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Arapahoe County Open Space is bringing in the green

Arapahoe County sponsors presentation on the economic benefits of open space

Littleton, CO --- People understand the immediate benefits of open space – conserving natural land and wildlife habitat, providing a place for people to connect with nature and enjoy the great outdoors, and increasing the amount of the color green in an urbanized, concrete environment in the form of trees and grasses. But, many may not be aware that open space also brings in the “green” in the form of new sources of revenue, job creation and higher home valuations.

To explain this return on investment for Arapahoe County’s Open Space sales tax, the County is sponsoring “Economic Benefits of Greenspace” presented by Chuck Flink, President of Greenways Inc., 6 – 7:30 p.m., Feb. 23 at the County’s Administration Building East Hearing Room, 5334 S. Prince St., Littleton.

Businesses, homeowners and residents are invited to attend this free event. Please RSVP as seating is limited. Refreshments will be provided.

Flink’s presentation will answer: How does conservation influence Arapahoe County’s economy? Are parks, trails and open spaces an attraction for business and industry? What’s their economic impact on adjacent properties? Can parks, trails and open space generate new sources of revenue and create jobs?

The event coincides with the development of the County’s *Open Space Master Plan*, which will serve as a guide for making strategic decisions about the program’s future. Residents interested in commenting on the draft master plan can drop by an open house 4 – 8 p.m., March 23 at CentrePoint Plaza, 14980 E. Alameda Dr., Aurora, or review the draft plan online at www.greenways.com/arapahoe.

“The County has distributed and invested almost \$60 million in open space sales taxes and already has protected more than 15,000 acres of land that preserves natural habitats and wildlife corridors, protects sweeping vistas and provides outdoor recreation for residents of all ages in just the past five years,” said Arapahoe County Commissioner Rod Bockenfeld, who serves as Board Chair.

“These taxes have been invested throughout Arapahoe County, from projects along the South Platte River in Littleton, Sheridan and Englewood, and along the Highline Canal in Greenwood Village to parks and trails in Aurora and on the grassland prairie in eastern Arapahoe County. This would not be possible without the voters who generously approved the Arapahoe County open space sales and use tax in 2003.”

For more information or to RSVP, contact Bob Finch with Arapahoe County Open Space at 720-874-6734 or rfinch@co.arapahoe.co.us.

Flink and his national consulting company have worked with public and private sector organizations in more than 200 communities and 35 states. He also has provided consulting services to clients in Argentina, Canada, China, Japan, and the Czech Republic. Flink is the lead planner and author for the Arapahoe County Open Space Master Plan.

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To download a photo click on the link: ftp://www.co.arapahoe.co.us/Pub/CM/Photos/OpenSpace/Bikers_MaryCarterGreenway2009: Residents enjoy both recreational and economic benefits of the Arapahoe County Open Space sales tax. To learn more, attend the “Economic Benefits of Open Space” presentation 6 p.m., Feb. 23.