

# **Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services**

PR&CS Administration, 1401 Recreation Way, Colorado Springs, CO 80905



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## **Agenda TOPS Working Committee**

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**Wednesday, May 1, 2024**

**7:30 a.m.**

**1401 Recreation Way**

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### **How to call in to the meeting for citizens:**

*Please dial +1 (720) 617-3426 Conference ID: 494 055 957#*

### **How to comment:**

- *For Citizen Discussion concerning items that are not on the agenda please email your comments to [PRCS-TOPSWorkingCommittee-SMB@coloradosprings.gov](mailto:PRCS-TOPSWorkingCommittee-SMB@coloradosprings.gov) in advance of the meeting.*
- *For Agenda Items - Before the meeting, those who wish to comment should submit their name, telephone number, and the topic or agenda item for comment to [PRCS-TOPSWorkingCommittee-SMB@coloradosprings.gov](mailto:PRCS-TOPSWorkingCommittee-SMB@coloradosprings.gov). If you are a participant in Microsoft TEAMS please use the chat function to indicate you would like to comment. If you have joined the meeting via conference call, please listen for your opportunity to comment. You will be called upon to comment using the last four digits of your telephone number. Please limit your comment to three minutes.*

### **Agenda Preview**

Board Chair

### **Announcements**

Staff and Committee

### **Approval of Minutes**

Committee

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### **Citizen Discussion**

Citizens

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### **Action Items**

Property Acquisition

Lonna Thelen

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### **Presentation Items**

2025 Capital Improvement Project Recommendations

Sandy Elliot

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### **Citizen Discussion**

Citizens

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### **Adjournment**



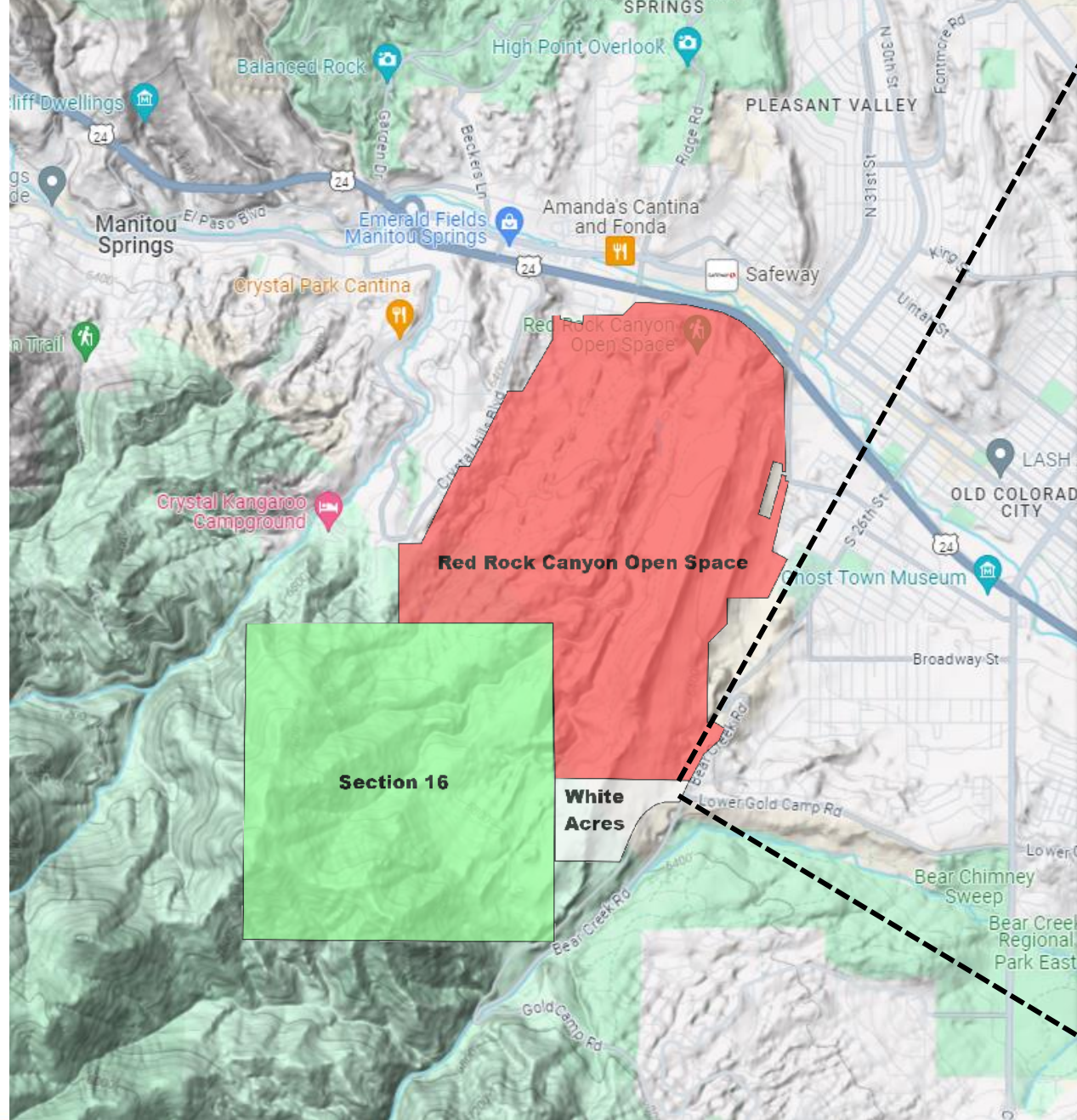
# 1680 S 26<sup>TH</sup> STREET PROPERTY ACQUISITION OPPORTUNITY

