

A Message from the Adams County Open Space Advisory Board

The Open Space Advisory Board members are honored to be serving as your Open Space representatives during Adams County's Centennial year.

In the two years since the Open Space Sales Tax has been in effect, we have reviewed and toured 57 proposed open space projects. These projects have given us an appreciation for the beauty of the landscape in Adams County. We recognize the excellent job the cities and county have done in planning for parks and open space to meet the needs of the citizens.

The Open Space Sales Tax was passed on November 2, 1999 and went into effect on January 1, 2000. The sales tax is 1/5th of a cent on each dollar and sunsets on December 31, 2006.

The ballot issue established a seven-member citizen advisory board to solicit and review grants to be allocated from 68 percent of the funds. The grant program has collected almost \$9 million to date. We are proud our

recommendations to the Adams County Board of Commissioners have led to 46 funded projects through this allocation.

Thirty percent of the open space funds go directly to the cities and unincorporated Adams County to be used for parks and open space projects. To date, over \$3.7 million has been collected and distributed.

The Open Space Advisory Board meets the 4th Thursday of each month at 5:30 p.m. in the Parks Administration Building at the Adams County Regional Park, located one mile west of Hwy. 85 on 124th Ave. Our agendas are posted on the Adams County website at www.co.adams.co.us. We welcome your input and invite you to attend our public meetings. For more information, please contact the Adams County Parks office at 303.637.8004.

Sincerely,
The Adams County Open Space
Advisory Board



Open Space Board Members from left to right,
Back row: Kenneth Eichel, Patricia Bisant, Steve Bernard and Robert Sakata, Chairman
Front row: Edwin Hickel, Lois Buckman, Robert Welte

Open Space Tax History

Adams County citizens passed an Open Space Sales Tax on November 2, 1999. The voter-approved issue called for 68 percent of the proceeds from the tax to be distributed to eligible jurisdictions by a grant process. The Open Space Sales Tax issue also provided for 30 percent of the funds to be returned to the cities and county based on where the tax is collected. The remaining 2 percent may be used for administrative purposes.



Open Space at the Regional Park



The Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory Stone House at Barr Lake State Park

Grant Process

Since the implementation of the Open Space Sales Tax on January 1, 2000, the Board of County Commissioners has distributed \$8,731,281 in open space grant funds that have preserved 1,637 acres of parks, trails and open space.

The grant process was developed by the Open Space Advisory Board and is implemented by the Parks and Community Resources Department. Once the grants are scored, the Open Space Advisory Board makes a recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners for funding of each submitted project. At the end of 2001, there was a surplus of \$251,679 in the grant fund for future grant cycles in 2002.

Adams County Open Space Sales Tax Facts

- ❖ Passed in 1999
- ❖ 1/5 of 1 cent collected on each dollar, food excluded
- ❖ \$6,944,388 collected in 2001
- ❖ Tax Allocation:
 - 30% to the cities where the tax was collected
 - 68% for grants
 - 2% for administrative purposes

Open Space Terms & Definitions

Conservation Easement

A conservation easement is a legal document which permanently restricts the use or development of land in order to achieve one or more specified conservation purposes, such as the protection of farmland, open space or wildlife habitat. Once sold or donated to a qualified organization, such as a not-for-profit land trust or a government agency, a conservation easement is recorded in the county real estate records as a permanent restriction on the deed of the property on which it is placed. The sale or donation of a conservation easement is a voluntary act by a property owner wishing to conserve his or her land. If a property owner chooses to donate all or a portion of the value of the conservation easement, the property owner often can secure substantial tax benefits associated with this charitable contribution.

Purchase of Development Rights

Similar to a conservation easement except it usually just addresses purchase of future development rights.

Landowner-Bargain Sale

A bargain sale is when the landowner sells below the appraised value. This is also called a donation and the property owner can often receive tax benefits.

GOCO

Great Outdoors Colorado Trust Fund. GOCO was approved by the voters in 1992 to receive lottery funds to be used for parks, recreation, open space, trails and wildlife purposes. The GOCO Board awards the funds in grants. Counties, cities, non-profits, state parks, Division of Wildlife and recreation districts can all apply for grants.

ADA

Americans with Disabilities Act. This federal legislation ensures projects are accessible to those with disabilities.

Passive Use

Defined in the Open Space Sales Tax as land for open space preservation. Habitat preservation, farmland protection, bike trails, fishing, picnic, environmental education and environmental interpretation.

Active Use

Defined in the Open Space Sales Tax as sport fields, recreation centers and golf courses.

Land Trust

A non-profit with the goal of preserving land for purposes that often include open space, passive recreation uses, farmland preservation, river protection, community buffers and wildlife habitats. The Trust for Public Lands and The Conservation Fund have worked on land acquisition projects in Adams County.



