

I trained an AI model on the mission of COSAC. Regarding this I instructed the model on the name of the project and requested amount for the project/program. I then asked ChatGpt to summarize the comments in paragraph form. The following are the results from these inputs. As these inputs are current summaries as compiled by COSAC staff, we could remove the member names from the templates and ask AI to generate a summary of the inputs. Then, we could repeat the initial process I used to create a report for the commissioners. Note, this did not include scores/potential max scores.

Sandstone Ranch Survey

The Sandstone Ranch Survey funding request for \$250,000 is aimed at completing a cultural survey to support further development at the ranch, including trail expansion and historic preservation. The survey is crucial for planning additional trails, as well as for addressing critical needs related to the historic structures on the property. The general consensus is that the cultural survey funding should come from Open Space, as it is tied to the preservation of open space and trails, while the funding for historic building repairs should come from the Historic Preservation (HP) budget, as these costs are separate from open space considerations.

The request is viewed as a one-time cost, with no additional funding sought from the Open Space and Natural Resources (OSNR) department. Although the request is described as substantial, it is highly recommended by staff, highlighting its importance in completing the cultural survey and addressing the critical restoration needs identified in an updated Historic Structures Assessment (HSA). The request also ties into broader goals, including the eventual expansion of trails at Sandstone, which may connect to the Pike National Forest .

The historic structures at Sandstone, built in the 1870s, are in poor condition and visible from the nearby Ranch Overlook. However, the buildings are not currently open to the general public. Despite the limited impact on the criteria for Open Space funding, the cultural survey is seen as necessary for preserving these historically significant buildings and furthering the development of the property.

There is some concern about whether the historic preservation components of the project should be considered under Open Space funding, given their distinct nature. The Historic Preservation commission is suggested as a potential partner in this initiative. Nonetheless, the cultural survey is critical for advancing both the preservation and public access components of the project, and it is noted that completing this survey is essential before expanding the trail system at Sandstone Ranch.

Greenland Townsite

The Greenland Townsite funding request for \$25,000 is aimed at placing interpretive signage at the site, which is a small historical location with poor condition buildings located near I-25. The site is under a conservation easement, and the project could enhance the recreational features of the Greenland Ranch area. However, there are questions about whether the signage is permissible under the conservation easement and whether it aligns with Open Space objectives.

The project is seen as primarily historical in nature, with the proposed signs focusing on educating the public about the history of the townsite. It is suggested that the Historic Preservation department partner with this project, as the site has more historical significance than natural value. Partnerships with the Larkspur Historical Society and the Historic Preservation Board are recommended, and there is a suggestion to explore other funding sources for the historical components, such as signs related to the town's history.

While public safety concerns about a traffic pull-off area near the site are raised, the signage itself is seen as a low-cost, one-time project that would improve public education. There is some concern about the limited visitation due to the site's remote location and lack of parking. The interpretive signage would highlight both the history and natural features of the area, but the overall impact on wildlife and the environment is minimal, given the site's location and the condition of the buildings.

In terms of funding, it's noted that the \$25,000 request represents a small portion of the COSAC budget, and while the request is viewed as worthwhile for historical education, some feel that the signage could be produced at a lower cost. It is also suggested that Open Space funding should cover signs related to the natural resources, while Historic Preservation could fund those related to the history of the area.

Finally, the project aligns with the goal of educating the public about Douglas County's history, with minimal maintenance required for the signage. However, the project's low visitation and the lack of direct accessibility to the site limit its broader impact.

Prairie Canyon Ranch Survey

The Prairie Canyon Ranch Survey funding request for \$65,000 is aimed at conducting a cultural resource survey of the property, which is already preserved. The survey is seen as a necessary prerequisite before expanding public access to the site, including potential trails for hiking, biking, and equestrian use. It is noted that the property contains important cultural and historic resources, such as frontier-era buildings and artifacts, which need further protection.

The primary focus of the survey is to identify and protect cultural resources, rather than the structural integrity of historic buildings. While Historic Preservation has already been allocated funding for similar projects, a partnership between Historic Preservation and Open Space is suggested, as the survey is seen as essential for planning future access to the site and its integration with adjacent open spaces like Castlewood Canyon .

The survey is expected to enhance the understanding of the site's topography, vegetation, and cultural assets, and would increase the potential for public access. However, there are concerns about the cost of improvements, such as road access along CO Highway 83, and the potential costs associated with discovering additional artifacts .

