

CENTENNIAL CONNECTION

Winter 2024

A publication by the City of Centennial



MEET THE MAYOR

Centennial Mayor Stephanie Piko is available to meet virtually and in-person with residents and business owners.

Schedule a time to meet at a time that's convenient for you, visit centennialco.gov/meetthemayor.



INSIDE OUR CITY

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Remembering a Legacy

Cathy Noon, a visionary leader who served as the City of Centennial's second Mayor for eight years, passed away in December after a courageous battle with pancreatic cancer.

Mayor Noon's leadership and dedication to Centennial spanned decades. During her tenure as Mayor, we witnessed many initiatives including the completion of significant transportation projects, the opening of Centennial Center Park, IKEA, Topgolf and the groundbreaking for The District. Additionally, under her guidance the City established its Senior Commission, constructed

a fiber backbone and the opening of the City's Public Works Facility, all crucial in shaping the City's identity.

Mayor Noon was an influential figure in the community and her remarkable impact has left a lifelong mark on the City of Centennial and its residents. We are thankful for her legacy, and she will be missed.



2024 CITY COUNCIL



Left to Right Back Row: Alston, Sweetland, Piko, Tharp. Front Row: Sheehan, Carnes, Sutherland, Holt & Maurer.

In early January, one newly elected and three incumbent City Council Members were sworn into office.

Centennial Municipal Judge Louis Gresh administered the oath of office to, newly elected Amy Tharp (D1), Christine

Sweetland (D2 incumbent), Richard 'Rik' Holt (D3 incumbent), and Don Sheehan (D4 incumbent), who began serving four-year terms. The City also expressed its gratitude to Council Member Candace Moon (D1) who concluded her term and eight years of service.



Call to Action! Local Control Matters- Centennial should make decisions locally!

Centennial residents should be concerned by the State regulating specific zoning and land use within the City, as it would reduce your ability to engage in local decision-making.

The State is positioning itself as the main authority to govern accessory dwelling units, parking of all sorts, and land use/zoning around light rail and certain bus corridors.

If these bills pass, and you find yourself in disagreement with how they impact you or your neighborhood, your recourse to appeal to Centennial's City Council or fellow residents will be greatly diminished.

Instead, you will have to address the matter with the State of Colorado or seek sponsorship from a legislator and hope a majority of state legislators and the Governor support. Or you could collect signatures and place an initiative on a statewide ballot and hope most Colorado voters agree with you.

Please contact your representatives and ask them to vote NO on the bills below.

*Encourage partnership with the State Legislators.
Centennial is represented by:*

CHRIS KOLKER

State Senator • Senate District 16
chris.kolker.senate@coleg.gov
(303) 866-4883

TOM SULLIVAN

State Senator • Senate District 27
tom.sullivan.senate@coleg.gov
(303) 866-4873

CHAD CLIFFORD

State Representative • House District 37
chad.clifford.house@coleg.gov
(303) 866-5510

DAVID ORTIZ

State Representative • House District 38
david.ortiz.house@coleg.gov
(303) 866-2953

ELIZA HAMRICK

State Representative • House District 61
eliza.hamrick.house@coleg.gov
(303) 866-3706

2024 BILLS OF CONCERN:

HB24-1152 Accessory Dwelling Units

- State law would control how ADUs would be regulated. Centennial is considering its own ADU ordinance in March, but State law would override local rules. As an example, the State bill prohibits cities from requiring off-street parking for ADUs; Centennial's draft ordinance requires 1 off-street parking spot.
- Municipalities could not require detached units to be architecturally compatible with the existing residence.
- HOA covenants/by-laws would also be preempted and have no authority over ADUs.

HB24-1304 Parking

- Prohibits municipalities from having minimum off-street parking requirements for all land use types. This means residential, commercial, industrial and places of public assembly would determine their own parking needs.
- The City may need to create a public street parking program.

HB24-1313 Density mandates around light rail and bus routes

- Mandates a minimum of 40 units per acre within 1/2 -mile of light rail stations (Arapahoe, Dry Creek, and County Line Light Rail Stations all impact Centennial).
- Failure to comply would strip cities of Highway User Tax Funds used by cities for street maintenance and operations. Centennial will receive approximately \$3.8 million in 2024.

