

**FOR THE PARK**

**FOR THE PEOPLE**

**FOR THE FUTURE**



CREDIT: James W. Rogers

**2 0 2 2   A N N U A L   R E P O R T**





## LETTER FROM THE CHAIRPERSON

Civic Center Conservancy does it again.

The Conservancy has taken pride in listening to the community to achieve its mission for almost 20 years and counting. However, over the last three years, it has truly found its footing transforming Civic Center Park into the active and thriving vital public space it should be recognized as.

At the height of the pandemic, social issues seen across America were concentrated in public spaces, and Civic Center was no exception. The Conservancy knew it needed to make the park clean and beautiful before it could focus on making it active and thriving, and it did so with compassion.

After the 2021 park closure, the City and County of Denver re-opened with an additional \$1.5M of resources. From there, the Conservancy doubled down on its volunteer program SPARKLES and added a new pilot workforce development program WORKS – adding an additional 2,700 hours of supplemental maintenance to Civic Center.

WORKS hires unhoused citizens to clean and maintain the park and it WORKS (pun intended). Not only is the park cleaner and more beautiful than I have seen in the 18+ years I've been with the Conservancy, but WORKS has changed people's lives. Forty percent of our participants found permanent employment because of the program, and all received wraparound support from our partner, Bayaud Enterprises.

I can't wait to see these folks, and many of you, return for another season as the Conservancy shifts its attention to "active and thriving."

*Chris Frampton*

Chris Frampton, Chairperson of the Board



## LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

I began my work with the Conservancy in a programming role. I proudly produced some of the best activations that Civic Center has ever seen, including several Independence Eve celebrations, EATS, and the Tree of Transformation. For years, we approached our mission to keep the park active and thriving for all with Conservancy-produced programming. It worked ... to an extent.

After stepping into the Executive Director role three years ago, I knew that if we were truly going to transform Civic Center into the vibrant public space our city deserved while substantially growing our organization to make that happen, we needed to adjust our approach.

The first thing we did was focus on the first barrier to use: clean and beautiful. Through WORKS and SPARKLES, we engaged our community in collaborative power and hard work to raise the bar for what Civic Center should look and feel like. These programs are here to stay.

Now, we are returning focus back to programming to address another barrier to use: underutilization.

In 2022, we laid the groundwork for what programming would look like in 2023 and beyond with our partners at the Central Park Conservancy. We worked to address how we would increase park utilization consistently in a financially sustainable way and knew we could not achieve the vision alone. However, we also realized that our biggest strengths include recruiting, hosting, and partnering.

Leaning into these strengths, we brought the Christkindlmarket and the Mile High Tree to our table with the City to create a memorable holiday experience for our community. The result was incredible: 290,000 people visited Civic Center during the holiday season – double from 2021.

**This** is what we are good at, and you will see much more of this kind of collaboration in 2023.

Thank you to our community, park stewards, Board of Directors, Next 100 Partners, City Beautiful Circle, donor community, and our staff for making Civic Center an amazing place to play, pause, process, and participate every day.

See you in the park,

*Eric Lazzari*

Eric Lazzari, Executive Director

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Peter Park, Peter J Park, LLC/ University of Colorado-Denver  
Eric Rymarz, Urban Villages  
Andrew Stettner, Stettner Properties  
Marvin Wilkinson, John Brooks Inc.  
Molly Wink, Ex-Officio, Denver Arts & Venues



**FloraJane DiRienzo,**  
*Executive Director of the  
Biennial of the Americas,  
Board Member for  
Civic Center Conservancy*

“Being an ambassador for Civic Center Conservancy and the park is a big source of pride for me. It’s our responsibility to support these parks in urban spaces so that they’re better for everybody”

## STAFF

Eric Lazzari, Executive Director  
Sara Leitch, Development Director  
Murphy Hogan, Program & Development Operations Coordinator

# FOR THE PARK

## 2700 HOURS OF SUPPLEMENTAL MAINTENANCE FOR CIVIC CENTER THROUGH WORKS AND SPARKLES



In 2022, the Conservancy launched its pilot workforce development program, Civic Center WORKS, which employs unhoused individuals to perform supplemental maintenance in Civic Center Park. The results were incredibly successful.

We had 24 participants, 10 of which found permanent employment through the program. Three of those went to our partner the City & County of Denver. Thank you to VF Foundation and Bank of America for supporting this program.