The project has the potential to connect to Castlewood Canyon, enhancing wildlife corridors and offering broader public educational opportunities. While public access is currently limited, the survey would provide a foundation for future trail development and public use. It is emphasized that this is a one-time cost for the survey, and the resulting data could support further conservation and public use decisions.

Overall, the funding request is recognized as an important first step toward making Prairie Canyon Ranch a public resource, though some suggest that funding for historic preservation could be sought from other sources, such as the Historic Preservation Board .

High Line Canal Conservancy Funding Resource Management Plan

The High Line Canal Conservancy has requested \$15,000 for a Resource Management Plan (RMP) for approximately 800 acres of open space along the canal's Douglas County segment. The goal of the plan is to enhance habitat, improve native vegetation, and address challenges like the tree canopy and fire hazards, particularly in the context of reduced water availability. It will outline steps for better management of the natural resources and habitat along the canal, which is a regional amenity with 1 million annual trail users and 340,000 residents within a mile of the canal.

This request represents only 3% of the total project cost, with the remaining funds coming from 14 partnering agencies. The plan will be collaborative, with input from multiple municipalities and agencies, and will focus on fire safety, hazard tree mitigation, and improving habitat. It will also consider the canal's role as a wildlife corridor, supporting over 190 bird species, 25 mammals, and 15+ reptiles, and addressing concerns over the health of cottonwoods and other vegetation.

The plan is a one-time cost that will help guide future maintenance and restoration efforts, as well as establish funding partnerships. It will also provide valuable information for tree planting, watering strategies, and wildlife usage. The High Line Canal is noted as an important historic resource, though the RMP will focus primarily on natural resource management rather than cultural or historic issues. The plan will also recommend citizen science initiatives to support restoration and interpretive education .

Overall, the project is seen as a small but valuable investment for ensuring the sustainability of the High Line Canal, which connects to numerous trails, including the Plum Creek and Centennial trails, and spans 71 miles across multiple jurisdictions.

Highlands Ranch Metro District Historic Park Funding

The Highlands Ranch Metro District Historic Park has requested \$250,000 for a portion of the overall \$1.5 million needed for site analysis and master planning of the park. The project involves 195 acres of land that is already conserved and aims to preserve both the natural habitat and historic elements, including a historic mansion and barns. The funding request is focused on the public process and master planning for the development of the site, but there is uncertainty about how to divide the funding between historic preservation and open space aspects of the project.

Several stakeholders, including Parks and Historic Preservation, are suggested to partner in the funding, though it's unclear how the request should be divided between Open Space and Parks & Recreation. The project has existing trails and potential future trail connections to Wildcat Regional Park and backcountry areas, though it is not currently connected to regional trails or Highlands Ranch's backcountry trails. Some comments question whether funding from Open Space should be allocated, as the project primarily focuses on historic preservation, with only portions of the project related to Open Space (e.g., trail planning).

Concerns have been raised about the potential precedence this funding request could set for Metro District projects, and it's noted that funding from sources like the Conservation Trust Fund or lottery could be explored. Additionally, while the project is seen as valuable for preserving both history and culture, there is a need for further clarification and more detailed information to assess the appropriate allocation of funds. COSAC members express that they would only support funding for passive open space planning, such as trail development, and not for the restoration of historic buildings.

The \$250,000 requested would cover the planning and public process portion, but additional funding from other sources may be necessary to complete the full project.

Mancanta Regional Park

The Mancanta Regional Park project is largely seen as fitting within the mission of Douglas County Open Space (COSAC), particularly in terms of preserving natural habitats and offering passive recreational opportunities. The park, set on a 463-acre undeveloped tract, will support hiking, biking, and equestrian use, and is expected to be as busy as the Bluffs Regional Park. While the property is already conserved, the project includes significant infrastructure for public accessibility, including ADA-compliant trails.

However, the request for \$3.8 million from COSAC raises concerns. The park's total estimated value is \$5.5 million, with \$450K donated by the developer, and some argue that the project should primarily be funded by the Parks Department, which has already budgeted for the park's development. Many suggest that COSAC should only fund the portions related to open space, such as trails and habitat conservation, rather than the entire build-out. There is also concern about ongoing maintenance costs, estimated at \$55K per year, which would fall to the Parks Department, and the long-term impact of potential future housing developments.

Despite these concerns, the project is widely viewed as beneficial, offering important wildlife corridors and connections to nearby open spaces and regional trails, such as Hidden Mesa Open Space and the Cherry Creek Regional Trail. There is also potential for educational opportunities through interpretive signage.

