



# JANUARY 2025



## In This Issue.....



Well, as the saying goes, all good things must come to an end (like my Halloween candy stash), and here we are saying goodbye to 2024 and hello to 2025. It was a mixed year for the Metro—in general a lot of positive accomplishments, but some frustrations along the way. However, as we bring the year to a close most of those issues have been resolved and we are well positioned for 2025.

This month's newsletter will highlight some of those accomplishments, as well as detail our plans for 2025. We will have our annual Residents' Meeting in February, and several of our Board seats will be open for election in May. [Information on the position, commitment and applications for candidacy will be distributed in early January.] We will be putting the finishing touches on our Milam median landscaping project and expand that into other areas of the community. Our financial status remains stable and in 2025 we will begin to rebuild our financial reserves, which came in handy in '24 due to several unexpected developments that required unbudgeted expenditures. So please read on—and best wishes to you and your family for a great 2025 from the Metro Board!

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# Annual Meeting - February 18, 2025

## FREE RESIDENT DINNER

Please be sure to mark your calendar to attend our 2025 Annual Resident Meeting to be held at our community Lodge on February 18, 2025 beginning at 6 p.m. At the meeting we will recap our accomplishments in 2024; projects and plans for 2025; and recap the community’s financial status and mill levy projection. The Board will be seeking your input on one major project—additional security around our mail kiosk. The plan requires a significant financial commitment from the community so we would like your feedback on the direction you would like the Board to take.

As usual, the meeting will be preceded by a free resident dinner, which this year will feature Asian cuisine from Pei Wei Asian Kitchen.

## New Board Member Appointed

Earlier this year a new Board opening was created when Chris Meacham, a Board member at the time, resigned as he will be leaving the community for an extended period. The opening was advertised for several months via e-mail blasts, an announcement at the mail kiosk bulletin board, and posting on the CP Metro website ([www.cathedralpinesmd.colorado.gov](http://www.cathedralpinesmd.colorado.gov)). This fall Scott Gassen, who relocated to Cathedral Pines with his spouse Karen earlier this year, applied and interviewed for the position and was appointed at last month’s Board meeting.



Scott Gassen

Scott and his wife Karen moved to Cathedral Pines 6 months ago from Houston TX where they had (and continue to have) a small business as Engineering and Software consultants for the Oil and Gas industry.

Scott’s background includes working as a Key Engineering and Design software administration role on multiple gas and oil projects.

In his application Scott stated “We feel it is important to not just own a home but engage with neighbors and the community. The community has been very welcoming and we want to repay that with our participation and involvement. We usually work as a team and although Karen won’t be on the Board we always back each other up on any projects we get involved in.” They have already contributed to CP by volunteering for several projects, including painting the fencing at the Cathedral Pines Lodge.

Scott is assuming an interim position as the term for this particular Board seat expires in May 2025 and will be up for election.

Please join us in welcoming Scott to the Board, and feel free to reach out to him if you have any particular concerns at [Scott.G@CathedralPinesMD.org](mailto:Scott.G@CathedralPinesMD.org).





## Who Turned Out the Lights?

Mother Nature, that's who!! The record snowfall we received in early November brought much-needed precipitation to the area—perhaps a bit too much in some cases! Unfortunately, the runoff from the subsequent melting drained into an inground electrical junction box near the mail kiosk, flooding it and shorting out all of the electricity in the area. The mail kiosk lights, the holiday lights attached to it, a nearby street light, and all eight Lodge entry lights near Milam Road were affected, and significant electrical work was required to restore power to the area. It took some time to trace the source of the problem as well as the route of the incoming lines, and once it was isolated, the junction box had to be removed, drained, reinstalled, and all systems had to be rewired or replaced. Unfortunately, all eight LED lights by the entry monuments (which were just installed earlier this fall) were burned out by the short and will have to be replaced. Power has been restored to the rest of the area and the entry lights will be replaced later this month.

The Metro Board has asked our District Management company, WSDM, to explore a possible insurance claim for reimbursement caused by the unusual weather event.

