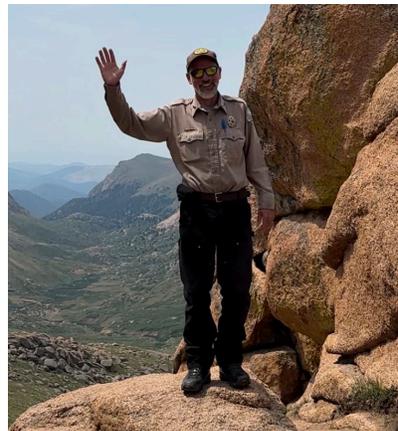




Parks, Recreation,  
& Cultural Services

# 2025 ANNUAL REPORT



COLORADO SPRINGS PARKS, RECREATION AND CULTURAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT  
**The People Behind The Parks. Proudly Serving Our Community.**



## 2025 AWARDS

### **Unsung Hero Award**

Trails and Open Space Coalition

Samuel Sherman

Park Maintenance & Operations

### **Certified Therapist Recreation Specialist of the Year**

Colorado Parks & Recreation Association

Ashley Bordenet-Grice, Program Administrator

Therapeutic Recreation Program

### **Tourism Leadership Award**

VisitCOS

Sarah Braun

Pikes Peak - America's Mountain

### **Employee of the Year**

City of Colorado Springs & Colorado Springs Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department

Stephanie Adams

Community Engagement, Administration

### **American Architecture Award**

The Chicago Athenaeum

International Museum for Architecture and Design

Pikes Peak Summit Visitor Center

*This prestigious award is the highest public award in the nation and honors new and cutting-edge designs.*

### **Design Award of Merit and Sustainability**

American Institute of Architects

Pikes Peak Summit Visitor Center

### **Green Architecture Award**

Green Good Design

Pikes Peak Summit Visitor Center

### **Unsung Hero Award**

Trails and Open Space Coalition

Angela Tolfa

Pikes Peak - America's Mountain

## The Gazette's "The Best of the Springs"

### Museum

Silver - Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum

### Impressive Outing

Gold - Garden of the Gods Park

### Dog Park

Bronze - Palmer Park Dog Park

### Lunchtime/After-Work Hike

Gold - Garden of the Gods Park

Bronze - Palmer Park

### Golf Course

Gold - Patty Jewett Golf Course

### Park

Gold - Garden of the Gods Park

Bronze - John Venezia Community Park

### Neighborhood Park

Silver - John Venezia Community Park

Bronze - Cottonwood Creek Park

### Places to Gaze at Pikes Peak

Gold - Garden of the Gods Park

Silver - Mesa Overlook

Bronze - Patty Jewett Golf Course

### Trail

Gold - Garden of the Gods Park

Silver - Red Rock Canyon Open Space

### Place to Propose

Gold - Garden of the Gods Park

Silver - Pikes Peak - America's Mountain

### Ice Rink

Silver - Sertich Ice Center

## Trip Advisor

### Top Attractions in the United States

#14 - Garden of the Gods Park

### Top Attractions in Colorado

#1 - Garden of the Gods Park

#5 - Pikes Peak - America's Mountain

### Top Attractions in Colorado Springs

#1 - Garden of the Gods Park

#6 - Red Rock Canyon Open Space

#8 - Helen Hunt Falls

#11 - North Cheyenne Cañon Park



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**2025**  
FISCAL YEAR

Awards & Recognition . . . . .	2
Note from Leadership . . . . .	5
PRCS By the Numbers . . . . .	6
Developing Our Park System . . . . .	8
Caring for Our System . . . . .	10
Water Conservation . . . . .	11
Park Rangers . . . . .	12
Track Chair Program . . . . .	13
Natural Resources . . . . .	14
Technology Investments . . . . .	15
CAPRA Reaccreditation . . . . .	16
Engaging Our Community . . . . .	18
Recreation Services . . . . .	20
Cultural Services . . . . .	22
Enterprise Operations . . . . .	24
Economic Impact of Parks . . . . .	26
Financial Overview . . . . .	28
Grant Funding . . . . .	30
Generation Wild . . . . .	31

## EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP

### Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department

---

- Britt I. Haley, Director
- Kim King, Assistant Director
- Eric Becker, Parks Maintenance & Operations Director
- Matthew Mayberry, Cultural Services Manager
- Lonna Thelen, Parks Design and Development Manager
- Skyler Rorabaugh, Pikes Peak - America's Mountain Manager

## BOARD LEADERSHIP

### Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Advisory Board

*(As of August 2025)*

---

- Stephen Harris, Chair
- Julia Sands De Melendez, Vice Chair
- Mike Sullivan
- Kimberley Sherwood
- Debbie Swanson
- Andrea Perry
- Larry Bogue
- Steve Lenzo
- Amandla Atilano-Roque

### Trails, Open Space and Parks (TOPS) Working Committee

*(As of December 2025)*

---

- Wendy Howe, Chair
- Jeff Davis, Vice Chair
- David Bundrick
- Randy Courduff
- Emily Danti
- Chelsea Gondeck
- Paula Krantz
- Jordan Risley
- David Bird
- Amandla Atilano-Roque, PRCS Advisory Board Liaison
- Larry Bogue, PRCS Advisory Board Liaison
- Steve Lenzo, PRCS Advisory Board Liaison

## MISSION

The Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department is the steward of a diverse park system that enriches the community through healthy, active opportunities that engage and inspire.

## VISION

Building community and preserving our legacy to make Colorado Springs the finest place to live and visit.



## HELLO PRCS FRIENDS!

Each year, it is a privilege to share my thoughts about the year in our annual report. 2025 is extra special to me because it is my final year as the department's director and we accomplished much! I am retiring from the City of Colorado Springs with a grateful heart. It is a challenging feat to guide an organization of elite professionals across many fascinating disciplines and an experience that I will always value.

## WHAT MAKES OUR PARKS WORLD CLASS

It remains true that Colorado Springs has "world class" parks that rival those offered in the national park system. While these places are inspiring and impressive, I know from first-hand experience that the people of the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department make it truly remarkable. Our professionals are top notch. They are drawn to this work through passion and dedication.

For those who are fortunate to live here, it might be easy to take these professionals, the beautiful views, and our park land for granted. I urge you to do the opposite and support them any way you can.



## STEWARDSHIP IN ACTION

A guiding principle I chose to embrace was "Let's take care of what we have." This year's report shows how we honored that commitment, and it demonstrates a second principle of the department, which is "We do a lot with what we have." In this report you will learn how our professionals and community volunteers made an astounding impact with the financial support and community resources entrusted to our care. You will read about an array of capital construction projects, community events, natural resource stewardship activities, youth and adult sports programs, cultural and historic exhibits, trails, and educational opportunities --all marking the completion of 2025 in a city park system like no other.

## IMPACT AT A GLANCE

- Demonstrated a **\$90 million** annual economic impact on the local economy. (Pages 26-27)
- Renewed and **improved facilities citywide**, from neighborhood playgrounds to major investments at the Westside Community Center and Garden of the Gods Park. (Pages 8-9,22)
- Expanded access to nature and recreation with the opening of a **new 4.5-acre park** in the Grey Hawk neighborhood. (Pages 8-9)
- Earned continued national recognition, ranking in the **top 3%** of parks and recreation agencies nationwide through CAPRA reaccreditation. (Pages 16-17)
- Engaged more than **715,000 community members** in programs supporting wellness, learning, and connection. (Pages 20-24)
- Elevated community storytelling through **new museum exhibits**, including "Until Forever Comes: This Is Ute Homeland". (Pages 22-23)

## AN INVITATION TO EXPLORE

This report captures a year of progress, partnership, and care for the places that make our city exceptional. How it continues is up to all of us. For a fun personal challenge, treat this report as a scavenger hunt.

- Get out to see the projects in this report.
- Let yourself be inspired and experience what is available in Colorado Springs.
- Thank a staff member or volunteer for dedicating their time, talents, and energy to this important work.
- Treasure what we have in Colorado Springs - by never taking our park system for granted.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Britt I. Haley". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Britt I. Haley, Director  
Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services  
City of Colorado Springs

# PRCS

## BY THE NUMBERS

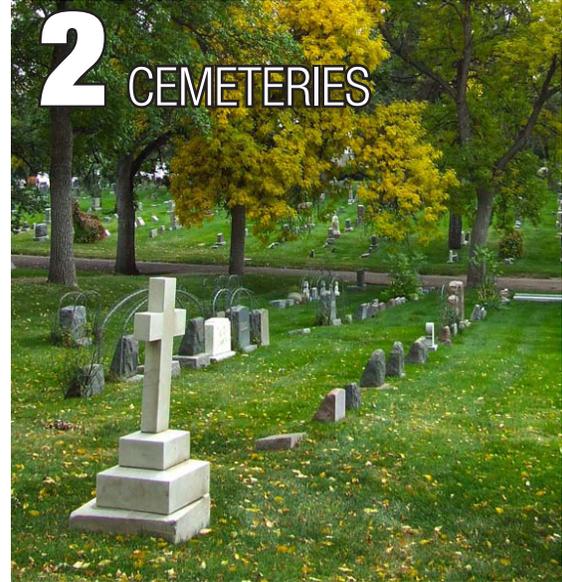
City parks have always been a vital part of Colorado Springs. In 1907, General Palmer established an independent Parks Commission to manage the City's public parks. However, as the city grew, a volunteer-led commission could no longer meet the demands of park administration. On April 1, 1947, the Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services (PRCS) Department was created to oversee and care for the City's park lands.

Today, PRCS manages natural and cultural resources, maintains an extensive network of trails, and provides community programs focused on recreation, wellness, and the arts.