In conclusion, the project is seen as a natural resource and recreational asset for the region, with COSAC's funding primarily supporting the open space and trail aspects while partnering with Parks for broader development and maintenance.

Lone Tree High Note Park Phase 1

The Lone Tree High Note Park Phase 1 funding request for \$2.5 million out of a total project cost of \$8 million has sparked mixed feedback, with concerns raised regarding its alignment with Douglas County Open Space (COSAC) criteria. The proposed project aims to develop a mile-long trail loop through the park, which is located within the Happy Canyon Riparian area. While the park itself preserves open space, the project is seen by many as more aligned with active recreational development rather than a traditional passive open space initiative. As such, the trail's primary focus on hiking, biking, and equestrian use is viewed as inconsistent with the goal of preserving wildlife habitats and maintaining passive recreational opportunities.

One of the key issues raised in the comments is the lack of connection between the proposed trail and other regional open space trails. The trail would pass through areas with active recreational amenities, such as ballfields, making it unlikely to serve as a passive-use trail that would typically qualify for open space funding. Additionally, the park's small passive open space area and the high volume of human activity from these recreational uses would likely reduce its capacity to support wildlife corridors. Consequently, there is concern that the addition of human traffic could discourage wildlife activity in the area.

Funding for the project is expected to come from multiple sources, with South Suburban Parks & Recreation (SSPRD) and the City of Lone Tree contributing the majority of the costs. Douglas County is asked to cover approximately 25% of the Phase 1 funding, amounting to \$2.5 million. While there is broad support for the park's development, there is a sense that the project is more suited for funding through Parks rather than Open Space, as it focuses on active recreation rather than the conservation and preservation of natural resources.

In terms of public access, the park's location in a rapidly urbanizing area near I-25 and Ridgeway Parkway is a significant benefit, providing easy access via transit. However, this urban proximity also raises concerns about the project's long-term impact on the riparian environment and wildlife. The integration of trails in such an active area may further compromise the natural landscape and wildlife corridors.

Despite these concerns, the project is viewed as a valuable resource for the community, particularly in its ability to provide recreational opportunities in a highly accessible location. However, many believe that it may be better suited for Parks funding due to its focus on active recreation. There is also a potential for future interpretive signage related to the nearby Schweiger Ranch and other cultural resources, though this is not part of the current funding request.

Overall, while the park and its amenities are considered a great asset to the community, there is debate over whether this is the right project for Open Space funding, as its focus appears more on active use and recreational development rather than preservation and conservation.

High Line Canal Conservancy Origins Trailhead Improvement

The High Line Canal Conservancy Origins Story Trailhead project requests \$450,000 to enhance accessibility, create interpretive signage, and improve amenities at the trailhead. The goal is to make the trailhead a more prominent and educational destination while improving public access to an underutilized section of the High Line Canal. The project is a collaboration between Douglas County, the High Line Canal Conservancy, and Denver Water, which controls the property under an easement. The funding request is to be split between Parks, Historic Preservation, and Open Space, with a significant portion being matched by private donations and a cost-share with the Conservancy.

The improvements will focus on increasing public accessibility, especially for individuals with disabilities, and providing historical and cultural interpretation of the canal's legacy. Interpretive signs and exhibits will highlight local history, water management, and the canal's ecosystem. The project aims to create a regional destination for passive recreation, appealing to various user groups, including hikers, cyclists, and history enthusiasts. While there are no significant concerns about wildlife impact, the project will enhance educational opportunities about the canal's ecological significance, with erosion control measures planned to minimize long-term maintenance costs.

The trailhead's location along Waterton Road, near Platte Canyon Reservoir, will provide increased visibility and attract more users to a currently underutilized section of the High Line Canal in the Roxborough/Waterton areas. The project also connects to nearby Chatfield State Park and Waterton Canyon, offering a chance to improve the trail system's overall accessibility. Some concerns were raised about cost efficiency and whether the project would lead to enough increased use to justify the funding, but the project is viewed as an important historical and educational asset for the county.

Overall, while the project has broad support for its educational and recreational benefits, suggestions for phasing the improvements or seeking additional funding partners were made. The strong partnerships already in place and the project's shovel-ready status are seen as positive factors for its success. The potential for school group involvement and citizen engagement through interpretive and outdoor classroom opportunities adds further value, making the trailhead an important long-term investment in the county's educational and recreational infrastructure.

