

RURAL  PROUD

# EPICENTER

**ANNUAL REPORT**  
FY22



# CONTENTS

**LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR**

**FY22 SELECT PROJECTS & PROGRAMS**

**THE FRONTIER FELLOWSHIP**

**SPRING SUMMIT**

**CANAL COMMONS & PEARL BAKER PARK**

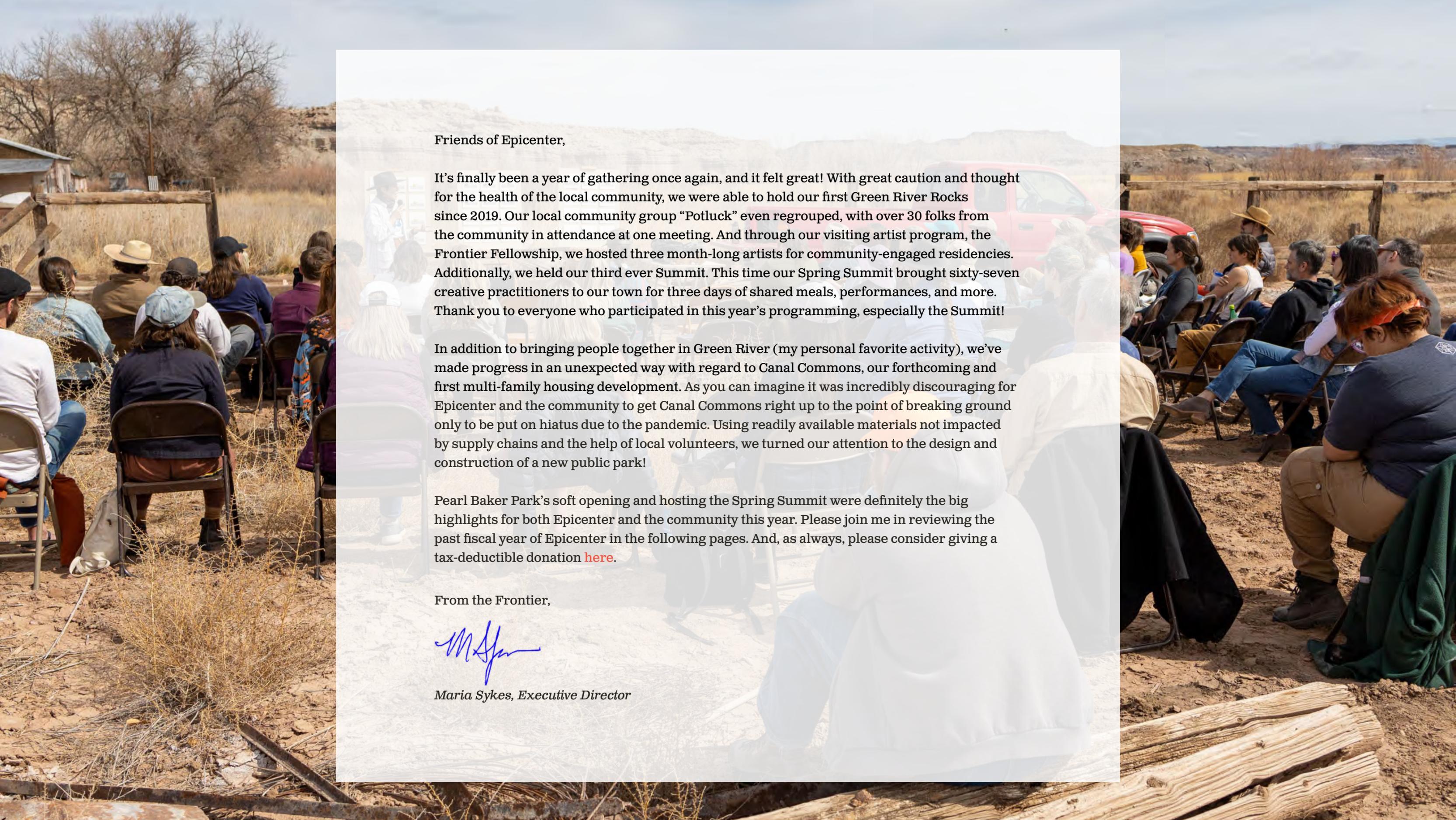
**FY22 FINANCIAL REPORT**



*Previous: Spring Summit welcome ceremony on Monument Hill, Green River, Utah (Mar 2022)*

*Above: Linocut version of Lisa Ward's "Welcome to Green River" sign by artist Grace Whatley*

*Next: Lecture at Hatt's Ranch by designer Elpitha Tsoutsounakis for the Spring Summit (Apr 2022)*



Friends of Epicenter,

It's finally been a year of gathering once again, and it felt great! With great caution and thought for the health of the local community, we were able to hold our first Green River Rocks since 2019. Our local community group "Potluck" even regrouped, with over 30 folks from the community in attendance at one meeting. And through our visiting artist program, the Frontier Fellowship, we hosted three month-long artists for community-engaged residencies. Additionally, we held our third ever Summit. This time our Spring Summit brought sixty-seven creative practitioners to our town for three days of shared meals, performances, and more. Thank you to everyone who participated in this year's programming, especially the Summit!

