



DEPARTMENT UPDATES

DEPARTMENT	PRESENTED BY	DATE
Administration	Christy Doon - City Administrator	December 17, 2024

Arts and Culture

- Steamplant
- Events and Engagement
 - 38 different events in November, with 24 groups using the SP facilities
- Public Art

City Clerk

- We have been working on the implementation of the new CORA software which will be in effect January 1st
- Our Agenda and Packet software is being updated the end of December to meet the Accessibility requirements. Once I have the schedule of trainings on the updated software we will have a training with Council at a future work session. The agenda's will look the same but navigating the packets will be a little different.
- Processed 5 CORA requests. We have processed 78 CORA requests so far in 2024.
- Processed 3 amplified sound permits for public hearings. We've issued a total of 180 permits this year.
- Processing one new liquor license, and several Liquor License renewals.
- The December Municipal Court had 40 cases.

Community Development

- Building Permits: Thus far through 12/9/24, we have seen 136 total building permits, including 163 new residential units. At this time in 2023, we had seen 248 total building permits, inc. 170 new residential units. In 2022, we had seen 167 total building permits, inc. 106 new residential units. In 2021, we had seen 239 total building permits, inc. 170 new residential units.
- 1st and D Apartments Project: General contractor, MW Golden, is working with Artspace and Cushing Terrell on finalizing designs and identifying equipment (HVAC, transformers, etc.) that may need to be ordered in advance of any potential tariffs going into place in the new year. We hope to have more specific cost estimates on the project by sometime in January. Meanwhile, Artspace is working on putting together a capital stack to finance the project per their responsibility as developer.
- Kathryn Dunleavy, Associate Planner, will be moving on from the City at the beginning of January. She and her husband plan to do a bunch of travel in the coming year. Kathryn has worked tirelessly on the updated land use code this past year and has been an incredible asset to the City over the last few years with her work ethic, analytical mind, and attention to detail. She will be missed greatly!
- Salida New Year's Eve "Big Heart Drop": Plans are in the works for a fun downtown New Year's Eve event with a Salida-style "ball (heart) drop" hosted by the City and High Country Bank. There will be two drops at the corner of F and Sackett—one at 9PM and another at Midnight. There will be a DJ (The Salida Sax Guy) spinning dance and holiday tunes and breaking out his saxophone for a few fun little numbers. Dan R. will serve as emcee and we expect a couple performances from The Salida Starlettes and we hope to pull off a bit of a laser light show on adjacent buildings and Riverside Park trees. Downtown businesses are being encouraged to remain open late that night and perhaps to even host events that will complement the countdown and help ring in the New Year right. Should be a great time and something we hope to make a new annual tradition!

Finance

- The Government Finance Officer's Association (GFOA) notified us that the City's 2023 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report is awarded the prestigious excellence in financial reporting award for the 3rd year in a row.
- Work in the accounting office is somewhat cyclical. The 2025 budget document is taking significant time and will be finished up by mid-January just in time for audit prep work to start on the 2024 actual financial performance.
- The following table shows some of the key daily accounting work that is accomplished in the office.



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Finance Office - Key Operating Metrics - 2024											
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov
Number of front desk customers served	264	212	167	212	214	154	255	241	209	246	181
Number of invoices paid	364	328	338	443	353	353	472	402	387	415	229
Number of utility bills processed	4,261	4,263	4,268	4,270	4,292	4,298	4,315	4,328	4,330	4,335	4,331
Number of online utility payments received	2,704	2,725	2,778	2,746	2,769	2,805	2,780	2,855	2,823	2,773	2,811
Number of delinquent utility accounts processed	325	383	397	294	371	374	334	375	330	487	389
Number of journal entries prepared	90	75	87	59	59	47	46	55	36	56	22
Number of payroll checks processed	456	341	321	478	314	317	387	329	313	321	340
Number of utility service orders processed	183	94	95	85	78	48	94	64	78	116	56
Number of new construction utility accounts	22	21	10	7	5	5	4	12	6	4	6
Number of Accounts Receivable billings	39	36	50	54	51	43	48	36	43	40	37