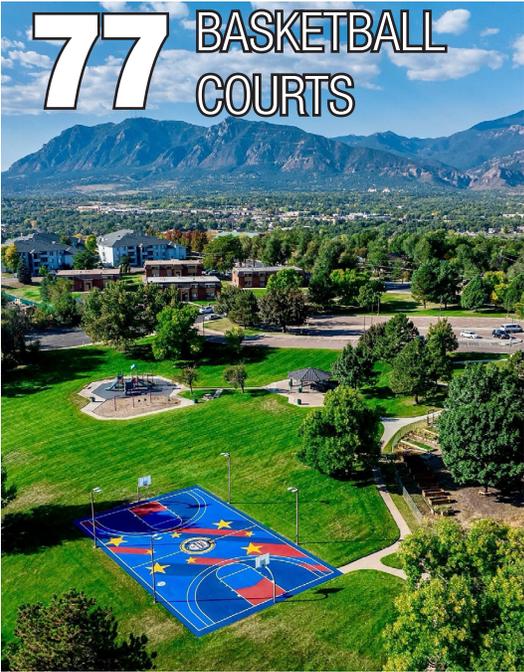
# 18,675

 ACRES OF PARK LAND

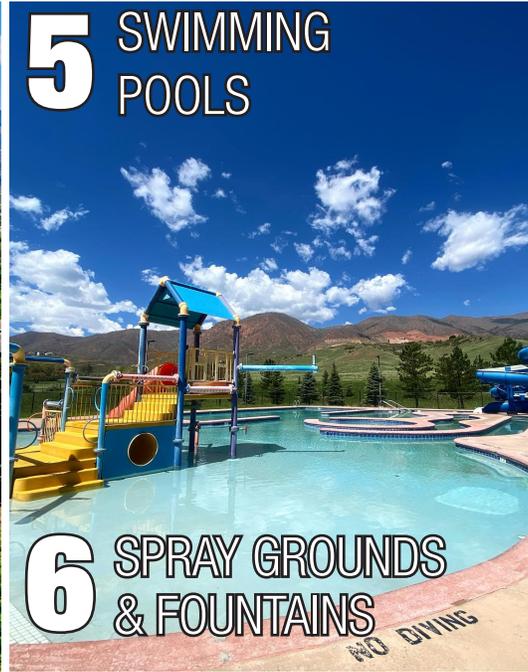
# 255

 FULL-TIME STAFF

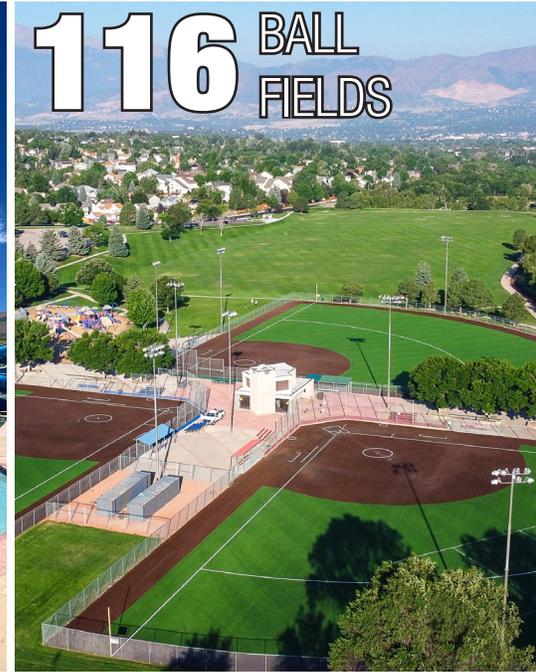
**77** BASKETBALL  
COURTS



**5** SWIMMING  
POOLS

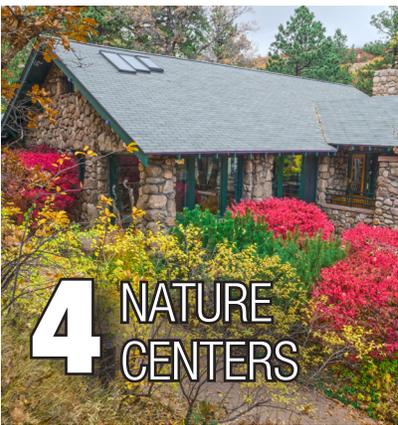


**116** BALL  
FIELDS



**6** SPRAY GROUNDS  
& FOUNTAINS

**4** NATURE  
CENTERS



**2** ICE  
RINKS



**3** DISC  
GOLF  
COURSES



**9** DOG  
PARKS



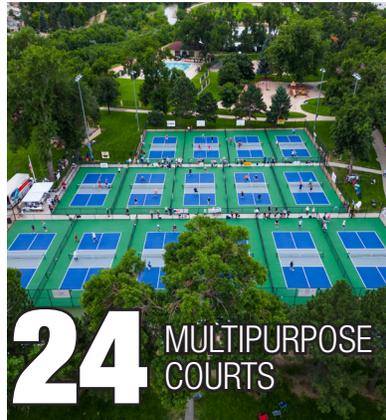
**1** MUSEUM



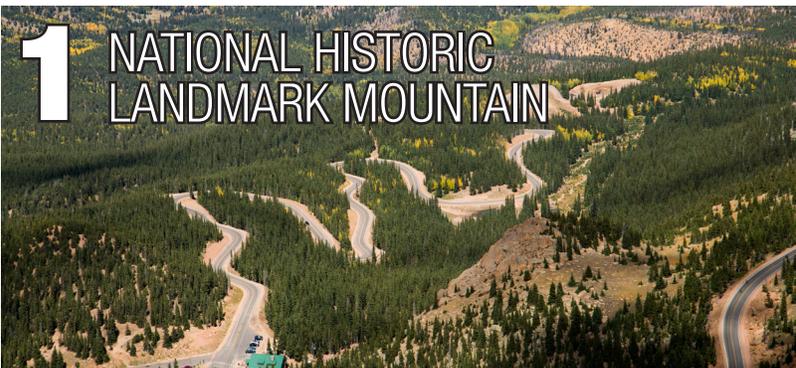
**2** GOLF  
COURSES



**24** MULTIPURPOSE  
COURTS



**1** NATIONAL HISTORIC  
LANDMARK MOUNTAIN



**4** COMMUNITY CENTERS



# DEVELOPING OUR SYSTEM

## Building Today. Planning for Tomorrow.

PRCS invests in the parks, playgrounds, trails, and open spaces that bring the community together. From long-range planning to on-the-ground improvements, these efforts strengthen access, enhance experiences, and protect the landscapes that define Colorado Springs. The projects highlighted below celebrate key investments delivered by the PRCS team in 2025 and reflect the momentum shaping the future of your park system.



### Fishers Canyon Open Space

The Fishers Canyon Open Space Master and Management Plan was adopted following an appeal to City Council, marking a major milestone in the long-term stewardship of this valued landscape. Shaped through extensive public engagement and technical analysis, the plan balances recreation, conservation, and resource protection over the next 15–20 years. It provides clear direction for future improvements and on-the-ground management, ensuring Fishers Canyon remains accessible, resilient, and protected for generations to come.



BEFORE



AFTER

### Sinton Trail Improvements

Improvements to the Sinton Trail between Chestnut Road and Holland Park strengthened safety, durability, and connectivity along a key urban trail corridor. The project replaced degraded asphalt with concrete, removed abandoned overhead utilities, and improved drainage, creating a smoother and more reliable experience for trail users.

These upgrades enhance the trail's role as both a recreation asset and an important active transportation route.



### Duck Lake Restoration

The restoration of Duck Lake in Monument Valley Park revitalized one of Colorado Springs' most historic park features. The project rebuilt the lake with a new stone cap and aeration system, restored original stonework, added native vegetation, and improved trail access around the site. This investment enhanced water quality, improved park aesthetics, and reaffirmed Duck Lake as a cherished community gathering place.

Funded by TABOR 2B, the TOPS sales tax and Friends of Monument Valley Park.



Grey Hawk Park Ribbon Cutting - School District 20 Playground Inspectors

## ImagineCOSparks: Building Community, Preserving our Legacy

Work on the Park System Master Plan (PSMP) began in 2025 as a community-driven effort to shape the future of parks, trails, open spaces, recreation, and cultural services across Colorado Springs. Guided by public input and local priorities, the plan is focused on how the park system can grow, adapt, and serve residents equitably over the next 10–15 years. Community voices remain central as work continues, with plan adoption anticipated in summer 2026. Once complete, the PSMP will provide a shared roadmap for strategic investment, improved access, and long-term stewardship. The plan will help ensure parks, open spaces, trails, and programming continue to support healthy neighborhoods, meaningful connections, and a high quality of life citywide.



### Woodland Hills Playground

Playground improvements completed in 2025 enhanced accessibility and play opportunities at Woodland Hills Park in northeast Colorado Springs. The project added a new play structure, accessible surfacing, ADA-compliant ramp access into the play area, and accessible picnic seating. These upgrades removed barriers to play, improved safety, and created a welcoming, inclusive environment where children of all abilities can play, gather, and enjoy the park together.



### Rampart Park Playground

Upgrades completed in 2025 at Rampart Community Park delivered a modern, inclusive play environment for neighborhood families. The project replaced outdated equipment with a new play structure, added an accessible artificial turf surface, improved drainage and concrete features, and created an accessible route from the parking area to the playground plaza. The improvements strengthen long-term accessibility while providing a safe, engaging space for all users.



### Grey Hawk Park Opens!

Completed in 2025, Grey Hawk Neighborhood Park introduced a new, inclusive community destination in the Northgate area. The 4.47-acre park features a 6,500-square-foot playground, walking loops, multi-use recreation areas, shaded seating, and natural surface trails with a scenic overlook. Designed through an informed public engagement process, the park provides space for play, exploration, and everyday connection while strengthening access to neighborhood parks in north Colorado Springs.



# CARING FOR OUR PARK SYSTEM

## A Healthier Future for Prospect Lake

The completion of the Prospect Lake Aeration Project marks an important step in improving water quality and supporting the long-term health of Prospect Lake at Memorial Park—one of Colorado Springs’ most popular places for outdoor recreation.

The new permanent aeration system increases oxygen levels and improves circulation throughout the lake. By moving water from deeper areas and distributing oxygen more evenly, the system helps balance nutrients and maintain healthier water conditions. The system turns over lake water approximately every two days, supporting a stronger aquatic environment and more consistent water quality. Integrated treatment lines also allow staff to respond to changing water conditions when needed, providing an added layer of protection during periods of increased stress.



The aeration system was shaped in part by feedback from residents who shared their thoughts about the future of Prospect Lake during planning and community conversations about Memorial Park. Public input helped guide the selection of a long-term solution that improves water quality while maintaining the recreational activities people value most at the lake.

