



# WESTMINSTER

## Staff Report

TO: The Mayor and Members of the City Council

DATE: November 30, 2005

SUBJECT: Study Session Agenda for Dec 5, 2005

PREPARED BY: J. Brent McFall, City Manager

*Please Note: Study Sessions and Post City Council briefings are open to the public, and individuals are welcome to attend and observe. However, these meetings are not intended to be interactive with the audience, as this time is set aside for City Council to receive information, make inquiries, and provide Staff with policy direction.*

Looking ahead to next Monday night's Study Session, the following schedule has been prepared:

*A light dinner will be served in the Council Family Room* 6:00 P.M.

### CONSENT AGENDA

None at this time.

### CITY COUNCIL REPORTS

1. Report from Mayor (5 minutes)
2. Reports from City Councillors (10 minutes)

### PRESENTATIONS

1. Possible Combining of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board and the Library Advisory Board
2. Performance Measurement Report Overview and Discussion (Attachment)
3. City of Westminster Emergency Management Plan

6:30 P.M.

### EXECUTIVE SESSION

1. McDermott Development Agreement

### INFORMATION ONLY ITEMS – Does not require Council action

1. Prairie Dog Control at Mushroom Pond Open Space

Additional items may come up between now and Monday night. City Council will be apprised of any changes to the Study Session meeting schedule.

Respectfully submitted,

J. Brent McFall  
City Manager



WESTMINSTER

## Staff Report

City Council Study Session Meeting  
December 5, 2005



**SUBJECT:** Possible Combining of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board and  
The Library Advisory Board

**PREPARED BY:** William Walenczak, Director of Parks, Recreation and Libraries

### **Recommended City Council Action:**

Review the following staff report regarding the combining of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board and the Library Advisory Board and direct Staff on whether or not to pursue the combining of these boards.

### **Summary Statement**

- The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board is currently made up of seven members.
- The Library Advisory Board is made up of eight members.
- Both Boards meet every other month or on rare occasions, once a month if there is a need.
- Both Boards are staffed by the Department of Parks, Recreation and Libraries.
- Due to the limited responsibilities of each Board, Staff believes that combining these Advisory Boards is advisable.
- If Council decided to combine both boards, Staff would recommend allowing all of the current active members to be members of the new board.
- As members resign through attrition, Staff would recommend not filling those vacancies until the board reaches a size of seven permanent members.
- Currently, there are three vacancies on the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board and two vacancies on the Library Advisory Board.

**Expenditure Required:** \$0

**Source of Funds:** N/A

### **Policy Issue**

Does City Council wish to combine two boards that have historically operated separately?

### **Alternatives**

1. City Council could leave the boards as they are and make no changes to their structure.
2. City Council could chose to eliminate one or both boards altogether.

### **Background Information**

The Library Board was established in 1960 and is one of the oldest boards in the City. The Parks and Recreation Board was established in 1994 and is one of the youngest boards in the City. In 1990, the Library Department was combined with the Department of Parks and Recreation to form the Parks, Recreation and Libraries Department. At that time, there was resistance from long-time supporters of the library that the library and its status in the community would be lost in a larger department. Since then, the library facilities have grown from two small facilities of approximately 9,000 square feet to being replaced by two brand new facilities offering over 90,000 square feet of books, DVDs, periodicals, computers, etc. Library circulation at College Hill broke the one-million mark last year. Irving Street Library is being used constantly by school children and adults who otherwise would not have internet access. Our library system is recognized as one of the best in the country according to the Hennen Survey, a well-respected survey of public libraries.

Despite these successes, it is staff's opinion that Council will likely encounter significant resistance from some Library Board members and some members of the Friends of the Library if the two boards were to be combined. Staff has discussed this possibility with Roman Kohler, the Chairman of the Library Board, and he indicated preliminary support for such an idea. Staff does not believe that the Parks and Recreation Advisory board members would object to such a merger. However, the subject has not been discussed until further direction is received from City Council.

Staff believes that combining these boards would have definite advantages, which include giving members of both boards a more global picture of the department and a better understanding of how department priorities are established.

Respectfully submitted,

J. Brent McFall  
City Manager



WESTMINSTER

## Staff Report

City Council Study Session Meeting  
December 5, 2005



**SUBJECT:** Delivery and Discussion of *Take a Closer Look: How Performance Measures Build a Better City*

**PREPARED BY:** Emily Moon, Senior Management Analyst

### **Recommended City Council Action:**

This item is for information only. Staff will provide an overview of the City's Performance Measurement Program and the Take a Closer Look report.

### **Summary Statement:**

City Council is asked to read the attached *Take a Closer Look* report prior to the December 5, 2005 Study Session. During the meeting, City Manager's Office Staff will provide an overview of the City's performance measurement program and will address any questions City Council may have about the program or *Take a Closer Look*.

**Expenditure Required:** \$0

**Source of Funds:** N/A

### **Policy Issue**

No policy issue identified.

### **Alternative**

No alternative identified.

### **Background Information**

The City of Westminster has had a rigorous performance measurement program in place for more than four years. The program's goals are to encourage strategic planning and goal setting, gather meaningful data to help managers make informed decisions, foster critical reasoning throughout the organization, compare the City's accomplishments and practices to other cities, and add an extra layer of credibility to managers' policy recommendations. The performance measurement program also helps employees to better understand how each piece of the City's management framework (i.e., the strategic plan, the mission statement, SPIRIT, individuals' contributions in their daily work, the measurement of performance, and public reporting) leads to systematic achievement of the community's vision. The performance measurement program enhances credibility with the public and allows the organization to give the community a more meaningful assessment of the City's achievements. The performance measurement program requires that employees step back from their day-to-day work and assess why the City provides each service and how those services are provided. This focus on analysis has helped Staff to ensure that it is working efficiently toward achieving community goals.

The City's performance measurement program consists of two parts. One part of the program consists of the City of Westminster's internal performance measures. These measures are designed by Staff in each department to show year-to-year trends for City programs and projects and to describe progress that is made toward achieving the Strategic Plan goals. The second part of the program is comparative in nature. This part of the program involves collecting and utilizing comparative statistics from the International City/County Management Association's (ICMA) Center for Performance Measurement (CPM) and other professional associations. This aspect of the performance measurement program gives the City an opportunity to compare its operations to governmental entities nationwide. CPM citywide and service area comparison cities are chosen according to key criteria such as population, square miles, or size and makeup of General Fund operating budget. Most of the comparative information Council will see in this year's *Take a Closer Look* reflects 2004 CPM data or 2004 Citizen Survey data. CPM will release 2005 data in July 2006.