McIntosh Dairy

2001 30% Open Space Distribution to Cities & the County



South Platte Wildlife Corridor

30% Distribution 2001

The ballot language for the Open Space Sales Tax designated that 30 percent of the funds be returned to the cities and the county where the tax was collected.

These funds can be used for all passive and active open space and parks projects. Following are the amounts returned to the cities and how they have been allocated by each city:

Arvada \$ 21,685.98 1%

The City of Arvada has not spent the 30% allocation from the Open Space Sales Tax. The money will be used in the future for improvements to Tennyson Knolls Neighborhood Park or to partner with the City of Westminster on a joint project in the Hidden Lake area.

Aurora \$ 181,754.57 9%

Open space land acquisition located at Airport Blvd. and Sand Creek. Adams County Open Space Tax funds received by the City of Aurora for the year 2001 have been applied to this acquisition for a total purchase cost of \$1,869,000.

Bennett \$4,423.82 Less than 1%

The Town of Bennett plans to use its 30% distribution funds for the future development of Brothers Four Park and a trail system.

Brighton \$137,308.34 7%

The City of Brighton's funds have been earmarked for future open space land acquisitions.

Broomfield \$33,973.68 2%

Plaster Reservoir trail design and construction is located in the area of 135th and Lowell. The trail will connect pedestrians on 136th to the wetlands and wildlife viewing area associated with Plaster Reservoir.

Commerce City \$191,053.40 10%

The City of Commerce City is building new trails throughout the city and along Sand Creek in addition to trail head construction, irrigation and purchase of plant material.

Federal Heights \$60,819.51 3%

Funds are allocated to improvements at Ruston Park.

Northglenn \$188,711.48 9%

Webster Lake/E.B. Rains Jr. Memorial Park Project, located at 117th Ave. and Community Center Drive was the benefactor of the City of Northglenn's allocation. The funds went toward the purchase of picnic pavilions, trail construction and landscaping.

Thornton \$411,411.10 21%

In 2001, Adams County Open Space Tax funds supplemented the acquisition of the 142- acre park and open space property located at 136th Avenue and Holly Street.

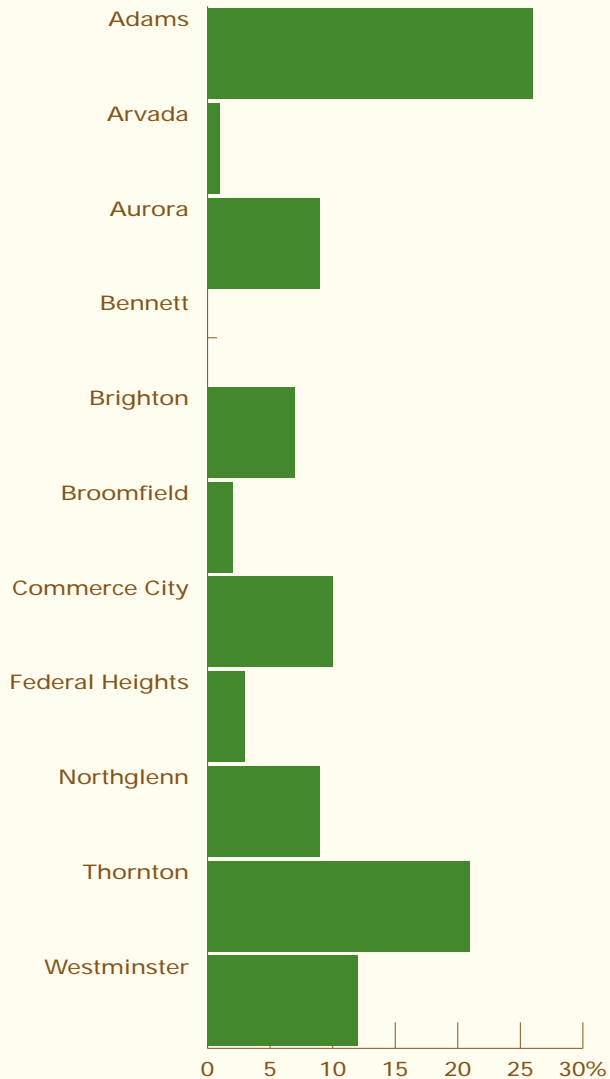
Westminster \$240,919.29 12%

Funds have been used for the development of Foxshire Park located at 108th Avenue and Alcott Street. The Foxshire Park project cost is approximately \$540,000.

Unincorporated Adams \$525,772.70 26%

The Adams County portion of the Open Space Tax Fund will be used as a match for land preservation projects in Adams County.

30% Open Space Distribution Total: \$1,997,833.96



Webster Lake/E.B. Rains Jr. Memorial Park

The Adams County Open Space Sales Tax fund distribution is a great help to the City of Westminster, allowing us to develop much needed park sites in the Adams County portion of the city. Foxshire Park, our latest neighborhood park development, provides our residents with park amenities that include a children's play lot, basketball court, open play areas and trails.