In addition to bringing people together in Green River (my personal favorite activity), we've made progress in an unexpected way with regard to Canal Commons, our forthcoming and first multi-family housing development. As you can imagine it was incredibly discouraging for Epicenter and the community to get Canal Commons right up to the point of breaking ground only to be put on hiatus due to the pandemic. Using readily available materials not impacted by supply chains and the help of local volunteers, we turned our attention to the design and construction of a new public park!

Pearl Baker Park's soft opening and hosting the Spring Summit were definitely the big highlights for both Epicenter and the community this year. Please join me in reviewing the past fiscal year of Epicenter in the following pages. And, as always, please consider giving a tax-deductible donation [here](#).

From the Frontier,



*Maria Sykes, Executive Director*



*Flyer by in-house artist Summer Orr for Frontier Fellow William Tyler's "Twilight Zephyr" radio play (May 2022)*

## THE FRONTIER FELLOWSHIP

***Epicenter's residency program in rural Utah, that invites creative practitioners to engage with the region's history, culture, and landscapes.***

The Frontier Fellowship invites creative practitioners to work with Epicenter in Green River for month-long residencies. These collaborators generate innovative work that is in cooperation and conversation with the region's history, people, and environment. In a place that is prone to the passer-by, Epicenter invites artists, designers, writers, folklorists, musicians, and other creatives from around the world to stay awhile and discover what makes Green River worth listening to, learning from, and celebrating. Fellowship projects bring the town together in order to strengthen local identity and provide opportunities for critical reflection. The Fellowship seeks to elevate rural voices within the region; instead of speaking for the community, Fellows seek to offer residents the tools needed to self-document, express, reflect, and ultimately shape their own futures.

Epicenter hosted three Frontier Fellows during FY22. More information on their respective month-long residencies can be found on the following page.

**MORE ON THE FRONTIER FELLOWSHIP**



### ERIN MALLEA

*We visited the in-progress Pearl Baker Park and continued to the canal, Haylie's horses, Anna's garden, Hannah's farm, and the former missile base near the "Black Pyramid" of uranium tailings. Collage materials included tamarisk, kochia, Little Caesar's red pepper flakes, Russian thistle, dog hair, goat hair, alfalfa, Dash and Lady's hair, Anna's petunias and pansies, missile base fiberglass, sagebrush, cottonwood leaves and seed pods, milkweed, various wrappers, lawn marker flags, grass from a friend's lawn, sand from Swasey's beach, dirt, field bindweed and more.*

Erin Mallea is a multidisciplinary artist motivated by an attempt to better understand the spaces she inhabits. She explores the past and present of particular microcosms as metaphors for larger human and environmental conditions. Analytical, meandering, playful, and often public in nature, Mallea's work manifests in a range of media.

[MORE ON ERIN'S RESIDENCY](#)



### BLANCA S. VILLALOBOS

*It had been months since I had meditated, journaled or sang; practices that had brought me so much joy yet which had been neglected for months. Perhaps it was Magia's death or the conflict I had with my parents days before the summer solstice that led me back into the safety of numbness; como si fuera una cueva dentro de un árbol que solo yo sabía cómo encontrar. However, being in a new place with strangers in a desert quite unlike the one I left gave me the motivation to recall all those disciplines and more. Over the course of my time in Green River I was reminded how precious life was and that pleasure could be found in the most mundane activities.*

Blanca S. Villalobos (they/them) is a queer, non-binary femme of color that offers services as a bilingual cultural worker and interdisciplinary artist. Blanca resides as a guest on the ancestral lands of the Cahuilla and Yuhaviatam/Maarenga'yam people, in the Morongo Basin of California's Mojave desert.

[MORE ON BLANCA'S RESIDENCY](#)



### WILLIAM TYLER

*After attending Epicenter's Spring Summit (photo above) in early April, I came back as a Frontier Fellow to spend the month of May in Green River, Utah. During that month, I created a radio play called "Twilight Zephyr," an audio collage made up of field recordings, live guitar compositions, narration and more. The piece was recorded in and around Green River, Utah, and at The Tank Center for the Sonic Arts in nearby Rangely, Colorado.*

William Tyler (b. 1979, Nashville, Tennessee) is an American musician and guitarist who plays "cosmic country," folk, indie folk, and pop rock. His debut studio album, Behold the Spirit, was released in 2010. He has since released three additional solo albums. Tyler splits his time between Nashville, TN, and Los Angeles, CA.

[MORE ON WILLIAM'S RESIDENCY](#)



## SPRING SUMMIT

***A three-day gathering of creative practitioners with shared meals, performances, installations, and more.***

Epicenter invited 67 artists, designers, and other creatives to gather around the concept of “Home” with the purpose of cultivating and strengthening creative investment in marginalized places. Like Epicenter, attendees are passionate about arts and design and the cultures of rural areas. The Summit encourages creating opportunities for new collaborative work to develop in rural Utah and beyond.

Rather than the typical conference approach, this Summit is a peer-run event that places an emphasis on conversation and interactive group experiences. Epicenter does this in order to facilitate a more horizontal exchange of ideas. Though there is not enough time for everyone to present and share equally, all enter the Summit as both participants and contributors, to share and learn from each other.

Activities included lectures, workshops, performances, installations, hikes in nature, shared meals, campfire stories, pecha kuchas, and more.