Visitors are encouraged to explore Prospect Lake during the 2026 summer season and experience the improvements firsthand—whether on the water or along the shoreline.

## Built to Last: Reinvesting in Memorial Park

When a pavilion along the Prospect Lake path at Memorial Park was severely damaged during a wind event, the Park Maintenance & Operations division focused on restoring the space in a smart, cost-effective way. Instead of fully replacing the structure, the existing steel frame was preserved and strengthened, and a new engineered roof was installed using modern, repairable materials.

This approach delivered a safer, refreshed pavilion at a fraction of the cost—\$26,558 compared to an estimated \$80,000 or more for full replacement. The renewed pavilion now provides a welcoming gathering space along one of Memorial Park’s most heavily used paths, reflecting a thoughtful approach to stewardship and long-term value.



2025 PARK MAINTENANCE & OPERATIONS BUDGET

**\$21,577,844**

TOTAL STAFF POSITIONS

**100.25**

## MAINTENANCE PROJECTS COMPLETED

In 2025, maintenance efforts focused on extending the life of existing assets, improving safety and accessibility, and making strategic, system-wide investments that deliver long-term value.

### Infrastructure, Lighting, and Mechanical Upgrades

- Installed new LED and solar lighting, electrical service, and irrigation infrastructure at key locations, including North Shooks Run Park, Meadowridge Park, and Sand Creek Trail, improving safety, efficiency, and reliability.
- Repaired and replaced aging equipment—such as water meters, back-flow devices, irrigation connections, and splash pad surfacing—to reduce failures, extend system life, and protect critical assets across multiple parks and facilities.

### Parks, Playgrounds, and Athletic Facilities

- Strengthened recreation infrastructure through field renovations, sod replacement, edging, surfacing upgrades, and irrigation repairs at Goose Gossage Complex, John Stone Playground, and Penrose, Village Green, and Rampart Parks.
- Replaced picnic tables, benches, trash receptacles, and bear-resistant containers across neighborhood and regional parks, improving comfort, cleanliness, and daily usability.
- Constructed the downtown Acacia Park Ice Rink through more than 600 staff hours during unseasonably warm weather. Built layer by layer, the rink serves over 20,000 residents annually and activates Acacia Park as a seasonal destination.

### Special Improvement Maintenance Districts (SIMDs) and Landscaping Work

- Improved sustainability and reduced long-term maintenance costs by replacing high-water turf with drought-tolerant landscaping, renovating medians and roundabouts, removing hazardous trees and stumps, and adding mulch, rock, and boulders at Duck Lake, Panorama Park, Briargate corridors, and downtown medians.

### Access, Safety, and Visitor Experience

- Enhanced access and site security through new gates, signage, parking lot repairs, trail-adjacent improvements, and open space access upgrades at Corral Bluffs, Blodgett Open Space, Austin Bluffs Open Space, and Pikes Peak.
- Completed facility painting, restroom improvements, and surface upgrades at Acacia Park, Memorial Park, Monument Valley South, and Village Green Park, extending the life of high-use facilities.



## Saving Water Today, Planning for the Future

Caring for our parks means planning for the future—and using water wisely. In 2025, PRCS focused on practical improvements that reduce water use, lower maintenance demands, and help ensure parks are resilient into the future.

Across the city, PRCS teams modernized aging irrigation systems and replaced outdated equipment with technology that allows water to be applied more precisely and issues to be addressed more quickly. A major improvement at Evergreen Cemetery upgraded critical infrastructure, improving system reliability while significantly reducing water loss.

Similar irrigation upgrades were completed at Duck Lake as well as Goose Gossage, Memorial, and Snowy River Parks, where new automated controls now support healthier landscapes and more efficient water use. These same strategies were also applied at Patty Jewett and Valley Hi Golf Courses, balancing conservation with high-quality playing conditions.

At the golf courses, which are funded by users, portions of irrigated turf were replaced with native, low-water landscapes better suited to Colorado's climate. Additional improvements—such as more efficient water delivery and energy-saving technology—further support long-term sustainability.

## WATER CONSERVATION: 2025 BY THE NUMBERS



**102**

acres converted from high-water turf to native or low-water landscapes across parks and Special Improvement Maintenance Districts (SIMDs)



**40M**

(million) gallons of water saved through irrigation upgrades and landscape changes throughout the park system



**\$399K**

(thousands) in annual maintenance cost savings from water-wise improvements



**\$111K**

(thousands) in estimated annual water cost savings at Patty Jewett and Valley Hi Golf Courses



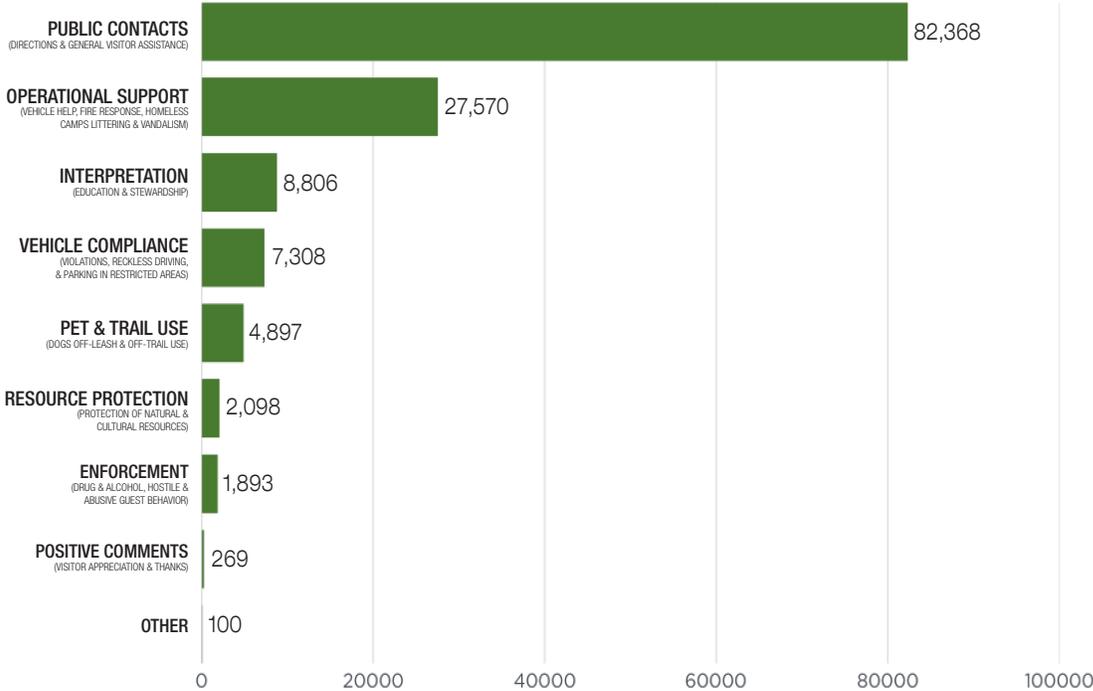
**50**

acres of irrigated turf reduced at both municipal golf courses

# PARK RANGERS

Park Rangers are dedicated to protecting our natural resources while creating welcoming and safe outdoor experiences for the community. From education and stewardship to safety and visitor support, Rangers help care for the places that make Colorado Springs special.

## PARK RANGER CONTACTS (BY CATEGORY)



## PARK RANGERS BY DIVISION

- REGIONAL PARKS, TRAILS & OPEN SPACES**  
**11 FULL-TIME RANGER STAFF / 13K ACRES**  
 STEWARDSHIP, EDUCATION, MAINTENANCE, PUBLIC PROGRAMMING, AND VOLUNTEER ENGAGEMENT ACROSS PARKS, TRAILS, AND OPEN SPACES
- URBAN TRAILS**  
**4 FULL-TIME RANGER STAFF / 120 TRAIL MILES**  
 HIGH-VISIBILITY PATROLS FOCUSED ON SAFETY AND APPROACHABILITY, WITH STRONG COLLABORATION ALONGSIDE COMMUNITY PARTNERS AND CITY DEPARTMENTS TO SUPPORT ACTIVE URBAN CORRIDORS
- GARDEN OF THE GODS**  
**3 FULL-TIME RANGER STAFF / 1.3K ACRES**  
 VISITOR EDUCATION, STEWARDSHIP, AND MAINTENANCE WITHIN A NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED NATURAL LANDMARK SERVING MILLIONS OF VISITORS EACH YEAR
- PIKES PEAK HIGHWAY**  
**7 FULL-TIME RANGER STAFF**  
 GUEST SERVICES, ROADWAY SAFETY, WEATHER MONITORING, EMERGENCY RESPONSE, STEWARDSHIP, EDUCATION, AND OPERATIONAL SUPPORT ALONG A HIGH-ALTITUDE MOUNTAIN HIGHWAY (FUNDED BY USERS)



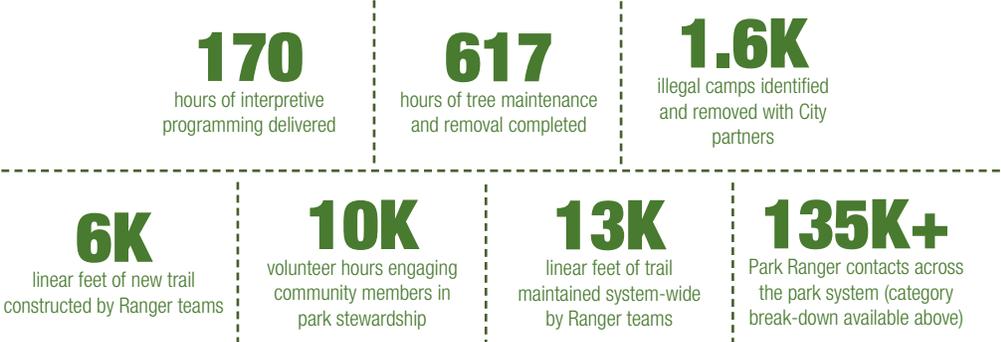
### Park Rangers: Connecting People to Parks

Park Rangers support positive experiences across Colorado Springs' park system every day. Their work extends beyond enforcement to include assisting visitors, providing education, supporting park operations, and helping ensure parks remain safe, welcoming, and well maintained. Rangers also engage the community through conservation and responsible recreation programs, including youth initiatives like the Traveling Trunk program and Leave No Trace education.