TOPS Working Committee



**5/1/24**

Lonna Thelen – TOPS Manager



# 1680 S 26<sup>TH</sup> STREET



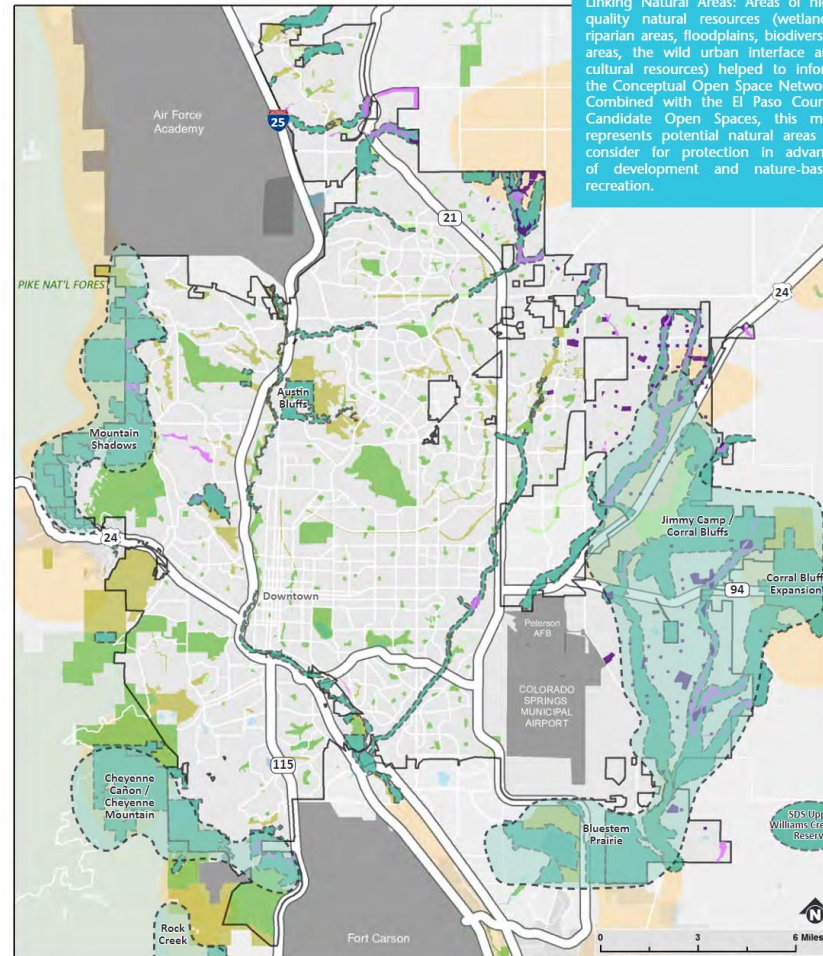
# 1680 S 26<sup>TH</sup> STREET



# 1680 S 26<sup>TH</sup> STREET

- ❖ Adjacent to Open Space area in 2013 Park System Master Plan
- ❖ Meets Master Plan goal to Fill in the Gaps in the Open Space Network

Map 27: Open Space Candidate Areas

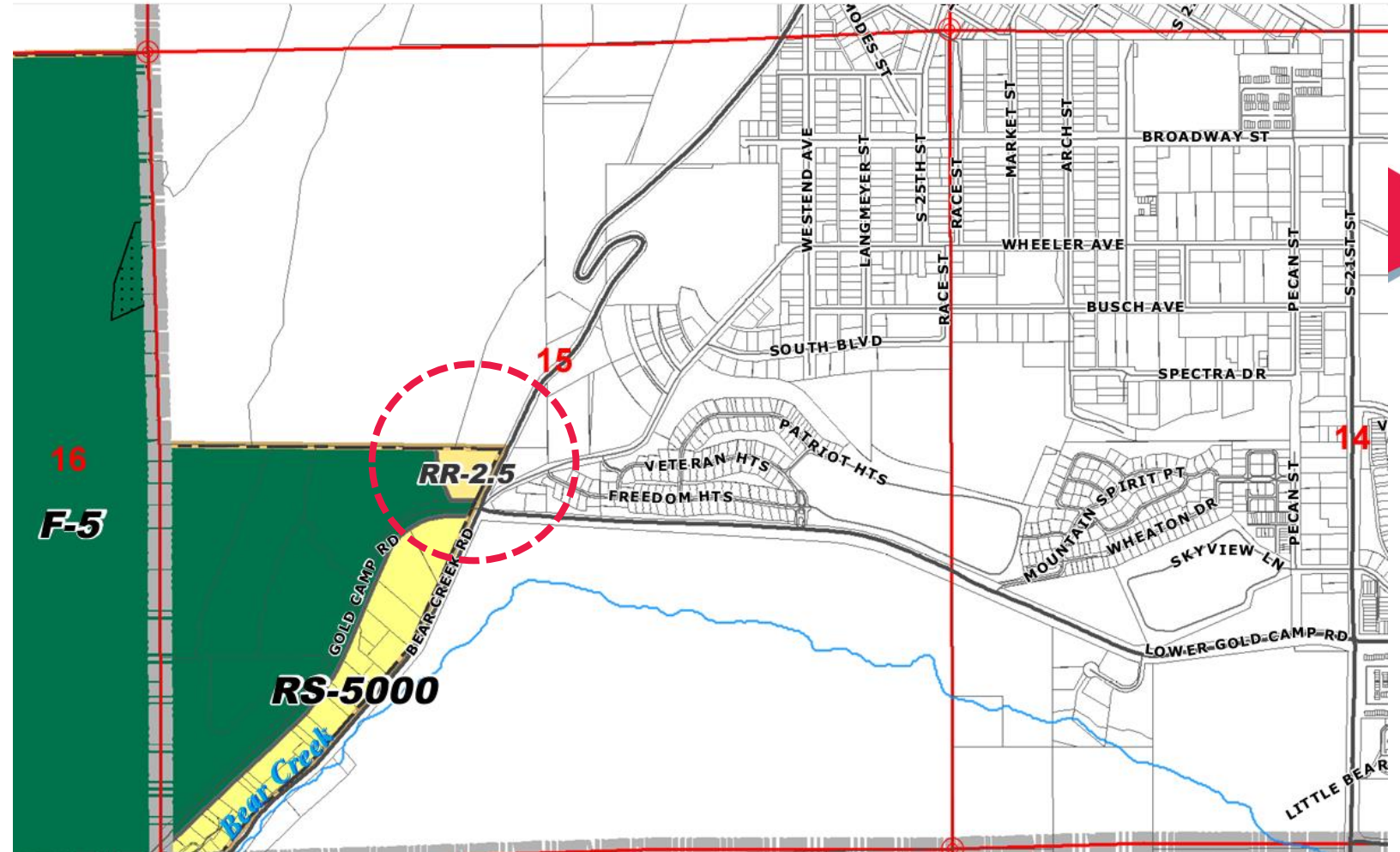


Linking Natural Areas: Areas of high quality natural resources (wetlands, riparian areas, floodplains, biodiversity areas, the wild urban interface and cultural resources) helped to inform the Conceptual Open Space Network. Combined with the El Paso County Candidate Open Spaces, this map represents potential natural areas to consider for protection in advance of development and nature-based recreation.