Camping Passive Program

The Camping Passive Program requests \$400,000 to develop a pilot program for 3 to 5 campsites on Douglas County lands, specifically at Sandstone Ranch. While the idea of expanding camping opportunities is generally viewed as positive for public access to nature, there are significant concerns about its impact on conservation, wildlife, and natural resources. The Land Trust must evaluate whether camping aligns with existing conservation easements, and there are worries that overnight camping could negatively affect wildlife habitats, especially in migration corridors. Additionally, the presence of humans overnight may disrupt nocturnal wildlife and lead to increased environmental damage, even with plans to ban fires.

The program is considered costly, with estimates indicating \$300,000 in initial costs and \$100,000 annually for maintenance, staffing, and operational needs. This would require ongoing staffing resources, including possibly a 24/7 ranger presence, and additional infrastructure such as new trails and composting toilets. The pilot program would be a valuable learning opportunity, though the limited number of campsites and high costs may not justify the investment when considering broader public benefit. Furthermore, the program's feasibility is in question due to the financial commitment and the potential need for a new reservation system .

Although the pilot program could expand public enjoyment of conserved lands, it raises questions about whether it provides the greatest benefit for the largest number of people. There is concern that the costs of maintaining and managing the campsites may outweigh the benefits, especially since the program would likely require substantial staffing and resources for ongoing operation. Furthermore, partnerships with other agencies such as CPW and the Forest Service remain unclear. Despite these concerns, the pilot is seen as an opportunity to gather data and assess whether such programs should be expanded or replicated on other Douglas County lands in the future.

Prairie Canyon Ranch

The Prairie Canyon Ranch project requests \$5,000,000 to increase public access to a property that is currently preserved for cultural and historic values. There are significant concerns about the potential negative impacts on the land's conservation and cultural resources. Public access, especially recreational use like trails, could jeopardize these values, with fears of looting and damage to artifacts and historical buildings. A biological baseline review and possible amendments to the conservation easement (CE) may be required to allow recreational access, which was not part of the land's original conservation goal. The project could benefit from guided access or limited opening periods, such as weekends, to mitigate the risks to cultural resources. However, the high costs of implementing necessary infrastructure, such as turn lanes on Highway 83 (estimated at \$3.5 million), could make the project less feasible given the anticipated number of users.

Additionally, there are concerns about public safety due to the dangerous access off of Highway 83, which lacks proper turn lanes. The cultural resources on the property, including thousands of artifacts, would require additional staffing or security measures to prevent damage. While the project could increase public access to an important historic and cultural site, the risks to the land's ecological and cultural integrity are significant. Future discussions with Castlewood Canyon and potential State Park connections could provide additional opportunities, but public access needs to be carefully managed to avoid harming the property's historic value.

The project's ongoing maintenance is also a concern, with estimated costs ranging from \$120,000 to \$300,000 annually, which will require funding from the county's open space budget. Overall, while the project has great potential for educational opportunities and increased public access, careful planning and limited access may be necessary to protect the property's cultural and environmental resources.

Cherokee Ranch Foundation

The Cherokee Ranch Foundation has requested \$75,000 to update project plans and cost estimates for future projects on the ranch, which is already preserved by Douglas County under a conservation easement. While the ranch provides unique opportunities for preserving wildlife, botany, and cultural heritage, public access is currently limited to guided tours, in alignment with the easement's terms. Expanding public access or altering the ranch's conservation use could negatively impact conservation values, particularly wildlife protection and the preservation of historic resources.

Concerns include potential damage to historic buildings, which are not currently protected under the conservation easement, and the need for amendments to include these buildings or funding under historic preservation. There is also discussion of partnering with organizations like the Douglas Conservation District to address specific conservation needs, and exploring options for partnerships in funding. The project's costs are high, with some funding requests beyond the initial \$75,000, leading to concerns over sustainability and the need for oversight, including annual reports on fund usage.

The ranch is located in an ecologically significant area, connected to other conserved properties like Daniels Park and the Highlands Ranch Backcountry, contributing to the county's wildlife sanctuary. While access is restricted, the foundation's events and educational initiatives, such as wildlife rehabilitation and historical education, make the ranch an important cultural and educational resource. Overall, while the requested funding is seen as a small ask for a significant property, concerns about the balance between historic preservation and open space conservation remain, requiring careful consideration of how funds are spent and how projects align with the property's broader goals.

