



# **THE GARDENS** ON SPRING CREEK

2018 ANNUAL REPORT





## FROM THE DIRECTOR **MICHELLE PROVAŽNIK**

Wow! What a busy and exciting year 2018 turned out to be as our transformation began to take shape. Records were shattered in attendance, education program participation, volunteer hours, and memberships—all while undergoing a partial closure as construction was in full swing on our five-acre garden expansion project. At the same time, planning for the Visitor's Center completion was fully underway so construction could begin in early 2019.

As I look back on this pivotal year for our organization, I can't help but feel profound gratitude: to the members and donors, City of Fort Collins leaders and Fort Collins voters who invested their financial support in our vision for the future; to the volunteers who labored in the new gardens planting, mulching and weeding; and to an amazing staff who accomplishes great things while making it all look so easy.

For years we have called the Gardens on Spring Creek our community botanic garden. Our transformation epitomizes that sentiment perfectly—it has taken all of us working together. We can't wait to emerge in Fall 2019!


**Vision:** To be a world-class botanic garden that is community oriented, educational, experiential, and sustainable.

**Mission:** To enrich the lives of people and foster environmental stewardship through horticulture.

*Testing irrigation in the Great Lawn after sod laying in July 2018.*







*Volunteers were vital  
to planting over 10,000  
new plants in our  
expansion in 2018.*

## VOLUNTEERS

We couldn't do what we do without our volunteers, and 2018 was no exception. They continue to amaze and inspire!

This year, 692 volunteers donated 10,711 hours of time to The Gardens. This is a 13% increase over 2017 and is valued at \$286,847 at the Colorado rate for value of volunteer time.

The Gardens hosted 17 interns (paid and unpaid) including high school, college students, and adults looking to diversify or improve job skills in partnership with the following:

- FRCC Career Pathways
- CSU Human Development and Family Studies
- CSU Horticulture
- CSU Natural Resources
- Larimer County Workforce Center
- Central Michigan University
- PSD Cooper House

Thank you to the following agencies, departments and corporate groups for volunteering with The Gardens in 2018:

- Associates in Family Medicine
- Boy Scouts of America
- Cargill
- City of Fort Collins Adult Recreation – Building on our Trail Stewardship (BOOTS)
- City of Fort Collins Environmental Services
- City of Fort Collins Utilities
- Colorado Allergy and Asthma Center
- FRCC Environmental Education
- FRCC Horticulture
- Garden Art Landscaping
- Headwaters Realty
- Intel
- Larimer County Conservation Corps
- Larimer County Workforce Center
- National Charity League
- Northern Colorado Daylily Club
- Otero
- OtterBox
- Starbucks
- United Way
- Volunteers of America RSVP
- Young Men's Service League

## FRIENDS OF THE GARDENS ON SPRING CREEK

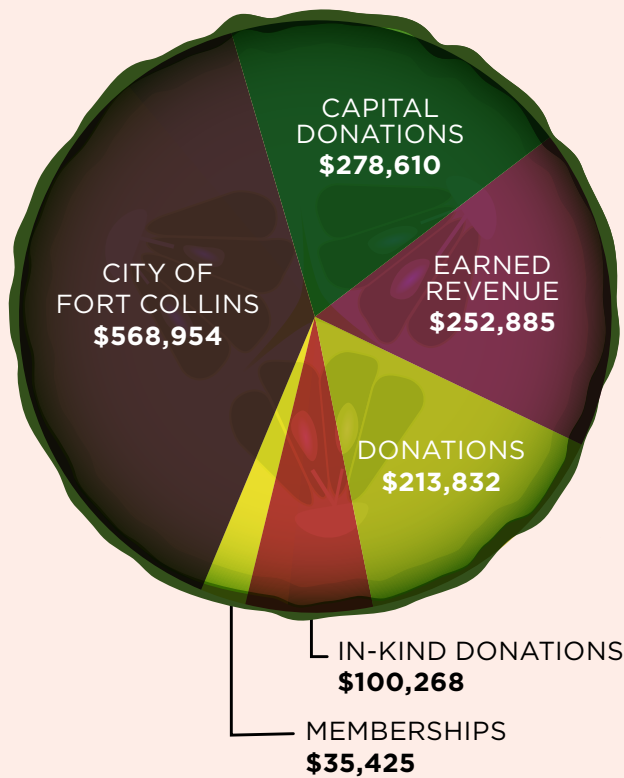
The Friends of the Gardens on Spring Creek is the non-profit partner of the Gardens on Spring Creek, a City of Fort Collins facility. The Friends is a member-based organization led by a volunteer Board of Directors. Its mission is to cultivate a world-class botanic garden through fundraising and advocacy.