*Take a Closer Look* reflects Staff's desire to share meaningful information regarding the City's service efforts and accomplishments in an easy-to-read format. *Closer Look* organizes performance measurement data in a broad, Citywide fashion according to the Strategic Plan goals. *Closer Look* presents a sampling of the City's 400+ performance measures in a visual manner and provides what Staff believes is a useful synthesis of the information being reported.

In September, the City of Westminster was awarded a second Certificate of Distinction from ICMA for its performance measurement program. The City was one of thirteen cities nationwide, and the only jurisdiction in Colorado, to receive this award. In April, City Staff presented the City's performance measurement program at ICMA's national Best Practices Symposium. City Staff will present the City's program again in April 2006 at the national American Society for Public Administration's conference.

Staff Report – Delivery of *Take a Closer Look* Performance Measurement Report

December 5, 2005

Page 3

The City's performance measurement results will be posted on the City's Website, in *City Edition*, and in other City publications.

Respectfully submitted,

J. Brent McFall  
City Manager

Attachment

TAKE A CLOSER LOOK

How performance measures build a better city.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

*Financially Sound Goal* 2  
*Safe and Secure Goal* 3  
*Balanced Local Economy Goal* 5  
*Revitalization Goal* 6  
*Beautiful City Goal* 7

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- City awarded 21st consecutive financial reporting award
- Westminster's police and fire response times compare well to cities nationwide
- City's property tax mill levy is one of the lowest in the state
- Significant investments in revitalization and open space were made in 2005

ACHIEVING THE STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

Welcome to Take a Closer Look, the City of Westminster's performance measurement and strategic plan report. The city uses performance measures to judge how well it is managing resources and delivering services. Much like a scorecard, performance measures reflect the progress the city has made in the past year toward achieving the strategic plan goals.

The strategic plan goals for 2005-2009 are:

- Financially Sound City Government
- Revitalized Aging Neighborhoods and Commercial Areas
- Safe and Secure Community
- Balanced, Sustainable Local Economy
- Beautiful City

These goals aim to preserve and improve upon the quality of life in Westminster.



The westward view from the Metzger Farm, which will become City of Westminster open space in late 2005 or early 2006.

City employees created performance measures to study the vast variety of services the city provides to the community. City staff also sets performance goals to ensure that quality standards remain high.

Data from the International City/County Management Association's Center for Per-

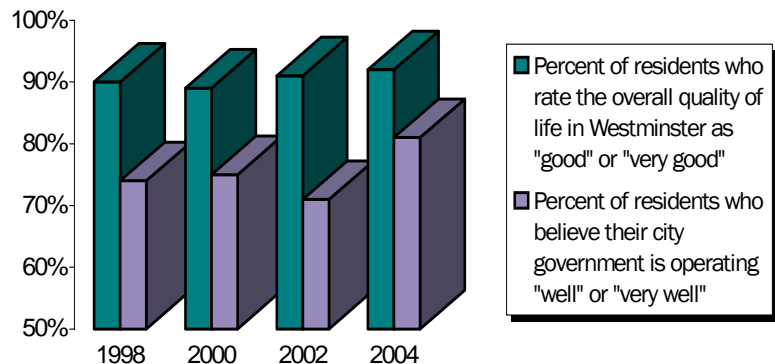
formance Measurement and other professional associations are used to compare the city's performance to other local governments nationally. Comparison cities differ between departments and activities.

We encourage you to Take a Closer Look at the city's performance.

QUALITY OF LIFE AND GOVERNMENT IN WESTMINSTER

The 2004 biennial Citizen Survey revealed large amounts of helpful performance measurement information. Some of the survey's results are included in this report; all of the results are posted on the city's website.

In a rating of overall city government performance, 93% of the survey's respondents stated that the city "is headed in the right direction."



## FINANCIALLY SOUND GOAL



Revenues to maintain and expand city services based upon community need



Maintain sufficient reserves



Greater diversification of revenue sources



Well-maintained city infrastructure and facilities



Effective methods of long-range revenue and expenditure forecasting



Effective cost containment/control measures for living within revenues and budget

2004 and 2005 were challenging and productive years for the City of Westminster. City council and staff responded to an economic recovery that was slower than expected with purposeful steps.

Despite the challenges of the current economic environment, the city has maintained high ratings for its bonds. Financial reserve levels remain very healthy at significantly higher levels than the minimums required by state law. High bond ratings ensure better financing terms and interest rates for the city as it undertakes large development, redevelopment, and public improvement construction projects. Good bond ratings make project funding go further.

The city has approximately \$120 million of cash that is invested in a variety of safe, fixed-income securities. This cash is used to pay for the daily operations of the city and is also available to finance major projects such as the construction of interchanges or water utility plants. City staff tracks the performance of the investments against a benchmark. By tracking the difference between the returns for the benchmark and the investments, staff was able to take advantage of changes in the interest rate environment and improve the value of the investments. These actions will enable the city to pay for projects more quickly than was previously anticipated.

The city was awarded a Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for the 21<sup>st</sup> consecutive year. The city's auditors stated that the city followed all accounting rules appropriately and that its financial reports are an accurate representation of the City of Westminster's financial condition.

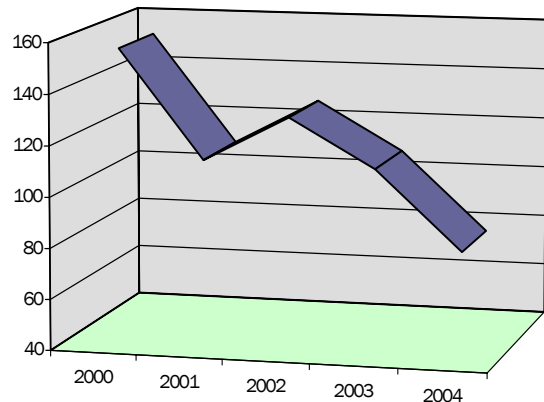
All of the city's departments worked diligently to achieve the objectives of the financially sound goal. Several examples of these efforts follow.

The Public Works and Utilities Department pays close attention to the amount of time and money it spends on maintaining

street maintenance activities, rather than to more expensive reconstruction.

The Public Works and Utilities Department is also committed to achieving its water system maintenance goals to better use ratepayers' dollars. The city established a performance measure requiring the replacement of nearly four miles of water pipeline annually. Since that time, water main breaks have decreased. See the chart below. The city's strategy of replacing the oldest pipelines, which are made of inferior materials, helps to reduce costly water loss and more expensive, emergency repairs. In 2004, Westminster residents experienced 2.6

Annual Waterline Breaks



city streets. Preventative maintenance, such as cracksealing, costs \$0.24 per square yard while reconstructing a residential street can cost \$13.80 per square yard. Staff wants at least 65% of the city's major streets to score pavement condition ratings of 70 points or more. Currently, 61% meet or exceed that rating. If the city continues rehabilitation and preventative maintenance at its current level, it will reach the 65% goal by 2008. The city's pavement condition rating system shows staff how to best direct resources to preventative

water breaks per 1,000 service accounts. The median rate for comparable cities was 2.9 water breaks. The department still has much work to do to reach its goal of keeping water main breaks to fewer than 30 per year.