Bill Walenczak, Director of Parks, Recreation and Libraries

We are grateful for the opportunity to purchase more open space and provide more park amenities to our residents through the grants made possible by the Adams County Open Space Sales Tax. Thanks to voters who have approved initiatives like this tax and others, our children and their children will have places to relax, play and enjoy for many years to come.

Noel Busck,
Mayor of Thornton

The staff at Barr Lake State Park is very grateful for the generosity of the Open Space Advisory Board and the Adams County Commissioners. The public has benefited from several grants received from the Open Space Sales Tax revenues that have facilitated the purchase of nearly 200 acres and completion of an educational bird banding station.

Randy Rivers,
Barr Lake State Park Manager

2001 Grant Distribution from the 68% Allocation



Sand Creek Greenway, Aurora

Following are the grants the Adams County Open Space Advisory Board recommended for funding with sales tax revenues collected in 2001. The Board of County Commissioners approved the recommendations and awarded the grants.

East of Interstate 25, South of 104th Avenue

Commerce City, Sand Creek Regional Greenway Trail South Platte Connection \$95,300 This project is to complete construction of Commerce City's western connection of the Sand Creek Regional Greenway Trail.

Aurora, Sand Creek Greenway Land Acquisition \$500,000 This project includes the acquisition of 42.912 acres of open space between Sand Creek and the High Line Canal, just west of Airport Blvd. The long-term use of the property is open space. The area will be open to the public.

Thornton, Fukaye Fields Project \$100,000 The Fukaye Fields Project (Thornton Sports Complex) includes the design and construction of a multi-purpose field complex at 104th Avenue and McKay Road.

East of Interstate 25, North of 104th Avenue

Adams County, Barr Lake Buffer \$400,000 The Conservation Fund, in partnership with Colorado State Parks and Adams County Open Space, will purchase 153 acres as an addition to Barr Lake State Park.

Adams County, Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory Stone House Restoration \$20,000 The renovated 115-year-old stone house, located at the north end of Barr Lake, is now the new office for the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory (RMBO).

Northglenn, Sensory Playground & Shelter Construction \$200,000 For the construction of a "Sensory Playground" in the location of the existing playground and the installation of nine new picnic and shade structures at E. B. Rains Jr. Memorial Park in Northglenn.

Thornton, Aylor Property \$700,000 This land acquisition includes 139 acres located at the northwest corner of 136th Avenue and Quebec Street.

Thornton, Open Space Acquisition \$400,000 Purchase of 142 acres located at 136th Avenue and Holly Street.

Westminster, Big Dry Creek Open Space and Trail Corridor Acquisition \$300,000 Purchase of approximately 31.5 acres along the Big Dry Creek open space and trail corridor at W. 124th Avenue and Zuni Street.

Eastern Adams County

Adams County, Strasburg Metro Parks & Recreation–Diamonds in the Rough \$150,000

To purchase five acres for the development of two adult size ball fields with amenities.

South Platte River Projects

Adams County, Regional Park Open Space \$600,000

This project will preserve approximately 140 acres, fee simple or purchase of conservation easements on properties adjacent to the Adams County Regional Park.

Adams County, Rural Farmland Preservation

\$600,000 This 90-acre parcel is currently in farmland use and is identified on the South Platte Heritage Plan as part of "rural preservation" in the South Platte Corridor.

Adams County, South Platte Wildlife Corridor

\$600,000 Purchase fee simple or purchase conservation easements along the South Platte River from Hwy. 7 to 104th Avenue for preservaton of approximately 192 acres. This property will be conserved as a wildlife corridor.



Sand Creek Regional Greenway Trail, Commerce City



Niver Canal Trail, Northglenn

West of Interstate 25

Federal Heights, Ruston Park Walking and Bicycle Path Reconstruction \$78,600

Improvements to Ruston Park path will serve the community as an alternative means of getting from one neighborhood to another, for children getting to and from school and for recreational purposes. The awarded funds will also purchase pavilions and benches throughout the park.

Northglenn, Niver Canal Greenway Trail Replacement Project \$40,000

This project will re-establish a safe pedestrian access connecting the surrounding residential neighborhoods to the Northwest Open Space Recreation Area and the Highline Canal Trail System.

Mini-Grants for 2001

Adams County, Berkley Neighborhood– Jim Baker Reservoir Amenities	\$2,350
Adams County, Strasburg Metro Parks & Recreation District– Furnishing Our Parks	\$5,000
Adams County, Strasburg Metro Parks & Recreation District– Shading Our Park	\$3,990
Brighton– Barr Lake Education Bird Banding Station	\$1,720
Brighton– Trees at the Gateway	\$5,000