Unhoused Initiatives Continue

As the number of unhoused individuals and families in the Denver Metro region continues to rise, municipalities, agencies, and nonprofits are intensifying their efforts to address this complex issue. The City and Arapahoe County, in collaboration with the City's Homeless Outreach Liaison Vanessa Gates, are assisting individuals and families experiencing homelessness or facing imminent risk. Through consistent outreach efforts and coordination with local agencies, we are working to provide essential resources and support to those in need. To learn more, visit centennialco.gov/homelessness.



community IMPROVEMENT



Community Grants

In Centennial, neighborhoods matter. To help bring that vision to life, the City has developed two community grant programs intended to enhance and foster neighborhood collaboration.

Large Community Improvement Grant – Now Open!

The Large Community Grant supports larger-scale improvements to neighborhoods. Groups may apply for up to \$10,000 per project for community-based enhancements, including but not limited to neighborhood signage, landscaping improvements, placemaking and community gardens.

- In 2023 the City received 23 applications and approved 8 grants. Seven neighborhoods completed projects through the grant program.
- **Applications are now open through April 2.** Please visit centennialco.gov/communitygrants or scan the QR code for the timeline requirements and online application.



neighborhood ENGAGEMENT



Neighborhood Engagement Grant – Opens April 2!

The Neighborhood Engagement Grant provides small monetary grants, up to \$500 per event, to residents, HOAs and community organizations located in Centennial to support community building events. This includes neighborhood block parties, movie nights and social gatherings. Yes, we want you to have fun and get to know your neighbors!

- In 2023 the City received 135 applications and approved 128 grants, distributing nearly \$49,000 in grant funds.
- **Applications open on April 2.** Please visit centennialco.gov/communitygrants or scan the QR code to apply.

Property Taxes & Mill Levy

LET'S TALK PROPERTY TAXES

Property tax revenue supports our public schools, municipal and county governments and special districts. They are a major source of revenue for the City of Centennial, as they fund City services such as law enforcement, public works including street maintenance. All revenue generated by property taxes stays in Arapahoe County and does not fund any state services. For 2023 taxes, payable in 2024, the City will levy a property tax of 5.010 mills or a tax rate of 0.005010. The City anticipates receiving about \$15.6 million in property tax revenues.

Who determines the tax rate? All of the tax rates of the various taxing entities providing services in the County are added together to determine the total tax rate. Taxing authorities, such as cities, counties, school districts and special districts annually set tax rates and levy the tax on property. The Taxpayer's Bill of Rights (TABOR) requires voter approval of any increase in tax rates.

In Colorado, tax rates are expressed as a mill levy (a property tax rate based on dollars per thousand of assessed valuation). One mill is 1/1,000th of a dollar or \$0.001 (1/10th of a penny). For example, a mill levy of 10 means \$10 of tax, per \$1,000 in assessed value.

For more information, visit centennialco.gov/cityfunding.



Pickleball - Let the Games Begin!

Grab your paddle and let the games begin! Centennial City Council approved Ordinance No. 2023-O-10 creating regulations for outdoor pickleball courts within the City and its residential areas. The details for both permanent and temporary outdoor pickleball courts, as well as limited exceptions for pre-existing permanent outdoor courts, are outlined online at centennialco.gov/pickleball.

Movie Nights

Centennial Movie Nights are back for its 2024 release! Beginning April 2, Centennial residents can make a reservation for the City's Movie Night Kit! It includes equipment for weekend outdoor fun: an inflatable movie screen, a Blue-ray Player, a projector, speaker, and more! Top it off with some freshly-popped popcorn, and you have an evening the whole neighborhood can enjoy.

Centennial's Movie Night program will run from April 26 through September 27, 2024. Reservations will be accepted beginning April 2 for Centennial residents. Mark your calendars and learn more at centennialco.gov/movie.