### PARTNERS



Employment Matters



THE VF FOUNDATION



*Kevin McAllister, Former Denver Day  
WORKS Site Lead with Bayaud Enterprises*

“This program helps people find employment. A lot of the people we work with are staying in shelters and need support finding housing too. Recently one of our crewmembers was connected to a job and housing. He’s doing good! We miss him here, but we’re happy to see him go onto his next job.”

[Hear 9News interview with WORKS crew member Brandon](#)

# FOR THE PARK

In 2022, we rang in our second year of Civic Center SPARKLES. This volunteer program hosts horticultural maintenance and cleanup each week throughout the summer.

Volunteer groups maintained Civic Center’s showstopping floral beds and helped fellow nonprofit Grow Local Colorado maintain 10 vegetable beds. In 2022, SPARKLES hosted 11 different groups and 200 volunteers who contributed 600 hours of maintenance for a powerful investment in Civic Center Park. Civic Center Grow Local beds resulted in 2,367 pounds of produce that went to organizations tackling food insecurity.



PRESENTED BY  
**amazon**



Linda Kiker, Co-Director,  
Grow Local Colorado

“I think that this park is a huge opportunity to connect people... It’s incredibly important to maintain, nurture and continually grow this plot of land for others to enjoy down the road.”

## PARTNERS



Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck, LLP

east west partners



**PLUS MANY OF YOU, OUR COMMUNITY**

# FOR THE PEOPLE

## CENTRAL PARK CONSERVANCY PARTNERSHIPS LAB

Central Park Conservancy's Institute for Urban Parks selected Civic Center Conservancy as one of seven urban land organizations nationwide to participate in its 2022 Partnerships Lab Cohort.

Founded in 2012, the Central Park Conservancy's Institute for Urban Parks draws on Central Park's history and expertise as a leader in the field of urban park management and public-private partnerships to empower, inform, connect, and celebrate the individuals and organizations that care for urban parks so that all urban park organizations have the knowledge, leadership, connections, and capacity to create, maintain, and support great public spaces. The Partnerships Lab supports urban parks as they identify "sticky" issues and develop strategies for long-term success.

### OUR "STICKY" ISSUE

Activating the park for everyone, every day with limited staff in a financially sustainable way.

### RESPONSE

Partnerships!

While partnerships have always been a strength (see Holidays in Civic Center on page 11 for proof!), Central Park Conservancy helped our programming role shift from "producer" to "host" for future park activation. This shift leverages the strengths and expertise of other organizations and community groups to collectively achieve our mission of keeping the park active and thriving for all. This work led to our engagement with Sakul Creative, a leader in inclusive programming, to help craft an effective park utilization framework.

## PARTNERS

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**CENTRAL PARK  
CONSERVANCY** 



# FOR THE PEOPLE



Civic Center EATS, presented by Westword, returned to Civic Center Park to deliver the best lunch in Denver for 15 Thursdays last summer. As part of our Zero Waste initiative, all vendors used either recyclable or compostable packaging.

With these sustainability initiatives and rising inflation, we knew that EATS had become prohibitively expensive for many. To remove this cost barrier, we launched EATS for ALL, our pay-as-you-are-able system, with pilot funding from public relations firm Barefoot PR. Another component of the program was to remove the cost barrier to participate as a vendor by giving season scholarships to three BIPOC food trucks.

Over 500 people participated in this program, with many contributing anywhere from \$2-\$10 for their meals.



“As a woman-owned business in Denver, we are fierce advocates for inclusivity and accessibility,” said Sarah Hogan, Co-Founder and Chief Purpose Officer at Barefoot PR.

## EATS FOR ALL SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

**LAS CAZUELAS DE FER  
MAIZ DENVER  
SWEET ACTION ICE CREAM**



**Fernanda,**  
*Las Cazuelas de Fer food truck*

“It was so heartwarming, especially after the pandemic, we weren’t sure if we were going to make it back to Civic Center EATS. I watched the struggle firsthand of us having to budget our money and it wasn’t easy. We are all happy to have the opportunity to be back in the park again this year.”

## PARTNERS



# FOR THE PEOPLE



Civic Center MOVES returned in 2022 with three woman-owned studios. Over 300 people enjoyed movement in Denver's most essential public space thanks to our funding partner VF Foundation.



