



Castle Rock
**PARKS &
RECREATION**
September 2022



LEARN MORE



CRgov.com/ParksandRec



parks@CRgov.com





Upcoming Events

View up-to-date information at CRgov.com/Events.

OCT
15

FALL FESTIVAL FEAT. CREEPY CRAWLIES AROUND THE ROCK
10 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Festival Park

OCT
22

SPOOKTACULAR
1 - 4 p.m.
Philip S. Miller Park

OCT
28

FANGTASTIC FESTIVAL
noon - 3 p.m.
Festival Park

NOV
5

PIE BAKE OFF
10:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.
The Millhouse at Philip S. Miller Park

NOV
19

STARLIGHTING
2 - 6 p.m.
Downtown Castle Rock

NOV
24

FACILITY CLOSURE
Thanksgiving Holiday
Recreation Center and
Miller Activity Complex



Parks, Open Space & Trails

PARK IMPROVEMENT PROJECT UPDATES

Parks, open space and trails located within the Town of Castle Rock contribute to the quality of life and enhance community character. The Council-approved Parks and Recreation Master Plan identifies the need to assess and plan renovations at existing facilities to sustain current levels of service and ensure user safety to continue to meet resident expectations.

BUTTERFIELD CROSSING PARK

The Butterfield Park Renovation was identified as a priority in the department's 2019-2024 Capital Improvement Plan. In addition to fitness stairs and a fitness course, new walking paths, new basketball and pickleball courts, new pavilions, a full-season ADA accessible restroom and upgraded lighting and irrigation, the renovation will feature a fully-inclusive playground. The Castle Rock Parks and Trails Foundation has set a goal of raising \$1.3 million for the Possibilities Playground, to help ensure play is accessible and fun for everyone. The project is slated for completion in spring/summer 2023.

In September, contractor American Civil Constructors moved along with significant progress in the playground and fitness areas. Only one seat wall remains in the playground area, as well the sensory wall. The concrete in the plaza area is complete, with only sandblasting and staining remaining. The restroom is also fully complete with the exception of plumbing fixtures. The pickleball and basketball courts are nearing completion and may open to the public prior to renovation project's end-date.

The Castle Rock Parks and Trails Foundation has raised \$917,611 to date and continues to connect with prospective donors and seek grant opportunities.





MITCHELL GULCH PARK

The Mitchell Gulch Park Renovation was also identified as a priority in the department's 2019-2024 Capital Improvement Plan. In addition to replacing the existing playground elements, the project will feature new tennis courts, new walkways, enhanced security lighting, a new pavilion, dedicated concrete parking areas, a bike pump track, a new fitness course, an all-season restroom and upgraded irrigation. The park will also be improved to meet current ADA accessibility standards. The project is slated for completion in summer 2023.

This past month, staff issued an Invitation for Bids via the Rocky Mountain E-Purchasing System for the Mitchell Gulch Park Renovation project and two responses were received. Designscales Colorado Inc. was the low responsive bidder. The department will seek Town Council approval of a construction contract with Designscales in October. Staff also elected to work with additional contractors to supply equipment and/or complete installation of various renovation components to reduce overall project costs. Proposals are being gathered and staff will soon seek approval for associated contracts. Additional vendors will likely include:

- Renner Sports Surfaces for the concrete tennis courts, saving approximately \$75k
- Landscape Structures to directly purchase the playground equipment, saving approximately \$30k
- Rocky Mountain Recreation for playground installation
- Churchich Recreation for fitness course equipment and installation
- CXT for the restroom



SECURITY UPDATES AT DEPUTY ZACK S. PARRISH III MEMORIAL PARK

This 5.5-acre park, located at 2020 Fiddle Road, honors the public safety profession and the men and women who work to keep the community safe. Dedicated in August 2019, the park features two play structures, picnic pavilions, a multi-use field, pickle ball and bocce ball courts, cornhole boards, horseshoe pits and a memorial honoring fallen Deputy Zack S. Parrish III.