Fire

- New Firehouse Slated to Open Soon** - Exciting changes are ahead as the new firehouse nears completion! Construction is progressing well, with the interior work almost finished. Fire crews are now focused on packing for the big move, which is scheduled for the first week of January. This transition marks the end of an era, as the department moves from its current location, which has served as home for an incredible 124 years. While it's a significant undertaking, the new facility promises to enhance our ability to serve the community and respond to emergencies efficiently. Stay tuned for updates as we settle into this new chapter in the department's history!
- Fireworks Display for Christmas Mountain Lighting** - The Salida Fire Department was honored to host the annual fireworks display on November 29th to mark the lighting of Christmas Mountain. This cherished tradition brings together the community in celebration of the holiday season, filling the night sky with dazzling lights and festive cheer. We take great pride in being part of this iconic event that symbolizes the start of the holidays in Salida. Through gatherings like these, we aim to spread joy and unity while celebrating the spirit of the season. Thank you to everyone who joined us and helped make the evening magical. The Salida Fire Department wishes you all a safe and happy holiday season, filled with warmth, joy, and the Christmas spirit.
- Increase in Heating-Related Fires: Stay Safe This Winter** - As temperatures drop, the Salida Fire Department has noted an increase in fires related to heating equipment. These incidents highlight the importance of taking proactive steps to ensure your home is safe during the colder months. Residents are reminded to have heating equipment serviced and cleaned regularly. Proper maintenance not only improves efficiency but also reduces the risk of fires. Additionally, make sure your carbon monoxide detectors are functioning properly to protect against this silent hazard. By staying vigilant and taking these precautions, we can all work together to keep our community safe this winter.
- South Arkansas Approves IGA with City of Salida** - The South Arkansas Fire Protection District Board has officially approved an updated Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with the City of Salida Fire Department. This renewed partnership ensures the continuation of 24/7 all-hazard emergency response for district residents, including fire suppression, emergency medical services, and specialized rescue operations. The IGA highlights the importance of working as one community to address shared risks and improve public safety. By pooling resources and expertise, the agreement supports critical initiatives such as enhanced training, swift water rescue



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capabilities, and the development of a live burn training facility. The Salida City Council is set to consider the agreement on December 17th. This collaboration reflects a unified commitment to protecting lives, property, and the environment for the entire region.

- **South Arkansas Fire Protection District Growing Wildfire Capabilities** - The South Arkansas Fire Protection District is making significant strides in enhancing its ability to combat wildfires. With the Board's recent approval of \$1.2 million for new wildland firefighting apparatus, the district is taking proactive steps to address the increasing wildfire risk in our area. As growth continues into the Wildland-Urban Interface, the need for advanced equipment and operational readiness becomes more critical. This investment ensures our firefighters are equipped to respond quickly and effectively to protect lives, property, and natural resources. In addition to these equipment upgrades, the district is exploring the potential addition of a dedicated Wildfire Chief. This leadership role would focus on wildfire strategy, preparedness, and response coordination, further strengthening the district's ability to tackle this growing challenge. These efforts reflect the district's commitment to staying ahead of wildfire threats and building a safer, more resilient community.
- **Firefighter Housing Pays Off** - The City of Salida is stepping up to support wildfire safety by providing housing for National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC) crews. In exchange, these crews will gain hands-on experience in wildland firefighting and conduct vital wildfire mitigation efforts in our community. This initiative is part of a partnership with Colorado Firecamp, the nation's only wildland firefighter training facility, located in Maysville. Fire Chief Jonke emphasized the importance of this collaboration, stating, "This relationship is critical to addressing the wildfire dangers our community is faced with." He also commended the leadership of Kent Maxwell and the team at Firecamp for their dedication to wildfire training and safety. Through this partnership, Salida is strengthening its wildfire response while providing essential training for the next generation of firefighters.

