

City of Colorado Springs

TOPS Working Committee Meeting Minutes

Location: 1401 Recreation Way, Colorado Springs, CO 80905

Date: January 7, 2026

Time: 7:30 a.m.

Meeting Attendance

Members Present: Wendy Howe, Jeff Davis, Chelsea Gondeck, Paula Krantz, David Bird, Jordan Risley, Dave Bundrick

Members Absent: Emily Danti, Randy Courduff

Alternate Members Present: Matt Nuñez, Steve Phillips

Parks Advisory Board Liaisons Present: Larry Bogue

Parks Advisory Board Liaisons Absent: Steve Lenzo, Amandla Atilano-Roque

Staff Present: Lonna Thelen, Eric Becker, Kim King, Anna Bingman, Andrea Solano, David Deitemeyer, Jake Butterfield, Daniel Gould, Connie Schmeisser, Emily Duncan, John Weaver

Call to Order & Agenda Preview

Committee Chair Wendy Howe brought the meeting to order at 7:30 a.m. and previewed the agenda.

Announcements

- Lonna Thelen, Design and Development Manager/TOPS Program Manager, made the following announcements:
 - Lonna introduced Matt Nuñez and Steve Phillips as the two new alternate TOPS Working Committee members, provided some information on their backgrounds, and welcomed them to the meeting.
 - There will be no site tour in January.
 - The Department is moving five properties through a zone change to the PK Zone: Fishers Canyon Open Space, Stratton Park, the eastern portion of Ute Valley Park, Grey Hawk Park, and Cumbre Vista Park. The initial review is done, and the next step is to move this to the Planning Commission in February. Lonna is hopeful the process will be complete by April.

- Council member David Leinweber announced that on Tuesday, January 13th at 1 p.m. at the Garden of the Gods Visitor Center, Governor Jared Polis will be presenting the Pikes Peak Outdoor Recreation Alliance with a \$2,500,000 grant to enhance components of the Ring the Peak Trail.
- Kim King, Interim Director, announced that this meeting would be the last meeting for Anna Bingman, Staff Assistant, as she has accepted a position with Colorado Springs Utilities. Additionally, her position will not be posted until after the new Director has been hired, as the Staff Assistant reports directly to the Director. However, Kim informed the Committee that, if the timing of the hiring process for a new Director stays on track, the new Director will hopefully be in place by the end of April or early May. In the meantime, Andrea Solano, Administrative Assistant, will be facilitating the TOPS Working Committee and Parks Advisory Board.

Approval of Minutes

Motion: To approve the November 5, 2025 TOPS Working Committee meeting minutes.

1st – Paula Krantz, 2nd – Jeff Davis, Approved, Unanimously.

Citizen Discussion

There was no citizen discussion at this time.

Action Items

There were no action items on this agenda.

Presentation Items

Design and Development Year-in-Review and Look Ahead (Presented by the Design and Development Team, including Lonna Thelen, Design and Development Manager/TOPS Program Manager; David Deitemeyer, Senior Program Administrator for TOPS; Connie Schmeisser, Senior Planner; Jake Butterfield, Capital Projects Coordinator; Emily Duncan, Trails Development Coordinator; Daniel Gould, Senior Landscape Architect; and John Weaver, Parks Asset Supervisor)

The Design and Development Team presented the Committee with the Design and Development Year-in-Review and Look Ahead. This presentation discussed projects, some property by property, including the Park System Master Plan; e-bikes; Blodgett Open Space; Austin Bluffs Open Space; Fishers Canyon Open Space; Snyder Quarry – Black Canyon Open Space; Legacy Loop – West Pikes Peak Greenway; Rock Island Trail – Sand Creek to Constitution Avenue; Grey Hawk Park planning and construction; 2026

bridges; Rampart playground; Woodland Hills playground; Open Space kiosks and wayfinding; and finally, the Parks Asset Management program.

Citizen Comment

Cory Sutela, Executive Director for Medicine Wheel Trail Advocates, thanked Anna Bingman for her facilitation and congratulated John Weaver for his promotion. Next, Mr. Sutela informed the Committee about a discussion that took place at the previous month's Parks Advisory Board meeting concerning the limitations for volunteers working on projects in parks. He stated that volunteers have a desire to do more work and is happy this is recognized in the master plan process taking place. Mr. Sutela has submitted a draft proposal to the Department on how to structure volunteer work, and the concerns over liability.

Adjournment

Motion: To adjourn the January 7, 2025 TOPS Working Committee meeting at 8:36 a.m.

1st – David Bird, 2nd – Jordan Risley, Approved, Unanimously.