**“RETHINKING [...]” BY SLUG MAG**

**“CURATORS [...]” BY SW CONTEMPORARY**

***Above: In-house artist Summer Orr (right) assisting artist Chip Thomas (left) with his installation for the Spring Summit.***



From Top Left, Clockwise: Attendees participate in a performance-based ice breaker led by KZMU Moab's Serah Mead. Artist workshop by Katie Boué & Erika Lynne Hanson at Epicenter's Pearl Baker Park. Keynote lecture by Elpitha Tsoutsounakis at the historic Hatt's Ranch. The Family Trade performs at La Pasadita taco truck. Ken Layne (Desert Oracle) performs his Campfire Stories at Swasey's Beach. Participants share a meal at the local La Pasadita taco truck, site of Chip Thomas' installation and The Family Trade's performance.



*Attendees of the 2022 Spring Summit. Closing Ceremony at Goose Point in Green River, Utah (April 2022)*

**[MORE INFORMATION ON ATTENDEES AND SUMMIT PROGRAMMING](#)**



## CANAL COMMONS & PEARL BAKER PARK

### HISTORY: AN UNPRECEDENTED LAND DONATION

In late 2019, the City of Green River issued a Request for Proposals for a 3.8-acre lot in acknowledgement of the need for more accessible, affordable housing in town. Epicenter's proposal for the development of Canal Commons was selected by the City: 10 affordable single-family homes, with both rental and owner-occupied options. Because the City originally received the land as a donation, Epicenter proposed a trade of in-kind service equal to the land's value; assistance with city events, grant writing, design services, etc. This trade allows Epicenter to absorb the \$109,000 land "cost" rather than pass that cost on to the future tenants and homeowners. In 2020, Epicenter officially received the deed to the lot.

### PROJECT SOURCES

In 2020, Epicenter secured all commitments of funding needed to proceed with Phase I of the project: constructing 5 affordable rental homes. A total of \$1,224,000 is committed by multiple sources, including the Olene Walker Housing Loan Fund, Rocky Mountain Community Reinvestment Corporation, Community Impact Board Fund (CIB), Federal Home Loan Bank, City of Green River (land donation), private foundation grants, and individual private donors.



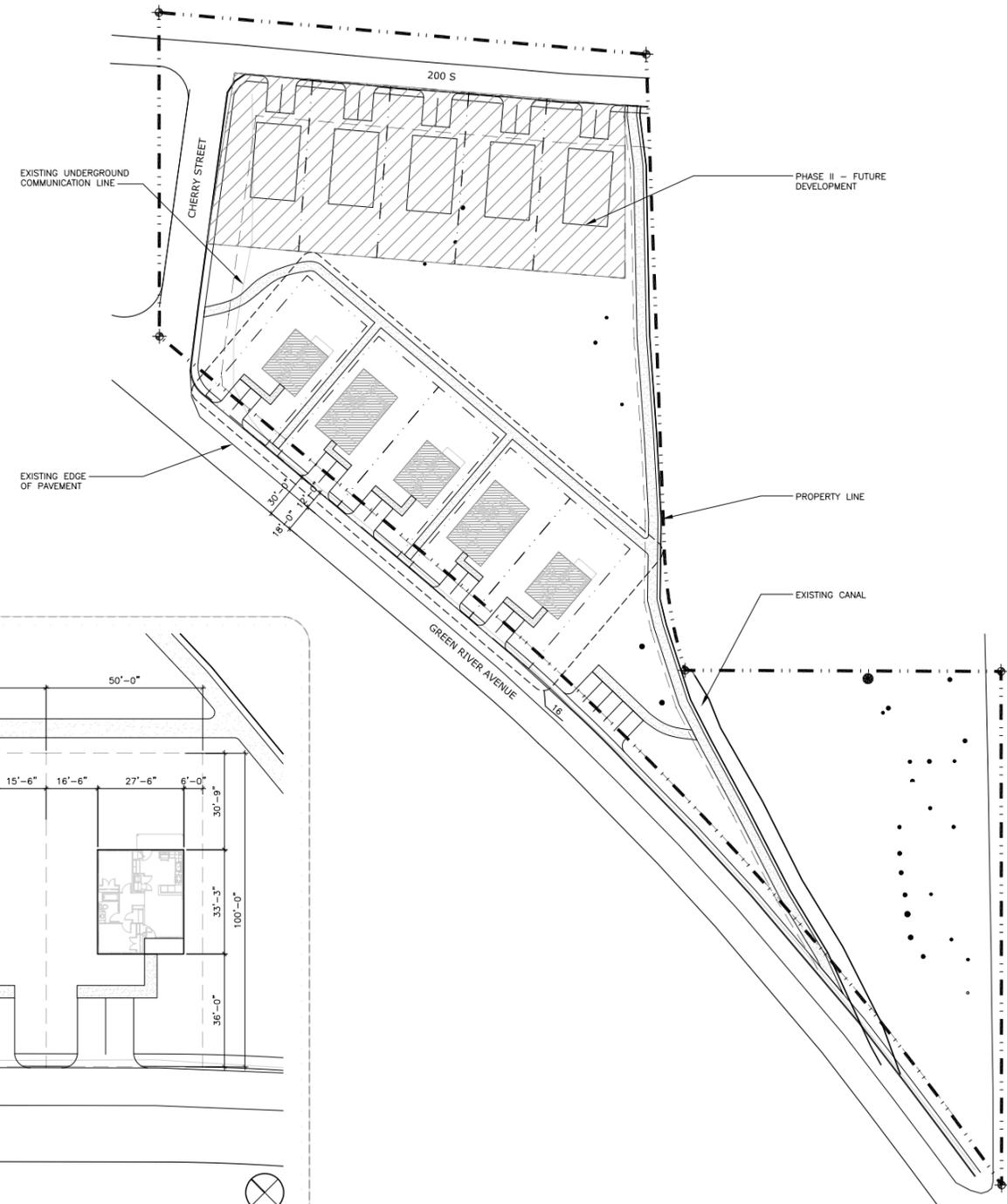
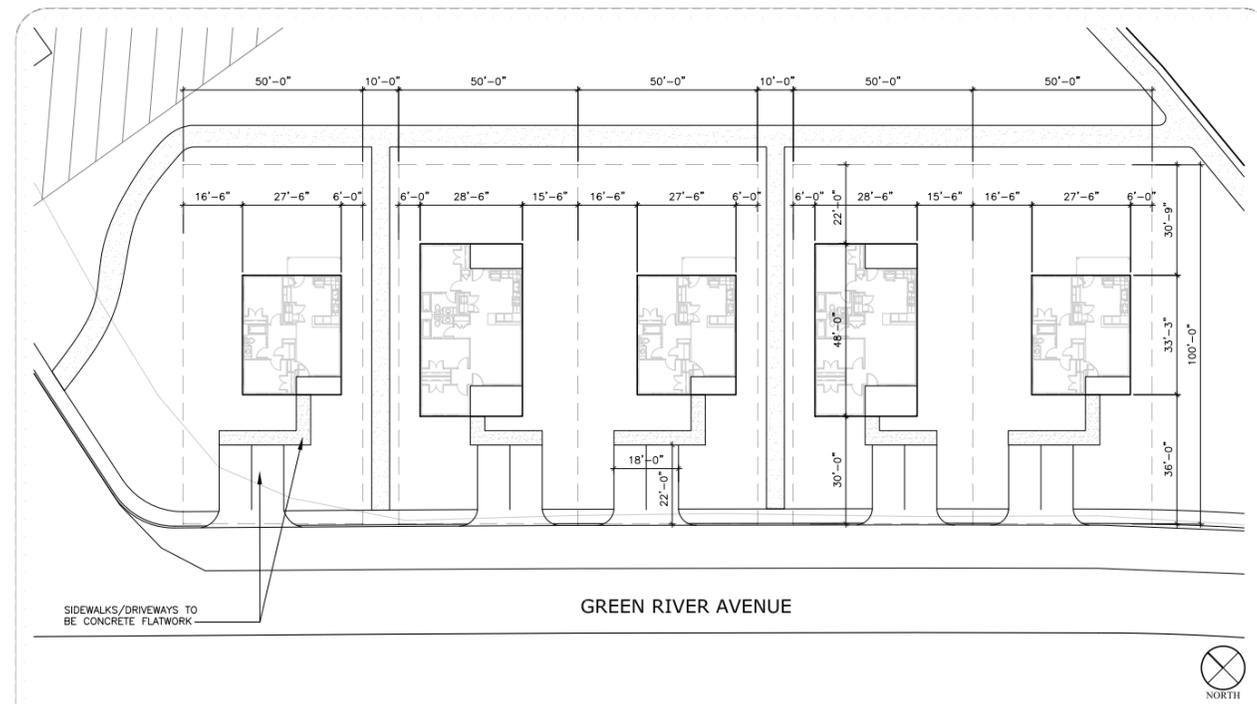
*Top: Overhead view of the land Epicenter received from the City Of Green River in exchange for in-kind services.  
Bottom: On-site view of the donated land (SE corner where Pearl Baker Park is now located).*