Since opening, the memorial has experienced ongoing vandalism, and individuals have scratched words and figures into the metal. To address and prevent ongoing vandalism, sandblasting was completed to remove the clear-coat and expose the bare metal, removing previous damage. The memorial was then painted in a flat black finish that will allow future vandalism to be easily repaired by the Park Operations and Maintenance Division. Cameras were also installed to monitor park activity.

Resident LuAnne Howell complimented staff on their efforts: "...I would like to thank who ever [sic] is responsible for having the sandblasting and painting done on the metal structures at the Zach Parrish III City Park. We have enjoyed this park during our walks and visits with the granddaughters. We are appreciative of how the parks maintenance department keeps up our parks in Castle Rock for the enjoyment of the community."



PARK VISITATION

TRAFx pedestrian and vehicle counters are positioned at various locations around Castle Rock, including open space areas, trails, parks, as well as inside the Recreation Center and the MAC. These counters have been collecting data to assist staff in analyze any daily, monthly or yearly trends for the amenities managed by the Town of Castle Rock Parks and Recreation Department.

Two busy sites within the Town include Gateway Mesa Open Space and Philip S. Miller Park. In September, 4,731 vehicles entered the parking lot at Gateway Mesa Open Space. The property is averaging 141 vehicles per day so far in 2022.

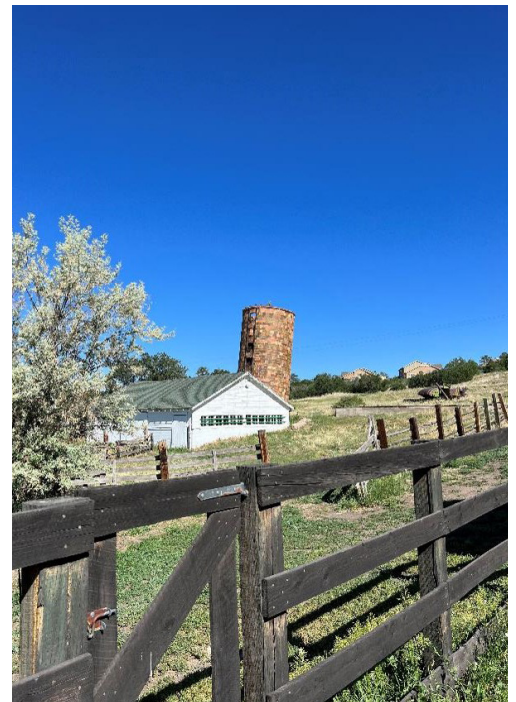
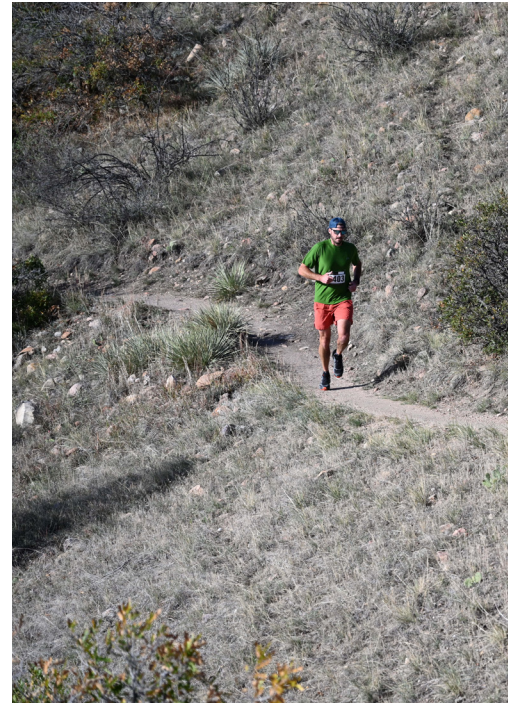
At Philip S. Miller Park, 35,299 vehicles entered the park lot in September. Being a regional park, this location was home to four large-scale events in September, and the vehicle counter reflected this. So far in 2022, Philip S. Miller Park sees an average of 1,129 vehicles per day.

Staff will continue to monitor TRAFx counters at all locations.