Even the smallest department at the city, the City Attorney's Office, does its part to help the city attain the financially sound goal. The city's attorneys gained expertise in areas such as bankruptcy, historic preservation, and urban renewal to provide a broader



range of legal services and reduce the number of times private, and more expensive, legal firms are used to represent the city's interests. This is a very important cost saving measure as the City Attorney's Office's hourly rate is estimated at \$102 compared to the prevailing hourly rate for private legal firms of \$225.

The city's libraries implemented another responsible solution to a potentially costly challenge. Over the past five years, the city's libraries have served an increasing number of users. Circulation of library materials per library employee grew from 7,900 items in 2000 to 18,280 items in 2005. To address this increased workload in a financially sound manner, the libraries have installed self-check out machines and are implementing a self-pick up service for reserve items. The machines have helped the city to keep up with demand without having to hire additional employees.

The Recreation Facilities and Programs Division analyzed how it might be more competitive with other recreation facilities and programs. For example, the division discovered that the facilities' classrooms could be better utilized for revenue producing activities. Some of the classrooms were scheduled for these types of activities during only 20% of the operating hours. In addition, staff added more revenue producing activities, such as badminton, and improved the quantity and quality of popular programs, such as swim lessons. As a result of these changes, swim lesson participants and parents rated the Swim and Fitness Center swimming lessons with a 98% satisfaction rating. Participation in the lessons grew by 46% and program revenues increased by 58%.

City staff often compares its costs of providing services with that of other cities. Here is an example from the Fire Department. The cost per capita of providing fire services and emergency medical services

(EMS) to Westminster residents in 2004 was \$84. The average cost per capita for cities reporting this information was \$123.

Another example of the city's commitment to being financially sound is shown in its risk management statistics. While the average number of liability claims per 10,000 residents for comparable cities in 2004 was 9.53, the City of Westminster experienced only 4.4 claims. Likewise, Westminster uses a successful return-to-work program to ensure that employees return to work in a timely manner after they are injured. In 2004, Westminster's employees did not work 1.5 days per injury claim while employees in comparable cities were away from work an average of 11.3 days per claim. When the city has few liability claims and returns employees to work in reasonable timeframes, taxpayers' money is used more efficiently for providing services to the community.

Managed disaster mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery

~

Safe public gathering places and secure city facilities

~

Citizens are safe anywhere in the city

~

Timely response to emergency calls

~

Citizens taking responsibility for their own and community safety and well-being

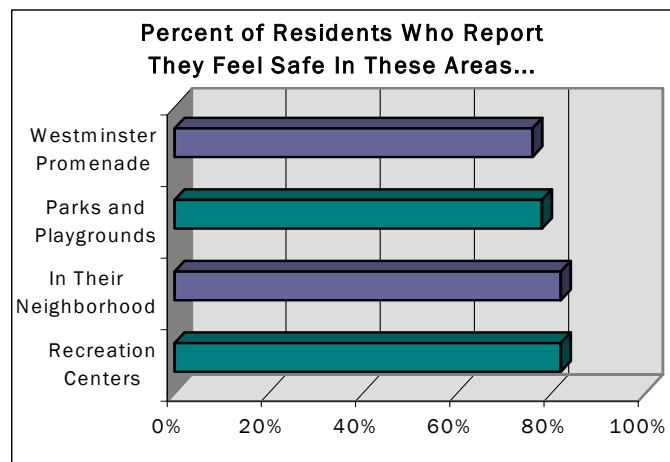
~

Provision of non-emergency services related to public education and prevention

## SAFE & SECURE GOAL

Residents feel safe in Westminster. In the most recent biennial citizen survey, residents were asked to rate their safety at a variety of locations, including the Westminster Promenade, in parks and playgrounds, in their neighborhood,

in their neighborhoods, and at the city's recreation centers. Those perceptions of safety are listed in the chart below. National comparisons are available for two of these locations. Westminster residents feel safer, on average, in the city's parks and play-



grounds than people in other cities. Westminster residents feel as safe, on average, in their neighborhoods as people do in other cities.

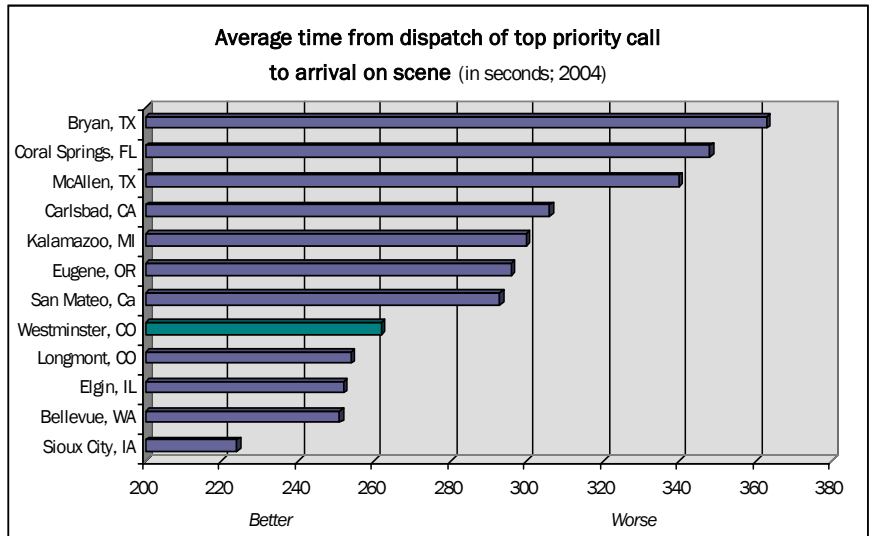
The Building Division's Rental Housing Inspection program greatly affects how safe some Westminster residents feel in their homes. In 2006, the Rental Housing Inspection program will more closely track life-safety violations in an effort to meet the city's safe and se-

cure goal. Life-safety violations include gas leaks or structural deficiencies. This analysis will help the division to create safer rental environments and lengthen the longevity of rental housing structures.

The city's Street and Infrastructure Improvements Divisions also share the responsibility for ensuring residents' safety. These two groups are responsible for such jobs as street sweeping, snow removal, pothole paving, and pavement maintenance. All of these activities are monitored as part of the performance measurement program. Rapid snow removal means staff is sent out to plow all 17 snow routes within 45 minutes of the onset of snowstorms. Satisfaction with the city's snow removal efforts ranked third out of ten other Front Range cities that included snow removal in their citizen surveys.