Police

- Michael Blais is graduating from the Police Academy on the 12th of December. He will be back home and starting his training with us on the 17th. We expect him to be on his own around May 1st, 2025.
- We had a successful Parade of Lights. We had several calls for service during the parade that made it a bit challenging but were able to manage. This with the biggest crowd we have ever had at the event.
- We hosted our 16th Shop with a Cop on December 8th. We had tremendous support from the community and were able to take twenty-four fourth grade students shopping from Salida and Buena Vista. We had an amazing time, and it was great seeing all the smiles on everyone's faces. This is without a doubt our favorite event of the year.

Public Works

- Planning/Engineering/Construction
 - Planning and Construction
 - Streets
 - Oak Street – Winter construction closure



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- SRTS CDOT Local Agency Project - Final FOR plans submitted to CDOT. Bid Spring 2025 TBD.
- West SH-291 Improvements – Draft roundabout plans provided to Public Arts Commission. First round of CDOT comments being addressed.
- Utilities
 - Rate Study drafting by Ehlers underway
 - Continued flow monitoring and coordination with other users on Harrington Ditch
 - Provide support as requested on updating Sewer System IGA's.
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- Other CIP Items
 - South Ark Neighborhood – Preliminary site plans being drafted and coordination with river restoration project and Trout Unlimited.
 - Prep for new Fleet Supervisor and transition of services to the Multi-Use Facility.
- Operations
 - Streets
 - Annual Tree Maintenance Project in progress. The focus is structural pruning of Adopt-a-Trees.
 - Asphalt cold patching of winter potholes.
 - Move of fleet and parks/streets/utilities bays at shop underway.
 - Utilities
 - WTP staff building framework for asset management software for treatment plant
 - Infrastructure repairs to drain line at gallery system completed
 - Scoping of WTP SCADA re-build in progress
 - Field Utility staff focusing on-line cleaning and inspection for fall (Poncha service area) – near complete
 - Move of fleet and parks/streets/utilities bays at shop underway.

Parks and Recreation

- Parks
 - The Grand Opening for the Salida Bike Skills Area was held last Friday with a ribbon cutting ceremony.
 - Staff are giving the old Skate Park some attention by replacing the old fencing.
 - Employees are starting the annual review process by getting their self -evaluations done.
 - Parks and PW staff are coordinating for the reorganization of our shop space.
- Facilities
 - Improvement to the Steam Plant's ballroom flooring is scheduled to start with re-surfacing the hardwood floor, vinyl tile and will be followed up with new carpeting.
 - Staff have begun discussing and implementing energy saving measures around the city facilities by tightening up door seals, replacing windows and programmable thermostats.
 - Staff is also discussing with the Sustainability Coordinator how we can increase our waste diversion programs in city facilities and during events held on city property.
 - Staff are working to upgrade lighting efficiency at the Public Works facility, along with a scheduled furnace replacement.



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- Aquatics
 - o We have two High School Swim Meets in December, one on the 10th from 4:30-6:30pm – (no public swim) and one on the 21st from 10:30am-1pm, Pool will open to the public at 2pm
 - o Soakember was a great success – we had 220 ppl sign up for our events and sold 54 memberships or access passes during our 3-day 20% off sale
 - o Membership and access pass sales generated the highest monthly revenue of the year, beating the previous record by over \$10,000-a 57% increase.
 - o Special holiday hours [click here](#)
 - o Winter Group lessons will open on January 6th at 6pm
- Recreation
 - o Youth Basketball registration closes this weekend 12/15, we have 203 registered
 - o Youth Volleyball camp is full with 48 participants
 - o New year's day 5k has a new course this year, starting at the golf cabin. So far we have 44 participants signed up. New shirt design is killer too!
 - o Wrestling registration is filling up quickly for 4 – 12 year olds.
 - o Open gym volleyball will be happening Monday nights starting in January. More details soon
 - o We're working on website changes to hopefully make the recreation website easier to navigate
- Events