



**ARAPAHOE COUNTY**  
COLORADO'S FIRST

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# News Release

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## Healthy Lands, Healthy Communities, Healthy People

*Arapahoe County distributes \$14.1 million for open space, parks and trails projects*

**Littleton, CO** – The Board of County Commissioners celebrated the distribution of \$14.1 million in project funding by the Arapahoe County Open Space program during a June 26 ceremony at 17 Mile House Farm Park - funding made possible by the generous voters of the Open Space Sales and Use Tax. The Cherry Creek Valley Historical Society and Cherry Creek Stewardship Partners also were presented with the *Our Progress Takes Flight* Stewardship Award during the celebration.

Grants and awards were distributed to local cities, towns and eligible special districts during the County's Open Spaces Shareback and Grant award ceremony, which is held each June.

"The County is proud to have strong partnerships with local municipalities and special districts in its joint efforts to build and enhance parks, connect regional trails and preserve open spaces," said Commissioner Nancy Jackson, District 4. "With our partners, we thank voters for their support of the Open Spaces as their tax dollars are helping neighborhoods flourish with healthy and vibrant outdoor recreation opportunities."

Arapahoe County citizens first had the vision to approve the Open Space Sales and Use Tax in 2003 and again in 2011. The quarter-of-a-penny sales and use tax is dedicated to preserve open space, enhance parks, build trail connections and protect our heritage areas.

Since its inception, the Open Space program has acquired or protected 30,000 acres of land for parks, trails and open space; created or enhanced more than 100 neighborhood and regional parks and nearly 40 open space properties and built or improved more than 190 miles of community and regional trails. More than \$151 million has been efficiently and effectively invested to protect water quality, preserve urban and rural open space, protect wildlife corridors and preserve the rich agricultural heritage of Colorado's First County.

### Stewardship Award

The Cherry Creek Valley Historical Society and the Cherry Creek Stewardship Partners were jointly presented with the *Our Progress Takes Flight* Stewardship Award, which annually recognizes an individual, local government or organization for displaying outstanding leadership, cooperation and stewardship to ensure the conservation and protection of the great outdoors.

Both organizations are acknowledged for being an invaluable partner of the Open Space program. These groups support preservation of our heritage, conservation of the Cherry Creek watershed and education of our community.

One of the wonderful offerings to citizens, by these groups, is free monthly tours of the 17 Mile House. Tours take you back in time to learn about the ways of the west and our rich history in farming and agriculture.

Additionally, both groups are pioneering first efforts toward formal open space programming on behalf of the County. They piloted an education program, launched in 2014, to engage local school children in a half-day of learning about the House, the agricultural and farming history, the watershed and the geology of the County.

**Open Space Shareback Awards:** Arapahoe County has one of the largest shareback programs in Colorado with 50 percent of the Open Space tax revenue returned to incorporated cities and towns to enhance local parks, trails, recreation and open space each year.

Since 2004, more than \$107 million from the Open Space Fund has been distributed to cities and town since the program's inception. This year, Arapahoe County distributed more than \$11.7 million in shareback funds, which was divided among the following cities and towns, based on population:

<b>Aurora</b>	\$6.85 million	<b>Englewood</b>	\$718,573
<b>Bennett</b>	\$8,371	<b>Foxfield</b>	\$17,128
<b>Centennial</b>	\$2.4 million	<b>Glendale</b>	\$99,296
<b>Cherry Hills Village</b>	\$142,285	<b>Greenwood Village</b>	\$332,506
<b>Columbine Valley</b>	\$29,923	<b>Littleton</b>	\$936,720
<b>Deer Trail</b>	\$12,954	<b>Sheridan</b>	\$164,336

### **Arapahoe County Open Space Grants**

In addition to Shareback funds, 12 percent of the annual tax revenue is set aside for competitive grants to eligible special districts and municipalities with more than \$24 million in grants awarded since 2004 for 152 projects throughout the County.

Arapahoe County awarded more than \$2.24 million in grants for 17 open space, park and trail projects in three categories. Grant recipients generated an additional \$10.8 million dollars in matching funds.