These interactions represent only part of the Rangers' responsibilities. Their professionalism, adaptability, and commitment are essential to the success of the park system.

## PARK RANGERS: 2025 BY THE NUMBERS



# Making the Outdoors Accessible to Everyone

The Trackchair Program, part of the Regional Parks, Trails and Open Space Division as well as the Therapeutic Recreation Program (TRP), helps ensure everyone in Colorado Springs can experience the joy, health benefits, and connection that come from being outdoors, regardless of mobility limitations. What began as a small pilot effort has grown into a program that allows residents to reconnect with nature, explore parks and open spaces, and share meaningful outdoor experiences with family and friends.

After a limited pilot season in 2024 at Red Rock Canyon and Blodgett Open Spaces, the program expanded in 2025 to include new locations such as Memorial Park, Ute Valley Park, and Blue Stem Prairie Open Space. This growth opened access to a wider range of landscapes across the city, bringing inclusive outdoor recreation to more residents.

Each hike is supported by trained staff who prioritize safety, comfort, and individual goals. Whether participants are seeking wildlife viewing, photography, or simply the freedom of being on a trail, the program creates welcoming, shared experiences in nature. Beyond the hikes themselves, community outreach and partnerships have extended the program's reach and impact.

Most importantly, participant feedback highlights the program's lasting effect. It has restored confidence, independence, and a sense of belonging, and reminds residents that the outdoors is for everyone. **Learn more at [ColoradoSprings.gov/TrackChair](https://coloradosprings.gov/TrackChair)**



## RESTORING INDEPENDENCE

*"The Trackchair gave me a sense of normalcy in a world that isn't always accessible. Being back on hiking trails and experiencing the outdoors again was something I never thought I'd be able to do. The staff made me feel safe and confident throughout the experience."*

## BELONGING ON THE TRAILS

*"Before I had mobility issues, hiking was a huge part of my life. Losing that connection was devastating. My first Trackchair hike with my family brought overwhelming joy. I felt included, supported, and truly part of the trail again. It was glorious." ~ Joan V.*

## A FAMILY EXPERIENCE

*"Dad is 85, living with dementia, and was once a huge outdoorsman. This program made the outdoors accessible to him again in a way we never expected. He smiled from ear to ear the entire hike, and our whole family shared that joy together."*

## A MOMENT THAT MATTERED

*"My mom was near the end of her life, and this Trackchair hike was the last time she was able to get outside and feel free. I would never see her that happy again. Thank you for giving her—and our family—such a meaningful and lasting memory." ~ A grateful son*

# TRACKCHAIR PROGRAM: 2025 BY THE NUMBERS



255 miles of trails made accessible to our community



231 conversations sparked with park visitors about inclusive recreation



175 family members & friends shared the hiking experience



131 residents experienced accessible hikes



84 guided Trackchair hikes delivered to the community



9.6/10 - a nearly perfect overall participant rating for the program

# NATURAL RESOURCES

The PRCS Natural Resources team plays a critical role in preserving wildlife habitats and maintaining ecological balance across our parks and open spaces. Their work ensures that conservation and public land use go hand in hand—protecting natural systems while keeping these spaces accessible and enjoyable for the community.

## Invasive Plant Monitoring

More than 400 acres were mapped within the Fishers Canyon and Stratton Open Space fire mitigation areas. This work helps staff understand how invasive plant species respond to ground disturbance from mitigation activities and allows the team to identify emerging problem areas early. By tracking changes over time, the Natural Resources team can better protect native plant communities and strengthen future invasive species management efforts.



## Wildlife Observation

Targeted monitoring documented wildlife use on two properties, including moose and elk presence. By combining field observations, game cameras, and mapping tools, the team gained a clearer understanding of how wildlife moves through and depends on park and open space lands. This helps ensure management decisions support both habitat connectivity and species safety.



## Expanding Species Detection

Enhanced monitoring efforts led to the detection of five previously undocumented species, including Eastern and Western Screech Owls and Northern Saw-whet Owls. These discoveries suggest that sensitive species may be more widespread than previously known. Identifying their presence allows staff to proactively consider wildlife needs in future development, recreation planning, and habitat protection efforts.



## Long-Term Avian Monitoring

For the past eight years, the Natural Resources team has monitored breeding bird populations across Stratton Open Space and other selected parks and open spaces. By tracking bird density, abundance, and diversity over time, staff can identify long-term population trends and better understand how birds respond to changes in habitat, land management practices, and recreational use.

Birds are widely recognized as sensitive ecological indicators, and changes in their populations can reflect broader environmental conditions such as habitat quality and forest structure. This long-term approach allows the team to move beyond short-term observations and make thoughtful, science-based decisions that support healthy, resilient ecosystems.

The data collected through this program is especially valuable in evaluating the ecological effects of recent forest thinning at Stratton Open Space. Comparing current findings with historical data helps staff assess how wildlife responds to management activities and refine future practices to balance habitat protection and wildfire mitigation.

## AVIAN MONITORING: 2025 BY THE NUMBERS

**22**

properties surveyed

**185**

unique bird species identified during the breeding season

**243**

individual survey locations

**729**

surveys conducted annually

**65%**

of species show increasing population trends across monitored properties

**RRC**

Red Rock Canyon recorded the highest species richness (101 species)

## WHY THIS MATTERS

Long-term monitoring provides the insight needed to manage parks and open spaces responsibly. By understanding how wildlife responds to change over time, the Natural Resources team can adapt management strategies that protect biodiversity, support ecosystem health, and ensure these landscapes continue to thrive for future generations.

# INVESTING IN NEW TECHNOLOGY

Across Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services, strategic investments in technology are helping staff work more efficiently, make better decisions, and deliver higher-quality experiences for residents. From athletic fields and golf courses to wildlife monitoring and program registration, these tools strengthen daily operations while improving outcomes the community can see and feel.

## Smarter Field Installation with Turf Tank

Installing athletic fields has always required precision, speed, and teamwork. Traditionally, this work involved multiple staff members walking thousands of feet with tape measures, string, stakes, and paint—relying on math, experience, and constant coordination to ensure accuracy.

The introduction of the GPS-guided Turf Tank has transformed this process, reducing labor time by nearly 90%. Using an iPad, staff can digitally place and paint fields with precision, eliminating manual measuring, stringing, and repeated adjustments.



## Improving the Golfer Experience with Pace of Play

At Patty Jewett Golf Course, GPS technology installed on the golf cart fleet provides real-time data on round times and identifies where play slows down across the course.

This data allows staff to make informed operational decisions that improve pace of play, reduce congestion, and enhance the overall golfer experience. The Golf Division will continue to evaluate and adopt technologies that support efficient operations and customer service.



## Advancing Wildlife Monitoring through Technology

To better understand and manage the diverse wildlife across parks and open spaces, PRCs invested in new monitoring technologies at multiple properties with known moose and elk activity. By integrating ArcGIS Field Maps, game cameras, and audio recording units, staff significantly expanded both the scale and accuracy of wildlife data collection.

These tools allow staff to monitor wildlife presence over time, identify patterns in habitat use, and document activity in areas that are difficult to observe through traditional fieldwork alone. The result is a more complete, data-informed understanding of how wildlife interacts with park landscapes.



## A Modern Way to Register, Connect, and Play

In 2025, PRCs transitioned to the SmartRec program registration system to improve how residents access programs and facilities. The platform provides a centralized, mobile-friendly hub for registration, facility booking, account management, and real-time updates.

### Benefits of the upgraded software include:

- Enhanced user interface and simplified navigation
- Greater transparency in schedules, payments, and balances
- Improved communication through real-time updates
- Mobile-friendly access anytime, anywhere



# NATIONALLY ACCREDITED EXCELLENCE

*Colorado Springs Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services, Recognized Among the Nation's Best*



## Nationally Recognized for Quality and Service

The Colorado Springs Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services (PRCS) Department is nationally accredited by the Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA), the only accreditation program for park and recreation agencies administered by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA). Fewer than 3% of park and recreation agencies nationwide achieve this distinction, placing Colorado Springs among an elite group recognized for excellence in public service.

## A Rigorous, Multi-Year Process

CAPRA accreditation is not a single review or one-time achievement. It is a comprehensive, multi-phase process that includes staff training, a detailed self-assessment, extensive documentation, and an independent onsite peer review. Agency performance is evaluated against 154 national standards covering safety, accessibility, planning, operations, staffing, maintenance, programming, and fiscal responsibility. Reaccreditation is required every five years, with annual reporting to ensure standards are continuously met and strengthened.

## Why Residents Should Care

For residents, CAPRA accreditation provides confidence that public parks and recreation services are thoughtfully planned, safely operated, and responsibly managed. It ensures that public resources are used wisely and that parks, trails, cultural sites, and recreation programs deliver welcoming, inclusive, and high-quality experiences for people of all ages and abilities.

---

“CAPRA accreditation demonstrates to our community that our organization and our staff provide Colorado Springs with the highest level of service. We're proud of the work our team puts into this process—and the quality programs and services they deliver every day.

— Britt Haley, Director of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services

---

## Committed to Excellence - Today and into the Future

Reaccreditation reflects the dedication, professionalism, and teamwork of staff across Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services. As a nationally accredited agency, PRCS will continue to uphold these rigorous standards through ongoing evaluation and reporting—ensuring safe, high-quality parks and recreation services for the Colorado Springs community now and in the years ahead.



## CAPRA ACCREDITATION 2025: BY THE NUMBERS

**TOP 3%** PRCS RANKS AMONG PARK AND RECREATION AGENCIES NATIONWIDE

**1 OF 13** CAPRA-ACCREDITED AGENCIES IN COLORADO

**100%** OF 154 NATIONAL CAPRA STANDARDS MET BY PRCS

**11+** YEARS DEDICATED TO EARNING AND SUSTAINING ACCREDITATION

### What Accreditation Means for the Community

A shared commitment to serving Colorado Springs by dedicated staff working across divisions to meet rigorous national standards. This collaborative effort ensures our parks, programs, and facilities are safe, well-managed, and responsive to community needs.

