A painting of a large, leafless tree in a rural landscape. The tree is the central focus, with its dark, intricate branches reaching across the upper half of the frame. Below the tree, a wooden fence runs across the middle ground, separating a field from a line of green trees. In the background, rolling hills are visible under a pale, overcast sky. The overall style is that of a textured oil or acrylic painting.

*Adams County  
Open Space  
2000-2006*



# Adams County Open Space Advisory Board



TIM FERRELL  
Chairman  
Unincorporated  
Adams County



CHRIS DE MAY  
Vice Chairman  
City of Northglenn



PATRICIA BISANT  
Unincorporated  
Adams County



ED HICKEL  
Unincorporated  
Adams County



MIKE SWEENEY  
City of Federal  
Heights



GLORIA RUDDEN  
Unincorporated  
Adams County



LANCE GROTHE  
Town of Bennett

## A Letter from the Open Space Advisory Board Chairman

The projects funded in 2006 brought to a close the original Open Space Sales Tax passed by Adams County voters in 1999. The voters have given Adams County an opportunity to continue to pursue land preservation by extending the sales tax for another 20 years.

In these times of pressure from development and growth, there is even more urgency than before to preserve the nature and character of Adams County to ensure that future generations will know firsthand the beauty and importance that open space provides. Please join us in our land preservation efforts. You can participate by attending our monthly advisory board meetings, visiting the trails and open spaces in your communities and becoming a voice for the wildlife inhabiting these unique spaces that truly depend on our concern and generosity for their survival.