Safety and security is a primary concern for the employees that protect Westminster's water quality. The city's internal standards for safe drinking water are more stringent than the federal government's standards. The city has not had a Safe Water Drinking Act violation in the last 30 years. To further its commitment to safety, the city upgraded its water treatment process in 2005 and reduced the possibility of bacterial regrowth in the distribution system. In addition to improving

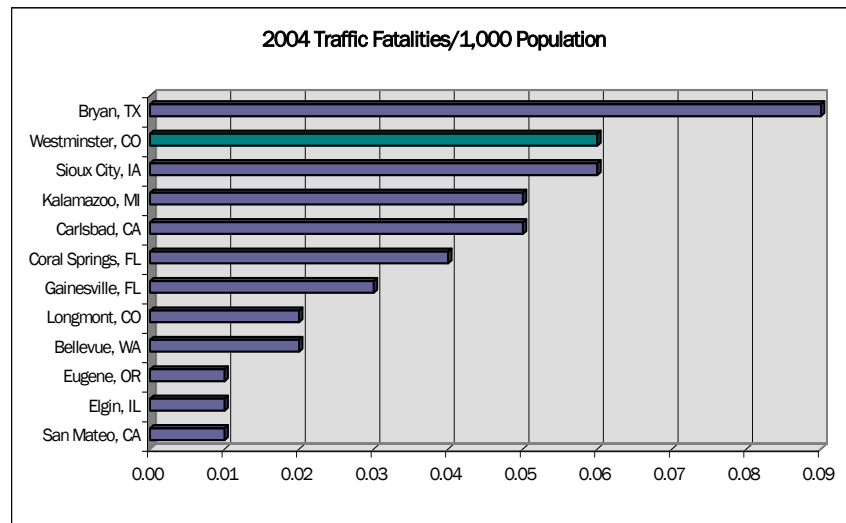
ensuring safety in Westminster. Through September, the number of Priority 1 calls, or the most critical calls for police services, was approximately the same as those experienced during the same time period in 2004. The City of Westminster's Police Department's response times to its most critical calls for service are faster than most comparable cities. On average, a police officer is on scene within 4.4 minutes of being dispatched to the call.



safety, these water treatment changes will result in less need to flush the system and fewer gallons of wasted water.

The Police Department is also

Serious crimes do not happen frequently in Westminster. When they do, the Westminster Police Department is quick and thorough in its response. Reported crimes in Westminster were down 13.4% through September 2005 from the same period in 2004. The Police Department had cleared or resolved 34.9% of those crimes. In 2004, 3.0 violent crimes per 1,000 residents were reported in Westminster. This number is lower than the average num-



ber of violent crimes experienced in the comparable cities group. Westminster's 64.3% clearance rate for these most serious crimes is the third highest clearance rate among Westminster's comparison cities.

Police Department staff is working to improve traffic safety in Westminster. While the number of traffic accidents in 2005 has increased only slightly over 2004, the number of injury producing accidents has increased 28% through September. Police officers performed 22% more traffic stops through September 2005 than they had in 2004. In mid-2005, the Westminster Police Department implemented its neighborhood traffic enforcement program, called Drive Wise, in an

effort to curb residential spending and boost awareness of neighborhood traffic safety issues.

Response times are also very important to Westminster's Fire Department. Since 2002, the Fire Department has reduced the time it takes to dispatch calls and the time it takes for fire and ambulance crews to leave the stations by one minute. The Fire Department's call processing and "turnout" times meet or exceed the national standards. The Fire Department is working very hard to achieve its goal of responding to 90% or more of all calls in six minutes or less. In 2004, the Fire Department achieved the six-minute response time for 78% of its calls. When 2005 concludes, the Fire Department hopes to see that the addition

of its seventh engine and fourth ambulance will have enabled it to meet its goal.

Voters' approval of a 0.6% sales tax for public safety improvements in November 2003 led to the addition of an ambulance in late 2004, a fire engine in mid-2005, and 35 fire personnel. Since the addition of the ambulance, the number of times the city has had to ask for a private ambulance to respond to an emergency because Westminster's ambulances were busy has been reduced significantly and ambulance response times have improved by 31 seconds. Quicker response times minimize the amount of time residents have to wait for life-saving services to arrive on scene.

Healthy retail base, increasing sales tax receipts



Attracting new targeted businesses, focusing on primary employers and higher paying jobs



Business-oriented mixed use development along I-25 and U.S. 36 corridors



Retention and expansion of current businesses



Transportation system that provides access to shopping and employment centers

## BALANCED LOCAL ECONOMY GOAL

2006 Sales Tax Rate Comparisons	
City	Sales Tax Rate
Lakewood	3.00
Littleton	3.00
Boulder	3.41
Arvada	3.46
Denver	3.50
Thornton	3.75
Aurora	3.75
<b>Westminster</b>	<b>3.85</b>
Northglenn	4.00
Federal Heights	4.00
Broomfield	4.15
Median	3.75

This goal focuses on creating a healthy retail base, attracting businesses that focus on providing higher paying jobs, developing business-oriented mixed use developments along the city's Interstate-25 and U.S. 36 corridors, and working to attract and retain businesses.



Sales tax is the primary financial mechanism by which Colorado communities provide services to their residents. Westminster is no exception. The city's sales tax rate is 3.85%. The sales tax rate remains highly competitive with other cities in the Denver metropolitan area.

In 2006, the city's property tax revenue will provide only 2.8% of the city's total revenue. The city's property tax mill

2006 Property Tax Rate Comparisons	
City	Mill Levy Rate (property tax)
Northglenn	11.597
Broomfield	11.457
Thornton	10.210
Boulder	9.981
Fort Collins	9.797
Lakewood	4.711
Arvada	4.310
<b>Westminster</b>	<b>3.650</b>
Median	9.889

levy has not changed for fourteen years. The city's mill levy continues to be one of the lowest in the state.

During the past year, the city's staff made great progress in planning the development of the Orchard Town Center. The Orchard will be a one-million square-foot, open-air, lifestyle and entertainment center located at the northwest corner of Interstate 25 and 144th Avenue. The development will include businesses and residences and provide additional jobs and tax bases for the city.

Rehabilitation of deteriorating commercial areas

~

Citizens taking responsibility for their neighborhoods

~

Maintained and improved neighborhood infrastructure

~

Revitalization plans developed and implemented

~

Appropriate infill, upgrading the quality of the neighborhoods

~

Preservation and restoration of historic assets

Achieving a balanced local economy keeps the Economic Development staff focused on assisting Westminster's existing businesses. The city offers many resources to its business community. During 2004 and 2005, Economic Development staff sought to increase awareness of the city's Business Scholarship program. In prior years, minimal promotion of the program led to a shrinking number of businesses taking advantage of the program. In 2004, greater promotion resulted in a 160% increase in the number of scholarships awarded. The Small Business Scholarship Program provides reimbursement of business training expenses to licensed Westminster entrepreneurs and small business owners and employers with 25 or fewer employees. The program reimburses 50% of the cost of tuition, fees, and required materials, up to \$500 per business, per calendar year, after successful completion of courses.