## DESIGN OF THE CANAL COMMONS SITE

The site is bound by Green River Avenue to the south, Cherry Street to the west, 200 South to the north, and to the east by the historic Green River Canal, which gives the project its name. Ten units will be located on the perimeter of the site with easy access from the three existing roads; the bottom five units are considered Phase I (rental units: two three-bedroom, two two-bedrooms, and one accessible two-bedroom) and the top are Phase II (e.g. 5 owner-occupied units yet to be designed). The interior of the site is reserved for a “commons,” a semi-public outdoor space, for residents of Canal Commons; this area is to be designed and built after all housing units are complete (i.e. Phase III).

The detached single-family housing typology chosen for Canal Commons is both market selected as well as inspired by the historic, vernacular housing in town. With every historic economic boom, affordable worker housing has been built in Green River, typically as minimal single-family detached houses. To complement this, a 2019 survey of prospective tenants and homeowners established overwhelming preference for the outdoor space and privacy brought by single-family detached units. Finally, the single-family detached housing typology will integrate well into its surroundings (as all affordable housing should) by mirroring all of the existing adjacent housing.

The southeastern part of the site located on the east side of the town canal was designated as a public park space due to both its historic status as the original (but 30+ years abandoned) town park as well as the grove of shady 100-year-old Cottonwood trees.