## PARTNERS



*Samantha Mock, Yoga Instructor for The River Yoga and Civic Center MOVES*

"Anyone can come here for free. It makes yoga for everyone. I feel like there can be barriers to yoga for some people – maybe they think they're not flexible enough. Being able to practice and share this space, movement, energy and breath brings us all together in a world where there's so much division."

# FOR THE PEOPLE

## SPECIAL EVENTS AND MUSIC IN CIVIC CENTER

### INDEPENDENCE EVE

Independence Eve returned to Civic Center on July 3, welcoming our community back to Civic Center to enjoy a magical evening of Colorado Symphony Orchestra music and spectacular fireworks.

### DAY IN THE PARK

The Conservancy partnered with the Golden Triangle Creative District to celebrate summer in Civic Center with free activities, treats, and fun for everyone. These days coincided with the Denver Art Museum free days, where we offered free ice cream, an experience with the Museum of Nature & Science Curiosity Cruiser, a drum circle, and frisbees.

### DENVER STREETS PARTNERSHIP ACTIVATION

Closed 14th Avenue between the Cultural Campus and Civic Center Park for an Open Streets demonstration aimed to encourage casual park use. Closing the street to vehicles prioritized people walking and biking. Demonstration elements included planters to create a buffered bike lane, and an enhanced crosswalk at Acoma Street.

### AEG LAUNCHES CONCERTS IN THE PARK

The Conservancy partnered with AEG to provide three concerts in the park this summer. This partnership created a new earned-revenue source for the Conservancy to pour into more community-centered programming. They also brought new audiences to the park.



## PARTNERS



# FOR THE PEOPLE



## HOLIDAYS IN CIVIC CENTER

For the first time in Denver history, Christkindlmarket and the Mile High Tree simultaneously found a home in Civic Center Park, thanks to Civic Center Conservancy.

Christkindlmarket, produced by the German American Chamber of Commerce, has been in Denver for 22 years, the last three of which have been in Civic Center. This annual event brings authentic German and European holiday traditions to Denver, allowing guests to experience authentic Glühwein, Bavarian-style beers, European coffee, or hot chocolate while wandering through its market full of charming artisans.

The Mile High Tree, produced by Visit Denver, is a seven-story 110-foot-tall immersive art piece containing 60,000 LED lights. The tree features nightly free public shows choreographed to multicultural holiday music and accommodating up to 140 guests at a time for an immersive viewing experience within the tree.

These two activations, paired with the Conservancy's Great Lawn Lights and the City & County Building Lights, made Civic Center Park a home for the holidays!

**290,000**  
PEOPLE VISITED THE PARK  
OVER THE HOLIDAY SEASON!

## PARTNERS



German American  
Chambers of Commerce  
Deutsch-Amerikanische  
Handelskammern



DENVER  
THE MILE HIGH CITY



RISING

UMB



# FOR THE FUTURE

## NEXT 100 CAPITAL UPDATE

Civic Center Conservancy, in partnership with the City and County of Denver, is leading the Next 100 Projects. The projects will improve Civic Center to catalyze new activity and animate the heart of Denver. The transformation of four key areas will bring the park's Master Plan to life and elevate Denver's First National Historic Landmark with daily energy, performances, and special events for the next 100 years. These transformative projects include the Greek Amphitheater, the Central Promenade, Bannock Street, and a central gathering feature.

In 2022, the Next 100 Final Concept Design was released and we began to move forward on Phase 1 of the projects: the Greek Amphitheater and the Central Promenade. A designer has been selected and will be announced in 2023.

[VIEW FINAL CONCEPT DESIGNS](#)

### FUNDING REPORT

\$180,000 has been raised toward final design of the Greek Theater Canopy. Thank you to Boettcher Foundation and Gates Foundation for launching this effort.

\$15 million has been committed by the City and County of Denver toward these projects.

### NEXT STEPS & TIMELINE

**Contractor & Construction Procurements: 2023**

**Construction: 2024**

**Substantial Completion: 2025**



Jenna Harris, *Downtown Parks Manager at City and County of Denver*

“It’s rare to be able to work in such a culturally significant, historic space. Civic Center Park is one of the most important upcoming projects for Denver Parks & Recreation right now, so I’m honored to be able to lead that effort.”

