



PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT
Civic Center • 500 East Third Street, Suite 200 • Loveland, Colorado 80537
(970) 962-2727 • FAX (970) 962-2903 • TDD (970) 962-2620
www.cityofloveland.org

LOVELAND OPEN LANDS ADVISORY COMMISSION

June 12, 2013

REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

Parks & Recreation Conference Room

500 E. 3rd Street, Suite 200, Loveland, CO 80537

Notice of Meeting Posted

Call to Order at 5:30 pm

Public Comment

Approval of May 8, 2013 Meeting Minutes

Approval of April 10, 2013 Meeting Minutes

City Council Liaison – Hugh McKean

Larimer County Open Lands Advisory Board Liaison – Hugh McKean

OLAB Agenda/Minutes online: http://larimer.org/boards/minutes/openlands_advisory_board.cfm

Discussion/Action:

1. Open Lands Proposed 2014 Budget
2. 57th & Taft Property Initial Review
3. River's Edge Natural Area Update

Reports/Correspondence:

4. Parks & Rec Master Plan Update – Note: Special OLAC Meeting, Wed. 6/19, 5:00-6:30 pm
5. Open Lands Projects Report

Commission Member Discussion Topics

Adjournment

Next Regular Meeting Date: July 10, 2013

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CITY OF LOVELAND OPEN LANDS ADVISORY COMMISSION

Regular Meeting Minutes – May 8, 2013
Parks & Recreation Conference Room

Commissioners Present: Lori Bell, Gale Bernhardt, Rick Brent, Andy Hawbaker, Ross Livingston, Steve McMillan, Bill Zawacki, Jim Roode (alternate), Hugh McKean (City Council Liaison).

Commissioners Absent: Ted Mioduski, Darren Pape.

Staff Present: Rob Burdine, Gary Havener, Brian Hayes, Debbie Eley.

The public meeting was called to order at 5:30 pm.

Public Comment: Kathy Hartman, 945 E. 6th Street, was present.

Approval of the April 10, 2013 Commission Meeting Minutes: Tabled until a quorum is present.

Council Liaison Report: Hugh McKean reported that he plans to attend the Joint Elected Officials' Meeting on May 23, where a presentation will be given regarding the preliminary results of the "Our Lands-Our Future" regional open space study.

Discussion/Action:

1. Swartz Farmstead Structures at River's Edge. The Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) and Loveland Historical Society (LHS) continue in their interests and efforts to preserve and restore the Swartz Farmstead structures. The most recent proposal from the Loveland Historical Society (LHS) includes uses (e.g., weddings, barn dances) that are incompatible with the natural areas and wildlife habitat preserved and enhanced at River's Edge. LHS and HPC plan to prepare a revised proposal for operation and funding of the structures, with no definitive timeframe. A demolition permit would put into motion a process and timeline for a determination on the future of the buildings. Steve McMillan made a motion to recommend that staff submit a demolition permit for all of the structures, with the understanding that the permit would not require all buildings to be demolished. Lori Bell seconded the motion and it carried.

2. Open Lands Tax Funds – Program Philosophy. Staff is compiling an information package for City Council members in preparation for the May 23 Joint Elected Officials' Meeting. The package will include funding spent/acquisitions to date, future projects planned through 2018, and policies such as reserving 15% of revenues for future operations and maintenance. Data and results from the regional study will help identify quality parcels supported by the public. Several acquisitions planned in the next few years will help increase visibility for Loveland's Open Lands program. Loveland's philosophy has been to reserve funding to use when opportunities arise for desirable acquisitions. The program is poised to grow with the addition of new staff members in 2012-2013 and the development of a site-specific 5-year capital plan.

Reports/Correspondence:

3. Larimer County Regional Open Space Study Update. The consultant is developing a financial model to analyze future acquisitions, operations and maintenance, and past acquisitions. The partners will review the analysis before finalizing for a presentation to the Advisory Board on May 16. The team will also present the study findings at the Joint Elected Officials' Meeting on May 23. The results will be useful in the preparation of the Open Lands Plan update.