# 1680 S 26<sup>TH</sup> STREET

- ❖ Nearest Location:
  - ❖ Gold Camp Road and 26<sup>th</sup> Street
- ❖ Property Size:
  - ❖ 2.54 Acres
  - ❖ 1,922 sf house
  - ❖ Built in 1955
- ❖ Adjacent Park:
  - ❖ Red Rock Canyon Open Space
  - ❖ Originally part of White Acres
- ❖ El Paso County
  - ❖ Zoned RR- 2.5





# TRANSACTION INFORMATION



- ❖ 2.54 Acres located at 1680 S 26<sup>th</sup> Street
  - ❖ Property includes house and garage structure
- ❖ Appraised value \$872,000 as of January 29, 2024
- ❖ Value per acre - \$343,307
  - ❖ Value includes a house and garage
- ❖ Total Supplemental Appropriation request \$875,000
  - ❖ Contract price - \$872,000
  - ❖ Closing costs - \$3,000

# TOPS OPEN SPACE FUND BALANCE



## TOPS Estimated Open Space Category Fund Balance - 2024

2023 Estimated Fund Balance	\$9,469,556.00
2024 Est Available Revenue for open space purchases	\$5,510,584.00
Total Available	\$14,980,140.00
10% Reserve Funds	(\$1,498,014.00)
Total available for Acquisitions	\$13,482,126.00

# 1680 S 26<sup>TH</sup> STREET



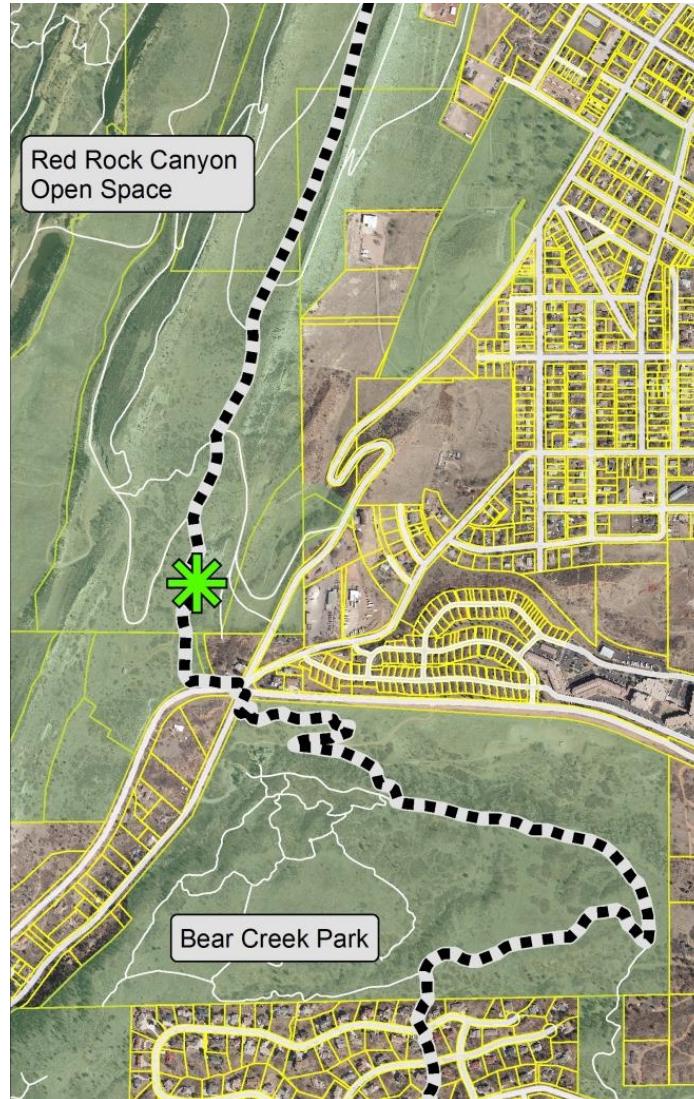
## ❖ Site Opportunities:

- ❖ Extension of existing Red Rock Canyon Open Space,
- ❖ Complete open space network
- ❖ Large level space to create parking lot Trailhead
- ❖ Chamberlain Trail access
- ❖ TOPS Ranger offices
- ❖ Maintenance storage
- ❖ Picnic opportunities
- ❖ Restrooms
- ❖ Interpretive educational opportunities
- ❖ Open space hub
- ❖ Stewardship

## ❖ Public Process to follow to discuss opportunities



# 1680 S 26<sup>TH</sup> ST



# QUESTIONS



# COLORADO SPRINGS PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

## TOPS WORKING COMMITTEE

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**Date:** May 1, 2024

**Item Number:** Action Item # 1

**Item Name:** Proposed acquisition of an approximately 2.54 property located at 1680 S 26<sup>th</sup> Street

### **SUMMARY:**

On April 1, 1997, an ordinance implementing a sales tax for trails, open space and parks (TOPS) was approved by the citizens of Colorado Springs. This tax went into effect on July 1, 1997. In 2023, this ordinance was amended to extend the TOPS sales tax through 2045. The TOPS Working Committee is responsible for setting priorities and making recommendations for the expenditure of TOPS funds. A 2.54-acre parcel is being considered for acquisition to be incorporated as TOPS Open Space as part of the Red Rock Canyon Open Space. This property appraised for \$872,000 in January of 2024.

### **BACKGROUND:**

The 2014 Park System Master Plan (“Master Plan”) shows the 2.54-acre parcel adjacent to the White Acres property and notes it as part of the open space/special resource area/greenway. Due to the small size of the parcel it is not clearly identified as candidate open space; however, the acquisition of parcels adjacent to existing open spaces is supported as one of the goals of the Parks System Master Plan – Filling in the Gaps in the Open Space Network. If acquired, the site would be protected from future private development and could assist in maintaining connections between open space areas and protecting wildlife corridor movement.