**02 ACCOUNTABILITY TO OUR COMMUNITY**

**04 WELL-MANAGED & SAFE FACILITIES**



**01 HIGH-QUALITY PARKS & PROGRAMS**



**03 RESPONSIBLE USE OF TAX DOLLARS**



# ENGAGING OUR COMMUNITY

The Community Engagement team powers the connection between parks and people—turning moments into memories and voices into impact. Bringing together volunteers, communications, public process, employee engagement, and special events, this workgroup ensures that engagement is not an afterthought, but a core part of how PRCS serves Colorado Springs.

## Volunteers: Serving to Strengthen Our Park System

Volunteers are essential partners. In 2025, their contributions represented an estimated **\$5,200,000 in service value**, reflecting the extraordinary impact of their time and dedication. Through hands-on service, educational programming, event support, and long-term stewardship, thousands of community members strengthened public lands, enhanced visitor experiences, improved safety, and invested in the places we all share.

### VOLUNTEERS: 2025 BY THE NUMBERS

**135,936**  
volunteer hours

**3,230**  
volunteers

**2,400**  
bags of trash removed

**415**  
acres of parkland adopted



## Thank you to our Friends Groups

### Corral Bluffs Alliance

Total Volunteer Hours: 13.5 hours

### Friends of Peregrine Parks and Open Spaces

Total Volunteer Hours: 165 hours

### Guardians of Palmer Park

Total Volunteer Hours: 492 hours

### Friends of Ute Valley Park

Total Volunteer Hours: 506 hours

### Friends of North Cheyenne Cañon

Total Volunteer Hours: 530.5 hours

### Friends of Red Rock Canyon

Total Volunteer Hours: 688.75 hours

### Friends of Garden of the Gods

Total Volunteer Hours: 909.5 hours

### CS Mountain Biking Association

Total Volunteer Hours: 552 hours

- Enhanced Captain Morgan's Trail with drainage and reinforcement upgrades.

### Medicine Wheel Trail Advocates

Total Volunteer Hours: 627 hours

- Trail work on eight city properties across 17 work sessions.

### Incline Friends

Total Volunteer Hours: 433 hours

- Strengthened the Manitou Incline with trail repairs, drainage improvements, and erosion control.

### Friends of Monument Valley Park

Total Volunteer Hours: 1,343 hours

- Removed 23 bags of trash, donated \$125,000 toward Duck Lake embankment repairs, and hosted 13 community events to build support and connection.

### Friends of Stratton Open Space

Total Volunteer Hours: 418 hours

- Installed 15+ drains, repaired erosion, restored wildlife habitat, removed invasive plants, and cleared 3 miles of trail.

### Horticulture Arts Society

Total Volunteer Hours: 7,088 hours

- Care for three Monument Valley Park gardens, creating welcoming, inspiring community spaces.

## Special Events: Bringing Our Community Together

The Office of Special Events plays a vital role in activating parks and public spaces by facilitating gatherings that bring residents and visitors together. From small community celebrations to nationally recognized events, these experiences foster connection, community pride, and economic vitality across Colorado Springs.

As part of the Community Engagement team, the office manages permitting for parkland and amenities, ensuring equitable access while balancing public use and long-term stewardship. The team supports major tourism-driving events such as the Labor Day Lift Off and the U.S. Senior Open, working in coordination with City partners, including Police and Fire, to deliver safe, successful experiences.

### SPECIAL EVENTS: 2025 BY THE NUMBERS

**1,144**  
event permits

**895,000**  
special event visitors





## Public Process: Shaping Our Future

PRCS values an engaged community and recognizes that meaningful public input is essential to delivering responsive, high-quality services. Through community surveys, master plans, and project-specific outreach, the department works to create opportunities for residents to help shape the future of parks, programs, facilities, and open spaces across Colorado Springs.

The City aligns its outreach efforts with the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) framework, using it as a guide to promote transparency, broad engagement, and accountability. Through digital surveys, public meetings, stakeholder workshops, and targeted outreach, PRCS strives to ensure diverse perspectives are heard and considered in decision-making.

By embedding public participation into planning processes, the department seeks to strengthen trust, support equitable access, and help ensure investments reflect community priorities.

### PUBLIC PROCESS: 2025 BY THE NUMBERS

**219**

public process sessions

**34,500**

participants in public process sessions



## Communication: Connecting our Community

Strategic communication is essential to how PRCS engages our community by connecting residents to parks, programs, projects across our park system, and opportunities for public input. By integrating social media, email marketing, and targeted outreach, the department ensures information is accessible, timely, and aligned with community needs. This coordinated approach transforms communication from a promotional tool into a core function of public service.

### COMMUNICATION: 2025 BY THE NUMBERS

**13,855,054**

Post impressions across all channels  
(+1,800% since 2024)

PRCS content appeared on screens nearly 14 million times, expanding awareness of programs, capital projects, events, and public engagement opportunities across the city.

### Platform Performance

Strategic platform distribution and targeted content amplified reach while meeting residents where they are most active.

**8.923M**

Facebook impressions  
(+3.1K% since 2024)

**4.907M**

Instagram impressions  
(+1.2K% since 2024)

### Audience Growth

Across platforms, PRCS expanded its direct digital audience, strengthening its ability to communicate timely updates, registration opportunities, and public engagement initiatives.

**13,432**

New followers added across all channels  
(44,115 total followers)

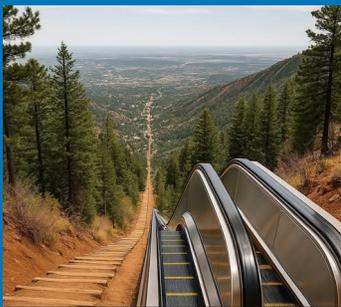
**9,293**

PRCS newsletter subscribers  
(+84% since 2024)

### WHY THIS MATTERS

Strong communication helps build trust in public institutions. When residents feel informed, they are more likely to participate by registering for programs, attending events, contributing to planning efforts, and supporting stewardship of the park system. By expanding digital reach and growing its direct audience, PRCS continues to work toward greater transparency, more equitable access to information, and ensuring more voices are connected to the future of Colorado Springs' parks and recreation system.

## 2025 TOP SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS



APRIL FOOLS PRANK (ESCALATOR ON THE INCLINE)  
**3.65M VIEWS • 250K REACTIONS**



FIRST RESPONDER 911 INCLINE CLIMB  
**727K VIEWS • 37K REACTIONS**



MANITOU INCLINE TIPS & LEAVE NO TRACE  
**673K VIEWS • 22K REACTIONS**

GET SOCIAL WITH US!  
**@CoSpringsParks**



# RECREATION SERVICES

The Recreation Division provides inclusive programs and welcoming spaces that bring Colorado Springs together. Through community centers, sports complexes, and specialized program areas, residents of all ages and abilities can stay active, build skills, and connect with others. From youth and adult sports to health, wellness, food distribution, and adaptive recreation, these services expand access and strengthen community, making recreation an essential part of everyday life in Colorado Springs.

**\$2.5M** Revenue Generated

**314** Programs Offered

**522K** Participants in Programs

**2K** Meals Provided to Neighbors

**296K** Visitors to PRCS Ice Rinks

**5.1K** Persons with Disabilities Served

**104K** Pounds of Food Distributed  
*(In partnership with Care & Share and other partners)*

**195** Fee-Based Programs Offered

**90K** Volunteer Hours

**1.3K** Youth & Adult Volunteers



# RECREATION

## Co-Ed Flag Football: A Strong First Season

The Sports Office, located in Memorial Park, successfully launched a new co-ed flag football program—creating a non-tackle option for youth athletes and expanding opportunities in one of the fastest-growing sports nationwide.

The program was intentionally designed to:

- Provide an accessible entry point into football
- Serve as a developmental pathway to tackle football
- Increase participation opportunities for girls

Community feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with families expressing interest in expanded seasons and additional age divisions. An additional season is already planned following Spring Tackle, with a focus on increasing participation among girls and older age groups.

The successful launch reflects Recreation Services' commitment to meeting community interests while creating inclusive, skill-building opportunities for youth.



### CO-ED FLAG FOOTBALL: 2025 BY THE NUMBERS



**146**

young athletes participated in inclusive non-tackle football



**26**

mentors invested in youth as volunteer coaches



**STRONG**

community demand for continued growth

## Westside Community Center: Expanding Access

The \$1.6M+ Westside Community Center improvement project is now complete, delivering critical upgrades that enhance accessibility, comfort, and long-term facility performance across the entire campus. As a high-use neighborhood facility serving youth programs, community events, and partner organizations, these improvements directly support the daily experiences of residents.

Funded through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), the project modernized all three buildings—replacing aging systems, increasing energy efficiency, and removing physical barriers that previously limited access to programs and events.

### Completed Improvements Include:

- Removal of outdated swamp coolers and installation of 24 high-efficiency HVAC units, providing reliable year-round climate control
- New roofing and upgraded gutter systems on all buildings
- Secure enclosures for new A/C infrastructure
- Installation of an ADA-compliant front entry system with push-button automation
- Construction of an interior ADA ramp and two wheelchair lifts, expanding access to the lower hallway and gym performance stage

In collaboration with the City's Office of Accessibility, these upgrades expand equitable access, ensuring more residents can comfortably and fully participate in the programs, performances, and services offered at the center.

With the project complete, the Westside Community Center is positioned to better serve daily users, community partners, and future generations through improved safety, comfort, and accessibility.





## Centering Indigenous Voices: New Permanent Exhibit at Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum

In 2025, the Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum opened a major new permanent exhibit, *Until Forever Comes: This is Ute Homeland*, marking a transformative moment in how regional history is shared, interpreted, and understood.

Developed through five years of consultation and collaboration, the exhibit was created in partnership with the:

- Southern Ute Indian Tribe
- Ute Mountain Ute Tribe
- Ute Indian Tribe of the Uintah Reservation
- Ute Indian Tribe of the Ouray Reservation

The exhibit centers the enduring history, culture, and presence of the Ute People in the Pikes Peak region, told in their own voices and on their own terms. Rather than presenting history as something of the past, the exhibit emphasizes continuity, resilience, and living culture.

The thoughtfully designed gallery brings together historic artifacts and contemporary works by 24 Ute artists, alongside powerful photography, language preservation, and revitalization elements, plus immersive digital storytelling through interactive touchscreens. A new Hands-On History Station, designed specifically for 2nd–5th graders, invites young learners to engage with Ute history in age-appropriate, meaningful ways.