Over the years, The Friends efforts have been essential in establishing and growing The Gardens. In fact, through these efforts, 43% of The Gardens overall capital construction costs have been raised in our community—a testament to the strength of the public-private partnership. In addition, memberships have grown significantly with a record 672 member households to end 2018.

In 2018, the Friends Board was instrumental in securing final funding for the Visitor's Center expansion project. Our sincere thanks to Randy Morgan, Capital Campaign Chair and former Board President for his leadership.



## FUNDING 2018



## EDUCATION

The Gardens education programs reached 8,038 adult and youth students, an increase of almost 33% from 2017. This tremendous increase was due, in part, to an increase in the number of students from across northern Colorado that participated in School Tours; a new event, STEM in the Gardens targeting 4th graders, and a 20% increase in adult education class participants.



This year, we partnered with organizations to expand our reach into the community including the Boys and Girls Club (three sites in Larimer County) for garden education, Head Start through scholarship supported field-trips and holiday family programming, and the 2nd annual Pajaros Sin Fronteras reaching 250 students and family members.



*Summer campers exploring garden art.*



# HORTICULTURE

The Spring Plant Sale once again brought in record sales. The long-standing partnership with Colorado State University and Front Range Community College Horticulture Departments allow us to provide a unique assortment of plants, many not found in retail centers.

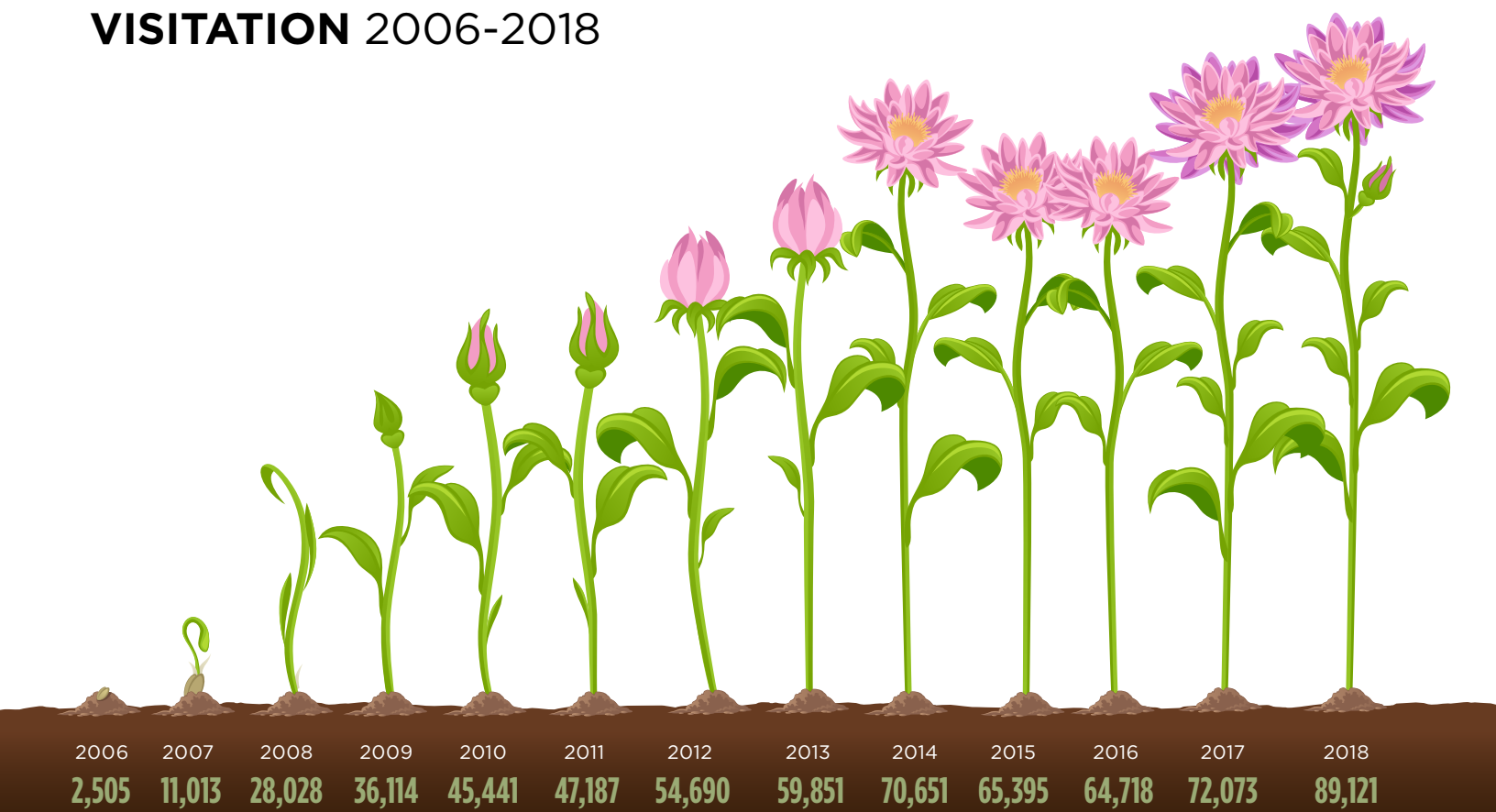
With the garden expansion on the horizon, the horticulture team was busy growing 20,000 plants for the expansion and getting as many planted as possible in the fall. Many varieties were grown from seed as that is the only way to get the plants that aren't available commercially. Staff and volunteers planted 10,000 perennials and shrubs across the five-acre expansion —a tremendous effort! There are about 10,000 more plants overwintering in the hoop house and cold frames just waiting to be planted in spring/summer 2019.

