

Newsletter from Colorado Springs City Councilmember Nancy Henjum

Hello District 5 friends and neighbors,

I'm so glad to connect with you through this edition of my District 5 Newsletter. Each month, I share updates on city projects, events you can join, resources for residents, and stories from around our community. Since my last newsletter I have been especially energized by residents who are themselves getting energized by what matters to them! **This newsletter is full of ways you can get involved! Note that a few of these opportunities have deadlines soon. Don't miss out!**



Several years ago, when I decided to run for my first term, it was out of a sense that ordinary people can and should stand up and make a difference in their communities. For years I've taken inspiration from this quotation from Margaret Wheatley: "There is no power for change greater than a community discovering what it cares about." That said, we know that such power is not invincible. Realistically, we often face disappointment when, for instance, others don't see things as we do and our best efforts are thwarted. And so when that happens, I am reminded of another favorite quotation of mine, from Václav Havel: "Hope is not the conviction that something will turn out well, but the certainty that doing the right thing makes sense, regardless of how it turns out."

I encourage you to find the courage to keep getting up, getting out, and making a difference! One step, one day at a time!

Grateful to serve,

Nancy

Councilmember, District 5 – Colorado Springs

Cragmor/Papetown Neighborhoods – Community Meeting with Parks and Rec



As you just read above, "There is no power for change greater than a community discovering what it cares about." I felt that power on September 24 when more than 150 neighbors from the Cragmor and Papeton neighborhoods gathered at Edison School to talk about the future of Portal, Flanagan, and Danville Parks. The turnout was inspiring, and the care people showed for their parks and one another filled the room with optimism.

With critical support from our Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services (PRCS) staff, Great Outdoors Colorado, and the Division of Reclamation and Mining Safety (DRMS), neighbors shared their priorities and hopes for the future. Through "dot voting," the top choices were clear: transforming the closed Portal Park pool into a spray ground (or rebuild the pool if possible), rebuilding the courts at Portal Park, and adding a new ADA walking loop in Flanagan Park. Additionally, there are calls for improvements such as lighting, restrooms, pedestrian safety, trash cans, dog poop bag dispensers and ongoing clean-up efforts.

I'm excited to share some especially good news: DRMS has awarded a \$750,000 grant for investigation and mitigation at Portal Park, beginning in early 2027. This funding is a crucial first step toward restoring and reimagining the park for the future.

Thank you to every neighbor who showed up, spoke up, and reminded us that when community comes together, real change begins. Thank you to our dedicated PRCS staff who are grateful for the community engagement and support.

What's Next?

We've started to build great momentum together, and I'm committed to keeping it going for my final 3.5 years in office. As your City Councilor, I will help convene future conversations with partners like Public Works, Police, and even the Pioneer's Museum to capture and learn from some of the deep history that was shared in the last meeting. But lasting impact comes from neighbors like you! Consider forming "Friends Of" groups with the Parks Department to help shape and sustain ongoing care, programming, and storytelling for these special places. I'd love to hear your ideas for what's next and how we can move forward together.

Wasteless COS: City seeks stakeholder input – *take note of deadlines!*

In my 4.5 years on council thus far, I have heard from many dozens residents that they want more efficient and effective waste management in our city. Well, a couple of years ago the city received funding from the Colorado Circular Communities (C3) to complete a [waste characterization study](#) and Waste Diversion Action Plan. That study is almost complete, and the City of Colorado Springs is exploring opportunities to increase waste diversion and recycling. We want to hear YOUR valuable input through virtual stakeholder meetings in October.

Residents (including residents of single-family homes, condos, apartments, mobile home parks, etc.)

- Option 1: Tuesday, October 14, 12:00 – 1:00 PM or
- Option 2: Wednesday, October 22, 5:30 – 6:30 PM

Businesses & Institutions (including business owners, employees, representatives, etc.): Tuesday, October 21st, 10:00 – 11:00 AM.

Solid Waste Service Providers (including representatives of waste haulers, waste processing facilities, composting organizations, recycling agencies, etc.): Wednesday, October 15th, 1:00 – 2:00 PM



All meetings will be held over Zoom. Translator services are available upon request.

Interested? Learn more and fill out an interest form at Sign Up at [Wasteless COS | City of Colorado Springs](#) for Wasteless COS by Friday, October 10th.