Made possible through generous public and private support—including Lyda Hill Philanthropies, City of Colorado Springs LART funding, and the Thomas and Alberta Meagher Legacy Fund—this permanent exhibit reflects a shared commitment to honoring Indigenous voices, deepening community understanding, and ensuring that the stories of this land are told with care, accuracy, and respect.

## Enhancing Fire Safety in Garden of the Gods

Through a 10-month collaborative effort with Colorado Springs Utilities, the Colorado Springs Fire Department, and the Office of Accessibility, critical infrastructure improvements were completed at Garden of the Gods Park—enhancing safety, accessibility, and the visitor experience.

The project installed 8,000 feet of new waterline and nine fire hydrants, significantly improving fire protection and emergency response capabilities by ensuring a reliable water source throughout the park. This essential infrastructure also supports future enhancements, including the potential addition of a new year-round restroom facility.

The project also delivered meaningful accessibility upgrades. A fully accessible parking lot was created closer to the Central Garden, approximately 3,200 feet of asphalt was replaced, and a new ADA-compliant concrete trail now provides a more sustainable and accessible route into the Central Garden, reducing barriers and improving access for visitors of all abilities.

Protecting the park's unique geology and sensitive ecosystem remained a top priority, with construction teams implementing archaeological assessments, erosion control, and ongoing environmental monitoring to preserve this renowned National Natural Landmark for future generations.

As the most visited attraction in the Pikes Peak Region, Garden of the Gods Park remained open throughout construction. We sincerely thank community members for their patience and support during this necessary and sometimes disruptive work, which was carefully planned to balance infrastructure improvements with continued public access.



## 30 Years of Stewardship: Garden of the Gods Visitor and Nature Center

In 2025, the Colorado Springs community proudly celebrated the 30th anniversary of the Garden of the Gods Visitor and Nature Center, a remarkable partnership that has strengthened preservation, expanded education, and enhanced the visitor experience at one of the city's most beloved natural landmarks.

The Center was envisioned by philanthropist Lyda Hill and former Parks and Recreation Department Director Nancy Lewis, who recognized the need for a welcoming space near the park entrance where visitors could learn about the landscape, enjoy educational exhibits and amenities, and support the long-term care of Garden of the Gods Park. Their forward-thinking created a model that balances public access with responsible stewardship.

Owned and operated by the Garden of the Gods Foundation, the Visitor and Nature Center has generated more than \$7.5 million to support preservation and capital improvements within Garden of the Gods Park. The Colorado Springs Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department is deeply grateful for this enduring partnership and the continued community support that has helped ensure Garden of the Gods remains protected, accessible, and inspiring for residents and visitors alike—today and for generations to come.



*For 30 years, the Garden of the Gods Foundation has demonstrated what's possible through partnership and stewardship—reinvesting more than \$7.5 million to protect and enhance a place that belongs to the entire community.*

*-Matt Mayberry, Cultural Services Division Manager*



## CULTURAL SERVICES SITE VISITATION: 2025 BY THE NUMBERS



**3,732,000**

Garden of the Gods Park Visitors



**70,400**

North Cheyenne Cañon Park Visitors



**110,100**

Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum Visitors



**105,000**

Rock Ledge Ranch Visitors

# ENTERPRISE OPERATIONS

Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services operates several enterprise facilities that provide recreational, cultural, and essential services to the community while being fully funded through user fees and revenues, without support from the City's General Fund. These operations include Patty Jewett and Valley Hi Golf Courses, Pikes Peak – America's Mountain, and Evergreen and Fairview Cemeteries.

## Cemeteries: Honoring History and Community

Evergreen and Fairview Cemeteries are Colorado Springs' oldest continuously operated cemeteries, providing peaceful spaces that honor history, remembrance, and community. In addition to daily operations and essential services, 2025 included a nationally recognized event highlighting the care and stewardship of these historic grounds.

### Honoring Veterans Through Stewardship: Saluting Branches

Evergreen Cemetery, established in 1871 and the final resting place of more than 90,000 individuals, including Civil War veterans, was selected to host the national Saluting Branches Day of Service in 2025. Professional arborists volunteered to plant and maintain more than 30 trees and complete critical tree care, contributing an estimated \$100,000 in donated services. The nationwide effort honors U.S. veterans while reinforcing the cemeteries' commitment to preserving dignity, history, and natural beauty.

### CEMETERIES: 2025 BY THE NUMBERS



**805**

total program participants



**596**

burials completed



**138**

work orders completed



**123**

hours of programming

## Golf Operations: Timeless Courses, Everyday Play

### Patty Jewett Golf Course

Established in 1898 and City-owned since 1919, Patty Jewett Golf Course has long been a gathering place in Colorado Springs. With tree-lined fairways, sweeping views of Pikes Peak and the Front Range, and both an 18-hole championship course and a 9-hole course, the facility—along with its golf shop and on-site dining—continues to welcome thousands of rounds each year from players of all skill levels.



**119K**

rounds of golf in 2025

### Valley Hi Golf Course

Opened in 1956 and acquired by the City in 1975, Valley Hi Golf Course in Southeast Colorado Springs, offers a classic, walkable 18-hole layout framed by views of Pikes Peak and Cheyenne Mountain. Known for its approachable design, well-maintained greens, on-site dining, and community partnerships such as First Tee of Southern Colorado, the course hosts thousands of rounds annually from golfers of all ages and abilities.



**62K**

rounds of golf in 2025



# Pikes Peak - America's Mountain: A Year at the Summit

Pikes Peak – America’s Mountain (PPAM) remains one of Colorado Springs’ most iconic destinations, welcoming visitors year-round to experience sweeping views, recreation, and cultural history. In 2025, operations focused on meeting growing demand while balancing access, visitor comfort, and long-term stewardship of this treasured landscape.

## Expanding Access to the Summit

A key highlight was the continued expansion of the Pikes Peak Guest Shuttle System, which improved access to the summit and helped reduce congestion along the highway. Sunrise shuttle experiences sold out quickly, and additional stops throughout the recreation corridor gave visitors more flexible ways to experience the mountain. Public feedback throughout the season reflected strong appreciation for convenience and accessibility.

## Enhancing the On-Mountain Experience

Visitor center improvements further enhanced the on-mountain experience. Expanded food, beverage, and retail services at the Crystal Reservoir, Glen Cove, and Summit Visitor Centers created a more welcoming environment for guests.

## Protecting the Mountain for Future Generations

Behind the scenes, PPAM advanced critical stewardship and resilience efforts to protect the mountain for future generations. Infrastructure planning addressed storm-related damage, while an interagency prescribed burn and forest fuels mitigation efforts within the highway corridor reduced wildfire risk and improved forest health—supporting a safer, more resilient Pikes Peak for years to come.



## PIKES PEAK - AMERICA'S MOUNTAIN: 2025 BY THE NUMBERS

**10.8M**

(million) in revenue generated through self-funded operations

**405K+**

visitors experienced Pikes Peak - America's Mountain

**20K+**

riders reached the summit using the expanded shuttle systems

**932K**

social media interactions across various platforms

**2.8K**

volunteer hours supporting stewardship, visitor services and special events

**1.7K**

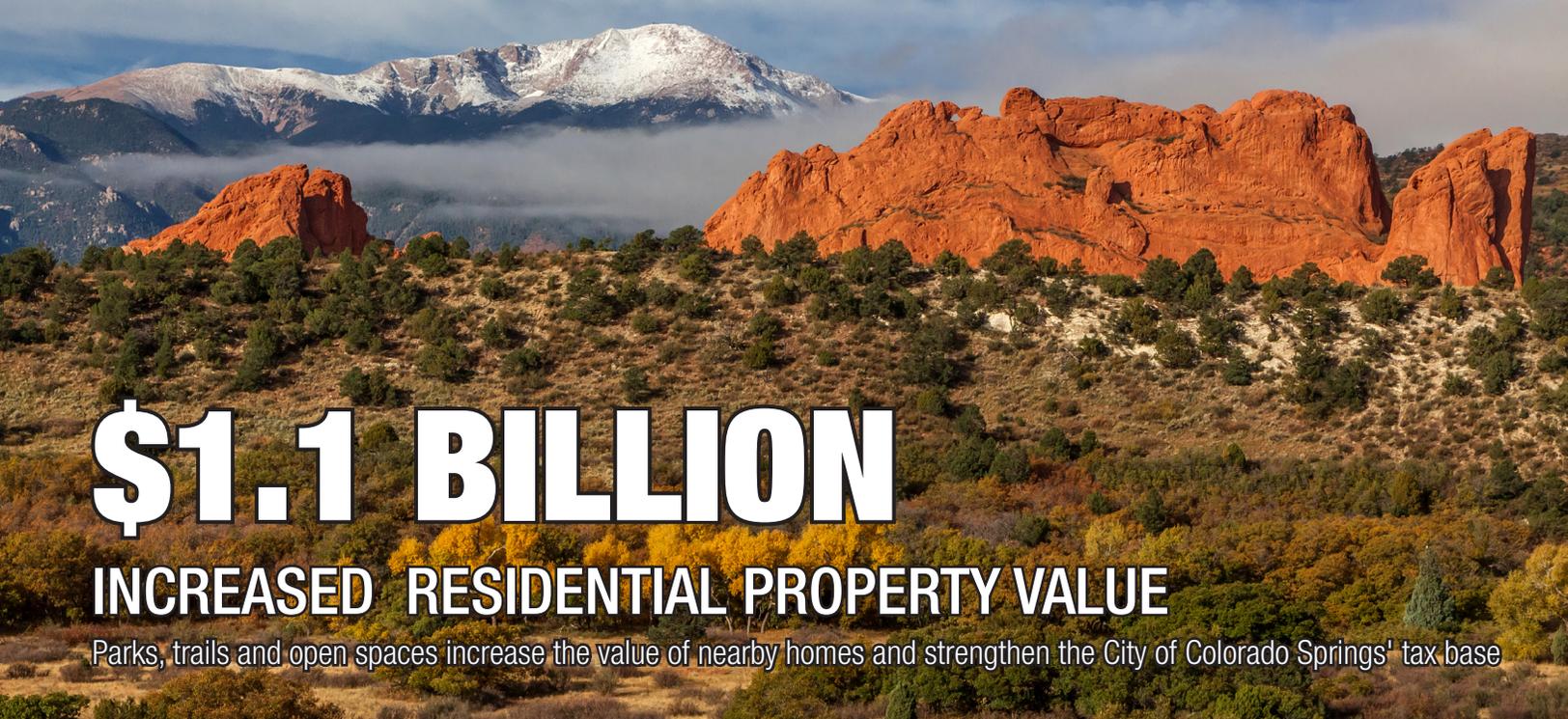
program participants took part in events and seasonal programming



# THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF PARKS & RECREATION

*Colorado Springs' parks are more than places to play — they are essential public infrastructure driving measurable economic value.*

A 2025 independent study by the Trust for Public Land confirms that Colorado Springs Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services generates hundreds of millions of dollars in measurable value for residents, businesses, and visitors each year.