## Road Condition/ Snowplowing Update



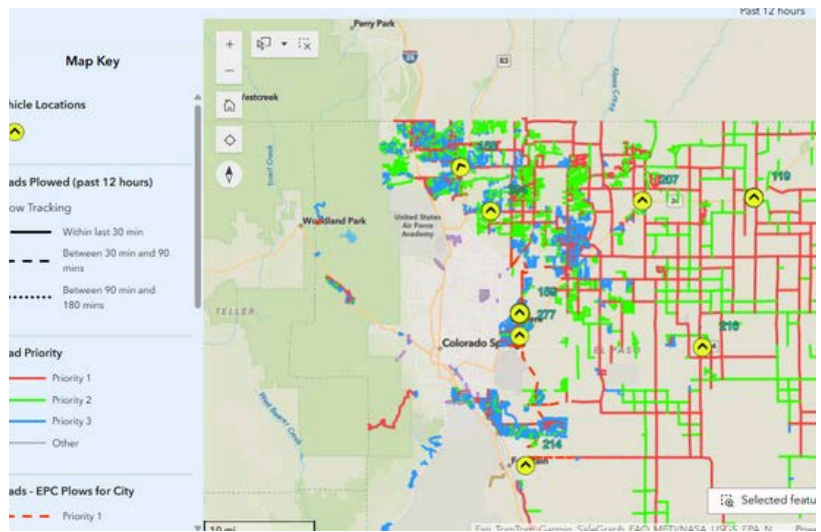
As you have likely noticed, earlier this fall El Paso County completed work on improving the roads in Cathedral Pines. Milam Road itself was resurfaced, and other roads in the community were seal coated. The ride is noticeably smoother these days—with some exceptions.

There continue to be new potholes developing, particularly along Millhaven Road near the median and further down on Vessey Road. In particular, the dropoff from the asphalt surface to the side of the road on Vessey is as much as 10", well below a safety standard particularly when driving before the road has been plowed.

In October the Metro Board filed a request with El Paso County to repair those potholes and drop additional gravel along the roadsides to prevent the large dropoff in certain areas. Unfortunately, we were notified by the County that the County Engineers had determined those improvements were not necessary this year, and any additional road work in Cathedral Pines would not begin until 2025 due to a lack of its remaining budget. (continued on page 4)



On another note, if you want to track the location of the County snow plows during a snowstorm, last year the County instituted a snow plow tracking website. The tracker shows a live look at where plows are currently running throughout the county. Roads are color-coded based on priority, giving residents an idea of when their most traveled roads may be plowed. The website also offers an option to show which roads have already been serviced as well. It can be accessed [here](#).



As a reminder, the County establishes priorities for snow plowing. Shoup Road, and Milam Road heading south off Shoup towards Union are Priority 1 routes; Milam Road heading north of Shoup, connecting to Millhaven and exiting the community on Vessey is a Priority 2 route; and the balance of our roads in Cathedral Pines is Priority 3. The County focuses on highways and main arterials as Priority 1, heavy traffic areas as Priority 2 and remaining roads as Priority 3. Generally speaking, this means the majority of our roads may not be plowed until 24-48 hours after a weather event. To offer better access and egress to those requiring it, the Metro District also engages our landscaping company to make one run through the community to keep the roads open until the County can complete its work. Please note that the landscaper's responsibility is to keep only a single lane open on all CP roads until the County plows can come through the area.



## Lodge News

The Cathedral Pines Lodge plays an important role in our community as a central point for community events, resident rentals, and a supplemental revenue source through outside rentals.

After reaching a low point in rentals during COVID, the Lodge has continued to build back its bookings to the point that close to \$120,000 will be generated this year from rentals.

This can be attributed to several factors: a much-improved website that is driving traffic through Google analytics; better facility management and customer engagement; and upgrades to the facility itself. (continued on page 5)





The Lodge was built in 2006 and has never had a major “refresh” until the flooring in the main hall was replaced in 2023, and is starting to show its age in both “wear and tear” and an increase in mechanical breakdowns. Therefore, earlier this fall the Metro Board approved the funding for additional improvements to enhance the facility.