Visit and volunteer at the new Senior Center

You can learn more about the new Senior Center on Hancock in the heart of District 5 here: [Home - Senior Center](#). But I do want to brag on my sweet grandbaby, who attended the grand opening and helped me with some remarks. She and the rest of her family are now permanent residents of Council District 5. And I also want to encourage you to visit if you've not done so, and to consider both availing yourself of services and volunteering. The Senior Center is a partnership between the City, The YMCA of the Pikes Peak region, and many other partners, including Silver Key.



The City's 2026 Budget – Planning for a 31 Million Dollar Gap!

One of the roles of City Council is to adopt the City Budget, with or without amendment, and appropriate funds. The administration has already eliminated 38 positions and are proposing 5 scheduled unpaid furlough days in 2026 for city employees along with multiple other cost reductions.

The public is invited to give feedback regarding the City's proposed 2026 Annual Budget on **Monday, October 27** from **5:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.** in **City Council Chambers** at **City Hall**. Colorado Springs City Hall is located at 107 N. Nevada Ave. Write to Samuel.Friedman@coloradosprings.gov if you would like to speak directly to City Council about the priorities that matter to you.

Proposed 2026 Budget Information: [ColoradoSprings.gov/budget](https://coloradosprings.gov/budget)

Remaining Meetings for the Proposed 2026 City Budget:

- Wednesday, October 15 – Work Session for the proposed 2026 City Budget
- **Monday, October 27 – Public Input Meeting for the proposed 2026 City Budget**
- Wednesday, October 29 – City Council Budget Markup Session
- Monday, November 10 – First reading of 2026 Budget ordinance at City Council Regular Meeting
- Tuesday, November 25 – Second reading of 2026 Budget ordinance at City Council Regular Meeting

Public Hearing for the Colorado Springs Utilities Rate Case

The Colorado Springs City Council will hold a public hearing on **Tuesday, October 14, 2025** to consider proposed rate changes for Colorado Springs Utilities. The hearing will take place during the regular Council meeting in **City Council Chambers, City Hall (107 N. Nevada Ave.)**, beginning at **10:00 a.m.** The rate filing can be found [here](#).

Public Comment:

Community members are invited to provide comments in person at the hearing. To sign up in advance, please email samuel.friedman@coloradosprings.gov. Written comments may also be submitted to the City Clerk's Office.

Pikes Peak Library District Board of Trustees: APPLY! DEADLINE OCTOBER 24

Although the Rockrimmon Library that the Board of Trustees voted to close – a move I vigorously opposed as Board Liaison – is not in Council District 5, all of us in Colorado Springs and the greater Pikes Peak region are affected by the vibrancy of our local libraries. And that begins with having Board Trustees who truly care about the communities that are served by those libraries and who support the mission of public libraries.



From a current announcement seeking applications to the board: “Members of PPLD’s Board of Trustees are appointed by a joint committee of the Colorado Springs City Council and the El Paso County Board of Commissioners. It is a governing board of seven members that are limited to two five-year terms. Trustees serve without remuneration and must live within the Library District’s service area.”

Click here to learn more, including how to apply: [City Council invites community engagement: Serve on the Pikes Peak Library District Board of Trustees | City of Colorado Springs](#).

Celebrating a Century of Innovation at Ruxton Hydroelectric Plant

On August 8, I had the incredible opportunity to visit the Ruxton Hydroelectric Plant to celebrate its 100th anniversary alongside the other Utilities Board Members, El Paso Commissioners and members of the media. Standing in Ruxton Park, high on the south slope of Pikes Peak, I couldn’t help but reflect on the remarkable legacy of this facility—opened in 1925 as the world’s first fully automated hydroelectric plant.



Even after a century, Ruxton is still going strong. With a generating capacity of one megawatt (MW), it continues to operate remotely from the control center in Colorado Springs. It’s amazing to think that in a semi-arid region like ours, hydropower has been a part of our energy story since 1898—and it’s still growing. Today, Ruxton is one of four hydro plants serving our community, alongside Manitou Hydro (6 MW), Tesla Hydro (28 MW), and Cascade Hydro (1 MW).

Ruxton Park itself has a fascinating history. Originally intended to be a town site, a few log cabins were built before the land was acquired by the City of Colorado Springs as part of the South Slope watershed. In 1924, Colorado Springs Utilities began constructing the pipeline from Lake Moraine to the Ruxton plant, dropping a total of 1,160 feet and generating an impressive 500 psi (pounds per square inch) of turbine inlet pressure.

Being at the plant for this milestone event was both humbling and inspiring. It’s not every day you get to witness a century-old piece of engineering still doing what it was built to do—efficiently, sustainably, and with a touch of historical brilliance. Here's to another hundred years of innovation and clean energy at Ruxton!