



June 2026

## *A Personal Note: Taking a Deep Breath Together*



*Pikes Peak from Patty Jewett Golf Course June 6 at the 70<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration of a friend.*

My newsletter this month isn't about the very many things I have been doing or that you might be interested in learning about. It isn't really newsy. It is about serving you as your representative, about the people who choose public service, about the rising levels of worry and anger in our public conversation, and about how we individually and collectively carry them.

Few topics capture the tensions we face right now better than data centers. The concerns reach me from nearly every direction you can imagine.

Some are about water, noise, air, and other environmental impacts in an arid climate. Some are about energy: what new demand does to our grid and to the rates we pay. Some are about transparency, and a lack of trust that your civic servants, elected and non-elected, are acting in the public interest. And underneath much of it is a deeper unease about artificial intelligence itself, about how fast the technology is moving, and whether anyone is steering it with the overall health of our community in mind.

I take all of that seriously. These are legitimate concerns, and they deserve real answers.

At the same time, I think we must recognize the other half of the picture. If you use a phone, stream a show, look up directions, bank online, or send me an email, you are already relying on data centers somewhere. And if you use AI (even if just a free version to enhance a Google search) you are using a data center.

Data centers have been part of American infrastructure since the 1960s. Colorado Springs has had them for years, and most of us never noticed. What's changed is the scale. AI-driven facilities draw far more power and require far more infrastructure than the data centers that have been operating in our city for decades. Colorado Springs is going to see more of these proposals, not fewer. There is demand for this kind of infrastructure. How much? How fast? Valid questions. It's a reality we need to be prepared for, and that's why getting the details right on each new proposal matters now more than ever.

The real work, then, is not pretending we can wish the technology away. It is insisting that every project receive careful, specific evaluation. What are the actual impacts on water, energy, and neighborhoods? Are commitments enforceable, not just aspirational? Is the public getting adequate information and genuine transparency? Are we protecting ratepayers? Not every data center is the same. The details matter — the site, the scale, the technology, the conditions, the operator. Getting those details right is how we protect neighborhoods *and* keep Colorado Springs competitive. It is not one or the other. And it means having very challenging conversations about both the benefits and the dangers of AI, a technology we created.

There is a specific data center matter that may be coming before City Council if it is appealed, and because that would be a quasi-judicial proceeding, I cannot and will not comment on it here or anywhere outside the hearing. That is not me dodging. It is the law, and it exists to guarantee every applicant and every neighbor a fair process. What I can tell you is this: I will approach it exactly as I have approached every land use matter that has come to me over the past five years. I will listen to the full record, apply the criteria honestly, and decide as fairly as I know how.

Which finally brings me to what worries me most. It is not any single project.

I am profoundly concerned about what has emerged as the collective tone of our public discourse. It is the way we speak to city employees and elected officials, in writing and in person. It feels like we are losing our minds — and perhaps even our collective humanity. Some of us have reached the point where being cruel and threatening violence in our language is not just okay; it is expected, it is brave. Alongside the thoughtful and passionate messages that are the lifeblood of democracy, what is being conveyed to your city servants wishes harm, sometimes even death. I do not say that for sympathy. I say it because the pressure makes it harder for all of us to stay open and to keep listening, and a city government that stops listening is exactly what none of us wants.

All of this leads me to a request and an offering.

**Request:** We can be fierce about data centers, growth, AI, any of it, and still treat one another as neighbors. There is so much we cannot control right now, and this is deeply unsettling, even frightening. But we can control how we treat the person on the other side of the screen. Let us help each other remember to breathe and recognize that each of us has a story that deserves to be heard and respected. And then let's get back to the hard, hopeful work of building this community together.

**Offering:** The first is a poem that for me is an inspiration to practice being my best self. It is one I have come to many times since it was first read in my church in January of this year. On my very best days, I am striving to practice these words. Those best days feel further apart right now, with the stresses and pressures we're all feeling. But I am ultimately so grateful to have the loving support of friends and family and of very many of you who read my newsletter. I am so very imperfect. And each day is a new opportunity for practice.

The second is an offering of beauty. Consider taking eight and a half minutes to [watch jazz pianist Hiromi Uehara](#) play her stunning medley of the Beatles' "Blackbird" and Bach's "Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring." It is a reminder that even in anxious times, there is still so much wonder and grace in the world worth slowing down for.

## Because

By Rosemerry Wahtola Trommer

So I can't save the world -  
can't save even myself,  
can't wrap my arms around  
every frightened child, can't  
foster peace among nations,  
can't bring love to all who  
feel unlovable.  
So I practice opening my heart  
right here in this room and being gentle



Blackbird & Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring - Hiromi Uehara (Complete Transcription)

with my insufficiency. I practice  
walking down the street heart first.  
And if it is insufficient to share love,  
I will practice loving anyway.  
I want to converse about truth,  
about trust. I want to invite compassion  
into every interaction.  
One willing heart can't stop a war.  
One willing heart can't feed all the hungry.  
And sometimes, daunted by a task too big,  
I tell myself what's the use of trying?  
But today, the invitation is clear:  
to be ridiculously courageous in love.  
To open the heart like a lilac in May,  
knowing freeze is possible  
and opening anyway.  
To take love seriously.  
To give love wildly.  
To race up to the world  
as if I were a puppy,  
adoring and unjaded,  
stumbling on my own exuberance.  
To feel the shock of indifference,  
of anger, of cruelty, of fear,  
and stay open. To love as if it matters,  
as if the world depends on it.

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As always, I am grateful to serve,

Nancy