The property is located at 1680 S. 26<sup>th</sup> Street and consists of 2.54-acre parcel with a single-family residence and garage (built in 1955). The property was once part of the larger property grouping known as the White Acres property. This larger White Acres property was owned by Bethany Baptist Church and consisted of 6 parcels. In 2009, the TOPS program acquired five of the six parcels of the White Acres for a total of 47.5 acers. The candidate open space parcels provided an expansion of Red Rock Canyon Open Space. The sixth parcel, located at 1680 S. 26<sup>th</sup> Street was the residence and was retained by the Church. The Church later sold the property to a staff member who had lived in the home as their caretaker.

The property is envisioned to be incorporated into and managed as part of Red Rock Canyon Open Space. The parcel has the potential to be utilized as a trailhead for Red Rock Canyon, offices for TOPS Rangers, storage of small maintenance equipment and materials, picnic opportunities, restrooms, interpretive educational opportunity, a hub for the open space, stewardship and the Chamberlain Trail, which is currently master planned to access this area. A decision on the use final use of the property will be determined after a public process.

City Code supports the potential uses listed above through the highlighted sections below. The site has been disturbed over the years with construction and fill. Acquisition would allow the use of this already disturbed site to assist in preserving the adjacent open space areas and providing a hub for stewardship and educational opportunities.

### **4.6.101.G: PURPOSE:**

The general purposes of this article are as follows:

G. To **manage, patrol, improve and maintain** all new open space lands and trails acquired with revenues generated by a sales and use tax approved by the electorate pursuant to this article, in accord with the purposes set forth in this article.

4.6.101.L

L. Open space lands shall serve one or more of the following functions:

1. Linkages and trails, access to public lakes, streams, and other suitable open space lands, stream corridors and scenic corridors along existing highways;
2. Preservation of fragile ecosystems, natural areas, scenic vistas and areas, fish and wildlife habitats and corridors, or important areas that support biodiversity, natural resources, significant land formations and landmarks, and cultural, historical and archeological areas;
3. **Creating spatial definition of and between urban areas;**
4. Areas of environmental preservation, designated as areas of concern, generally in multiple ownership, where several different preservation methods (including other governmental bodies' participation or private ownership) may need to be used;
5. **Conservation of natural and visual resources,** including, but not limited to, forest lands, range lands, agricultural land, aquifer recharge areas, and surface water;
6. **Lands within or adjacent to a park or public open lands whose development potential is clearly incompatible with those lands; and**
7. **Preservation of land for educational opportunities and outdoor recreation areas limited to passive recreational use, including, but not limited to, hiking, photography or nature studies, and if specifically designated, bicycling, horseback riding, or fishing.**

The TOPS Working Committee is toured the site on April 17, 2024. The City has completed the appraisal process and offered the seller fair-market value for the property of \$872,000. A signed contract is pending at the time of this write-up; however, the owner has verbally agreed to a purchase price of \$872,000 and the purchase process for the City. The contract is contingent upon final approval by City Council and acceptance of the property based on the City's due diligence work. The acquisitions would be funded with revenues from the TOPS Open Space.

Pursuant to TOPS and City Real Estate acquisition procedures, an appraisal was completed January 29, 2024, for the property which indicated a value of \$872,000 based on a comparative sales approach for the 2.54-acres. This equates to a value of approximately \$343,307/acre. The property is in the jurisdiction of El Paso County and is zoned RR-2.5.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

Acquisition of the 2.54-acre property will require funding of \$ 875,000 (purchase price plus real estate transactions costs) from the TOPS Open Space Category. Maintenance, operations and any future capital improvements will be funded by the TOPS program.

<b>TOPS Estimated Open Space Category Fund Balance - 2024</b>	
2023 Est Fund Balance	\$ 9,469,556.00
2024 Est Available Revenue for Open Space Acquisition	\$ 5,510,584.00
Total Available	\$ 14,980,140.00
10% Reserve Funds	\$ (1,498,014.00)
Total Available for Acquisition	\$ 13,482,126.00

Including projected 2024 open space funds of approximately \$5.5 million, a fund balance of approximately \$13.5 million, the TOPS open space fund balance is anticipated to have a sufficient balance to support this acquisition if approved.

**BOARD/COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION:**

The TOPS Working Committee is the first committee to consider this proposed acquisition.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

Alternatives include advising staff of support for this acquisition, requesting additional information or suggesting an alternative approach to the transaction.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends approval of acquisition of approximately 2.54 acres of property located at 1680 S 26<sup>th</sup> Street (TSN 7415300044) and approval to expend \$875,000 to include the purchase price and associated real estate transaction costs from the TOPS Open Space category fund balance.

**PROPOSED MOTION:**

A motion to recommend the acquisition of approximately 2.54 acres of property located at 1680 S 26<sup>th</sup> Street (TSN 7415300044) and a supplemental appropriation of \$875,000 to include the purchase price and associated real estate transaction costs from the TOPS Open Space category fund balance.

**Attachments:**

Powerpoint



# TOPS Working Committee 2025 Proposed Capital Improvement Budget

TOPS Working Committee  
May 1, 2024



# Informing the Budget Process



- Park System Master Plan
- Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services Strategic Plan
- City Strategic Plan
- Community Input – needs and desires
- Opportunities to Leverage Funding
- Strategic Timing of Projects
- Urgent Repairs and Renovations
- Funding Requirements and Project Eligibility
- Board and Committee Input
- Mandates and Paybacks
- Staff Capacity

# Assumptions

- Sales tax revenue assumes 2% growth in 2025 and subsequent years
- Salary & Benefits forecasted to increase 5%
- Materials, services and contracts forecasted to increase 3%

# **TOPS**

## **Proposed 2025 CIP Budget**

Trails, Open Space and Parks Fund (TOPS)

0.1% Sales Tax

# TOPS Ordinance



Trails, Open Space and Parks (TOPS) revenue is generated from a 0.1% sales and use tax adopted by voters in April 1997, extended by voters in 2003, and extended by voters again in 2023. The tax will now expire in 2045.

*There are 5 categories of spending allowed by the TOPS ordinance (Ord.97-96; Ord. 01-42):*

## ***Off the top***

- **Administration-** 3% for TOPS administration, planning and management
- **Maintenance-** 6% for stewardship and maintenance of properties acquired with TOPS funds

## ***Of the remaining***

- **Open Space-** Minimum 60% for acquisition and stewardship of (all) open space lands. 75% of this amount for acquisition of Open Space.
- **Trails-** Maximum 20% for construction, acquisition and maintenance of (all) trails.
- **Parks-** Maximum 20% for acquisition and construction of new parks AND to acquire, construct, establish and maintain new parks and related facilities and to maintain and renovate all City Parks.