## PARTNERS



# 2022 IMPACT



**24**  
PARTICIPANTS

**10** FOUND PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT

**3** FOUND EMPLOYMENT WITH  
DENVER PARKS & RECREATION



**15** DAYS  
**10,000**  
ATTENDEES

**500**  
EATS FOR ALL MEALS

**30+**  
LOCAL FOOD VENDORS



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**575**  
HOURS

**17**  
DAYS

**188**  
PEOPLE

**ONE**  
BEAUTIFUL RAINBOW BED  
FOR PRIDE MONTH

**2,367** POUNDS OF PRODUCE HARVESTED FROM GROW LOCAL BEDS

# 2022 IMPACT

## AEG CONCERTS

**27,000** PEOPLE AT **3 CONCERTS**

## HOLIDAYS

**290,000** PEOPLE

## INDEPENDENCE EVE

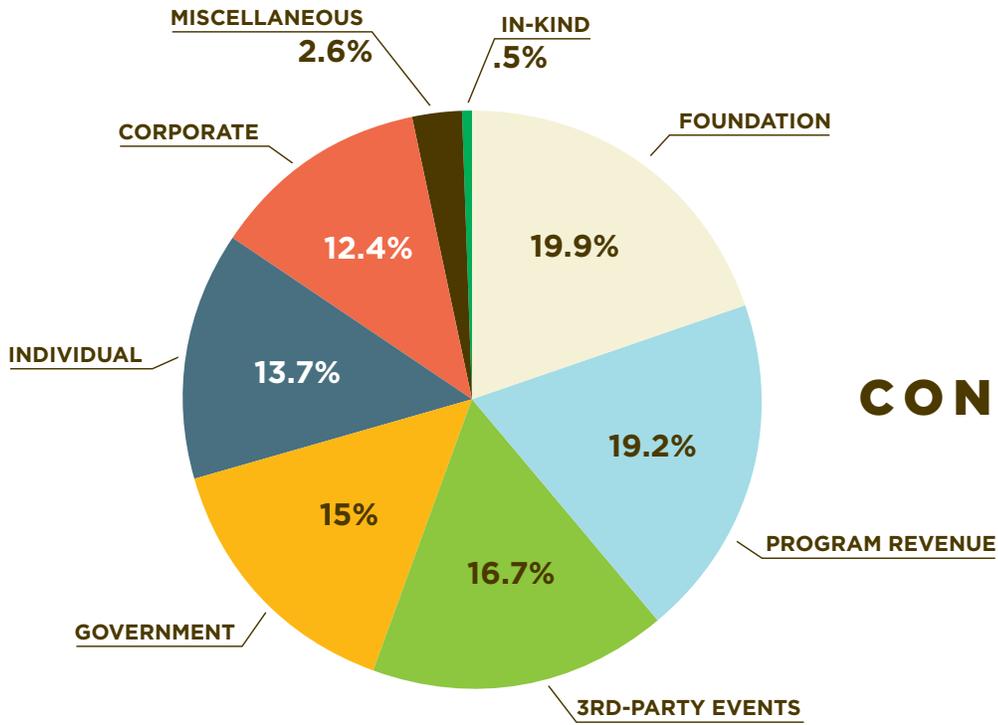
**30,000** PEOPLE

## MOVES

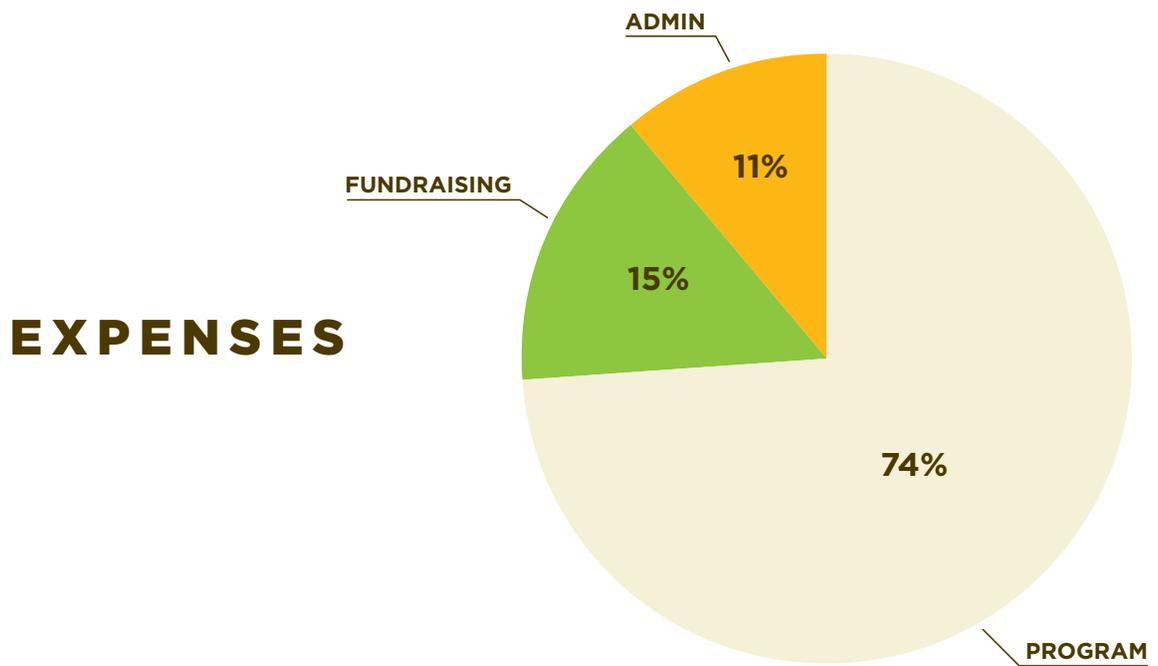
**3** TYPES OF MOVEMENT

**38**  
CLASSES

**300+**  
PARTICIPANTS



**CONTRIBUTIONS**



**EXPENSES**

# 2022 CONTRIBUTORS



Next 100 Partners have committed unrestricted, often multiyear gifts of \$15,000+ to reenergize our treasured Denver landmark for the next 100 years.

## CHAMPIONS



## SUPPORTERS

east west partners



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## CITY BEAUTIFUL CIRCLE

City Beautiful Circle, named for the City Beautiful Movement, is a dedicated group of individuals invested in keeping Civic Center Park active and thriving for all with unrestricted gifts of at least \$1,000.

Anonymous (1)	Amanda Johnson
Jerrel & Maggie Armstrong	Eric & Leah Lazzari
Heather & Nael Ashour	Lindy Eichenbaum-Lent
Sean Bahoshy	Sharon & Lanny Martin
Ferdinand Belz	Tony Mauro
Trish & Tully Bragg	Thomas McLagan
Mardi & Brown Cannon	Susan & Howard Noble
FloraJane & James DiRienzo	Wende Nossaman
Chris & Yvette Frampton	Katie & Michael Owen
Susan & Harry Frampton	Marcus Pachner