Lincoln Mountain Trail & Pavilion

The Lincoln Mountain Trail and Pavilion Project has requested \$500,000 to create an accessible cement trail and picnic pavilion, primarily to increase ADA accessibility in southeastern Douglas County, which is far removed from population centers. The project aims to provide a safe, accessible outdoor space for individuals with disabilities, families, and the elderly, offering much-needed access to nature, particularly for those who use wheelchairs. This initiative has been praised as a fantastic opportunity with minimal environmental impact, enhancing public access and providing a public benefit through the addition of accessible features like the trail and pavilion.

Concerns about the project include cost considerations, particularly regarding the high expense of the pavilion, with some suggesting that alternative, less expensive options could be explored, such as utilizing existing trails like Hidden Mesa. The project is seen as having a high return on investment (ROI) for increased accessibility, although ongoing costs like snow and ice removal may add to future staffing needs. The proposed project would not significantly impact wildlife, scenic views, or historic resources, though concerns about potential vandalism at the Evans Homestead are noted.

While the project is a strong candidate for enhancing public access, the high costs and lack of partnerships are challenges. Some suggest that this project could be postponed to future years or consider alternative locations for the pavilion, like Hidden Mesa, which may be more centrally located. Despite these concerns, the project is generally seen as a positive addition for accessibility, offering an opportunity for educational and recreational use with potential for grant funding.

Here is the ranking of the projects based on their alignment with COSAC's mission to balance public access, conservation, and preservation, along with the feasibility of each project:

1. High Line Canal Conservancy Origins Trailhead Improvement

This project stands out for its strong alignment with COSAC's goals. It promotes public access, enhances an existing open space resource, and contributes to a broader network of trails, providing recreational opportunities while supporting conservation. The project also aligns well with COSAC's focus on protecting natural resources while improving public engagement and use of preserved lands.

2. High Line Canal Conservancy Funding Resource Management Plan

The resource management plan is a key element in ensuring that conservation efforts are coordinated, prioritized, and sustainable. It emphasizes long-term land stewardship, environmental protection, and educational opportunities, making it a critical asset for the region's natural resources and aligning well with COSAC's long-term conservation goals.

3. Prairie Canyon Ranch Survey

The Prairie Canyon Ranch Survey is crucial for understanding the property's conservation values, cultural resources, and ecological significance. The survey would support informed decision-making regarding future access and preservation plans, aligning with COSAC's goal of making data-driven, responsible funding decisions.

4. Lone Tree High Note Park Phase 1

This project provides important public access and recreational opportunities while incorporating some environmental sensitivity. Its success hinges on carefully balancing development with the park's ecological features, making it a strong fit for COSAC, provided the conservation aspects are well-managed and integrated into the overall design.

5. Prairie Canyon Ranch

Prairie Canyon Ranch is an important property with strong potential for public education and access. However, concerns about the impact of increased public access on cultural and environmental resources need to be carefully addressed. While the project aligns with COSAC's mission, it will require careful planning and management to ensure it does not jeopardize the conservation values of the land.

6. Mancanta Regional Park

Mancanta Regional Park offers an opportunity for expanded public access, but its long-term sustainability will need to be evaluated carefully. This park could potentially increase recreational opportunities in the region, though there are concerns about its full alignment with COSAC's conservation priorities if proper resource management strategies are not put in place.

7. Camping Passive Program

While expanding camping opportunities could provide additional public access, the Camping Passive Program faces significant concerns about conservation impacts, wildlife disturbance, and resource management. The environmental costs of increased camping could outweigh the benefits unless there is careful management and strong oversight, making it a lower priority compared to other projects.

8. Sandstone Ranch Survey

The Sandstone Ranch Survey is necessary to understand the site's ecological and cultural resources better. However, without clear plans for how the land will be managed or how public access will be integrated, it falls lower on the priority list for funding. The survey alone does not offer a direct benefit to the public and may not be as urgent as other projects.

9. Greenland Townsite

Greenland Townsite is an interesting historical and cultural site with potential for educational opportunities. However, its limited direct impact on open space conservation and potential challenges around development and management make it a lower priority for COSAC funding compared to projects with more direct conservation benefits.

10. Highlands Ranch Metro District Historic Park Funding

While preserving the historic park is important, it does not directly contribute to COSAC's primary mission of conserving open space and wildlife habitat. The funding request may be more suitable for historic preservation funding rather than open space priorities, lowering its fit with COSAC's core goals.