The Community Garden Outreach Program continued with another strong year. The Eatin' Effort volunteers and staff grew 6,727 pounds of produce for the Food

Bank for Larimer County and Plant it Forward donations were in excess of 52,000 pounds – both higher than 2017. The Community Gardens in Parks program continued to flourish with many community members on waiting lists for plots.

Lastly, one of our Horticulture team members, Bryan Fischer, had a unique opportunity to go on a seed collection trip in the northern Rockies with staff members of Denver Botanic Gardens. With funding provided by the Rocky Mountain Chapter of the North American Rock Garden Society and permission of the US Forest Service, the horticulturists were able to collect more than 1,000 seeds from over 100 species of native plants. These seeds are currently being propagated, and the resulting plants will be planted in our new native gardens where they will be documented and studied for future conservation efforts. This is an exciting step towards our efforts to becoming an accredited plant museum!

## VISITATION 2006-2018





## SPECIAL EVENTS

Our special events are designed to engage different members of the public in our gardens, be mission-centric, and raise revenue.

In total, our special events attracted over 31,000 visitors and netted more than \$200,000 to support our operations, maintenance, programs and capital needs.

The eight signature events held in 2018 included the inaugural Blossoms and Butterflies fundraiser celebrating the power of arts, gardens and nature. Other events included High Plains Landscape Workshop, Spring Plant Sale, NoCo Urban Homestead Tour, Garden a'Fare Wine & Beer Tours, Halloween Enchanted Garden, and Garden of Lights. Unfortunately, Nature's Harvest Fest was cancelled due to ongoing construction and planting in our new gardens.

## NOTEWORTHY

Two exciting things blossomed in 2018 on the marketing communications front:

- In anticipation of our transformation, a new brand and website was launched in collaboration with City of Fort Collins marketing, design and IT departments. See our previous logo and new logo to the right.
- NoCo Bloom was awarded the Dorothy Hansell Marketing Award at the American Public Garden Association's Annual Conference—a huge honor for a small garden with a very limited budget.