Tom Gougeon	Peter & Kristin Park
John & Susan Gowen	Victoria Sterling
Arlene & Barry Hirschfeld	Andrew & Sarah Stettner
Matt & Sarah Hogan	Maren Stewart
Dennis Humphries	Darrell Watson & Mike Wenk
Nicole Jarman	Marvin Wilkinson & Arthur Ellsworth
Bruce James	

# 2022 CONTRIBUTORS

## \$50,000+

AEG  
Boettcher Foundation  
City and County of Denver/Independence Eve  
Gates Family Foundation  
Peak Beverage  
VF Foundation

## \$25,000-\$49,999

Central Park Conservancy  
FirstBank  
Liberty Global  
PCL Construction  
Peak Beverage  
PepsiCo, Inc.  
TransAmerica

## \$10,000-24,999

Amazon  
Bank of America  
Coors Distributing Company  
East West Partners  
MDC Richmond American Homes  
Suncor  
Urban Villages  
VISIT Denver  
Westword

## \$5,000-\$9,999

Barefoot PR  
BuildMark  
Ernst & Young  
McWhinney  
Stettner Properties

## \$500-\$4,999

Brownstein Hyatt Farer Schreck, LLP  
CCS Fundraising  
Golden Triangle Creative District  
Herdez Salsa  
LC Fulenwider Inc.  
Lennar/LMC  
Rising Realty Partners  
The Port Group  
Saunders Construction  
UMB  
Xcel Energy

## In-Kind

Brownstein Hyatt Farer Schreck, LLP  
CBS4 Denver  
Cultivator Advertising & Design  
Laz Parking  
Westword



Civic Center Conservancy is dedicated to keeping Denver's Civic Center Park active and thriving for all. As an independent nonprofit, the Civic Center Conservancy engages individuals, businesses, and community groups as champions for this essential public space. The Conservancy attracts people to the park, supports the park's upkeep, and ensures it meets the needs of anyone who gathers there, for today and for

**THE FUTURE.**



CIVIC CENTER CONSERVANCY  
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