TRAILHEAD PARKING ADDITION AT METZLER FAMILY OPEN SPACE

In June 2021, Town Council approved a resolution accepting the donation of property from the estate of Robert F. Metzler northwest of the Crowfoot Valley Road and Founders Parkway intersection. This 60-acre property has since been named the Metzler Family Open Space and features a historic homestead, silo and additional outbuildings along with ranchland dating back to Douglas County's homesteading. As part of the transfer of the property, the Town agreed to the installation of parking, signage and trails for the first phase of property improvements, as well as the restoration of the silo. Trails were installed and the silo restored in summer 2022. The Metzler Family Open space is now open for public use, but more formal access will be provided through the development of an access road and trailhead.

In September the Town solicited construction bids via Rocky Mountain E-Purchasing System to construct access and trailhead parking at Metzler Family Open Space. The low responsive bidder was Schmidt Construction Company in the amount of \$1,135,039.20. Staff will seek Town Council approval of a construction contract with Schmidt in October to commence trailhead development. Depending on weather, a substantial portion of the parking lot will be complete by Dec. 23, 2022.





CONNECTING COLORADO THROUGH THE COLORADO FRONT RANGE TRAIL IN CASTLE ROCK

The Colorado Front Range Trail project was initiated by Colorado State Parks and the support of many stakeholders in 2003 to set the vision of a multi-purpose trail connecting communities across the Front Range from New Mexico to Wyoming. Castle Rock will serve as the trail's southern crossroads, eventually connecting Douglas County with Denver via the Cherry Creek Regional Trail. To complete the Town's remaining portions of the Colorado Front Range Trail, construction will include approximately 5 miles of 10-foot-wide concrete trail located in three areas of Town including the Cobblestone Ranch, Terrain and Montaine neighborhoods. Construction will commence fall 2022 and is anticipated to be complete by September 15, 2023.

This past month, staff issued an Invitation for Bids via Rocky Mountain BidNet and two responses were received. The low bidder was Native Sun Construction Inc. Staff will seek Town Council approval of a construction contract in October to commence project development.

DATA DRIVEN PRESENTATION AT THE COLORADO OPEN SPACE ALLIANCE CONFERENCE

The Colorado Open Space Alliance (COSA), an organization of publicly funded local and regional open space programs who work cooperatively to protect and preserve open spaces throughout Colorado, held its annual conference in September. Natural Resource Specialist Barbara Spagnuolo co-presented with Joe O'Brien, Program Manager for Park Partnerships at AllTrails.

The presentation, attended by roughly 40 participants, was entitled 'Scan Me! An Exploration of the Value and Limitation of QR Codes on Trails'. This past summer, the Town and AllTrails partnered to explore the value of utilizing QR codes at trailheads to enhance visitor experiences and improve communication with the public. This pilot project tracked the rate of adoption, public sentiment, and practical limitations of blending physical trail signage with digital information across multiple properties. By comparing rates of QR code use against trail counter data we aim to present a clear, data-informed picture of the value of this technology for management agencies as they consider new approaches to public engagement.

The presentation and placement of QR codes at trailheads is the result of an exciting pilot partnership with AllTrails, launched last year.





Recreation Facilities

SPORTS DEVELOPMENT CENTER

Since its inception, the department has thoughtfully planned, implemented and maintained public recreation facilities enhancing active lifestyles, health and wellness, youth development and multi-generational social interaction.

The next proposed recreation facility is a Sports Development Center that would complement the youth-oriented Miller Activity Complex and traditional recreation options available at the Recreation Center, providing new opportunities for league play, developmental programming and drop-in use. The Town has not constructed a new gymnasium or competitive pool since 1988. By the time a new facility is developed, the Town is projected to have approximately 90,000 residents.

To prepare for growing demand, staff worked with architectural firm Barker Rinker Seacat (BRS) to complete an Indoor Recreation Feasibility Study throughout 2021. The purpose of the study was to assess community programming needs, development costs and operational impact, and set a general timeline for the next indoor recreation facility. While the study confirmed the Town's financial ability to develop and operate the first phase a new facility, it also identified that the Town has limited site options.