Sincerely,  
Tim Ferrell  
Chairman

## PAST OPEN SPACE ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS

Robert Sakata, City of Brighton

Steve Bernard, City of Thornton

Art Mander, City of Thornton

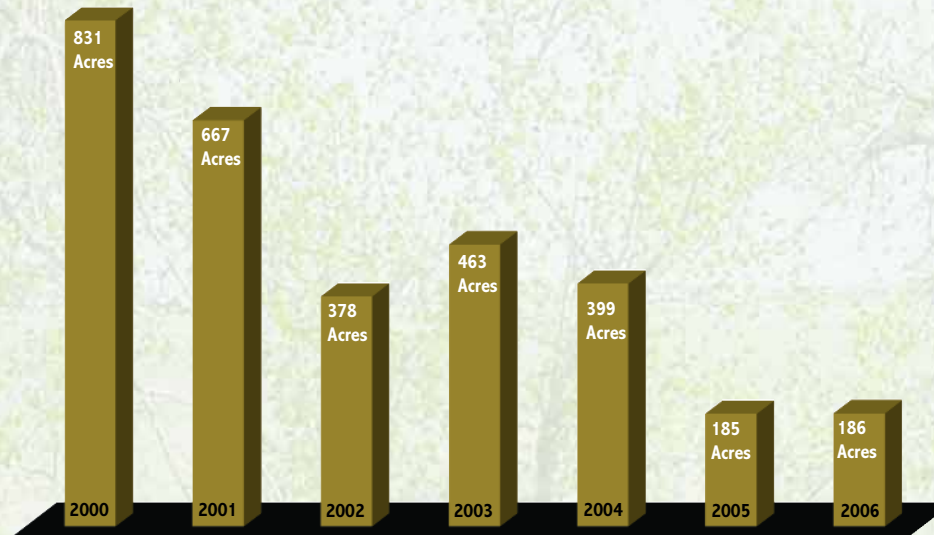
Ken Eichel, City of Westminster

Ann Merkel, City of Westminster

Lois Buckman, Unincorporated Adams County

Robert Welte, Unincorporated Adams County

# Number of Acres Preserved from the Open Space Sales Tax 2000-2006



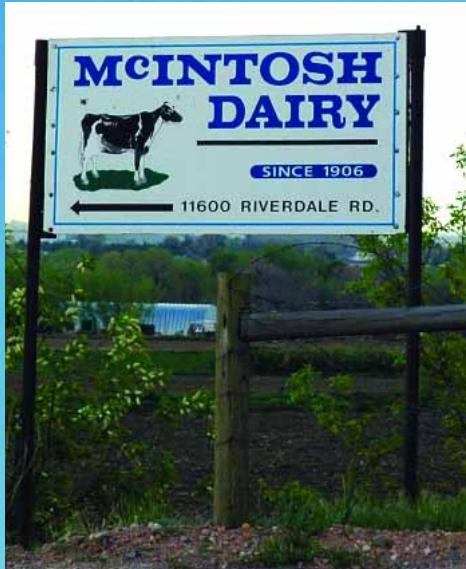
	ACRES
Adams County	1,941
Barr Lake State Park*	123
City of Aurora	70
City of Brighton	42
City of Broomfield	3
City of Commerce City	118
City of Thornton	358
City of Westminster	379
Special Districts:	
Hyland Hills Parks & Recreation District**	70
Strasburg Metro Parks & Recreation District*	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,109</b>

\*In partnership with Adams County

\*\*In partnership with Adams County and the City of Westminster



# Adams County Open Space Accomplishments 2000-2006



McIntosh Dairy

## LAND PURCHASES

The Open Space Sales Tax preserves natural areas by providing grants to acquire land that will be dedicated to preserving working farms and protecting natural areas, neighborhood parks and community buffers to limit sprawl.

Forty-nine projects have received funding from the grant funds for land purchases. Since the beginning of the Open Space program, \$15,619,360 has been used to preserve 1,886 acres for open space purposes. An additional \$8,981,675 has been used to protect 1,223 acres through conservation easements (see definitions on page 22).

## LAND PRESERVATION

A conservation easement transfers the development rights of a property to the grant recipient such as the county or a city. The property remains in the same ownership and is forever preserved from development.

In 2000, Adams County completed its first conservation easement with the McIntosh Dairy, located on historic Riverdale Road along the South Platte River. Since 2000, an additional five conservation easements have been negotiated with county landowners.



Adams County Regional Park



Adams County Open Space, north side of Barr Lake



# Other Funded Projects

Funding has gone to the cities and towns throughout Adams County for a wide variety of projects. The projects include new construction and development of parks and trails, as well as renovation of existing neighborhood parks. Shown here is a summary of these projects. Eleven other projects received \$101,595 in funding for planning, trail signage, tree planting, ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) access and historic preservation.



## RENOVATION OF EXISTING PARKS

Fourteen projects received \$1,613,506 to make improvements to existing parks and public amenities.



## NEW PARK CONSTRUCTION

Thirty-six new projects received \$4,816,462 for the development of new parks and multi-use athletic fields.



## TRAIL CONSTRUCTION

Eight projects received \$1,696,050 to construct new trails and make safety improvements to existing trail crossings.



## ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Nine projects received \$35,076 for environmental education.

# 30% Distribution Open Space Sales Tax

The Adams County Open Space Sales Tax began January 1, 2000. The tax was reauthorized in 2004 for 20 years and increased to 1/4th of one cent effective January 1, 2007. The sales tax is distributed three ways. Sixty-eight percent of the revenue goes into a competitive grant process for Adams County and its cities. A seven-member Open Space Advisory Board reviews grant applications and recommends funding to the Board of County Commissioners. Three advisory board members come from cities and four members from unincorporated Adams County. Thirty percent of the sales tax revenue is returned to the jurisdiction where the tax is collected. Two percent is retained to administer the Open Space Sales Tax program. See charts below for a breakdown of the 30% distribution for 2006 and of the 30% distribution that was collected and distributed from 2000 – 2006.

## 30% Distribution January 1 - December 31, 2006

Adams County	\$526,329.97
City of Arvada	\$18,805.26
City of Aurora	\$287,492.67
Town of Bennett	\$4,156.65
City of Brighton	\$175,781.44
City of Commerce City	\$222,859.89
City of Federal Heights	\$59,276.40
City of Northglenn	\$185,863.98
City of Thornton	\$548,684.16
Town of Watkins	\$1,173.50
City of Westminster	\$257,804.23

## 30% Distribution January 1, 2000 - December 31, 2006

Adams County	\$3,493,501.76
City of Arvada	\$143,277.58
City of Aurora	\$1,434,283.62
Town of Bennett	\$34,349.29
City of Brighton	\$1,008,856.02
City of Broomfield	\$64,875.75
City of Commerce City	\$1,349,141.43
City of Federal Heights	\$414,794.85
City of Northglenn	\$1,350,273.56
City of Thornton	\$3,190,119.82
Town of Watkins	\$4,174.67
City of Westminster	\$1,612,377.02



