

TREES PLEASE and the Dutch Clark Stadium Planting Project for 2022

In 1950 School District 60 built a large stadium where all of the four high schools in the city would play their football games and host their track meets. Today, it is the venue where people from throughout the city and region come together to cheer for their high school teams, attracting crowds that grow to 8,000 and is home to the longest football game rivalry west of the Mississippi, the Bell Game. The parking area is also the site of the Dutch Clark memorial, a bronze statue of the football player, honoring his athletic career.

Seventy years ago the idea of landscaping parking lots was not part of the environmental conversation. Climate change and the necessity to cool heat islands was a concept in the unforeseeable future, not the 1950's. It was a customary practice to lay asphalt over blocks of the cityscape and Dutch Clark Stadium was no exception. Today, these twelve acres of asphalt comprise the parking area. Situated along Abriendo Avenue, a well traveled thoroughfare for commuters and the entryway to an upscale residential neighborhood and Pueblo's prominent City Park, this highly visible parking lot is an eyesore and commonly referred to as the 'ugliest parking lot in the city'.

The 2022 TREES PLEASE* planting project is to landscape a portion of the Dutch Clark Stadium parking lot. The plan calls for removing an area of asphalt that is adjacent to Abriendo Avenue. This area is 730 feet long and 30 feet wide and will be planted with 55 drought hardy trees, a variety of shrubs and flowering ornamental trees that will surround the Dutch Clark sculpture. In conjunction with Pueblo City Schools, the Pueblo Board of Water Works, and numerous contractors throughout the community, our goal is to reclaim and transform this strip of asphalt into a vibrant, park-like planting. The project will not only beautify a blighted parking lot but demonstrate the success in reclaiming hard surfaces into living spaces that enhance the city landscape and support the urban forest.

Infrastructure estimates for this project have been set at \$267,000. The planting materials including 55 trees, 175 shrubs, and the ground cover for this project is estimated at \$40,000. A donor recognition plaque will be engraved with names of all contributors and located in the planting area. TREES PLEASE is requesting \$5000 from the City of Pueblo and \$5000 from the County of Pueblo to complete this project.

*TREES PLEASE is a non-profit organization founded in 1989 to promote the preservation and planting of street and park trees in Pueblo, Colorado. TREES PLEASE has planted over 5000 trees throughout Pueblo, and composed and legislated the landscape ordinance for all new construction in the city. In 2015 TREES PLEASE started a tree nursery for the city enabling the city to grow their own trees. To date, 400 saplings have been planted. Trees Please has raised over \$250,00 in grant donations since 1989.

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