# 2023 End-of-Year Revenue Report



## 0.1% Trails, Open Space and Parks Tax - TOPS For Filing Period Ended November 30\*

<u>Month Paid to City</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>% Over(Under) Previous Year</u>
February	681,817	676,078	741,043	828,525	852,776	2.93%
March	616,420	626,138	742,255	824,847	828,661	0.46%
April	814,083	700,611	997,375	1,076,126	1,095,423	1.79%
May	727,369	569,042	898,625	1,017,271	950,536	(6.56%)
June	732,903	708,683	918,895	983,720	1,022,677	3.96%
July	875,596	878,140	1,127,282	1,179,995	1,160,801	(1.63%)
August	803,205	824,140	1,008,377	1,087,594	1,066,335	(1.95%)
September	788,458	803,665	979,345	1,066,174	1,072,722	0.61%
October	841,777	922,298	1,076,829	1,154,188	1,140,358	(1.20%)
November	767,044	828,200	949,006	1,008,826	1,036,293	2.72%
December	714,708	773,509	914,992	930,020	996,917	7.19%
<b>Total (Year-to-Date)</b>	<b>8,363,379</b>	<b>8,310,503</b>	<b>10,354,024</b>	<b>11,157,286</b>	<b>11,223,499</b>	<b>0.59%</b>
<b>Refunds (Year-to-Date)</b>	<b>18,339</b>	<b>46,735</b>	<b>38,704</b>	<b>47,289</b>	<b>49,501</b>	
<b>Net Revenue (Year-to-Date)</b>	<b>8,345,040</b>	<b>8,263,768</b>	<b>10,315,320</b>	<b>11,109,997</b>	<b>11,173,998</b>	

\* Filing period is the month the tax monies are collected by the retailer from their customers

# TOPS Fund Future Revenue 2024-2028

## TOPS projected revenue with forecasted annual amount 2024-2028

	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	TOTALS (Next 5 Years)
<b>Projected Revenue</b>						
<b>Forecasted Annual Amount</b>	<b>\$ 13,456,860</b>	<b>\$ 13,725,997</b>	<b>\$ 14,000,517</b>	<b>\$ 14,280,527</b>	<b>\$ 14,566,138</b>	<b>\$ 70,030,040</b>
Administration allowable (3%)	\$ 403,706	\$ 411,780	\$ 420,016	\$ 428,416	\$ 436,984	\$ 2,100,901
Maintenance allowable (6%)	\$ 807,412	\$ 823,560	\$ 840,031	\$ 856,832	\$ 873,968	\$ 4,201,802
<b>Adjusted category revenue</b>	<b>\$ 12,245,743</b>	<b>\$ 12,490,657</b>	<b>\$ 12,740,471</b>	<b>\$ 12,995,280</b>	<b>\$ 13,255,186</b>	<b>\$ 63,727,336</b>
Trails allowable (20% Max)	\$ 2,449,149	\$ 2,498,131	\$ 2,548,094	\$ 2,599,056	\$ 2,651,037	\$ 12,745,467
Parks allowable (20% Max)	\$ 2,449,149	\$ 2,498,131	\$ 2,548,094	\$ 2,599,056	\$ 2,651,037	\$ 12,745,467
Open Space allowable (60% min)	\$ 7,347,446	\$ 7,494,394	\$ 7,644,282	\$ 7,797,168	\$ 7,953,111	\$ 38,236,402
75% of Open Space-Acquisition	\$ 5,510,584	\$ 5,620,796	\$ 5,733,212	\$ 5,847,876	\$ 5,964,834	\$ 28,677,301

# TOPS Fund Summary

## Q1 2024 Estimated Fund Balance



Category	Fund Balance
Trails	\$2,611,752
Open Space	\$10,604,447
Parks	(\$127,055)
Administration	\$390,823
Maintenance	\$579,469

\*2023 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR) preliminary, unaudited figures



# Preliminary 2025 Revenue

**Trails, Open Space and Parks Revenue                    \$13,725,997\***

## **2025 TOPS Revenue by Category**

<b>Administration (3%)</b>	<b>\$    411,780</b>
<b>Maintenance (6%)</b>	<b>\$    823,560</b>
<b>Trails (20% Max)</b>	<b>\$ 2,498,131</b>
<b>Parks (20% Max)</b>	<b>\$ 2,498,131</b>
<b>Open Space (60% Min)</b>	<b>\$ 7,494,394</b>

***Acquisition (75% of the 60%) = \$ 5,620,796***

***Stewardship (25% of the 60%) = \$ 1,873,599***

\*Revenue subject to adjustment in forecast by Budget Office

# TOPS Administration



<b>TOPS Administration – 3%</b>	
Administration Available Revenue	\$ 411,780
Smith Creek Management Plan	\$ 50,000
Jimmy Camp/Corral Bluffs Assessments	\$ 100,000
Draw from Fund Balance	\$ 170,489
<b>Total Proposed 2025 TOPS Administration Budget</b>	<b>\$ 582,269</b>

<b>TOPS Administration Salary &amp; Benefits, Operating, CIP</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>% of Total</b>
Salaries & Benefits	\$ 356,808	60%
Operating	\$ 75,461	13%
CIP	\$150,000	27%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 582,269</b>	<b>100%</b>

