work ongoing - shelter for bike park waiting on building permit will be around December.

High Plains Trail: Segments 1-4

- Design & Construction for remaining trail segments 2,3, & 4 within the Prairie Point development are underway – design is at 90%.
- First construction document submittal to City of Aurora for approvals in Feb. 2024, re-submitted in March – Delayed: received first submittal comments in June; resubmittal upcoming.
- Next Steps: after Aurora design approval, easement acquisition will begin, bid advertising, contractor selection, & construction. Estimated construction start early 2025.

17 Mile House Farm Park Improvements



- Parker Rd. and future Aurora Pkwy. intersection design and construction: Working with CDOT, City of Aurora, and Kings Point/Prairie Point Developer to make intersection improvements on Parker Rd. and future Aurora Pkwy, creating a 4-way signalized intersection.
- IGA with Oakwood homes/new metro District has been executed to continue the joint construction.
- CDOT issued County Notice to Proceed Jan. 2024 we have 3 years to complete work.
- Update: Prairie Point has issued advertisement for bids on entire infrastructure of development including intersection – construction could begin in early 2025.

#### Kiowa Creek (North) Open Space Master Plan Project

- Stream Landscape Architects (LA) were selected for design development, Location & Extent Plan and construction documents.
- We have completed 90% construction documents.
- First L&E submittal occurred- we have received comments, second submittal upcoming.
- We have submitted to Army Corp of Engineering a plan set and Letter of No Rise for floodplain improvements: Bridge and amenities in floodplain – this review and approval can take 6-9 months.
- CPW Archery Range Grant of \$80,000 was awarded to County.

#### New 4 Square Mile Park: Arcadia Park

- A new residential community comprised of approximately 345 rental apartment units and 168 two-story for-sale paired-homes at the former Potter's House Church site at 9495 E. Florida Ave., on a 32-acre site.
- Open Spaces requested land dedication for a park instead of Cash in Lieu in 2020.
- Final concept has been created. Construction Document Design is underway, currently at 90%.
- Final funding has been approved.
- Property has been transferred to County ownership.
- 2025 tentative start date slated for construction of park.

#### Bijou Basin – Master Plan

- Natural resource, agriculture and cultural studies; drafts have been completed.
- Phase I community outreach – public meetings in Byers and Benntt Days, Survey are completed.
- Extensive Phase I public comments and surveys are being summarized and compiled for review and internal discussion.
- Based on comments and management decisions public feedback will generate three park concepts for Phase II public outreach in early 2025.

#### Richmil Ranch – Phase II Parking Lot Expansion

- Partnership with County Public Works to design, bid and construct an expansion to Richmil Parking lot
- At 90% construction document design. Location & Extent Plan amendment has been submitted.
- CDOT has issued new Access Permit.
- Final cost estimate and 100% design upcoming
- Funding request to OSTAB and BoCC in Dec. 2024.

### Countywide Bike and Pedestrian Master Plan implementation: S. Holly St. and E. Yale Ave. Multimodal improvement project

- Identified in 2017 Master Plan: bike and pedestrian improvements along Yale Ave. to connect existing bike lanes in Denver to Cherry Creek Trail and High Line Canal Trail and Bible Park.
- City of Denver leading High Line Canal crossing underpass of Yale Ave. in partnership with County for roadway improvements and inclusion of new side-path along Yale for bikes and pedestrians.
  - Tentative Schedule: Design through 2024, Contractor starting construction 2025 and opening 2026.
  - 2014-2015 Funding approvals for Yale/Holly Highline Canal crossing improvements for \$500,000 are now going to be re-approved by OS: BoCC has approved funding.
- Other multi-modal projects being scoped and investigated:
  - HAWK crossing signal for Quebec Street and High Line Canal.
  - Peoria missing sidewalk connection: west side of Peoria from Arapahoe Rd to Easter Ave.
  - Parker Road Trail on east side of Parker Road through Foxfield – to Broncos Parkway.
  - Inverness Drive East bike lanes.
  - Parker Road multi-modal safety Improvement Study – Parker Road from Mississippi to Havana.