**THE GARDENS**  
ON SPRING CREEK



*Featured homestead on the 2018  
NoCo Urban Homestead Tour.*





# COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

The strength of The Gardens stands solidly with our active partners in the community. Thank you to the following for their continued dedication to a shared mission in 2018:

**Ability in Motion** – community garden program

**Audubon Rockies** – Habitat Hero training site, school programming, Pajaros Sin Fronteras partner

**Bird Conservancy of the Rockies** – Pajaros sin Fronteras partner, school programming

**Boys and Girls Club** – outreach programming

**Boy Scouts of America** – host Eagle Scout projects

**Butterfly Pavilion** – operating partner in butterfly house conservatory

**Cargill** – STEM in the Gardens

**Chill LLC** – community garden program

**City of Fort Collins departments**

Utilities – co-host High Plains Landscape Workshop, program and event support, NoCo Bloom

Museum of Discovery – program and event support

Natural Areas – program and event support

Wellness – subsidizing adult education for employees

Nature in the City – program and event support

Sustainability – program and event support

**Cooking Studio** – Garden to Fork Cooking Programs

**Colorado State University**

Horticulture – adult education programs, co-host Twilight Gardens, Spring Plant Sale, NoCo Bloom

Entomology – adult education programs, Bug Zoo

Extension, Larimer County – co-host Twilight Garden Series, co-host High Plains Landscape Workshop, adult education programs, NoCo Bloom

**Elderhaus** – community garden program

**Food Bank of Larimer County** – Plant it Forward, community garden program

**Front Range Community College** – adult education programs, Spring Plant Sale

**Poudre School District** – youth education programs, community garden program, curriculum support, Head Start community programs

**Schools & Outdoor Learning Environment (SOLE)** – youth program provider

**Trees, Water and People** – Pajaros Sin Fronteras partner

**TriHydro Corporation** – community garden program

**UCHealth** – Healthy Family Initiative program site

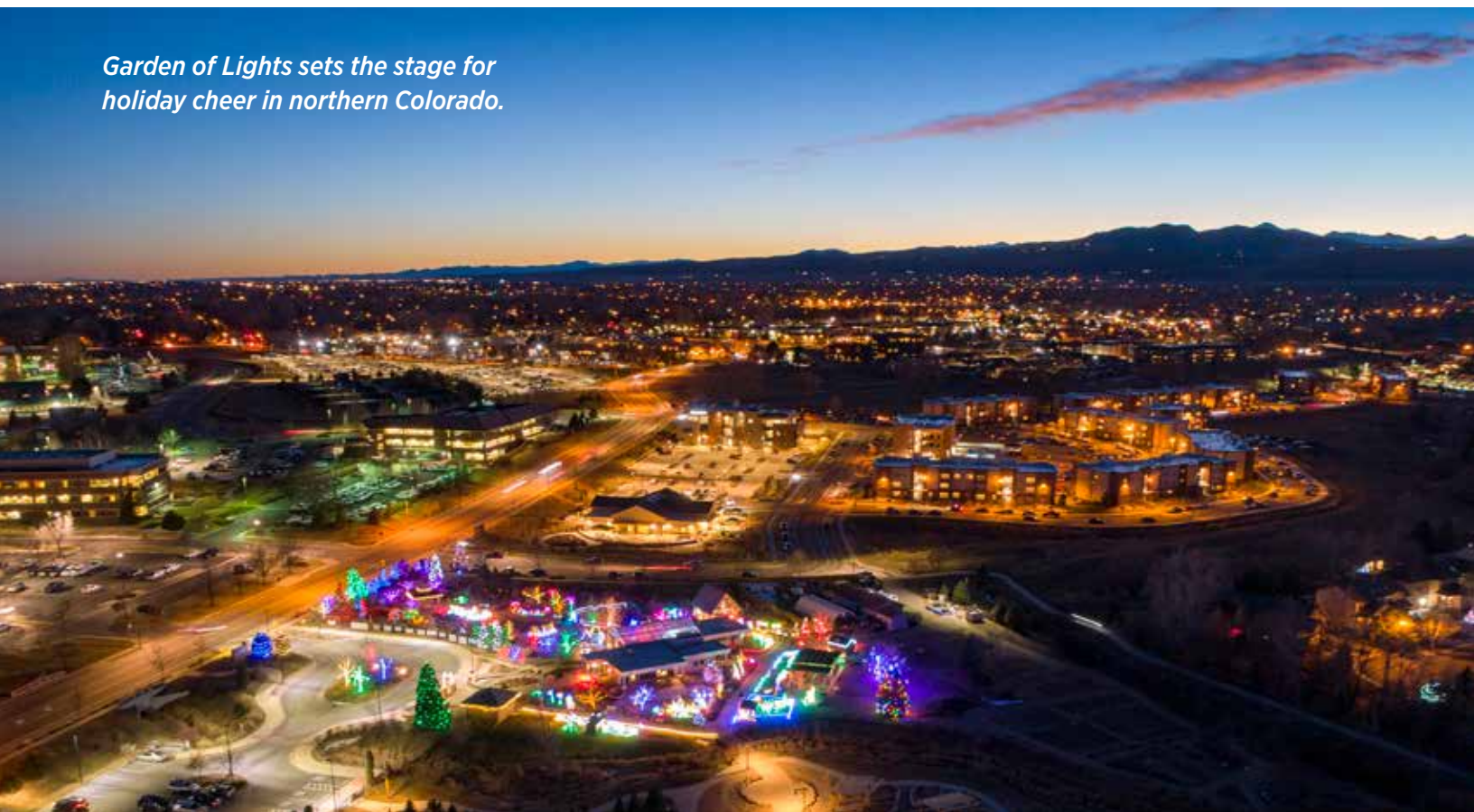
**Weld RE4 School District** – curriculum support

