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Arapahoe County awards \$700,000 to the City of Greenwood Village for purchase of land along the High Line Canal

ARAPAHOE COUNTY --- In a move that will protect the sweeping views of Pike's Peak and the Rocky Mountains, the Arapahoe County Board of County Commissioners Tuesday awarded \$700,000 to the City of Greenwood Village for the protection of open space along the High Line Canal.

"When you walk through the property, you truly appreciate how breathtaking it really is," said Commissioner Jim Dyer, who serves as Chair Pro Tem and whose district includes Greenwood Village. "I've lived in this area for more than 35 years and the scenic views are unmatched. It is one of the last remaining untouched properties of its size and I believe it is exactly what Arapahoe County voters had in mind when they adopted the Open Space sales and use tax."

The High Line Farm conservation easement acquisition is made possible by the generous citizens of Arapahoe County through the Arapahoe County Open Space Sales and Use Tax, which was approved by voters in 2003 to help preserve open space in Arapahoe County.

Since 2003, Arapahoe County has awarded more than \$35 million in open space tax dollars to local cities, towns and parks and recreation districts to preserve urban and rural open space; protect water quality in rivers, lakes and streams; maintain and improve neighborhood parks and trails; protect wildlife habitat and corridors as well as protect views, vistas and ridgelines.

The 20-acre parcel, which is located in Greenwood Village, is immediately adjacent to the High Line Canal and trail, and offers sweeping views of the Colorado Front Range to the west.

The cost to purchase the conservation easement, valued at \$6.4 million, is \$2 million. Funding includes \$700,000 from Arapahoe County's Open Space acquisition funds, a Great Outdoors Colorado grant of \$350,000, and \$950,000 in parks and open space funding from the City of Greenwood Village. The landowner is donating \$4.4 million.

The Trust for Public Land, a national non-profit land conservation group, negotiated the purchase of the conservation easement and assisted in engaging the participation of Colorado Open Lands, a third party land conservation organization, to hold and monitor the easement on behalf of the funding partners.

This is the second open space award given to Greenwood Village this year. In February, the Board of County Commissioners awarded \$375,000 in Open Space funds that gave Greenwood Village the matching dollars needed to acquire the four-acre Marjorie Perry Nature Preserve In holdings, which protected scenic property that would have been developed.

The purchase of the High Line Farm conservation easement is one of 20 projects identified by the South Platte Working Group, a coalition of 19 cities, towns and local organizations working to conserve land, clean up open space and improve connections to the South Platte River.

Convened by Arapahoe County in 2006 as a collaborative, consensus-based regional approach to protecting the South Platte River corridor, the South Platte Working Group has racked up several accomplishments in its two year existence. The group has secured more than \$28 million in funding, including a Legacy grant from the Great Outdoors Colorado; acquired several parcels; began a planning process and won the Denver Regional Council of Government's highest honor – a gold award – for their collaborative work to protect the South Platte.

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