To Prune or Not to Prune

With winter in full swing, we don't always think about our trees and how to keep them healthy. However, pruning trees in late winter is one of the best times to do it!



WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Three main reasons: safety, health, and aesthetics.

Pruning is most important for safety, which includes removing branches that are at risk of falling to mitigate the risk of property damage or possible injury. Pruning branches and shrubs that encroach upon the public right of way is imperative for the safety of pedestrians, bikers and drivers in the neighborhood. According to the City's Code, this means trees must be at least 8 ft. above the sidewalk and 15 ft. above the street.

Another reason for pruning is the overall health of the tree. By removing diseased or infected branches, along with crossing or rubbing branches, pruning helps maintain a strong tree structure increasing its ability to withstand severe weather.

Lastly, pruning for aesthetics helps enhance a tree's natural form, as well as assist trees that do not self-prune.



HOW DO I PROPERLY PRUNE? HOW MUCH SHOULD I CUT OFF?

The extent of pruning primarily depends on the age of the tree. For mature trees, the rule of thumb is removing 5 - 10% of the total live wood; for growing trees, or "medium age" trees, this range increases to 10 - 25% of the live wood as the tree is still actively growing. It important to remove codominant or secondary trunks, as well as branches growing below the "primary canopy" of the tree.

Before you begin, decide what you want to achieve and make sure to trim the branches correctly. For small branches, it is recommended to trim 1/4 of an inch or more from the main stem. For larger branches, it is recommended to cut three to four inches above the collar, the bulbous area attached to the trunk, or a bigger branch at a 45-degree angle, ensuring that you cut from the bottom up. There is no need to dress or seal the cuts, as that will prevent proper healing and further growth.



WHAT DO I DO WITH THE DISCARDED BRANCHES?

Aside from throwing them away, there are many creative ways to use tree branches. They can be used as firewood, decorative pieces for the yard, or mulch in the garden.

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Branches can also be brought to the City's and South Suburban Park & Recreation District's

CHIP & MULCH EVENT Saturday, June 1

Turn in your dead branches and then collect mulch at the end of the day! For more information, please visit centennialco.gov.

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Centennial Airport Noise Study

Are you curious about aircraft noise and its impact on our community? Join Centennial Airport and a shared commitment to quieter skies at the Part 150 Noise Compatibility Study.

Comments or questions can be submitted at APA150noisestudy.com. If you have current noise concerns, formal complaints can be submitted at centennialairport.com.



Arapahoe Bridge Complete

The reconstruction of the bridge over Big Dry Creek Rd. on Arapahoe Rd., east of University Blvd. is complete. The enhanced bridge features wider lanes and a taller structure, significantly improving safety for the traveling public.

Construction crews continue to work on stream stabilization efforts under the bridge to the pedestrian and bike path. This work is anticipated to be completed this Spring providing safer pedestrian access over and around the bridge along with an upgraded drainage and waterway system for Big Dry Creek.

Thank you for your patience throughout this project. To learn more visit centennialco.gov/arapahoebridge and sign up for future updates.



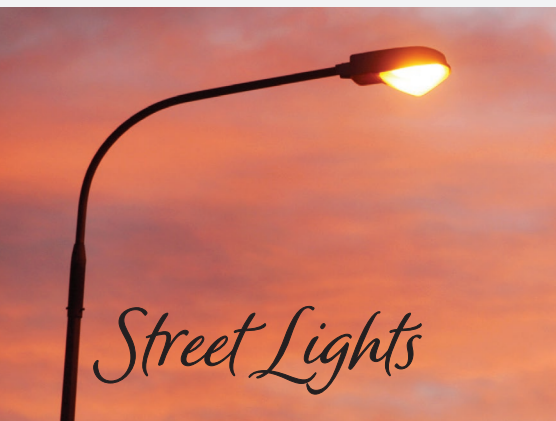
How Centennial Operates & Fiscal Sustainability

Centennial is focused on providing excellent customer service to our residents and customers. We partner with service providers in certain key areas, like Public Works and Law Enforcement, to deliver these services through contracts. This provides flexibility to adjust service levels as needed, access to quality regional resources that a community like ours would not normally have, and a focus on exceptional customer service.