## **OPERATIONS**

### Open Space, Parks & Trails Operations

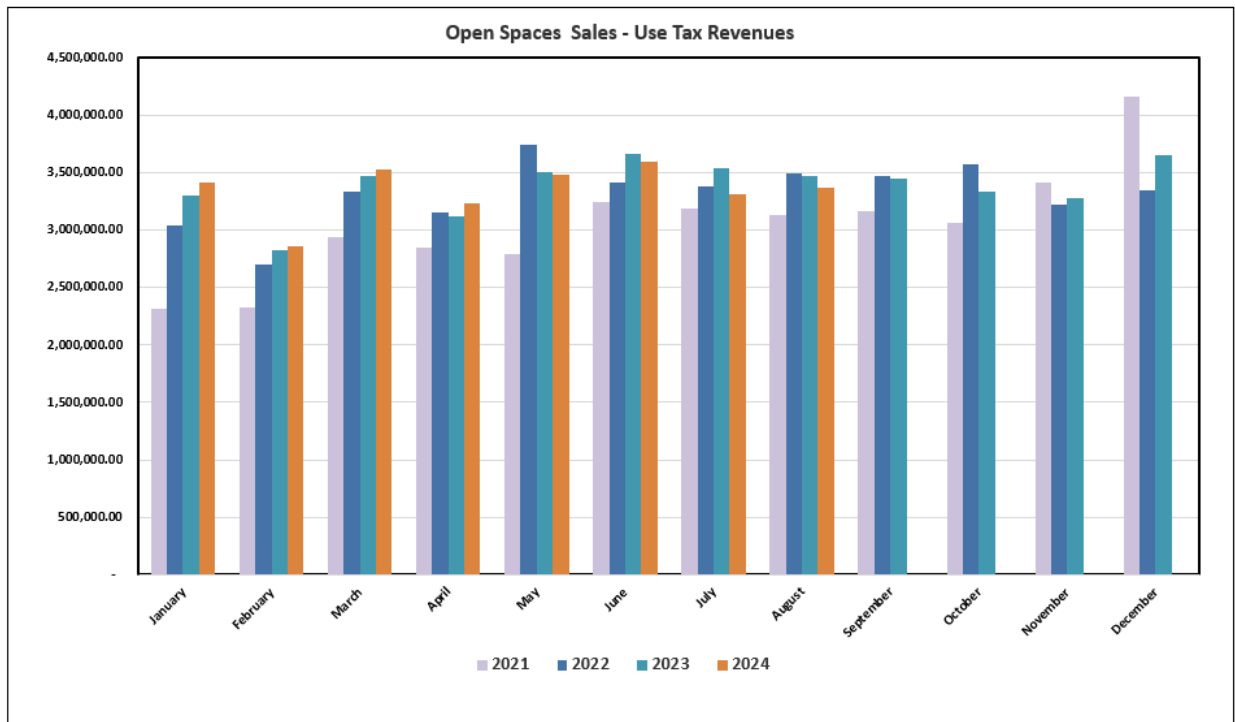
- Operations / Maintenance
  - Ongoing process to update Rules and Regulations for properties.
  - Hired new Operations Supervisor – Open Space, Parks, and Trails.
  - Continue to recruit for vacant Operations Technician positions.
  - Irrigation winterization for urban parks and Fairgrounds property.
  - Present 2025 operations budget and staffing requests to Executive Budget Committee.
  - Support grand opening of Dove Valley Regional Park and associated bike park.
  - Staff attended Colorado Open Space Alliance Conference.
- Projects
  - Bijou Basin Open Space Master Plan: Ongoing support of planning process with Planning staff and project consultant. Review of draft plan.
  - Kiowa Creek Open Space Development: Ongoing support of site planning and design. Moving to 90% level.
  - High Line Canal Transition:
    - Completing site tours of High Line Canal with agency partners.
    - Serve on project team for Natural Resource Management Plan
    - Serve on project team for Storm Water Management Plan.
  - Dove Valley Regional Park Phase 1: Ongoing weekly project meetings and site inspections at project close out. City of Aurora staff finalizing IGA review, meetings to plan park programming and fall user season.
- 17 Mile House
  - Fall Open House events.

- Supported 4H Expo event hosted by CSU Extension.

**Fairgrounds Operations**

- Event Center
  - Initiate office renovation project in partnership with Project Management Office.
  - Ongoing work with IT to upgrade site IT infrastructure.
  - 2024 County interdepartmental events and calendar bookings.
  - 2024 Event Center bookings and event support.
- Operations / Maintenance
  - Fairgrounds fall turf and landscape improvements.
  - Fairgrounds asphalt improvement project completed.
- Annual County Fair
  - Post Fair financial close outs and outcomes review.
  - Post Fair interdepartmental recap meetings.
  - Animal emergency management planning with the Sheriff's Office.
- Community Events
  - 2024 Community Events logistics and planning. Treat Street, 10/19

**SALES AND USE TAX REVENUES**



Total Collected Jan -Aug 2024: \$26,793,368 (\$76,579 less than same time last year)

Total Collected Jan -Aug 2023: \$26,869,947

*Sales and use tax revenues are posted a few months after collection.*