Despite having generated 940 new jobs in 2004, net basic employment growth declined to -1.2% in 2004. Nevertheless, the number of businesses in Westminster has grown over the past four years from 1,566 to 1,814. Economic Development staff believe that Westminster's businesses are well-positioned to take advantage of local, state, and national economic recoveries.

The city pursues many strategies to make local businesses successful and to diversify the city's revenue sources. For example, this summer, Parks and Recreation staff helped to host an international girls' softball tournament, which generated field rental fees and an estimated \$2.5 million for hotels, restaurants, shopping venues, and other local businesses.

## REVITALIZATION GOAL

The city's revitalization goal focuses on improving deteriorating commercial areas, maintaining and upgrading the quality of the city's neighborhoods, and preserving historic Westminster.

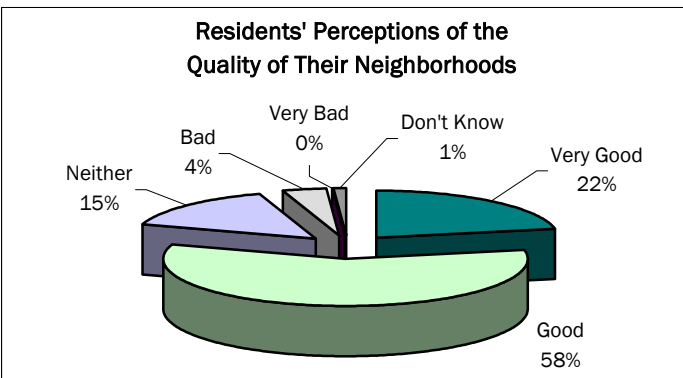
Semper Farm, which was designated as a local historic landmark



While 80% of the city's residents stated that they were satisfied with the quality of their neighborhoods in mid-2004,

Here are a few of the projects the city has been working on to meet the revitalization goal:

- Completing the restoration of Grange Hall and an historic structure assessment for the Rodeo Market
- Amending the city's nuisance codes and establishing administrative fines and a hearing process to facilitate violator compliance
- Lobbying for the protection of federal Community Development Block Grant funding, which provides funding for housing, health, and safety projects that benefit lower income residents
- Continuing to facilitate a way to revamp the Northgate Shopping Center
- Conducting a city-wide reconnaissance survey of historic resources
- Obtaining grants for historic site assessments for the



27% believed that the quality of their neighborhoods declined during the previous year. Such statistics underscore the city's need and desire to focus on neighborhood revitalization goals.

The Public Works and Utilities Department plays a key role in maintaining and upgrading neighborhoods through repairing and replacing aging sections

of the city's water and sewer lines. Residents and businesses experience fewer sewer backups and waterline breaks when the city achieves its preventative maintenance and replacement goals. For example, over the past four years, the number of waterline breaks has decreased 49% due to aggressive preventative maintenance. In 2004, 100% of the planned sewer system rehabilitation

and repairs were completed. In 2005, the Utilities Division does not expect to meet its goal of performing maintenance on 66% of the fire hydrants and 33% of the water-line valves. The division will put greater effort toward achieving this goal in its water distribution system maintenance plan in 2006.

The city's Rental Property Maintenance Inspection program is one of four such programs in the State of Colorado that is designed to improve renters' quality of life. The program improves the appearance and safety of rental housing in the community through education and inspection. Currently, 9,379 housing units or approximately 29,000 people benefit from the city's systematic inspection program.

Staff brought the blighted

Holly Park townhome project a step closer to redevelopment after an Adams County District Court sided with the City of Westminster in its efforts to acquire the abandoned project through eminent domain. Holly Park is a townhome project at 96th Avenue and Federal Boulevard. The city's economic development authority will remove the unfinished, dilapidated structures on the site and select a new developer to complete the project. Only 12 of 70 units were finished by the developer and, in 2001, the contractor and subcontractors abandoned the construction site.

The city's staff is particularly focused on revitalizing the south part of Westminster, where many of the city's historic assets are located and where older neighborhoods and commercial areas need extra care. The city recently won an award from the Colorado Chapter of

the American Planning Association for the south Westminster Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) plan. The award celebrates the city's use of a computer-generated, three-dimensional simulation of the TOD redevelopment.

The city estimates, that along with the Westminster Housing Authority (WHA) and the Westminster Economic Development Authority (WEDA), it has spent over \$38 million dollars to make major improvements in south Westminster. These improvements have included the Westminster Plaza redevelopment, transition of a very deteriorated nursing home into the Harris Park Townhomes, renovations at the Swim and Fitness Center, construction of Irving Street Library, and the development of numerous parks, open spaces, and trails.

Increased greenspace (parks, open space, etc.)

~

Expanded, developed and well-maintained parkland

~

Well-designed and maintained city facilities

~

Increased public and cultural arts

~

Attractive low water use landscaping

## BEAUTIFUL CITY GOAL

An attractive, well-maintained community that nourishes a high quality of life is very important to Westminster's city council. As such, the city is dedicated to increasing green spaces for parks and open spaces, using its land use policies and plans, and maintaining parks to a high standard to meet this goal.

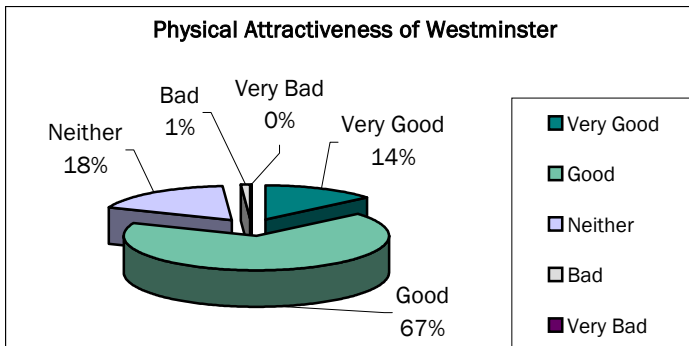
Westminster residents believe they live in an attractive community. In fact, residents

rated Westminster's beauty well above what citizens nationwide rated their communities. Westminster's physical beauty was also ranked highest along the Front Range by the city's residents.

Since 1985, when voters first approved a sales tax specifically earmarked to acquire and maintain open space, the city has purchased more than 2,500 acres of open space throughout Westminster. These



vital open space areas preserve essential view corridors in the city, enhance recreational opportunities for residents through a series of interconnected trails, and sustain a rich variety of plants and wildlife. In 2005, a total of 40.9 acres of open space were added. These purchases bring the city closer to its goal of preserving 15% of the city as natural open space; currently, 12.3% has been preserved. The open space program also removed four structures from open space parcels to bring the lands back to their original state and to eliminate vandalism targets.