The City was formed in 2001 from unincorporated Arapahoe County neighborhoods with established special districts providing key community services like water, sanitation and fire protection. These service models largely remain in place to this day, allowing each entity to provide their best level of service.

Our service delivery model that focuses on Fiscal Sustainability, ensuring our resilience to economic changes through forward-thinking planning for the future.

A significant part of the City budget is Operations and Maintenance along with major Capital Projects. Operations and Maintenance expenditures are funded based on service levels rather than “how it’s always been done.” We proactively plan and save for major Capital Projects during the biennial budgeting process, by committing fund balance for the future rather than taking on debt. We also diligently pursue grant opportunities, decreasing the City’s portion of costs for critical capital improvements to our street network.



Street Lights

Demonstrating Centennial’s values of intentionality and service-oriented, the City is purchasing \$1.4 million of street lights from Xcel Energy. The City anticipates improved customer service specifically for repair and maintenance. Residents should not experience a lapse in service.

Our **Citizen Response Center** is available 24/7 at 303.325.8000, along with the **My Centennial App**, to report problems across the City.

SAVE THE DATE

To learn more visit
centennialco.gov.

APRIL 17



MEET YOUR ANIMAL SERVICES OFFICERS

**Wednesday, April 17
6 – 7:30 p.m.**

Centennial Animal Services and the Human Society of Pikes Peak invite you to an open forum night to learn about support of the animals in our community.

APRIL 20



E-RECYCLING EVENT

**Saturday, April 20
8 – 11 a.m.**

Bring your old electronics to the Centennial Civic Center for recycling. For the list of accepted/not accepted items visit centennialco.gov.

MAY 7



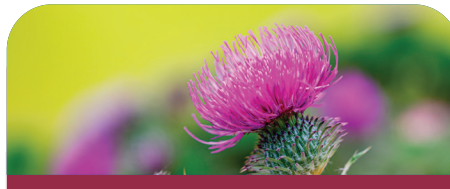
STATE OF THE CITY

Join Mayor Stephanie Piko and the City of Centennial for the 18th annual State of Our City luncheon.

**Tuesday, May 7
11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.**

Hosted by the Rotary Club of Centennial, tickets can be purchased at centennial.gov/stateofcity.

MAY 18



NOXIOUS WEED WORKSHOP

**Saturday, May 18
9 a.m. – Noon**

Learn about noxious weeds, how they threaten our native ecosystems in the area, and how to remove them. RSVP is required, and space is limited.

JUNE 1



CHIP & MULCH EVENT

Bring your tree limbs and woody plant materials for recycling.

**Saturday, June 1
8 a.m. – Noon**

Drop offs include the City's Public Works facility and Willow Springs Service Center. Free mulch while supplies last.

Center of Generations **Are you missing out?**

Poker, Mexican Train and Tai Chi by day. Esports, Digital Content Creating and Makers Space by night. Are you missing out? The Centennial YMCA Center of Generations at the Streets at SouthGlenn offers various programs for teens and older adults to enjoy. There is something for everyone!

View the list of available programs and be a part of a multi-generational community by visiting denverymca.org/centennial-cog.





City of Centennial
13133 E. Arapahoe Road
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centennialco.gov



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SEMSWA

SOUTHEAST METRO STORMWATER AUTHORITY



SEMSWA, the Southeast Metro Stormwater Authority (semswa.org), provides stormwater management services for drainage and flood control to the City of Centennial and unincorporated Arapahoe County with the primary purpose of protecting people and property from flooding. They are your resource for flood risk management.

Effective April 11, 2024 there will be updates to the FEMA, Federal Emergency Management Agency, flood risk maps (known as FIRM Panels.) There have been updates to the following creek and tributaries:

- Big Dry Creek
- Fillmore Tributary
- Otero Tributary
- Nobles Road Tributary

Want to learn if these updates affect you or your property? Have other questions about your flood risk? Contact SEMSWA at **303.858.8844** or semswamain@semswa.org.