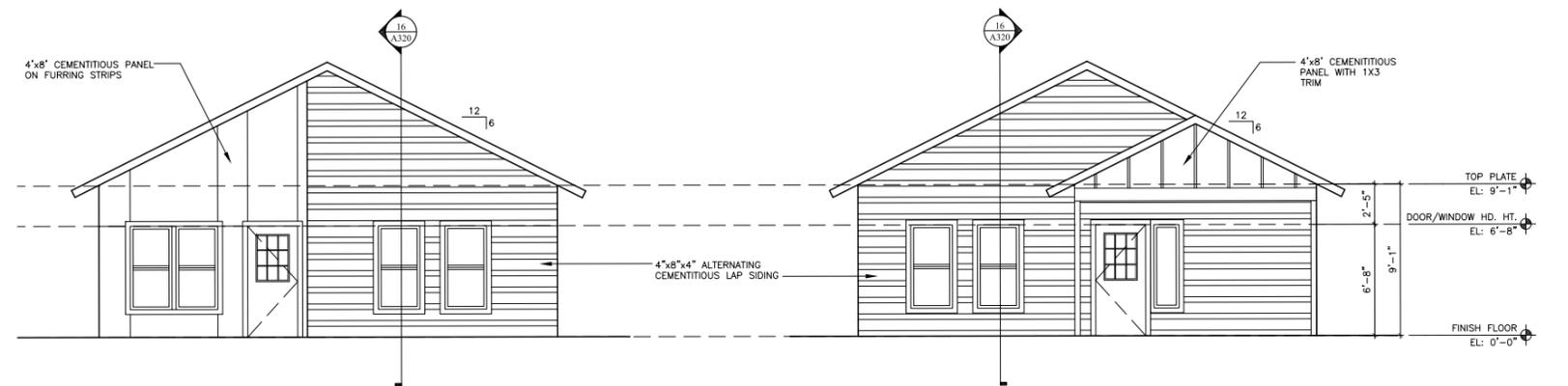
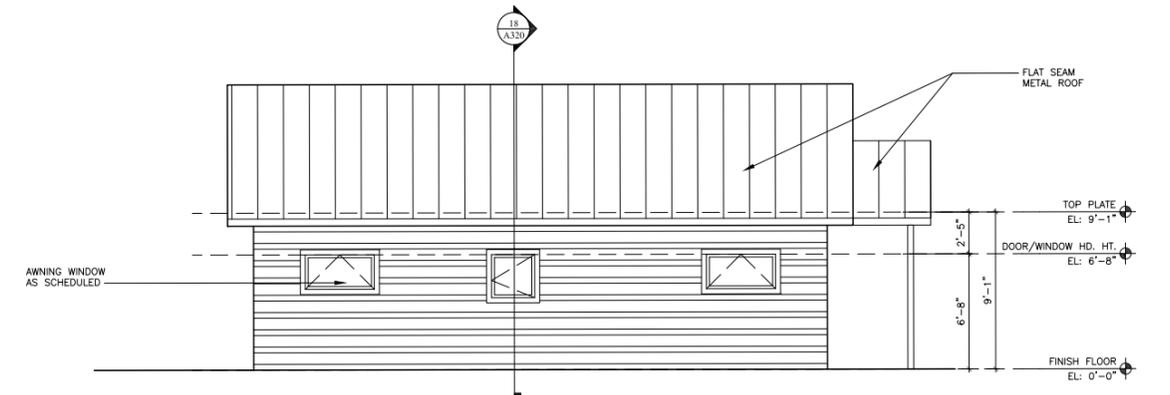
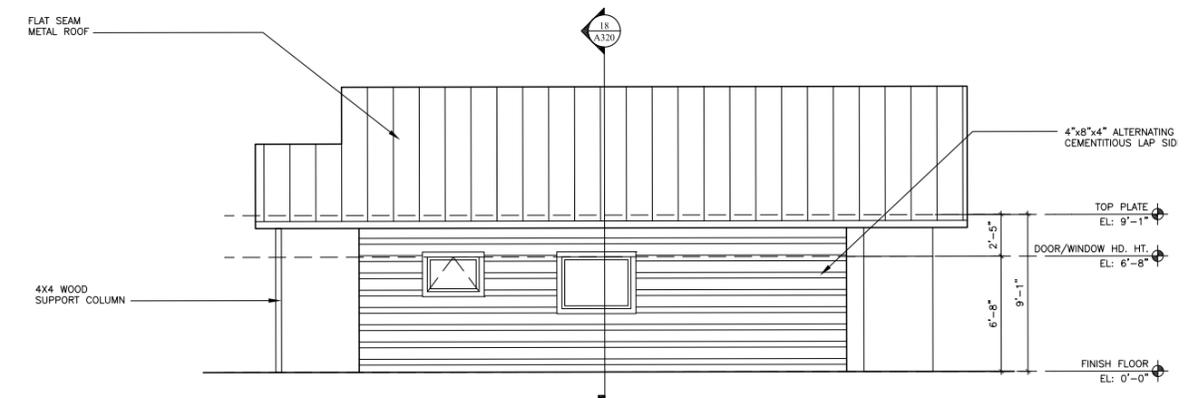
*Aerial photo in winter of the Canal Commons site from the southeast corner before construction began on Pearl Baker Park.*

## DESIGN OF THE PHASE I HOUSING UNITS

The design of the units focuses on efficiency, durability, and quality design specific for rural Southeastern Utah's climate and economics. Both the site plan (previous page) and design of housing units were completed in 2020.

Design of the housing units was based off of lessons learned through Epicenter's past projects: the design/build of a Habitat for Humanity house, the [Fix It First](#) home repair program, various [local housing studies](#) and [surveys](#), a [housing open house](#), working with local contractors, and the design, construction, and occupancy of Epicenter's Frontier House (affordable housing prototype built in 2016/17, pictured below). Through this research, the proposed units are appropriate for the climate, require minimal maintenance, are able to be constructed locally, and remain affordable to build.