WESTMINSTER

City of Westminster

4800 W. 92nd Avenue  
Westminster, CO 80031

Phone: 303-430-2400, ext. 2016

Email: westycmo@ci.westminster.co.us

**We're on the Web!**  
[www.ci.westminster.co.us](http://www.ci.westminster.co.us)

**Thank you for taking the time to *Take a Closer Look* at the city's performance measurement report. The city of Westminster's city council and city staff are committed to achieving the strategic plan goals. *Take a Closer Look* is an annual publication that appears on the city's Website each year and in the adopted budget document every two years.**



In late 2005 or early 2006, the city will acquire 150 acres of open space land at 120th Avenue and Federal Boulevard. This land, known as the Metzger Farm, will substantially add to the open space Westminster residents enjoy. The Metzger Farm will create a community buffer with Broomfield and preserve a

stated park maintenance was "good" or "very good" in 2004.

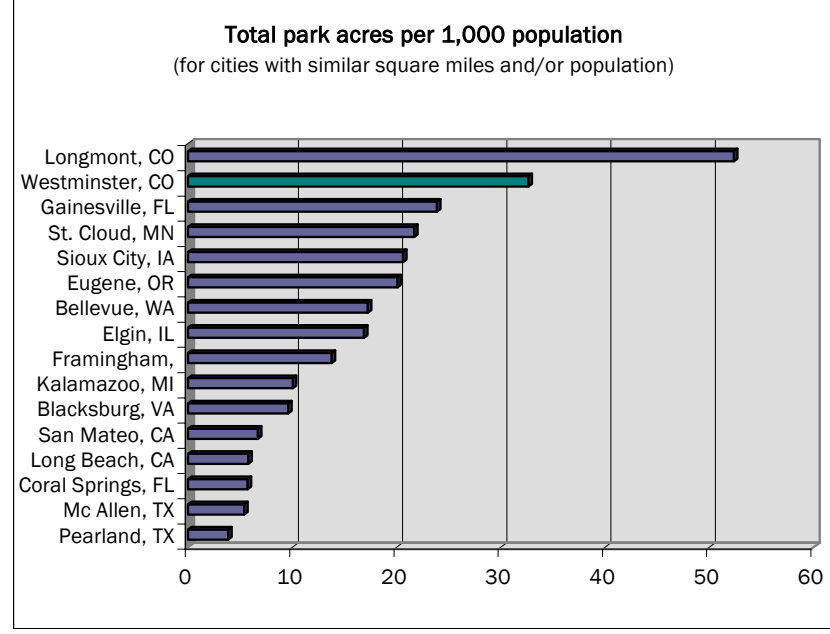
Westminster residents benefit from a high number of developed and total acres of park land. Of its comparison cities group, Westminster has the second greatest ratio of total park acres to residents with 32.7 acres per 1,000 residents.

visitors to enjoy the art. The City of Westminster's Public Art program is supported by public and private investment and the city's high development standards. More than 40 individual works of art are included in the collection. They range from larger-than-life cast bronzes to kinetic wind sculpture, and from

brick-masonry murals to murals assembled from tiles made by elementary school children. These pieces of art can be found at city facilities, community gathering places, and commercial centers throughout Westminster.

The City of Westminster was a 2005 silver award winner in an international competition designed to recognize outstanding livable communities. Westminster

won the top award for its use of environmentally sensitive practices. The International Awards for Liveable Communities are endorsed by the United Nations Environment Programme. Westminster competed in a population category that runs from 75,001 to 200,000 people and was the only city in the United States that was a finalist in this category. The International Awards for Liveable Communities is the world's only competition for local communities that focuses on environmental management and the creation of livable communities. Competitors are judged in five categories: enhancement of the landscape, heritage management, environmentally sensitive practices, community involvement, and planning for the future.



historic working farm with the potential for numerous educational uses. An unprecedented partnership with Broomfield, and grants from Adams County and the State of Colorado Great Outdoors Colorado Trust Fund made this land acquisition possible. Metzger Farm has been the top open space priority for Westminster's Open Space Advisory Board.

Maintaining a high quality and well-developed park system is central to achieving the beautiful city goal. The Parks, Recreation and Libraries Department monitors residents' satisfaction with the appearance of parks and recreation facilities and their satisfaction with maintenance in the parks. Eighty percent of residents

The city's Growth Management Program requires new residential projects to compete for the ability to proceed to the city's development review process. While these projects must only meet minimum design guidelines to be considered, new residential projects that have competed successfully have greatly exceeded the minimum design standards. Over the last five years, the average percentage of points scored by winning projects has been 32-55% higher than the minimum standards. The city's beauty is preserved through these well-designed projects.

City staff added a catalog and a map to the city's website that lists all of the city's public art and encourages residents and



# WESTMINSTER

## Staff Report

Information Only Staff Report  
December 5, 2005



**SUBJECT:** City of Westminster Emergency Management Plan

**PREPARED BY:** Jim Cloud, Fire Chief  
Mike Reddy, Emergency Management Coordinator

### **Summary Statement:**

This report is for City Council information only and requires no action by City Council.

Emergency Management Coordinator Mike Reddy will be present at the Study Session of December 5<sup>th</sup>, 2005 to provide an overview of the City of Westminster Emergency Management Plan. This overview will provide an understanding of the “all hazards” approach employed in the emergency management plan, help City Council understand their role in the event of a major disaster within the community, and provide a quick overview of the National Incident Management System (NIMS). City Council will be asked to formally adopt NIMS as the incident management system utilized by the City on December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2005.

### **Background:**

The Emergency Management Program operates within the Fire Department and coordinates with all City departments, counties, regions and the State of Colorado in preparing for, responding to, recovering from and mitigating against the impacts of large scale emergencies and disasters. This is accomplished through multi-departmental and multi-jurisdictional training and exercises that are held throughout the year. The City’s Emergency Plan and Management System (EPMS) provides information concerning responsibilities of various departments and addresses natural, technological and manmade risks that the City faces.

The Fire Department Emergency Management Coordinator works with all City departments in planning for disaster events and coordinates with other jurisdictions to assure City representation on regional issues related to emergency management. In 2005, the City plans to adopt the National Incident Management System (NIMS) that provides a common set of operating principles and practices for all governmental entities in the event of a disaster. The City receives federal funds to support the emergency management program and participates in numerous regional committees dealing with Homeland Security planning and grants.

