

## **Mayor's Report**

**By Marc A. Snyder - Mayor**

By every economic measure, the summer of 2010 was a success for the city of Manitou Springs. The city was full of visitors and 2010 sales tax collections year to date are up almost 10 percent from the same period in 2009. Bars, restaurants, shops and lodging all have experienced a significant increase in activity when compared to the last couple of years. However, these successes have come with a cost to the quality of life for our community in general and to our residents specifically.

Several times this season traffic congestion was such that we experienced downtown gridlock which made it difficult and very time-consuming to get around. Also, the implementation of our new parking management plan, especially with regard to the parking lots, left many residents and downtown employees less than satisfied. Please know that your city staff and council are listening and will do all that we can to address your concerns. Beginning with a town hall meeting in mid-November (stay tuned for exact date and time) and all through the off-season we are dedicated to alleviating these problems for 2011 as we try to build on the successes of 2010.

Another 2010 success is the signing of a settlement agreement/ purchase contract to acquire approximately 100 acres of open space south of the city that contains both Iron and Sheep Mountains. After 20 years of ownership and 17 years of litigation with the city, the owner decided to sell his land to the city for open space preservation. We are extremely grateful to Mr. Tom McGee and his attorney, Mr. P.J. Anderson, for making this happen.

This purchase not only preserves a significant portion of our mountain backdrop forever but will also allow for completion of the Intemann Trail and other connecting trails in the area. Additionally, this purchase means that current and future residents and elected officials will not have to deal with the costly consequences that inevitably flow downhill from unwise mountainside development.

One problem that we are still trying to address is how to manage the impacts that result from the illegal use of the Manitou Incline. A recent news article estimates that up to 500,000 visits to the Incline occur every year. If it was up to me (it isn't), I would close it immediately and put the onus on those wishing to use it to open and manage the Incline in a safe and responsible manner. Currently we have a very dedicated group, the Manitou Incline Task Force, working hard to draft a responsible management plan. While I fervently hope that they are successful, I will not support a plan going forward that places an unfair burden on the residents and taxpayers of Manitou Springs. The Task Force will be holding their next public meeting this Thursday, Oct. 21 at 7 p.m. at Manitou Springs City Hall and I encourage all who are interested to attend.

Finally, it is my great honor to have been elected chairperson of the Future of Regional Transit study committee formed by Mountain Metro Transit. This committee is dedicated toward identifying a sustainable funding and governance structure for a regional public transit system. Our next meeting will be held at Manitou Springs City Hall at 1 p.m. Nov. 5. I respectfully urge everyone who desires a sustainable future for the Pikes Peak region to attend, get educated and weigh in.

[Return to Article Index](#)