In response to both the busy street and train tracks located to the south, the units all "face" inward towards a common/shared greenspace. To achieve this, the street entrance is designed as a service or informal entrance while the interior "front" entrance is designed to be a welcoming front porch.



Left: Frontier House prototype housing unit. (2017)

Above: Construction drawing elevations for Canal Commons two-bedroom unit.

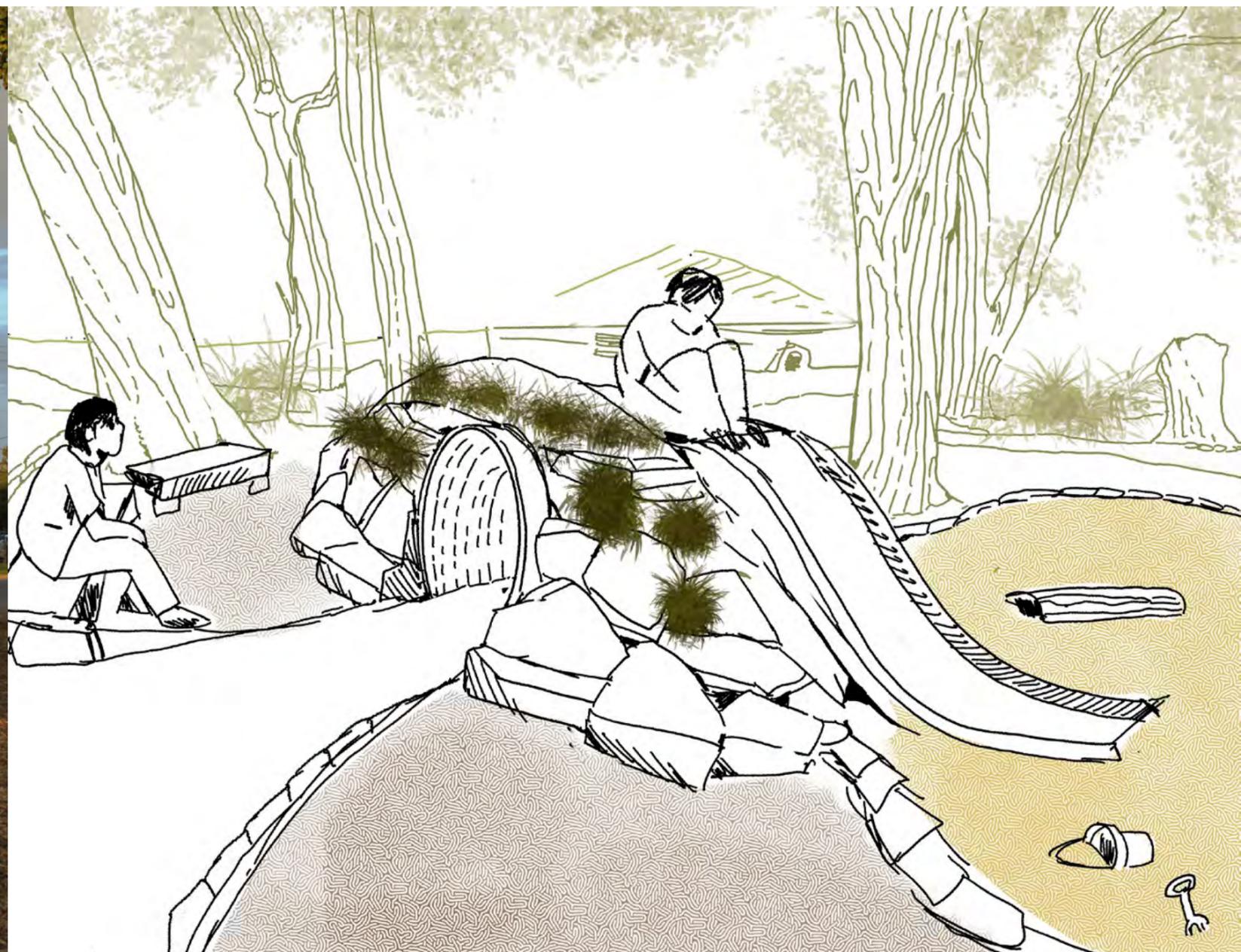


### PEARL BAKER PARK

Unable to build housing due to supply chain issues and labor shortages caused by the global pandemic, Epicenter shifted to what could be done during these times: using local labor and materials to rebuild the old town park, eventually named Pearl Baker Park during the community design process.

On the Canal Commons site, an isolated grove of historic Cottonwood trees provided opportunity for the enhancement of a naturally comfortable space. Epicenter hosted COVID-safe events, organized small group site visits, created remote “at home” design activities, and ultimately recruited a volunteer team of 20 residents from diverse age ranges and backgrounds who will continue to participate in the project from design revision to landscaping workshops and build days. Epicenter even recruited a high school student through Green River High School’s work-study program; she received a stipend to assist our team on Canal Commons with a focus on the park. Construction on the park continues but a soft opening was held in July of 2022.

*Left: Original park concept design by Frontier Fellow Sophie Maguire. Above: Photos from community design process and construction.*



*Left: Built natural playscape in Pearl Baker Park within Canal Commons. Right: Original local artist concept drawing by in-house artist Summer Orr.*



Above: Rendering by artist Summer Orr based on Sophie Maguire's concept drawing and Joseph Bondi's construction drawing.

Right: Concept drawings of potential signage for the park by artist Summer Orr.