**Vegetable Connection** – community garden program

**Veterans Association** – community garden program

**Wild Birds Unlimited** – program and event support

*Garden of Lights sets the stage for holiday cheer in northern Colorado.*





# CORPORATE AND FOUNDATION SUPPORT

The Gardens on Spring Creek and the Friends of the Gardens Board are grateful to the many local businesses and foundations that provide in-kind services and cash donations to our organization. Their support is critical to the success of our special events and overall operations. Corporate and Foundation supporters in 2018 included:

Ace Hardware Downtown  
Ace Hardware of Fort Collins  
Associates in Family Medicine  
Audubon Rockies  
Bluebird Nursery  
Blue Ocean Foundation  
Bohemian Foundation  
Botanical Interests  
Brent and Becky's Bulbs  
Café Vino  
Cargill  
Center for ReSource Conservation  
City of Fort Collins, Fort Fund  
City of Fort Collins, Nature in the City  
City of Fort Collins, Utilities  
City of Fort Collins, Wellness  
City of Greeley Water  
Colorado Allergy & Asthma Center  
Coloradoan  
Colorado Rain Catcher  
Colorado State University – Horticulture  
Colorado State University Extension – Larimer County  
Cooking Studio Fort Collins  
Elizabeth Hotel  
Emporium  
Eye Center of Northern Colorado  
Ewing Irrigation  
Fiona's Delicatessen & Catering  
FoCo Café  
Fort Collins – TRC  
Fort Collins Nursery  
Fort Fun  
Fossil Creek Nursery  
Fox & Crow  
Front Range Community College  
Garden Thyme



Garden Yards  
Gulley Greenhouse  
Hop Grenade  
Jax Mercantile  
Kaiser Permanente  
KUNC 91.5FM / KJAC Colorado Sound  
Locality  
Loveland Garden Center  
Madwire  
Mainline  
Moot House  
Northern Water Conservancy  
Nutrien  
Odell Brewing Company  
OtterCares  
Outpost Sunsport  
Palmer Flowers  
Pemberley Woods  
Plant Select  
Poudre Pet & Feed Supply  
Resource Central  
Restaurant 415  
Sandbox Solar  
SavATree  
Sawdust & Stone Builders  
Savory Spice Shop  
Spoons Soups & Salads  
Sprouts  
Stanley Hotel  
Swift Greenhouses  
Teach Me to Grow  
Terra Nova Nurseries  
Tim Foolery Magic  
ValPak  
Wilbur's Total Beverage  
Wild Birds Unlimited  
Wilkins Charitable Trust  
Woodward  
Zak George Landscaping