First, the old uncomfortable wood chairs that we had been using were sold, and the proceeds were used to purchase new cushioned chairs. [Ed. Note: Hooray!] Second, funds have been allocated for a major refresh of the Bridal and Groom’s Suites, which has not been done since the facility was built. This includes new paint, new carpeting, new furniture, and the addition of better décor. The total expense for the remodel is expected to be \$12,000-\$15,000, a modest investment covered by our normal operating budget, and which would be paid back simply through generating three additional rentals.

The Metro Board would like to thank CP resident Donna Combs and Lodge Manager Shalece Buchholz for their work in re-designing these areas, identifying the new furniture and fixtures and implementing the changes. And thanks to Kevin Combs for his work on assembly and painting. Thank you thank you thank you!

Lastly, after a review of competitive pricing, the Metro Board approved an increase in outside rental rates of approx. \$500/ event effective January 2025 (prior bookings for 2025 events would be grandfathered at the previous rates). Even with this increase the CP Lodge continues to represent a very good value in relation to similar competition in the area and is still on the low end of the rental rates spectrum.

Two additional facts to note. Resident rentals continue to increase, with 30 resident events taking place in 2024, an increase of 25% vs. 2023. In addition, NO INCREASE WAS TAKEN FOR RESIDENT RENTALS IN 2025, which continue to run \$250/event or more than 90% off the outside rental rate. So please take advantage of this resource at your disposal—the Lodge was built for *your* use!

## This Month’s Shoutout!



Thanks to a number of residents who volunteered to help assemble and place our holiday reindeer at several community locations. Fortunately, we had beautiful weather that day which made the project go (relatively) smoothly. The team included Kevin Combs, Kristi Correa, Kevin Ehlers, Alex Wolbrink, Allen Zeitz, and the entire Pappas clan—thank you so much for volunteering! No reindeer (or humans) were harmed in the process, and they really add a festive flavor to our community. Thanks again volunteers!



# Mailbox Security Update

Please plan to attend our Metro Board Annual Resident Meeting to be held this February. One of the key elements of that meeting is to review a proposal to construct decorative security fencing around the mail kiosk to provide additional security from theft. The investment has both financial and aesthetic implications, so the Board is asking for resident feedback before proceeding.



In the meantime, the good news is that mail theft has declined considerably since the arrest of a major bad actor by the El Paso County Sheriff's Department last spring. However, there is always the potential for increased theft from our mail kiosk and "porch pirates." The following is a reprint of a package security article first appearing in our newsletter in 2020.

## What Happened to My Delivery?

If you're anything like me, you have Amazon, FedEx and UPS at your door at least once a week these days. With the holidays I'm sure many of you will be ordering gifts for or receiving gifts from family and loved ones. The last thing you want is for it to get stolen.

Have you heard of the term "Porch Pirate"? It's often referred to as the person or persons that steal the packages you have delivered and left on your porch. They will follow the UPS or Amazon driver around the neighborhood and watch to see if the delivery person leaves your package at the door. They will hang close by to see if you open the door and retrieve the delivery or if it looks like you're not even home. Usually working in twos, thieves will blatantly walk right up to the door, pick up the box and walk away to the waiting vehicle. Like it was nothing.

This month's video is from right here in Colorado Springs. There is no way to profile who is and is not a thief and these same crooks won't hesitate to walk up the long driveways in Cathedral Pines. The main lesson here is to be vigilant in watching for expected deliveries, collecting your mail on a regular, frequent basis (Jeff, our carrier thanks you for that), and reporting any unusual activity around the mail kiosk, especially at night. Neighbors watching out for neighbors is a great way to prevent these thefts.