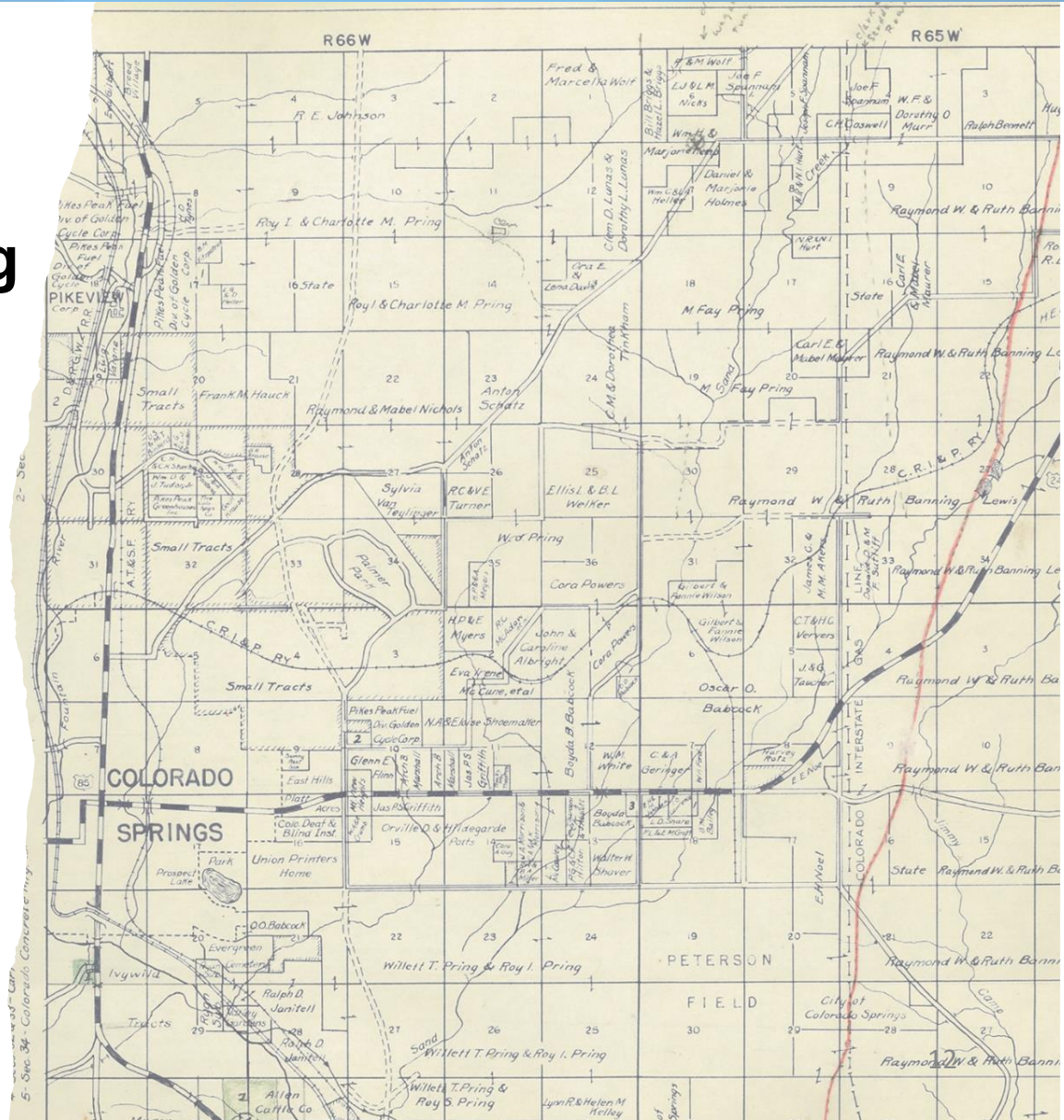
# Smith Creek Management Plan

- Public process and baseline inventory.
- Improved stewardship of Open Space
- 2025 TOPS Trails
  - \$50,000



# Jimmy Camp Creek/ Corral Bluffs Planning

- ❑ Continue ongoing assessments of the property including boundary analysis
- ❑ 2025 TOPS Admin
- ❑ \$100,000



# TOPS Maintenance



<b>TOPS Maintenance – 6%</b>	
Maintenance Available Revenue	\$ 823,560
No Draw from Fund Balance	\$ 0
<b>Total Proposed 2025 TOPS Maintenance Budget</b>	<b>\$ 807,303</b>

<b>TOPS Maintenance Salary &amp; Benefits, Operating</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>% of Total</b>
Salaries & Benefits	\$ 601,223	74%
Operating	\$ 206,080	26%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 807,303</b>	<b>100%</b>

# TOPS Trails Category



2025 Trails (20% Max) Total Revenue Available = \$2,498,131  
 2025 Draw From Fund Balance = \$2,181,869  
 2025 Total Proposed CIP Trails Category = \$4,680,000  
*Fund Balance Available – 10% Reserve + 1.8M\** = \$1,788,708

Proposed Trails Category CIP Project List	
University Park Trail	\$ 50,000
Urban Trail System sign package design	\$ 50,000
Garden of the Gods Trail Wayfinding	\$ 50,000
Red Rock Extension Circulation/Connectivity Plan	\$ 230,000
Blodgett Open Space Implementation	\$ 500,000
North Douglas Trail	\$ 500,000
Fisher Canyon Open Space Implementation – including Chamberlain Trail	\$1,500,000
High Priority Trails	\$1,800,000
<b>TOPS Trails = 100% Capital Improvement Projects</b>	

# University Park Trail

- ❑ Extend and complete 0.75 miles of trail in Austin Bluffs Open Space
  - ❑ Heller Center to Rockhurst Blvd
- ❑ 2025 TOPS Trails
  - ❑ \$50,000