4. River's Edge Natural Area Update. Construction continues with grading underway and concrete being installed. The wetlands will be started after consultation with the wetland scientist, Parks & Open Lands staff, and the contractor regarding final elevations and water levels. The easement with Thompson R2-J has been completed, providing public access to the trail and parking in the south parking lot at the Administration Building on S. Taft Ave. The Agilent easement is nearly complete, for the trail to cross the northwest corner of the remaining Agilent parcel. The Ryan Gulch and Big T Ditch easements will be reviewed by the ditch companies' attorneys. A construction sign will be posted along 1st Street with information about the project. Kiosks and wayfinding signage are being developed by the new Open Lands Planner. Staff will work with Colorado Parks & Wildlife regarding the fishing component (regulations, signage, etc). CPW delivered 1,200 rainbow trout to Dragonfly Pond and will install a fish feeder to encourage growth. An article in the City Update will be sent out with utility bills in June. The commission encouraged more public information, including website updates, a newspaper article, and a construction webcam. Loveland H.S. Honor Students planted more than 170 trees and shrubs to create a wildlife thicket in celebration of Arbor Day on April 27. Planning has communicated with the enclave property owner that their parcel will be annexed with the Jayhawker Annexation application.

5. Open Lands Projects Report

a. Big Thompson Canyon Property. Staff met with the landowners on 5/3, and discussed public access to the site, current easements, and surrounding property owners. Staff will continue to look at access opportunities, connectivity with Bobcat Ridge, and development costs. Loop trails could be developed if a regional trail proves unfeasible. The landowners have confirmed there is additional interest in the property and would prefer to work with Loveland Open Lands. The landowners have presented staff a firm asking price of the property for discussion with OLAC.

b. 57th and Taft Property. Staff visited the site in late April with Parks staff and Amy Laartz from EDM. Conceptually it appears that the property could connect the City's Recreation Trail, as well as the Regional Trail north to Fort Collins. Parks/Trails would construct the Recreation Trail and possibly an underpass at the railroad crossing. Amy Laartz confirmed that the property appears to have possibilities as an initial wetland banking site. Staff will meet with the landowner on 5/13.

c. Big Thompson River West Upland Property. A contract was sent to the landowner for signature on 5/10. Cedar Valley Drive is currently a private road, but Larimer County will accept it as a county road. A boundary line adjustment will be submitted to the county. The property is planned to close in July and the water will close in June. The water will be held in the City water bank in Open Lands' ownership, to be used on River's Edge or other future properties. The water could also be leased to the Parks or Golf Divisions.

- d. Rossum Drive Property. A Purchase Contract and Option Agreement have been sent to the landowner for signature. Closing is scheduled for late June, and any lien(s) will need to be resolved prior to closing as Open Lands will only accept a clear title.
- e. Parks & Recreation Master Plan Update. The update will consolidate Parks, Recreation, Golf, Open Lands, and Trails. The recent open lands regional study survey and maps will be used, as well as lands recently identified as priorities in the Capital Plan. The consultant will meet with OLAC for input.
- f. Marketing Plan. The new Parks and Open Lands Planner, Bill Wildenberg, is developing an integrated signage program for Open Lands properties. Site naming will also be initiated for 1-2 properties, including Brose and possibly Wild. Marketing Committee will work on developing a "brand" to identify the program and communicate organizational philosophy.

Commission Member Discussion Topics: None.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 pm.

CITY OF LOVELAND OPEN LANDS ADVISORY COMMISSION

Regular Meeting Minutes – April 10, 2013

Parks & Recreation Conference Room

Commissioners Present: Gale Bernhardt, Andy Hawbaker, Ross Livingston, Steve McMillan, Darren Pape, Jim Roode (alternate), Hugh McKean (City Council Liaison).

Commissioners Absent: Lori Bell, Rick Brent, Ted Mioduski, Bill Zawacki.

Staff Present: Rob Burdine, Brian Hayes, Debbie Eley.

The public meeting was called to order at 5:40 pm.

Approval of the March 13, 2013 Commission Meeting Minutes: Darren Pape made a motion to approve the minutes as written. Andy Hawbaker seconded the motion. Gale Bernhardt made the following addition to the minutes regarding Item 2 – River's Edge Natural Area Update: *“Rick Brent noted that, during a joint meeting of OLAC and the Historic Preservation Commission on September 17, 2012, the City Manager indicated that the cost of the Swartz Homestead structural analysis would come from the City Manager’s budget and not Open Lands funding. For reasons not shared with OLAC, funding was taken from the Open Lands budget.”* The motion was revised by Darren Pape to include this addition, and was seconded by Andy Hawbaker. The motion passed unanimously with this addition.

Council Liaison Report: Hugh McKean noted that his term on the Larimer County Open Lands Advisory Board will expire in June. Gale Bernhardt made a motion to recommend that City Council reappoint Hugh to the OLAB. Ross Livingston seconded and the motion carried. Gale will send a letter to staff for a City Council agenda item. Hugh also reported on several items: 1) City Council approved spending \$150,000 annually on an “accelerator” to help entrepreneurs manufacture products at the Rocky Mountain Center for Innovation and Technology (former Agilent campus); 2) Planning staff presented a proposal to City Council for a Loveland-Johnstown annexation/GMA revision, which Council requested that staff work with Johnstown planning staff to revise; and 3) the Roberts Ranch landowner withdrew the offer to donate her property to Larimer County Open Lands.