To address site options, staff issued a Request for Proposals to seek potential partners to contribute land and other value to the project. All undeveloped park properties owned by the Town that could accommodate a future facility are located within residential areas, and a sports development center could potentially generate significant traffic, especially during tournaments, requiring a more ideal and centrally located site.

Confluence Companies, the developer of the Riverwalk and Encore, answered the RFP and provided a proposal to provide land and options for financing and construction services to advance the project. Confluence proposes to build the sports development center at the

former Acme Brick facility on Prairie Hawk Drive. They envision the facility as part of an overall mixed-use development project called the Brickyard that would clean up a blighted industrial area and energize the proposed development.

The department is continuing to work with Confluence Companies and BRS to define the project's next steps, while seeking Town Council approval.

In September, staff coordinated with the Legal Department to draft and finalize a Memorandum of Understanding with Confluence Companies that would define the terms of an unbinding agreement between both parties to begin site planning, demonstrating commitment towards eventually establishing a formal lease agreement to plan and construct the proposed sports center. The department will seek Town Council approval of the MOU in October.

Pending the approval of the MOU, staff will also seek Town Council approval of a contract amendment with BRS to initiate schematic design for the proposed facility. The schematic design phase will identify final facility programming and determine the spatial relationship between components, set initial cost estimates and define regulatory requirements. The design will include a site plan, floor plans, elevations and renderings.





Arts & Enrichment

HONORING FIREFIGHTERS THROUGH PUBLIC ART

Parks and Recreation Department staff continue to work with the Public Art Commission to enhance community character through public art. Last month the Town purchased a watercolor from local artist Cindy Welch called the Castle Rock Fire Department to honor the firewomen and firemen who serve to protect the local community. The painting features the Town's vintage fire truck at the Fire Department's headquarter station in downtown. The Public Art Commission will coordinate an unveiling event with Councilmember LaFluer of the station's district in summer 2023.





POST Partners Volunteer Program

COLORADO BLUEBIRD PROJECT

Each year, volunteers monitor bluebird populations through the Town's Post Partners Volunteer Program under the guidance of the Denver Audubon Society. The mission of the Colorado Bluebird Project is to improve the vitality of bluebirds throughout the state and to inform and education the public.

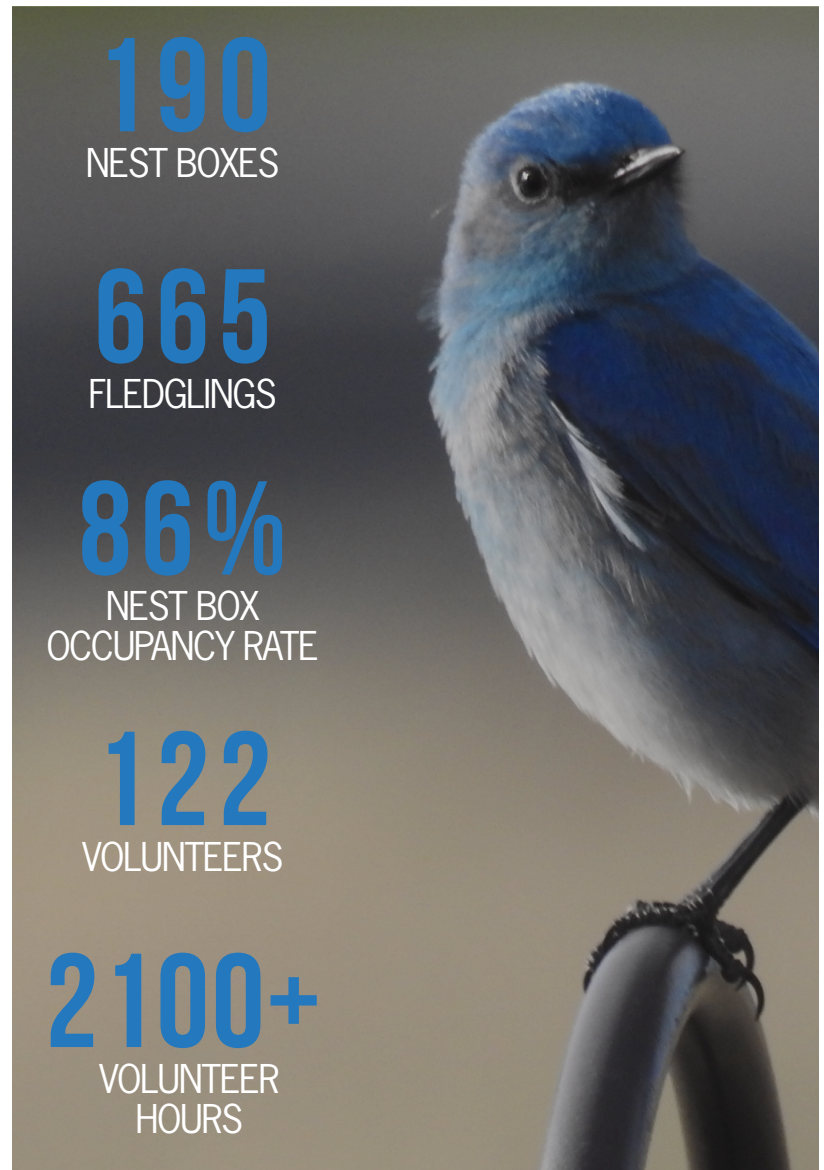
Bluebirds are social migratory songbirds, and, as second cavity nesters, rely on other species' used nest cavities or artificial nest boxes during their annual mating season. The POST Partners program manages 190 artificial boxes at 32 school, park, open space, cemetery and church sites in Castle Rock. Volunteers of all ages assist with annual maintenance and repair, as well as monitor fledgling success rates from April through August.