# Urban Trail System Wayfinding Design Package



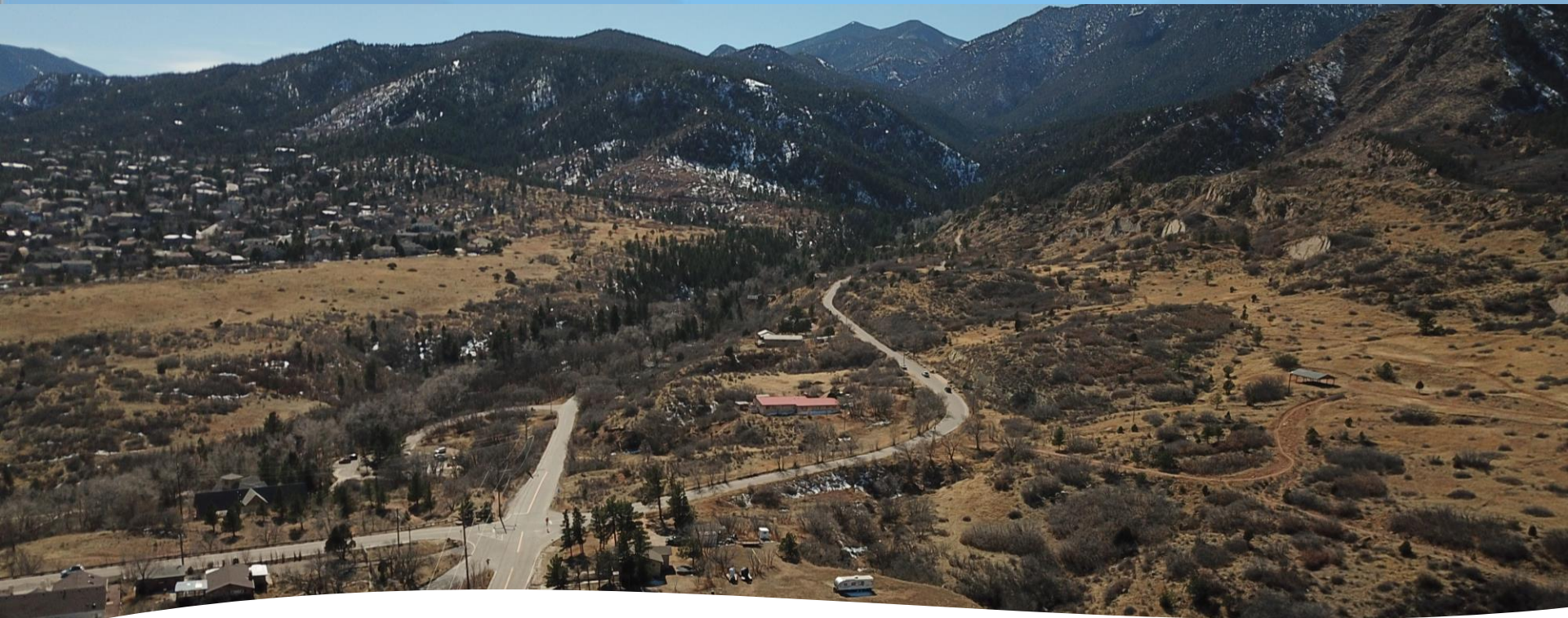
- 2025 TOPS Trails
  - \$50,000
- Create a cohesive wayfinding design package specific to our urban trail system
- Current signage is infrequent, outdated, inconsistent, and in various states of disrepair





## Garden of the Gods Trail Wayfinding

- ❑ 2025 TOPS Trails
  - ❑ \$50,000
- ❑ Trail Wayfinding improvements to the natural surface trail system
- ❑ Open Space Wayfinding Design Guidelines.
- ❑ \$50,000 match from Garden of the Gods Foundation



## Red Rock Extension Circulation/Connectivity Plan

- 2025 TOPS Trails
  - \$230,000
- Public process to study parking, circulation and connectivity.
- Red Rock Canyon Open Space, Section 16 Trailhead and Bear Creek Canon Park.

# Blodgett Open Space Implementation

- ❑ 2025 TOPS Trails
  - ❑ \$500,000
- ❑ Continued implementation of the Blodgett Master and Management Plan
- ❑ Open space trails, habitat restoration, north trailhead, barn removal



## North Douglas Trail

- 2025 TOPS Trails
  - \$500,000
- Extend North Douglas Creek Trail
  - Wilson Ranch Park
  - To Oak Valley Ranch Park
  - To Blodgett Open Space





## Fishers Canyon Implementation

- 2025 TOPS Trails
  - \$1,500,000
- Implementation of the upcoming Master Plan and Management Plan (\*Contingent on approval)
- To include trailheads, stormwater management, trail(s), bridges, signage, and Chamberlain Trail

# High Priority Trails

- 2025 TOPS Trails
  - \$1,800,000
  - Property Acquisition,
  - Design, and Construction
    - Rock Island Trail
    - Sand Creek Trail
    - Cottonwood Creek Trail
    - Chamberlain Trail
    - Legacy Loop Trail System



Sand Creek looking south from Platte Avenue: Future Construction

# TOPS Parks Category



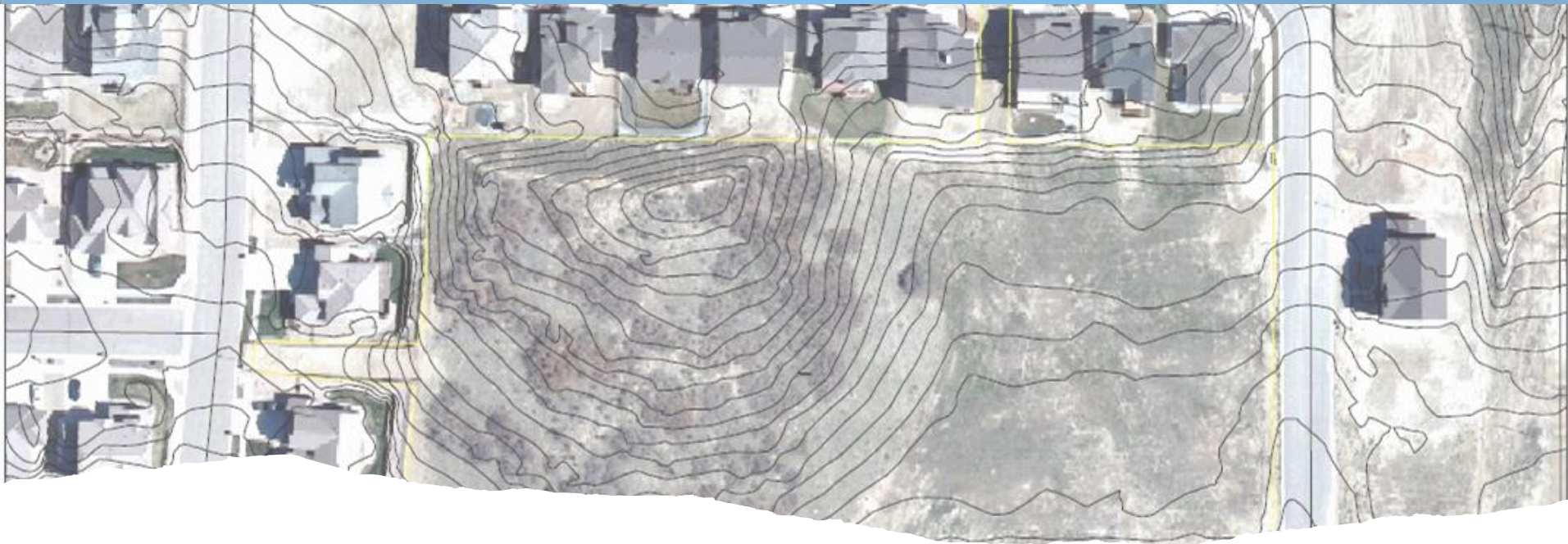
2025 Parks (20% Max) Total Revenue Available	= \$ 2,498,131
Proposed Fund Balance Draw	= \$ 0
2025 Total Proposed Parks Category	= \$ 2,263,848
<i>Fund Balance Available</i>	= \$ 107,228