The 2015 projects receiving funding include:

#### **Small Grant**

**City of Cherry Hills Village – City-wide Trail Surface Treatment | Grant: \$50,000 | Match: \$41,000**

A total of 34 miles of trail will be repaired to extend the lifespan and quality of the trail surface.

**City of Cherry Hills Village – Three Pond Park Irrigation and Tree Planting | Grant: \$25,000 | Match: \$3,000**

A water tap and irrigation system will be installed and trees planted for this 9.5-acre open space park

**City of Littleton – Trail Signage, Phase One for South Platte Park and Mary Carter Greenway**

**Grant: \$50,000 | Match: \$110,000**

This signage replacement project will provide uniformity, reduce clutter and increase usefulness for users.

#### **Planning Grants**

**Byers Park and Recreation District – Byers Community Park Renovation | Grant: \$34,600 | Match: \$4,296**

The district will complete site plans, construction documents and a phased implementation strategy with the funds.

**Cherry Creek Vista Park and Recreation District – Windemere Park Site | Grant: \$45,000 | Match: \$10,000**

Planning measures to include safety and accessibility upgrades, educational playground, shade structures and native landscaping.

**City of Cherry Hills Village – Trail Survey and Master Plan | Grant: \$50,000 | Match: \$5,750**

Plans include a trail survey and master plan, including an inventory of trail infrastructure and easements.

**City of Greenwood Village – Goldsmith Gulch Channel Restoration, Phase 2**

**Grant: \$80,000 | Match: \$8,890**

This phase includes the design of "braided gardens" for natural plants - inspired by the ecology of the channel.

**City of Sheridan - Alternatives Study for Bear Creek Trail Crossing at Lowell Boulevard**

**Grant: \$46,905 | Match: \$7,500**

An alternatives study for a safer connection of Bear Creek Trail across the dangerous Lowell Boulevard intersection.

**South Suburban Park and Recreation District - Progress Park Master Plan | Grant: \$60,000 | Match: \$6,600**

Update includes a public input process and a site improvement plan for current and future use of the park.

**Wheatlands Metropolitan District - Wheatlands Park Master Plan | Grant: \$50,000 | Match: \$8,100**

Design of a community gathering place that encourages residents to get outside, exercise and socialize.

**Standard Grants**

**City of Aurora – Aurora Sports Park Expansion | Grant: \$278,000 | Match: \$7,743,391**

Lighting of the multi-use turf fields as part of the expansion of the regional sports park.

**City of Englewood – Englewood Parks Gateway Enhancements Phase One**

**Grant: \$200,100 | Match: \$83,300**

Replacement of 17 signs with a modern design along with landscaping.

**City of Englewood – River Run Trailhead Phase One | Grant: \$300,000 | Match: \$100,000**

Phase one includes site preparation and stormwater facilities for the 4-acre future trailhead.

**City of Littleton – Centennial Academy of Fine Arts Playground Renovation**

**Grant: \$148,587 | Match: \$50,000**

Replacement of outdated playground and addition of shade structures, natural play areas and ADA pathways.

**City of Littleton – Reynold’s Landing Phase One | Grant: \$300,000 | Match: \$194,059**

Phase one of expansion and renovation includes a round-a-bout, 1,700 linear feet of new trail (10' wide), and 46 additional parking space.

**South Suburban Parks and Recreation District – Arapaho Park Playground Renovation**

**Grant: \$225,000 | Match: \$75,000**

Install age-specific playgrounds, upgrade concrete walking paths, and replace picnic tables and benches.

**South Suburban Parks and Recreation District – Writer’s Vista Park Renovations**

**Grant: \$300,000 | Match: \$100,000**

New age-specific play structures, surface areas, sidewalk access to ball fields, picnic tables and benches.

To learn more about Arapahoe County Open Space program, visit [www.arapahoegov.com](http://www.arapahoegov.com) and download the 2015 Community Guide.

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**To download photos please use the following link:**

<ftp://ftp.arapahoegov.com/Pub/Communication%20Services/Photos/OpenSpace/2015%20Shareback%20and%20Grants%20Ceremony/>

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