# \$1.1 BILLION

## INCREASED RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY VALUE

Parks, trails and open spaces increase the value of nearby homes and strengthen the City of Colorado Springs' tax base



## STRENGTHENING NEIGHBORHOODS

*Parks increase property values, generate tax revenue, and enhance the desirability and stability of surrounding communities.*

# \$3.8M

annual property tax revenue generated by parks-adjacent homes

# 41K+

homes are located within 500 feet of a park - increasing desirability, stabilizing neighborhoods, and strengthening the city's tax base.



## IMPROVING COMMUNITY HEALTH

*Access to parks, trails, and recreation opportunities supports active lifestyles, reduces healthcare costs, and improves overall well-being.*

# 22.5 MILLION

annual park visits

# 43.6 THOUSAND

residents meet recommended physical activity guidelines using City parks

# \$73.7 MILLION

annual healthcare savings generated by access to parks

# WHY THIS MATTERS FOR OUR COMMUNITY

**Colorado Springs' park system is essential public infrastructure.** The 2025 Trust for Public Land study confirms that parks, trails, open spaces, and facilities deliver measurable returns across every sector of our community — from housing stability and economic development to public health and environmental resilience. These are not theoretical benefits. They are real, quantifiable outcomes that impact residents every day and represent hundreds of millions of dollars in annual measurable community value.



## PROTECTING NATURAL SYSTEMS

*Parks function as natural infrastructure - absorbing runoff, improving water quality, reducing pollution, and helping mitigate climate impacts.*

**\$10.5  
MILLION**

annual stormwater infiltration savings

**\$142  
THOUSAND**

annual air pollution removal value

**\$45.9  
MILLION**

in estimated carbon storage value provided by park trees and vegetation



## FUELING THE LOCAL ECONOMY

*Parks drive tourism, support local businesses, create jobs and generate millions in regional economic activity.*

**\$268.6M**

direct tourism spending tied to parks and outdoor recreation

**\$193M**

annual resident spending on recreation equipment & activities

**\$17.3M**

state and local tax revenue from park-related tourism

**1,143**

jobs supported by local recreation-related retailers

## PARKS ARE ESSENTIAL INFRASTRUCTURE:



Reduce long-term healthcare costs



Lower public stormwater treatment expenses



Increase property tax revenue



Support tourism and outdoor recreation industries



Enhance mental and physical well-being

## GROWTH IN PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE

Parks are not amenities — they are appreciating public assets. Since 2017, their measurable value has grown across property values, tourism, and environmental services. Strategic investment protects these expanding returns and strengthens the city's long-term economic foundation.

**+72%**

INCREASE IN PROPERTY VALUE SINCE 2017

The economic value parks add to nearby homes has increased as demand for access to quality green space rises. As Colorado Springs grows, proximity to parks strengthens neighborhoods and expands the tax base.

**+52.7%**

INCREASE IN TOURISM SPENDING LINKED TO PARKS

Parks and outdoor destinations are generating higher visitor spending, directly supporting local businesses, hospitality, and the regional economy.

**+162%**

INCREASE IN STORMWATER INFRASTRUCTURE VALUATION

Updated modeling confirms parks deliver greater stormwater management value than previously measured, functioning as natural infrastructure that reduces long-term public costs.

**+18.8%**

GROWTH IN RECREATIONAL USE VALUE

More residents are actively using parks for fitness, wellness, and connection — translating into measurable economic and health benefits.



# FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

## Total Department Budgeted Funding Sources

Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services General Fund	\$19,128,499
City of Colorado Springs General Costs	\$3,262,956
General Fund Capital Improvement Projects (CIP)	\$300,000
<b>GENERAL FUND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$22,681,455</b>
Trails, Open Space and Parks (TOPS) Tax	\$9,220,546
Conservation Trust Fund (CTF)	\$7,221,867
Grants & Gift Trust	\$4,803,150
Special Improvement Maintenance Districts (SIMD)	\$4,587,896
Other Funds - Capital Improvement Projects (CIP)	\$27,315
<b>NON-GENERAL FUND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$25,945,774</b>
**Enterprises	\$18,632,874
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$67,185,103</b>

\*\*Enterprise operation, budget and funding figures are generated through fees received by specific Enterprise locations.

## Funds Overseen by the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department

### Trails, Open Space and Parks (TOPS)

TOPS funds are generated from a 0.1% sales and use tax adopted by voters in 1997. Funds are allocated as follows: 3% TOPS administration, 6% maintenance of TOPS properties. The balance is designated for open space purchases and stewardship (min. of 60%); new trails (max. of 20%); and park maintenance and development (max. of 20%). A minimum of 75% of Open Space funds must be used for acquisition and 25% used for stewardship.

### Conservation Trust Fund (CTF)

Local governments receive 40% of the total revenue generated by the State Lottery, with our city share distributed based on population. Conservation Trust Fund dollars can be used for the acquisition, development, and maintenance of new conservation sites and for capital improvements or maintenance for recreational purposes on any public site.

### Enterprises

Enterprises enable the city to offer numerous cost-effective services since they are predominantly supported by user fees and do not receive support from the General Fund.

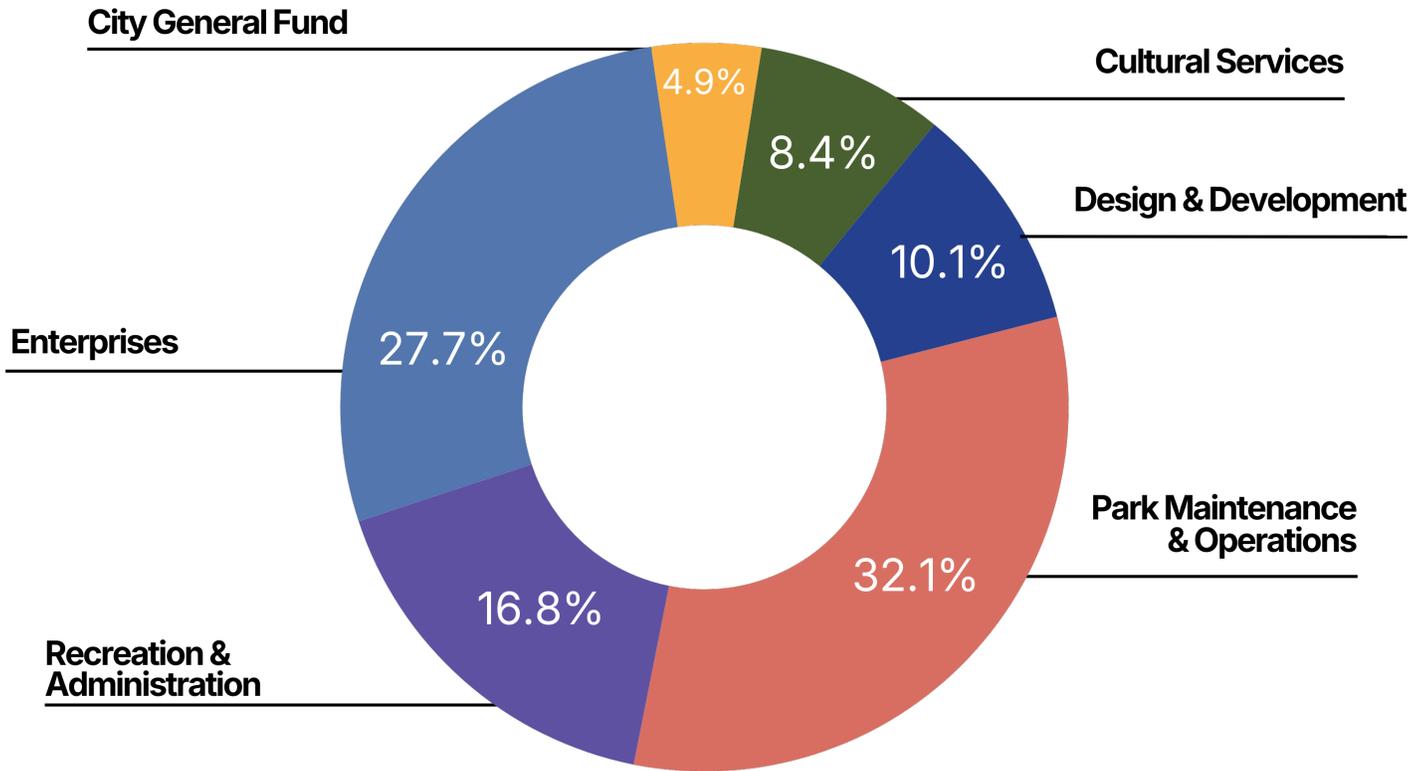
Enterprises include Patty Jewett and Valley Hi Golf Courses, Evergreen and Fairview Cemeteries, and Pikes Peak – America’s Mountain in partnership with the US Forest Service.

### Special Improvement Maintenance Districts (SIMD)

Assessments against real properties within established districts provide for maintenance of specific improvements in these areas.