[CLICK TO WATCH](#)



[Thanks to former CP resident Sherry Le for the above article]





**GRAND  
OPENING**

# Isn't That Just *Sooper*?



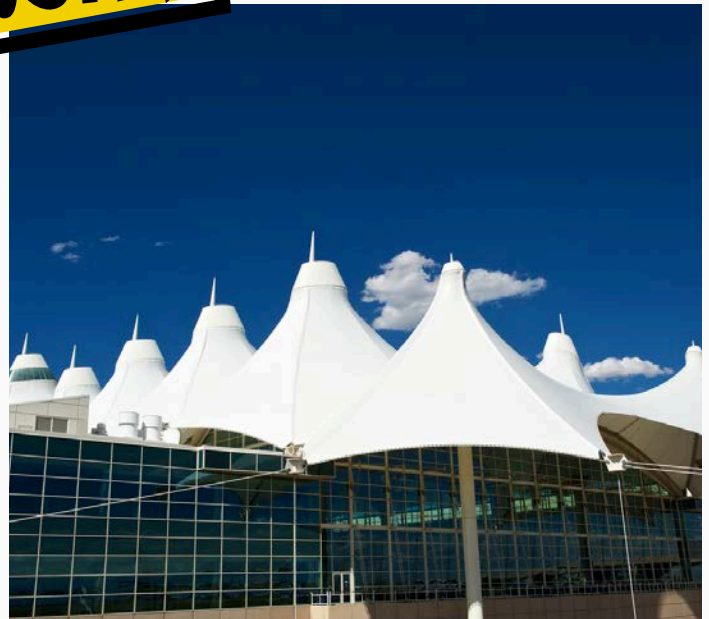
For those of us who are King Soopers shoppers, some good news is on the way. The new King Soopers being built at the intersection of Hwy. 83 and North Gate Boulevard is scheduled to open the morning of Wednesday, January 22. A ribbon-cutting ceremony will be held at the new location, 2731 North Gate Boulevard, and the store will open to the public immediately thereafter. The new store will offer a traditional grocery shopping experience with added amenities including fresh sushi, Murray's Cheese, Starbucks, apparel, pickup services, and a fuel center. The 122,000-square-foot location will be open daily from 6 a.m. – 11 p.m. seven days a week. Once fully staffed, the store will employ over 300 associates.

“We are thrilled to serve this vibrant community by providing access to fresh, affordable food and essential products,” said Store Leader, Mat Quartararo in a recent press release. “As we prepare to open our doors, we look forward to welcoming new customers, reconnecting with familiar faces, and building lasting relationships. It is truly a privilege to be part of this community and to continue our commitment to serving Colorado Springs with care and dedication every day.”

## DIA Auto Theft Ring

**BUSTED**

If you are a frequent flier out of Denver's DIA airport and concerned about your automobile's security, some good news has just been announced. A Denver grand jury has indicted 17 defendants in connection with a major auto theft ring and drug smuggling operation based out of Denver's airport, Denver's district attorney announced earlier this month. The indictment contains 222 charges, including more than 100 counts of auto theft, more than a dozen counts of drug possession and distribution, and multiple counts of identity theft, theft, criminal possession of identification documents, and criminal possession of financial devices. (continued on page 8)





The Denver District Attorney's Office said that between September 2022 and February 2024, the defendants stole at least 190 vehicles resulting in a loss of about \$9.5 million. The majority of the vehicles were stolen from parking lots at Denver International Airport and surrounding airport hotels, according to the DA's office. The stolen vehicles were typically high-end pickup trucks, which were then driven to Mexico and given to cartel members in exchange for drugs like cocaine, fentanyl, and methamphetamine. Those drugs were then imported to the U.S. and brought to Denver, the DA's office said.

According to Alison Foley, a prosecutor with the Denver DA's office, some of the defendants named in the grand jury's indictment were directly tied to the cartel and the DA's office believes they are currently in Mexico. Others are local individuals whose roles were primarily motor vehicle theft, Foley said. Some were responsible for the transportation of the vehicles from Colorado to El Paso or all the way into Mexico. "Our DEA agents were able to link this group to the Sinaloa Cartel, one of the most powerful Mexico-based organizations, notably responsible for the trafficking of fentanyl and methamphetamine into our nation," Olesky said. Investigators also recovered tools that thieves used to steal vehicles, including technology that can manipulate key fobs to take control of different cars.

Foley said that DIA was a focus for the thieves in large part due to the airport's geographic location. DIA is situated among neighboring states without access to international travel or other flights, meaning people from surrounding areas are driving in and leaving their cars for what can be long periods of time.