# 68% Distribution Open Space Grant Projects Funded in 2006

## **Adams County**

Riverdale Horse Property - \$396,675  
US 85 Farmland Corridor Preservation - \$3,600,000  
South Platte Trail, 120th Ave. to 124th Ave. - \$255,850

## **City of Brighton**

Trees for Water Tower Park - \$5,000  
Bromley Hishinuma Farm Acquisition - \$50,000  
Brighton Skate Park - \$50,000

## **City of Commerce City**

Pioneer Park Phase 2 - \$766,474  
Pioneer Park ADA Access - \$2,589  
Gifford Park ADA Access - \$1,200  
Belle Creek Multi-purpose Field - \$10,000

## **City of Northglenn**

Croke Reservoir Nature Area Improvements - \$470,500

## **City of Thornton**

Eastlake Open Space Acquisition - \$500,000

## **City of Westminster**

Big Dry Creek Park - \$500,000  
Cheyenne Ridge Park - \$80,000

## **SPONSORED PROJECTS**

### **Wonders of Wildlife Camp (City of Brighton)**

Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory - \$5,000

### **Jim Baker Statue Base & Signage (City of Westminster)**

Westminster Historical Society - \$4,200

### **Prairie Dog Action (City of Westminster)**

Front Range Community College - \$5,000



# Conservation Options for Landowners



Produce from Berry Patch Farms

*Many landowners in Adams County would like to conserve their lands, but do not know how. There are a variety of conservation options available to landowners that enable them to protect their land in a manner that meets their specific needs. Below are brief descriptions of just some of the conservation options available to landowners.*

## **Conservation Easements**

A conservation easement is a legal agreement between a landowner and a local government agency or land trust that permanently restricts the uses of the land in order to protect the land's conservation values. Conservation easements allow the landowner to conserve important aspects of the land without taking away the landowner's right to use the land, sell the land or pass the land on to heirs. In addition, conservation easements are flexible and can be written to meet the specific needs of the landowner.

Landowners who place conservation easements on their land are compensated financially for voluntarily

agreeing to place restrictions on their land. Landowners can either sell or donate a conservation easement. Significant state and federal tax incentives are given to landowners who donate all or a portion of the conservation easement.

## **Land Donation**

Donating land for conservation purposes is a conservation tool that ensures long-term protection of the land and relieves the landowner of management responsibilities and payment of property taxes. In addition, a donation can provide the landowner with substantial income tax deductions and estate tax benefits, as well as relief from any capital gain taxes that would result from selling the property.

## **Bargain Sale of Land**

Bargain sales are a good conservation tool for landowners who would like to protect their land, yet need to realize some immediate income from selling their land. In a bargain sale, the landowner sells the land to a land trust or local government agency for less than its fair market value. As a result, the land is protected and the landowner receives cash, avoids some capital gains tax and is entitled to receive a charitable income tax deduction based on the difference between the bargain sale price and fair market value of the land.

## **Retained Life Estate**

A landowner may wish to donate property to ensure that it will be protected in its natural state, but may

also desire to retain possession and use the property for his or her lifetime.

By donating a retained life estate, the landowner can continue to enjoy the land. The retained possession may be for the landowner's lifetime or for a fixed number of years. In addition, a landowner who donates a retained life estate may be eligible for a tax deduction when the gift is made.

## **Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs)**

In addition to the land preservation techniques listed, Adams County also administers a Transfer of Development Rights program that operates in a complementary fashion with the purchase of conservation easements. For more information on TDRs, contact the Adams County Planning and Development Department at 303.453.8000.

**For more information about the Adams County Open Space program and the efforts to preserve working farms and ranches, wildlife habitat and quality of life in Adams County, contact:**

**Adams County Open Space  
9755 Henderson Road  
Brighton, CO 80601  
303.637.8004**

**Visit us at  
[www.co.adams.co.us](http://www.co.adams.co.us)**