Reports/Correspondence:

- 1. Open Lands Priority Areas.** Staff presented a map, table, and graph of current Open Lands priorities, discussing each property's location, size, type, estimated acquisition cost, and current negotiation status in detail. Commission members asked questions and provided feedback on current priorities for staff to consider.
- 2. Big Thompson River West Upland Property Review.** This 4.65-acre property would provide an area for a small trailhead parking lot, wetland/upland buffer, trail, and boardwalk to access the Morey Wildlife Reserve. The acquisition would also include 50 units of CBT

water. Gale Bernhardt made a motion to recommend that staff pursue acquisition of this property and CBT units, and pursue the possibility of an option for future acquisition of the remaining parcel, for future consideration by OLAC. Darren Pape seconded the motion and it carried.

Reports/Correspondence:

3. Larimer County Regional Open Space Study. Staff distributed 5 graphs comparing Loveland responses to overall (Larimer County-wide) responses on several key questions from the first survey. Staff has reviewed possible acquisitions to satisfy Loveland residents' desire for neighborhood natural areas. Some areas may be protected during the development review process. Commission members also suggested a small grants program as a possible mechanism to enhance existing neighborhood open space sites.

4. River's Edge Natural Area Update. The construction project broke ground on April 8. Staff is working with the contractor and designer on details including the road, restrooms, bridge, etc. The cost estimate for renovation of the Swartz Homestead structures for public use was approximately \$511,000 (assuming Code variances are granted by the City for the historic structures). Steve McMillan made a motion to propose that the commission write a letter to the Parks & Recreation Dept. Director recommending that no additional staff time or Open Lands funds be spent on renovation of the Swartz Homestead structures. Darren Pape seconded the motion and it carried. Gale Bernhardt will forward a letter to this effect.

5. Open Lands Projects Report. Staff has identified several action items to help improve marketing and public awareness during 2013: website updates, *City Update* articles, property naming and identification signage, and *Leisure Times* advertising. The Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update RFP was sent to five experienced firms, with proposals due April 22. An Open Lands component will be included. Information and results from the Regional Open Space Study and "Plug In to Nature" study will be used. OLAC will have several opportunities to provide input during the development of the Master Plan Update.

6. Annual Spring Waterway Cleanup. April 20th, 9 am-12 noon (*Loveland Civic Center*). The Morey property is currently in very good condition and does not require cleanup, due to staff and volunteer Trail Hosts being good stewards of the property. An Arbor Day planting is also planned for April 20 at River's Edge, to create a buffer along the south property line.

Commission Member Discussion Topics: None.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 pm.



LOVELAND OPEN LANDS ADVISORY COMMISSION

AGENDA ITEM: 1

MEETING DATE: June 12, 2013

DESCRIPTION: Open Lands Proposed 2014 Budget

SUMMARY:

2014 Budget Schedule:

May 20, 2013 – CORE budgets distributed to Departments

June 12, 2013 – Budget information presented and discussed with OLAC

June 14, 2013 – Department Budgets due to Budget Office

July 18, 2013 – Budget Conferences with City Manager and Departments

September 10, 2013 – Study Session on 2014 Recommended Budget

September 22, 2013 – Public hearing & First Reading of 2014 Budget

October 15, 2013 – Second Reading of 2014 Adopted Budget

2A: Budget Office 2014 Directives that drive how the Open Lands budget is being prepared for 2014 include:

- No inflationary increase for operating line items.
- 4.5% salary merit/market increases and planned adjustments to the City's Pay Plan.
- General liability insurance and Workers Comp figures are determined by the Risk Management Division based on historical averages. No changes in health insurance rates.
- Additional costs are being allocated to each budget area for Information Technology and City Attorney to more accurately account for true service & programming costs.

2B. Open Lands Proposed CORE Budget

Each department has been given a CORE 2014 operating budget from the Budget Division and must manage its services and facilities with the designated CORE budget (2014 CORE budgets are based on 2013 budget levels).

	2013 Budget	2014 CORE	Difference	Explanation
Open Lands Operations	\$508,340	\$513,110	(\$4,770)	Wage & benefit changes Administration cost allocations

2C. Proposed 2014 Changes

In addition to 2014 operating levels, the following operating and capital budget requests are proposed for funding consideration in the 2014 budget process.