"We are also on I-25 and on I-70, which makes moving vehicles out of the city and county of Denver relatively easy," Foley said. Often these vehicles were taken from DIA or surrounding airport parking lots and airport hotels and were transported to El Paso, and then into Mexico before the owner had returned from a trip and even noticed their vehicle had been taken."

In 2023, the Denver DA's office filed 1,026 motor vehicle theft cases, and in 2024, they have filed charges in 1,038 cases. Kent Prose, an agent with the National Insurance Crime Bureau (NICB), noted that the number of auto thefts in Colorado has dropped considerably since August 2023, with a 30% decrease from the third quarter of 2023 to the third quarter of 2024. According to the NICB, Colorado is now No. 2, behind Washington D.C., for auto theft rates.

**ACCORDING TO THE NATIONAL  
INSURANCE CRIME BUREAU (NICB)**

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dropped 30%**

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# Contracts Approved for 2025

Recently the Metro Board negotiated agreements for services in 2025 with both its District Management company (WSDM, LLC) and landscaping company (LandTech). There were some minor revisions to the services requested, including additional landscaping maintenance to be undertaken by LandTech next year. The Board is pleased to report that there was no increase in the cost of either contract in 2025 despite the increase in services provided.

As part of its 3-year rotating negotiation of major contracts, 2025 is normally the year in which Lodge Management services would be offered out for bid. However, as our current Lodge Manager has only been in place since early last year and the Board is pleased with her performance, the Board has decided that it is premature to “shop the market” this soon, so that process has been canceled for 2025. In addition, as we have now moved well beyond the influence COVID had on suppressing Lodge rentals, our Lodge Management will revert back to operating on a commission-only basis beginning January 1, 2025.

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*Just because you are on the HOA email list, doesn't mean you are on the Metro District email list!*

*Thank you for reading!*

# Cathedral Pines Metropolitan District Information

## 2025 MEETING SCHEDULE

Board meetings are every third Tuesday of the month in **The Lodge at Cathedral Pines at 9 a.m.**, unless noted otherwise below.

<p><b>January 21</b> <b>February 18 (at 6pm)</b> <b>March 18</b> <b>April 15</b> <b>May 20</b> <b>June 17</b></p>	<p><b>July 15</b> <b>August 19</b> <b>September 16</b> <b>October 21</b> <b>November 18 (at 6pm)</b> <b>December 16</b></p>
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All dates subject to change. Any changes will be announced on the community bulletin board and via email to those who have signed up for the Metro District email list.

### METROPOLITAN DISTRICT BOARD MEMBERS

General Board Contact: [board@cathedralpinesmd.com](mailto:board@cathedralpinesmd.com)

Office	Name	Term Expiration	Phone	Email
President	Bill Heeter	May 2027	920-205-5605	<a href="mailto:bill.h@cathedralpinesmd.org">bill.h@cathedralpinesmd.org</a>
Vice President	Rick Stauch	May 2025	719-260-9236	<a href="mailto:rick.s@cathedralpinesmd.org">rick.s@cathedralpinesmd.org</a>
Treasurer	Kevin Combs	May 2027		<a href="mailto:kevin.c@cathedralpinesmd.org">kevin.c@cathedralpinesmd.org</a>
Secretary	Ecton Espenlaub	May 2025	719-822-0410	<a href="mailto:ecton.e@cathedralpinesmd.org">ecton.e@cathedralpinesmd.org</a>
Director	Scott Glassen	May 2025		<a href="mailto:scott.g@cathedralpinesmd.org">scott.g@cathedralpinesmd.org</a>