The City of Westminster Emergency Plan and Management system (EPMS) identifies responsibilities of all City departments, appointed and elected officials. These include:

#### Mayor is responsible for:

- Serving as a member of the Policy Coordinating Group
- Formal Disaster Declarations of disaster and/or emergencies
- Assigning overall direction and control to the City Manager

City Council is responsible for:

- Serving as members of the Policy Coordinating Group
- Determining the level of commitment of City resources and funds
- Overseeing policy decisions related to emergency duties and authorities as permitted by law.
- Nothing in this EPMS shall abridge or curtail the powers of the City Council as provided for in Municipal Code, Title 1, Chapter 32, Office of Emergency Preparedness (attachment # 1)

City Manager is responsible for:

*Overall management of the duties and authorities set forth in Municipal Code, Title 1, Administrative, Chapter 32.*

- Management of all city operations both in terms of emergency response and daily operations
- Coordination of Media Relations
- Providing information to be released by the Mayor or designee
- Coordination of press release and press conferences
- Organizing a Joint Information Center
- Assuring consistency of media and public

Respectfully submitted,

J. Brent McFall  
City Manager

Attachment



## CHAPTER 32

### OFFICE OF EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

- 1-32-1: INTENT AND PURPOSE
- 1-32-2: DEFINITIONS
- 1-32-3: ORGANIZATION AND APPOINTMENTS
- 1-32-4: DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
- 1-32-5: EMERGENCY PLAN AND MANAGEMENT SYSTEM
- 1-32-6: PROCEDURES
- 1-32-7: EMERGENCY RESPONSE POWERS
- 1-32-8: COMPENSATION
- 1-32-9: LINE OF SUCCESSION OF MAYOR
- 1-32-10: CONFLICTING ORDINANCES/ORDERS/RULES REGULATIONS SUSPENDED
- 1-32-11: VIOLATION OF REGULATIONS
- 1-32-12: PENALTY

**1-32-1: INTENT AND PURPOSE:** (1322 1741 2068 2921) It is the intent of the City Council to establish and maintain a local emergency agency as described in Colorado Disaster Emergency Act of 1992, Part 21 of Article 32 of Title 24, C.R.S. 1992, as amended. Except as provided in this chapter, City departments shall continue to exercise the responsibilities and authority specified in the City Charter or by ordinance.

**1-32-2: DEFINITIONS:** (1322 1741 2068 2400 2921) For the purpose of this Chapter, all definitions found in C.R.S. § 24-32-2103 apply as definitions to this chapter, except as follows:

“Emergency” shall include the terms disaster and disaster emergency as the context may require.

**1-32-3: ORGANIZATION AND APPOINTMENTS:** (1322 1741 2068 2921) The City Manager is hereby authorized and directed to establish an Office of Emergency Management as the coordinating agency for all emergency events, utilizing to the fullest extent the services and resources of existing departments within the City. An Emergency Management Coordinator shall be appointed to direct appropriate planning, management and coordination in all phases of emergency management including mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery.

**1-32-4: DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:** (1322 1741 2068 2400 2921) The Office of Emergency Management shall be responsible for preparing and keeping current an emergency plan and management system (EPMS), delineating measures to be implemented by the City before, during and after an emergency event. An Emergency Management System shall be developed and tested to assure capability of managing emergency events.

**1-32-5: EMERGENCY PLAN AND MANAGEMENT SYSTEM:** (1322 1741 2068 2921) An EPMS shall be developed and maintained by the Office of Emergency Management subject to approval of the City Manager. The plan will identify department responsibilities, including requirements for maintenance of specific facility and department emergency procedures and critical resource information.

**1-32-6: PROCEDURES:** (1322 1741 2068 2921)

(A) Declaration of Emergency: The Mayor shall have the power to declare that a state of emergency exists, when in his/her opinion, such an event has occurred or the threat of such event is imminent.

(B) Declaration in Writing: Declaration of emergency shall be in writing and shall describe the nature of the emergency, the area threatened, the conditions which have brought it about, and the conditions that would remedy it. The City Manager shall be responsible for publication and dissemination of information to the public and shall file the Declaration with the City Clerk and forward a copy to the State Office of Emergency Management.

(C) Effect of Declaration: The issuance of a declaration of emergency shall automatically empower the City Manager to exercise any and all of the emergency powers permitted by state and local law and shall activate all relevant portions of the EPMS. The City Council shall convene to perform its legislative powers as the situation demands and shall receive reports through the City Manager and evaluate and enact policy and other incident support as required. Nothing in this Chapter shall abridge or curtail the powers of the City Council.

(D) Duration:

1. A state of emergency shall remain in effect until the City Council or City Manager declares that the threat of danger has passed or that the emergency conditions no longer exist. However, a state of emergency shall not be continued or renewed for a period in excess of seven (7) days unless the City Council approves a longer duration.

2. City Council may by motion terminate a state of emergency at any time and the City Manager shall immediately issue a notice affecting the same.

3. Any Declaration continuing or terminating a state of emergency shall be filed with the City Clerk and a copy shall be forwarded to the State Office of Emergency Management.

**1-32-7: EMERGENCY RESPONSE POWERS: (1322 1741 2068 2921)**

(A) The City Manager may exercise any and all powers granted by applicable state law subsequent to issuance of the Emergency Declaration.

(B) During the existence of a state of emergency, the City Manager may promulgate such regulations, as he or she deems necessary, to protect life and property and preserve critical resources. These regulations shall be confirmed at the earliest practical time by the City Council, shall be given widespread circulation, and shall be disseminated to the news media. These regulations may include, but shall not be limited to powers granted by applicable state law. Specifically the City Manager may:

1. Suspend the provisions of this code that prescribe procedures for conduct of city business, if strict compliance would in any way prevent, hinder, or delay necessary action in coping with the emergency.
2. Transfer the direction, personnel, or functions of city departments for the purpose of performing or facilitating emergency services.
3. Subject to any applicable legal requirements to provide compensation, commandeer or utilize any private property if the City Manager finds this necessary to cope with the emergency.
4. Direct and compel evacuation of persons from any stricken or threatened area within the City if the City Manager deems this action necessary for the preservation of life or other emergency mitigation, response, or recovery measures.
5. Prescribe routes, modes of transportation, and destinations in connection with evacuation.
6. Control ingress to and egress from a disaster area, the movement of persons within the area, and the occupancy of premises therein.
7. Suspend or limit the sale, dispensing, or transportation of alcoholic beverages, firearms, explosives, or combustibles within the city.
8. Make provisions for the availability and use of temporary emergency housing.
9. Waive all provisions for competitive bidding and may direct the purchasing agent to purchase necessary supplies in the open market at not more than commercial prices.

(C) The City Manager is authorized to exercise all powers permitted by city charter and state law to require emergency services of any city officer or employee and command the aid of as many citizens of the city as he or she deems necessary in the execution of his or her duties. Such persons shall be entitled to all privileges, benefits, and immunities as are provided by state law for civil defense workers.