Summary of Ranking Criteria:

1. Alignment with Conservation Goals: Projects that support sustainable land management, wildlife habitat, and environmental protection are prioritized.
2. Public Access and Engagement: Projects that expand or enhance public access to open spaces while considering conservation values rank higher.
3. Sustainability: Projects with a clear plan for long-term management and minimal environmental impact are preferred.

4. Educational and Cultural Opportunities: Projects that offer educational and cultural value to the community but do not compromise conservation goals are valued.

5. Feasibility: The project's cost, potential partnerships, and logistical requirements were also factored into the ranking.

This ranking is based on an analysis of how well each project aligns with COSAC's core mission of conserving open space while balancing public access and ecological sustainability.

Executive Summary

This report presents an analysis of 10 proposed projects within Douglas County, evaluating their potential impacts and benefits. The projects span a variety of categories, including open space conservation, public accessibility improvements, historic preservation, and environmental resource management. Each project is assessed based on its merits, costs, and overall contribution to the community, with recommendations for moving forward.

1. High Line Canal Conservancy Origins Trailhead Improvement

The project aims to enhance access to the High Line Canal, with improvements to the trailhead facilities, ensuring ADA compliance and increasing the public's ability to explore the area. The project is seen as a positive addition, offering minimal environmental impact and significant public benefits. It is recommended for funding, as it will improve accessibility to a highly valued natural resource.

2. High Line Canal Conservancy Funding Resource Management Plan

This initiative focuses on creating a long-term resource management plan for the High Line Canal. The plan is critical for ensuring sustainable development and protecting the natural integrity of the canal and its surrounding areas. Given its importance for guiding future conservation and management efforts, this project is highly recommended.

3. Prairie Canyon Ranch Survey

The Prairie Canyon Ranch Survey will provide valuable data for understanding the ecological and cultural resources of the site. While the survey is important for informing future planning, there are concerns about its potential for increased public access, which could impact the area's preservation. The project is recommended with the condition that future access plans are carefully considered to balance conservation with public engagement.

4. Lone Tree High Note Park Phase 1

Phase 1 of this project includes the development of new recreational facilities in the High Note Park area, aiming to improve access to open space. The project has some concerns regarding wildlife impact, but it offers significant potential for enhancing community access to green spaces. Its funding is recommended, though further evaluations on mitigating environmental impacts are necessary.

5. Mancanta Regional Park

Mancanta Regional Park seeks to create a new recreational area, although its environmental and resource management impacts remain a concern. The project could serve as a valuable community space, but more details on the environmental considerations and mitigation plans are required. It is recommended that the project be revisited after further environmental review.

6. Sandstone Ranch Survey

The Sandstone Ranch Survey will collect data on the property's natural and cultural assets. While valuable for guiding future decisions, its scope is more limited compared to other projects. The survey is recommended, but its scale and impact should be considered in relation to other, larger projects in the county.

7. Camping Passive Program

The Camping Passive Program seeks to increase recreational opportunities through camping initiatives, but concerns exist regarding its impact on natural areas and wildlife. The project should be re-evaluated to ensure it aligns with broader conservation goals and does not negatively affect environmental quality. It is recommended that this project undergo further review before moving forward.

8. Greenland Townsite

The Greenland Townsite project is focused on historical preservation and community engagement. While it has merit in terms of cultural heritage, it has less potential to impact the county's open space and conservation priorities. Its funding is recommended to be reconsidered until it better integrates conservation and public access objectives.

9. Highlands Ranch Metro District Historic Park Funding

This project focuses on the preservation of historic structures in Highlands Ranch, aiming to preserve the cultural heritage of the area. While important for historical preservation, the project is less aligned with broader community needs for open space or environmental conservation. Funding through other sources outside of this program is recommended.

10. Sandstone Ranch Survey

Similar to the Prairie Canyon Ranch Survey, this project focuses on gathering data to inform resource management and future planning at Sandstone Ranch. Though important for planning, its direct impact on the community is more limited compared to other larger-scale projects. It is recommended for funding with a focus on ensuring that data gathered will be used to inform more comprehensive projects.

Conclusion

This report evaluates the proposed projects based on their overall contributions to Douglas County's development and public service needs. Projects that improve accessibility, enhance community engagement with natural resources, and support environmental sustainability are highly recommended for funding. Projects with more limited impact or that require further environmental review should be reconsidered or postponed until additional data and strategies are developed. The report ultimately prioritizes projects that will have lasting positive effects on public access to natural spaces, historical preservation, and community engagement.