The 2022 season ended in September with a potluck celebration for volunteers. Attendees enjoyed a slideshow of photos, followed by a presentation summarizing breeding activity. Five native bird species used Castle Rock's nest boxes including Mountain and Western Bluebirds, Violet-green and Tree Swallows and Mountain Chickadees.

In its 16th year of data collection, bird activity saw a slight rebound from the lower numbers of 2021 with 665 total fledglings.

The Cornell Lab of Ornithology's NestWatch app was utilized by volunteers at all sites this year to directly record monitoring data, helping staff achieve the goal set in 2020 of using the technology at all data collection sites. In past years, volunteers have entered data into a Google Doc, which is transferred to [NestWatch.org](https://nestwatch.org) at the season's conclusion. Volunteer feedback was positive, and use of the technology helped reduce data entering and transferring at the end of the season.

More information on Castle Rock's Colorado Bluebird Project, as well as its volunteer opportunities, can be viewed at [CRgov.com/Bluebird](https://crgov.com/bluebird).





Community Events

BATTY ABOUT CASTLE ROCK

Offered through a partnership with Douglas Land Conservancy, the Town of Castle Rock offers free, family-friendly environmental educational programs. The Animals Around the Rock series dives into the characteristics that define Castle Rock's local wildlife, and in September, Kate Hogan of the Denver Audubon offered a presentation of Batty About Castle Rock. Over 80 participants learned interesting facts and viewing tips about nighttime and daytime insect eaters, bats and swallows, both of which have their own ecological niche in controlling mosquito and moth populations.

One additional Animals Around the Rock program will be offered in 2022 at the Fall Festival on Saturday, Oct. 15 from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Creepy Crawlies at the Rock will feature a Halloween-themed animal booth at Festival Park, including creatures like snakes, toads and other invertebrates, provided by Nature's Educators.



NATIONAL PUBLIC LANDS DAY

On Saturday, Sept. 24, the Parks and Recreation Department hosted an event at Metzler Family Open Space to celebrate National Public Lands Day. Always held on the fourth Saturday in September, this day was established to promote the enjoyment and volunteer conservation of America's public lands.

Three guided hikes of about 2-miles in length took participants through the new open space parcel. Nearly 60 visitors explored the new amenity, making this year's National Public Lands Day event a success.