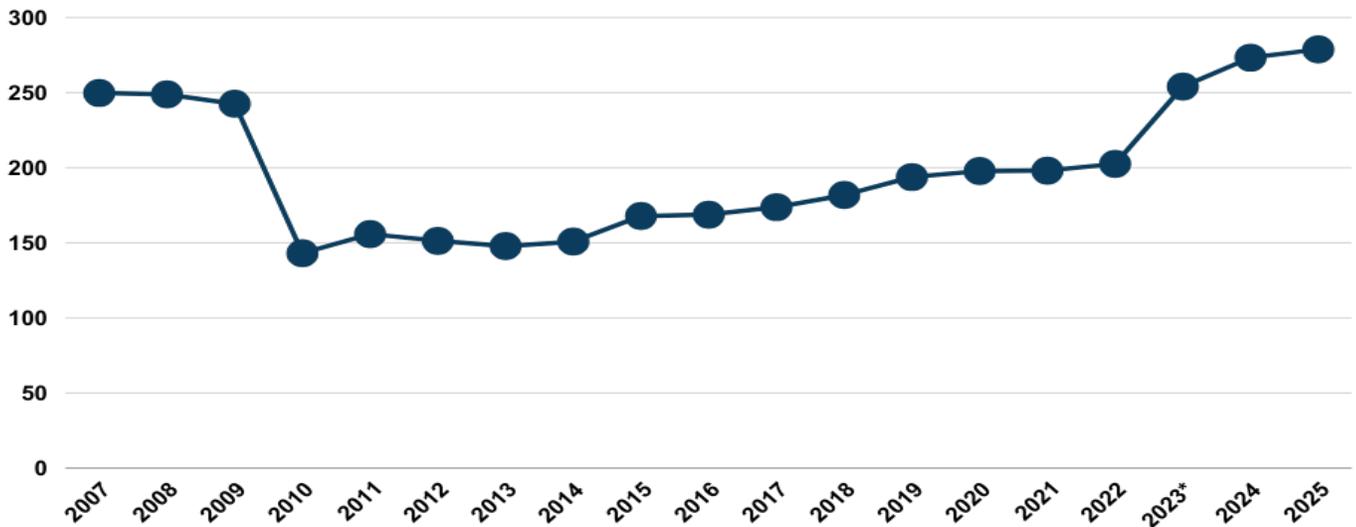
SIMD areas include Norwood, Old Colorado City, Platte Avenue, Gateway, Woodstone, Stetson Hills, and Briargate (a general improvement maintenance district).

## Total Department Budget by Division



Park Maintenance & Operations	\$21,577,844	City General Costs	\$3,262,956
Enterprises**	\$18,632,874	Design & Development	\$6,802,513
Recreation & Administration	\$11,291,585	Cultural Services	\$5,617,331
<b>TOTAL BUDGET \$67,185,103</b>			

## Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Historical Staffing



\*The staffing numbers include staff who have been converted into full-time equivalents.

# GRANT FUNDING

Grant funding plays a vital role in improving and maintaining our parkland and expanding capacity for programming, providing more opportunities for recreation and creating a stronger, more accessible park system for all. Many grants provide support over multiple years. The funding below was used and invested into the parks system during 2025.

## CAPITAL/CONSTRUCTION GRANTS

GRANT / PURPOSE	FUNDING SOURCE	TOTAL AMOUNT
Black Canyon Quarry	Colorado Department of Natural Resources (DNR)	\$68,601.48
Blodgett Open Space	Colorado Parks & Wildlife	\$220,569.34
Austin Bluffs Open Space	Colorado Parks & Wildlife	\$31,538.00
Cemetery & Golf Irrigation Projects	American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)	\$3,020,664.80
Prospect Lake Aeration	American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)	\$281,652.70
Westside Community Center HVAC	American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)	\$1,611,977.56

## OPERATIONAL GRANTS

GRANT / PURPOSE	FUNDING SOURCE	TOTAL AMOUNT
Generation Wild Inspire	Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO)	\$374,792.11
Generation Wild Capacity	Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO)	\$115,000.00

## MAINTENANCE GRANTS

GRANT / PURPOSE	FUNDING SOURCE	TOTAL AMOUNT
COS Forest Improvements	USDA Forest Service	\$588,303.70
CO Strategic Wildfire Action Program - Fishers Canyon Open Space	Colorado Department of Natural Resources (DNR)	\$26,858.71
Turf Replacement	Colorado Water Conservation Board	\$14,309.65

**2025 TOTAL GRANT INVESTMENTS ..... \$6,354,268.05**

### Additional Funding Partners

Thank you to our partners that generously support our projects, programs and operations.

**Max Delgado**

Donated trackchair to support Trackchair program

**\$16,000**

**Mile High Youth Corp**

Sand Creek Trail bench and solar light

**\$11,130**

**Friends of Monument Valley Park**

Embankment wall repairs at Duck Lake in Monument Valley Park

**\$125,000**

**Jordana Land**

Broadmoor Valley Park dog fountain

**\$7,315**

**Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum Board and Foundation**

Programs and exhibits at CSPM

**\$409,000**

**Garden of the Gods Foundation**

Various projects in Garden of the Gods that enhanced the visitor experience and safety, restoration of natural resources, capital projects, and more.

**\$764,639**

**Rock Ledge Ranch Living History Association**

Educational programs at Rock Ledge Ranch

**\$75,000**

**Mary Starsmore Fund of Pikes Peak Community Foundation**

Starsmore Visitor and Nature Center project improvements

**\$25,000**

**Ricks Garden Center**

Donation of trees and shrubs

**\$7,485**

**Estate of Donald T Moore**

Support of new ADA van and software to support recreation services

**\$43,885**



## Powering a Generation Outdoors

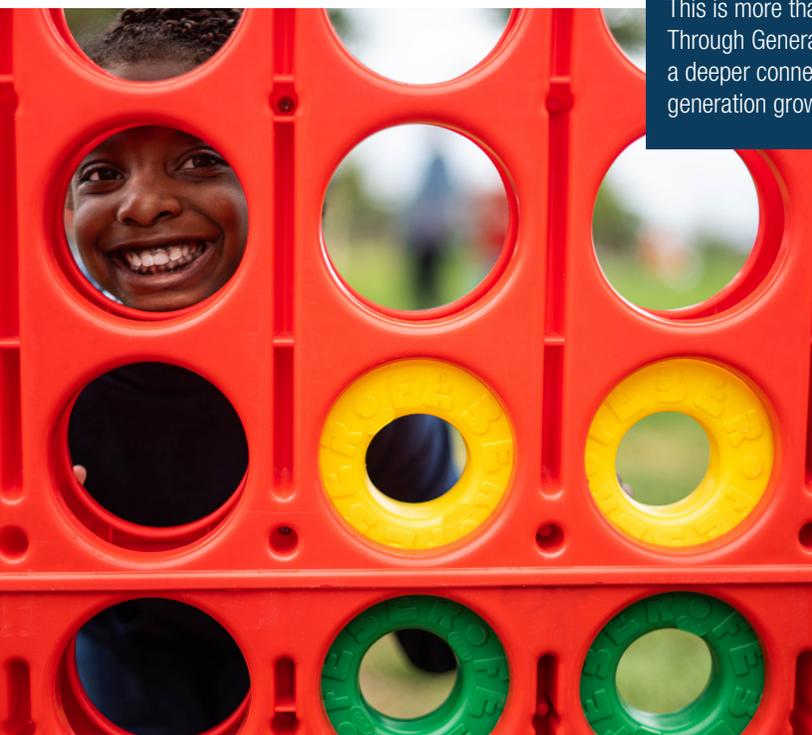
In 2025, Colorado Springs Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services (PRCS) secured a transformational \$1.2 million Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) grant to continue Generation Wild of the Pikes Peak Region through 2030. As the fiscal sponsor and a driving force behind the coalition, PRCS is not only stewarding this investment — it is helping lead a regional movement to ensure every child has access to the outdoors.

Generation Wild directly advances PRCS' mission by expanding equitable access to parks, trails, open spaces, and nature-based programs. Through PRCS camps, outdoor recreation programs, environmental education, and community events, youth gain hands-on experiences that build confidence, strengthen mental and physical health, and inspire lifelong environmental stewardship.

The coalition prioritizes youth and families in Southeast Colorado Springs and students attending Title I schools in Districts 2 and 11 — communities where barriers to outdoor access can be significant. By leveraging PRCS facilities, staff expertise, park infrastructure, and partnerships, this grant removes those barriers and brings nature within reach for thousands of children who might otherwise miss these opportunities.

The renewed funding followed a year-long strategic planning and community engagement process led in partnership with PRCS. Community voice will now directly shape future programming, ensuring investments reflect the needs, cultures, and priorities of the families served.

This is more than grant funding. It is a five-year commitment to equity, health, and opportunity. Through Generation Wild, PRCS is helping cultivate resilient youth, stronger neighborhoods, and a deeper connection to the natural landscapes that define Colorado Springs — ensuring the next generation grows up not just near nature, but connected to it.



Photos Courtesy of Generation Wild, Pikes Peak Region

# OUR "EPPIC" CORE VALUES

## EXCELLENCE

CONSISTENTLY STRIVES TO DELIVER SUPERIOR SERVICE AND RESULTS WITH INTEGRITY; MAXIMIZES POTENTIAL THROUGH CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT; SETS, ACHIEVES, AND MAINTAINS A HIGH LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE.

## PASSION

MOTIVATED TO PROVIDE REMARKABLE SERVICE AND DEDICATION TO THE COMMUNITY AND THE DEPARTMENT.

## PROFESSIONALISM

HIGHLY SKILLED AND ADAPTABLE SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTS THAT EMBRACE LIFELONG LEARNING AND IMPROVEMENT.

## INNOVATION

PURSUES CREATIVE WAYS TO BETTER DELIVER SERVICES BOTH WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT AND WITH EXTERNAL PARTNERS, WHILE ANTICIPATING FUTURE NEEDS.

## COLLABORATION

INSPIRES OTHERS TO SUCCEED AND DEVELOP; THINKS AND ACTS BEYOND THE SCOPE OF INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITIES; PUTS DEPARTMENT GOALS IN FRONT OF DIVISION OR INDIVIDUAL OBJECTIVES; RECOGNIZES OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE AND IS ACCOUNTABLE TO ONE ANOTHER.

## GET CONNECTED WITH PRCS

PRCS Administration  
1401 Recreation Way  
Colorado Springs, CO 80905

(719) 385-5940

[www.ColoradoSprings.Gov/PRCS](http://www.ColoradoSprings.Gov/PRCS)



Parks, Recreation,  
& Cultural Services

Scan to sign up for e-mail newsletter