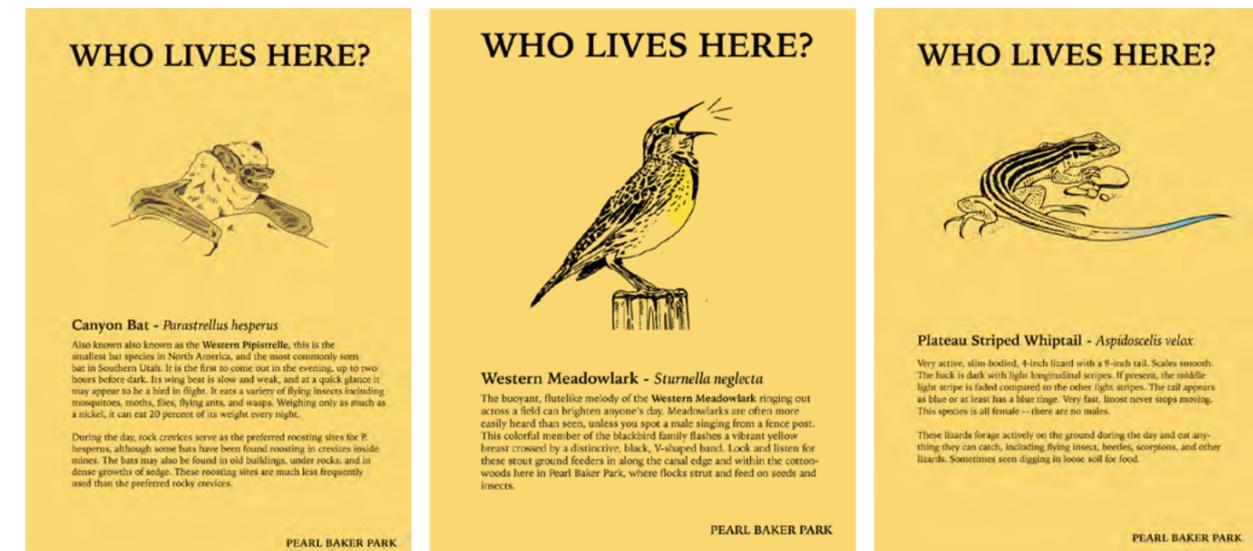
Next: Photos from the park's soft opening held July 2022.

## OUTDOOR CLASSROOM

Pearl Baker Park's outdoor classroom has been designed with flexibility and ease of use in mind. Its interlocking design lends itself to group gatherings, allowing students and instructors to shift in response to the bright desert sun. The amphitheater will be made of concrete and use gradual shifts in topography to create a cozy community gathering space. In addition to the amphitheater, educational signage will be installed throughout the park giving community members and visitors the opportunity to learn about native plant species, local history, geology, and other topics.

Epicenter has worked with local experts to create a planting plan for native and pollinator-friendly species in the park. Special focus will be placed on planting saplings to eventually complement the mature cottonwood trees currently providing shade on the site.

Although designed with waterwise landscaping in mind for this high desert environment, some irrigation will be required in the establishment phase and during any future droughts. Water will be pumped from the town's irrigation canal that runs directly through the park site. The irrigation setup will be complemented by swales, a detention zone, and other water management techniques that have been built on site.



### WHO LIVES HERE?



#### Canyon Bat - *Parastrellus hesperus*

Also known also known as the Western Pipitrelle, this is the smallest bat species in North America, and the most commonly seen bat in Southern Utah. It is the first to come out in the evening, up to two hours before dark. Its wing beat is slow and weak, and at a quick glance it may appear to be a bird in flight. It eats a variety of flying insects including mosquitoes, moths, flies, flying ants, and wasps. Weighing only as much as a nickel, it can eat 20 percent of its weight every night.

During the day, rock crevices serve as the preferred roosting sites for *P. hesperus*, although some bats have been found roosting in crevices inside mines. The bats may also be found in old buildings, under rocks, and in dense growths of sedge. These roosting sites are much less frequently used than the preferred rocky crevices.

PEARL BAKER PARK

### WHO LIVES HERE?



#### Western Meadowlark - *Sturnella neglecta*

The buoyant, flute-like melody of the Western Meadowlark ringing out across a field can brighten anyone's day. Meadowlarks are often more easily heard than seen, unless you spot a male singing from a fence post. This colorful member of the blackbird family flashes a vibrant yellow breast crossed by a distinctive, black, V-shaped band. Look and listen for these stout ground feeders in along the canal edge and within the cottonwoods here in Pearl Baker Park, where flocks strut and feed on seeds and insects.

PEARL BAKER PARK

### WHO LIVES HERE?



#### Plateau Striped Whiptail - *Aspidoscelis velox*

Very active, slim-bodied, 4-inch lizard with a 9-inch tail. Scales smooth. The back is dark with light longitudinal stripes. If present, the middle light stripe is faded compared to the other light stripes. The tail appears as blue or at least has a blue tinge. Very fast, almost never stops moving. This species is all female -- there are no males.

These lizards forage actively on the ground during the day and eat anything they can catch, including flying insects, beetles, scorpions, and other lizards. Sometimes seen digging in loose soil for food.