## TOPS Parks Operating

2025 Parks Operating Budget	<b>\$ 1,713,848</b>
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## TOPS Parks CIP Projects

High Priority Playground Rehabilitations	\$ 350,000
Grey Hawk Park Implementation	\$ 200,000
<b>Total Proposed 2025 Parks CIP Projects</b>	<b>\$ 550,000</b>



## Grey Hawk Park Implementation

- ❑ Construction of Grey Hawk Park
- ❑ 2025 TOPS Parks
  - ❑ \$200,000



## TOPS Parks Proposed 2025 Budget

**\$ 2,263,848**

TOPS Parks Salary & Benefits, Operating, CIP	Budget	% of Total
Salaries & Benefits	\$ 368,903	16%
Operating	\$ 1,344,945	60%
CIP	\$ 550,000	24%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 2,263,848</b>	<b>100%</b>

# Playground Renovation

- ❑ 2025 TOPS Parks
  - ❑ \$350,000
  
- ❑ High Priority Playground List
  - ❑ Rampart
  - ❑ Sandstone
  - ❑ Sage Brush
  - ❑ Flanagan
  - ❑ Vermijo



# TOPS Open Space - 25% Stewardship Category



**TOPS Open Space Proposed 2025 Budget      \$1,812,668**

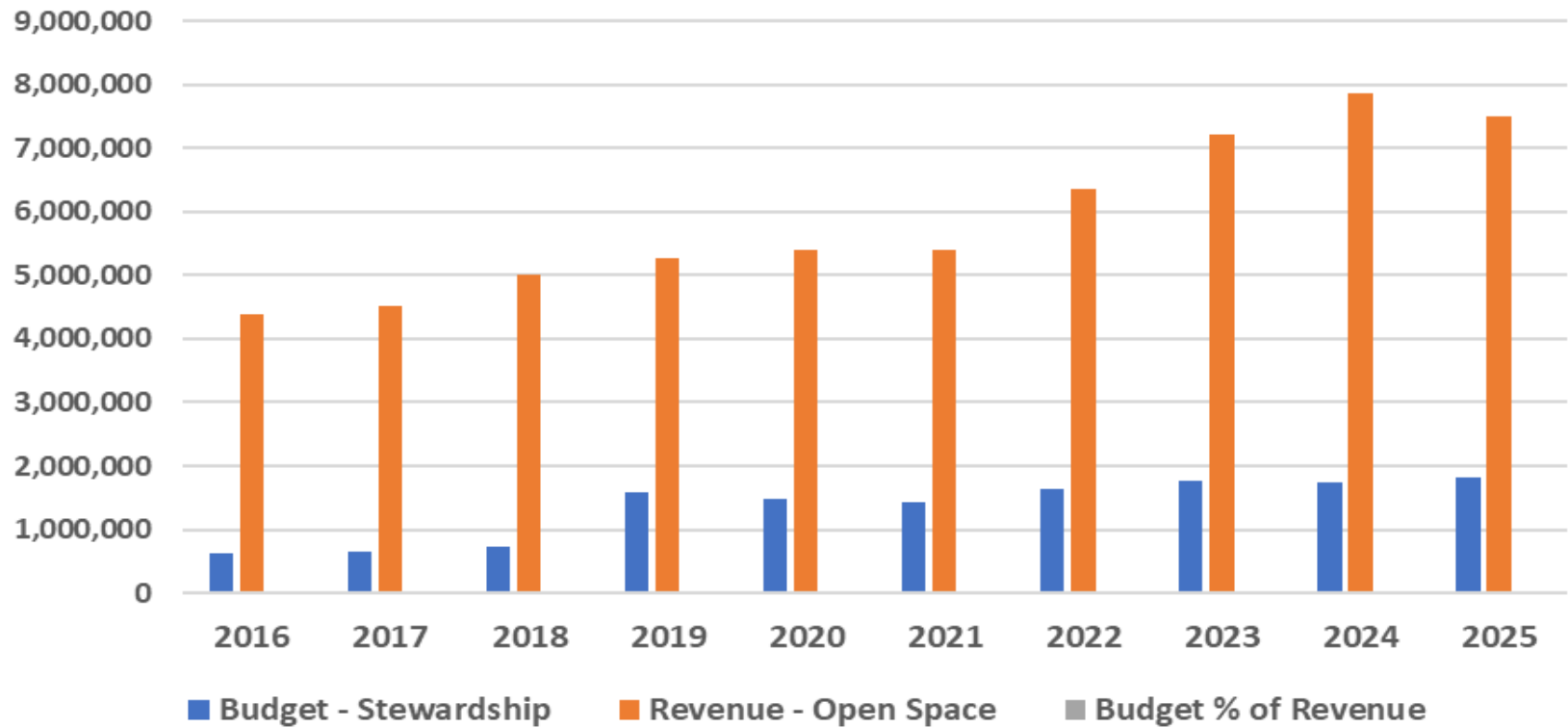
<b>TOPS Open Space Salary &amp; Benefits, Operating</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>% of Total</b>
Salaries & Benefits	\$ 1,332,947	74%
Operating	\$ 479,721	26%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 1,812,668</b>	<b>100%</b>

**2025 Revenue available for Open Space purchases (75%) = \$5,620,796**

# Stewardship Funding History



## Total Stewardship Budget by Year



	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
<b>Budget - Stewardship</b>	619,000	649,000	738,900	1,595,617	1,480,455	1,437,029	1,626,309	1,759,867	1,735,222	1,812,668
<b>Revenue - Open Space</b>	4,372,368	4,501,940	5,005,728	5,268,354	5,396,664	5,407,082	6,346,977	7,203,378	7,868,290	7,494,395
<b>Budget % of Revenue</b>	14%	14%	15%	30%	27%	27%	26%	24%	22%	24%



**Questions?**