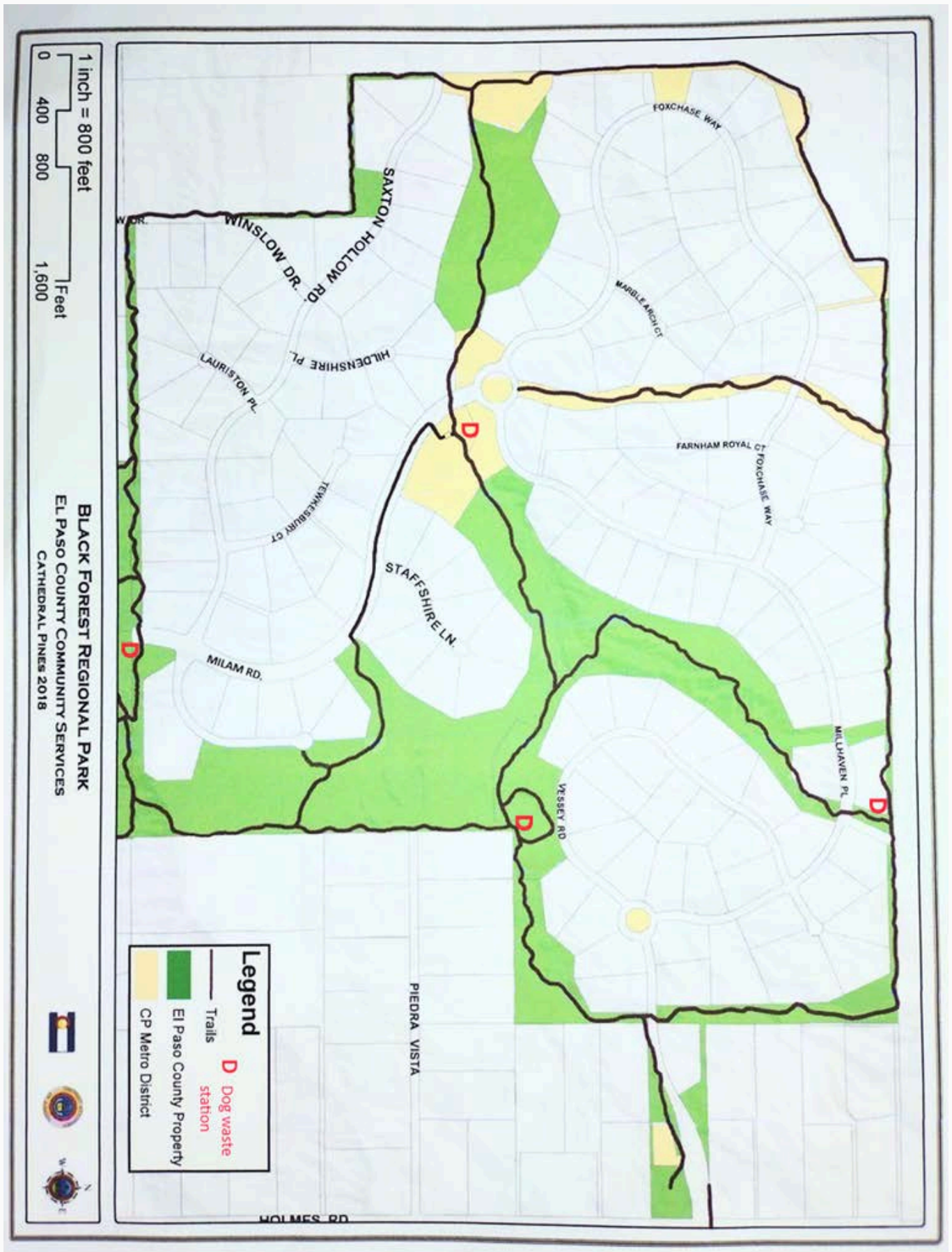
### METROPOLITAN DISTRICT MANAGEMENT TEAM

Rebecca Harris District Manager	Office: 719-447-1777 Cell: 719-266-3189	<a href="mailto:rebecca.h@wsdistricts.co">rebecca.h@wsdistricts.co</a>
Beth Diana District Manager	Office: 719-447-1777 x 110	<a href="mailto:beth.d@wsdistricts.co">beth.d@wsdistricts.co</a>

 <https://cathedralpinesmd.colorado.gov/>



# Cathedral Pines Metropolitan District Trail Map





# Cathedral Pines Metropolitan District District Map

## CATHEDRAL PINES METROPOLITAN DISTRICT