PEARL BAKER PARK



# FINANCIAL REPORT

July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022



## ASSETS

Buildings	\$154,069.53
Bank Accounts	\$37,850.18
Land	\$5,000
Accounts Receivable	\$23,753
Equipment	\$1,811.29
Depreciation	\$-20,683.91
Other Current Assets	\$805.16
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$202,605.35</b>

## LIABILITIES & EQUITY

Restricted Net Assets	\$51,988.75
Unrestricted Net Assets	\$108,186.24
Net Income	\$40,528.96
<b>Total Equity</b>	<b>\$200,703.95</b>
<b>Total Liabilities and Equity</b>	<b>\$202,605.35</b>

# THANK YOU

<b>AARP</b>	<b>MASS Design Group</b>
<b>American Express</b>	<b>Museums of Western Colorado</b>
<b>AmeriCorps</b>	<b>The National Endowment for the Arts</b>
<b>The Bureau of Land Management (Utah)</b>	<b>Olene Walker Housing Loan Fund</b>
<b>City of Green River</b>	<b>River Rock Inn</b>
<b>Conoco Phillips</b>	<b>River Terrace Inn</b>
<b>The Desert Oracle</b>	<b>Rocky Mountain Community Reinvestment Corp.</b>
<b>Emery County</b>	<b>Rocky Mountain Power Foundation</b>
<b>Enterprise Community Partners</b>	<b>Rural Community Assistance Corporation</b>
<b>Equinox Foundation</b>	<b>Rural Utah Project</b>
<b>Federal Home Loan Bank of Des Moines</b>	<b>Sleepy Hollow Motel</b>
<b>Field Notes</b>	<b>Sorenson Legacy Foundation</b>
<b>Green River High School</b>	<b>Utah Division of Arts &amp; Museums</b>
<b>Hatt's Ranch</b>	<b>Utah Humanities</b>
<b>Holiday River Expeditions</b>	<b>Utah Office of Outdoor Recreation</b>
<b>Homer's Overall Ranch</b>	<b>Utah Office of Tourism</b>
<b>JW Powell River History Museum</b>	<b>Union Pacific Foundation</b>
<b>March Studio (LA)</b>	<b>UServe Utah</b>

**Jason Dilworth**

**Alison Jean Cole**

**Chip Thomas**

**Ken Layne**

Steve Acerson, Trevor Adams, Alisha Anderson, Emily Arntsen, Layla Aronow, Christopher Barnes, Noel Baker, Danny Baxter, Matt Beatty, Jessica Bennett, Michelle Benoit, Adair Blair, Nara Bopp-Williams, Joseph Bondi, Victoria Panella Bourns, Jason Bowcutt, Lindsey Briceno, Katie Boué, Bryan Brooks, Dasha Bulatova, Sarah Burnett, Adriana Chimaras, Bolton Colburn, Katy Corneli, Kris Crabtree, Steph Crabtree, Candice Cravins, Christopher DeVaney, Casey Dooms, Kamilla Earlywine, Gaye Marie Ekker, Thomas Ellerbeck, Danna Engleman, Naomi Englar, Frances Erlandson, Todd Erlandson, Kenny Fallon Jr, Keara Fenzel, John Foster, Wes Funes, David Gee, Get In The Wild, Sarah Gilman, August Granath, Logan Gray, Green River Conservation District, Sara Gibbs, Kristin Hamilton, Jarod Hamm, Ashley Hanson, Erika Lynne Hanson, Katie Hargrave, Ren Hatt, Holly Harrison, Margaret Hayes, Skip Henrie, High Desert Excavating, Daisy Hilton, Collin Hoban, Leigh Hoffman, Jamie Horter, Tammy & Annalee Howland, Victoria Hutter, Tina Jahn, Jennifer Joy Jameson, Steve Jansen, Amy Jorgensen, Will Kershner, Jim Kirkland, Joseph Kunkel, Brian Laidlaw, Emily Larsen, Tomi Lasley, Nicole Lavelly, Kristina Lenzi, Christopher Paolo Lezama, Ben Loescher, Rob Loucks, Marisa Lovera, Love's, Tim & Ana Lucas, Christopher Lynn, Meredith Lynn, Magnuson Lumber, Sophie Maguire, Allyson Mathis, Kayce May-Riches, Hannah McBeth, Christy L McBride, Greg McDonald, Madeline McGill, Diane McGregor, Dr Julia McHugh, Serah Mead, Kelsey Mealey, Chris Merchant, Dane Miller, Summer Orr, Casey Padron, Elise Pepple, Natalie Petersen, Darcie Quist, Lydia Rennalis, Nancy Rivera, Alexander Robinson, Jorge Rojas, Ashley Ross, Evan Rubel, Blair Sagan, Ryann Savino, Rosie & Jake Serago, Jocelyn Scudder, Matt Sheridan, Hollie Smith, Matt Smith, Jaime Smialek, Aurora Smith, the Geoff & Hollie Smith family, Nathaniel L Smith, John Sproul, Jared Steffensen, Adam Steuer, Daniel Strauss, Maria Sykes, Steve & Juanita Sykes, Kristin Tand, Aurora Tang, Emilie Taylor Welty, TerraSophia (Moab), Kevin Thueson, Doug Tolman, Alicia Toldi, Amy Trujillo, Elpitha Tsoutsounakis, Willian Tyler, Bo Wareham, Sam Van Wetter, Schuyler Walter, Nicole Weaver, Grace Whatley, Jason Wheeler, Stephanie Willis, Amy Wilmarth, Emilee Wilson, Glyn Wilson-Charles, Lauren Wood, Kaya Woodall, Kristy Young, Sam Zim

*Spring Summit attendees volunteer on-site at Pearl Baker Park.*

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