**1-32-8: COMPENSATION:** (1322 1741 2068 2921) Compensation for services or private property used by the City in responding to an emergency shall be compensated as specified by contract or as required by state law, subject to the principles and procedures set forth in C.R.S. § 24-32-2111 and Articles 1 to 7 of Title 38 of the Colorado Revised Statutes.

**1-32-9: LINE OF SUCCESSION OF MAYOR:** (1741 2068) If the Mayor is unable to perform the duties or functions set forth in this Chapter, then the powers and duties conferred upon the Mayor shall be performed in descending order, as follows: by the Mayor Pro Tempore, then by the Council member most senior in length of service, then by the Council member whose last name begins with a letter that is the closest to the beginning of the alphabet.

**1-32-10: CONFLICTING ORDINANCES, ORDERS, RULES AND REGULATIONS SUSPENDED:** (1741 2068 2921) Any orders, rules and regulations promulgated during a proclaimed state of emergency shall take precedence over existing ordinances, rules and regulations if a conflict arises.

**1-32-11: VIOLATION OF REGULATIONS:** (1322 1741 2068 2921) It shall be unlawful for any person to violate any of the provisions of this Chapter or of the regulations or plans issued pursuant to the authority contained in this Chapter, or to willfully obstruct, hinder or delay any person in the exercise of any duty or authority pursuant to the provisions of this Chapter.

**1-32-12: PENALTY:** (1322 1741 2068 2921) Any person convicted of a violation of any section of this Chapter or of any regulations or plan issued pursuant to the authority contained herein shall be punished by a fine or by imprisonment or by both such fine and imprisonment pursuant to the provisions in Section 1-8-1 of this code.



# WESTMINSTER

## Staff Report

Information Only Staff Report  
December 5, 2005



SUBJECT: Prairie Dog Control at Mushroom Pond Open Space

PREPARED BY: Richard Dahl, Park Services Manager

### Summary Statement:

This report is for City Council information only and requires no action by City Council.

- The Mushroom Pond Open Space, located just east of Federal Boulevard and north of the Legacy Ridge Golf Course, was purchased in 1989 and is 8.82 acres in size.
- In 1995, the Mushroom Ponds were built to serve as flood control facilities and must continue to function in that capacity per an agreement between the City of Westminster and the Urban Drainage and Flood Control District.
- In 1997, a wetlands mitigation planting project occurred on this site to provide increased water quality filtration by reducing contaminants that may be present in stormwater.
- The Open Space is bordered on the north by the Savory Farms subdivision, on the East by the Cedar Bridge subdivision, and on the South by the Legacy Ridge Golf Course. The private property to the west of the Open Space is scheduled to be developed as the Savory Farms Estates in 2006.
- Over the past three years, the prairie dog population at the Mushroom Pond Open Space has expanded steadily and will totally surround the pond within the next two years if left alone. Although prairie dogs are understood to be a native wildlife species and a natural occupant of the City's Open Space, they are also very destructive to the native vegetation when concentrated in small areas with expanding populations.
- Staff has received information from the Colorado Division of Wildlife that there are no relocation sites for prairie dogs available in Adams County. The City's Community College Open Space (located in Adams County) is also experiencing unprecedented prairie dog population increases and is not available as a depository site for the Mushroom Pond prairie dog colony.
- On August 4, 2005, per the Boulder County website, the Boulder County Health Department confirmed that fleas collected from a prairie dog colony in Boulder County open space tested positive for plague. The website stated, "This is the ninth case of plague in Boulder County this summer, and the third within the City of Boulder." Other similar requests have been received recently.
- To protect the health and safety of users and the adjacent property owners and to protect the remaining flora and fauna of the Mushroom Pond Open Space, the Department of Parks,

Recreation and Libraries, after consultation with the Office of the City Manager, and under Resolution No. 8 re; Prairie Dog Management on City Owned Property, which states, “The City will consider other alternatives to prairie dog relocation if relocation is 1) not fiscally reasonable, 2) not environmentally sound, 3) not timely achievable, or 4) if it poses a health risk”, authorized the extermination of prairie dogs at the Mushroom Pond Open Space. This action is to take place no later than February 28, 2006, by a licensed contractor.

### **Background Information**

There is a colony of prairie dogs on the southeast corner of the Mushroom Pond Open Space that, through natural control, have remained within a defined area for several years. In 1997, the Park Services Division installed an information and education sign about prairie dog colonies at this corner of the property.

Also in 1997, the Mushroom Pond Open Space was used as a wetland mitigation site by Melody Homes as a Section 404 permit approval from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers authorizing the creation of 1.29 acres of wetlands and riparian areas. This mitigation work was completed in 1998 by Aquatic Wetlands Company, which replicated natural wetlands and riparian habitats. The mitigation project was comprised of a diversity of wetland habitat types including submergent, emergent, scrub-scrub and forested wetlands. Where the prairie dogs are present, Staff has noted a severe reduction in the native plant life that makes up the character of the this open space site and, with the continued pressure due to over grazing by the prairie dogs, the possibility of unwanted contamination of the pond caused by storm water run off is very possible and may endanger the intent of the wetland mitigation project.

In 1999, Staff began to see a new colony of prairie dogs develop on the northwest corner of the Open Space shortly before the Savory Farms subdivision started over lot grading in 2000. This colony has steadily grown to the point where it now encompasses most of the northern and a portion of the western shores of the Mushroom Pond. It is estimated that the two separate colonies will join as one within the next two years, thereby encircling the entire open space site and more than doubling its current estimated population of 120 prairie dogs.

In 2000, the private land owner directly to the west of the Mushroom Pond Open Space exterminated prairie dogs on his property (adjacent to Federal Blvd) and accidentally went onto Open Space and killed part of the colony on City property. The property owner was fined \$3,000 for this incident and the money was used to fund a prairie dog exhibit at the Standley Lake Visitor Station.

A petition from the homeowners of this area was received by Staff requesting elimination of the prairie dogs colonies on north and eastside of the pond. Currently there is an ODP in Community Development to develop some of the vacant land on this site as part of the Savory Farms Estates and the prairie dogs on that property will either be exterminated or be pushed onto the Mushroom Pond Open Space further complicating the problems on City property and for residents in the area.

Staff Report – Prairie Dog Removal at Windsor and Cobblestone Parks

December 5, 2005

Page 3 of 3

Staff firmly believes that to delay the control of the prairie dogs on the Mushroom Pond Open Space will make the problem worse for both citizen safety and environmental degradation of the Open Space. Staff is therefore moving forward with complete elimination of the prairie dog colony from the Mushroom Pond Open Space.

Respectfully submitted,

J. Brent McFall  
City Manager

Attachments