Fund 202: Open Lands

1. Additional Utility Costs	\$ 3,000
2. Open Lands Acquisitions/Restoration	\$ 1,865,000
Total Open Lands Fund	\$ 1,868,000

Fund 263: Open Lands Capital Expansion Fund

1. Open Lands Acquisitions/Partnerships	\$ 276,000
Total Open Lands CEF	\$ 276,000

2D. 5-Year Capital Requests in the City's Strategic Financial Plan

2014-2018 Capital Requests Submitted for the City's Strategic Plan

PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

Updated 5/28/13 - Revised

OPEN LANDS TAX FUND

PROJECTED FUNDS	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	TOTAL
Capital Outlay						
Acquisitions & Water	1,731,000	2,015,000	380,000	2,440,000	4,106,250	10,672,250
Partnerships	150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000		600,000
Restorations/Site Development	260,000	250,000	1,050,000	280,000	400,000	
Total Expenditures	2,141,000	2,415,000	1,580,000	2,870,000	4,506,250	13,512,250

Open Lands – 2014 Proposed Budget

The Parks & Recreation Department administers and manages the Open Lands Program to identify, acquire, and maintain areas in conformance with the Open Lands Plan. Funding is from a portion of the Larimer County Open Space sales tax of \$0.25 cents, which was approved through 2018, and through capital expansion fees. There are currently 2,300 acres of open lands preserved through these funding sources. To ensure the City's ability to maintain these areas after the sunset of the tax, 15% of revenue is annually added to a reserve for future years' maintenance.

OPEN LANDS

EXPENSE BY DIVISION/Program	'12 Actual	'13 Revised Budget	'14 Budget Proposed
PERSONNEL SERVICES	198,020	394,770	383,230
SUPPLIES	3,680	36,750	36,050
PURCHASED SERVICES	92,350	76,820	94,380
CAPITAL	<u>202,789</u>	<u>5,007,000</u>	<u>2,141,000</u>
Total Expense	496,839	5,515,340	2,654,660
REVENUE			
INTERGOVERNMENTAL	1,724,000	1,456,560	1,700,000
OL CAPITAL EXP FEES	24,608	264,950	255,510
INTEREST	172,188	142,770	162,230
OTHER	<u>4,070</u>	<u>2,500</u>	<u>503,000</u>
Total Revenue	\$1,924,866	\$1,866,780	\$2,620,740
FTE	2.75	3.75	3.25

2014 Budget Changes:

- 4.5% Increase on Wages Pool for Market/Merit and funds for Pay Plan Adjustments
- Utility Rate Increase \$
- Additional Administrative Cost Allocations for Information Technology and City Attorney
- Capital:
 - o Acquisitions
 - o River's Edge Area Improvements and Ward West Property Renovation.

Commission Action Recommended: Informational.



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LOVELAND OPEN LANDS ADVISORY COMMISSION

AGENDA ITEM: 2

MEETING DATE: June 12, 2013

DESCRIPTION: 57th & Taft Property Initial Review

SUMMARY:

After a site visit in late April to identify trail opportunities and wetland potential, staff continued researching the property for preservation. The site is identified as the final piece for a regional trail connection between the Loveland Recreation Trail and Fort Collins trail system. Fort Collins will be constructing a trail south to Trilby Ave. in 2014 and Larimer County will complete the trail south to the PRPA station, at the northern boundary of this property. The trail linkage is identified in the NFRMPO Regional Bicycle Plan as a route providing connectivity between Berthoud and Fort Collins.

Through research of aerial photography, it appears that historically the site contains natural drainages and wetlands. An initial banking site is needed to finalize our application for an Umbrella Wetland Mitigation Bank with the Army Corps of Engineers. The trail could be designed to accommodate both the connectivity we desire for a regional connection without impacting the wetlands we aim to protect and enhance.

Staff met with the landowner's representative to discuss our interest in the property. The landowner confirmed an interest in working with Open Lands on a purchase of the property, or a trade for more developable land.

Commission Discussion/Action Recommended: Staff is requesting an OLAC recommendation to continue negotiations with the landowner on a potential purchase. Staff is also requesting a recommendation to further investigate the wetland potential of this site, and seek pre-approval from the Army Corps of Engineers that the wetlands are a viable option to complete our application for a Wetland Mitigation Bank.



LOVELAND OPEN LANDS ADVISORY COMMISSION

AGENDA ITEM: **3**

MEETING DATE: June 12, 2013

DESCRIPTION: River's Edge Natural Area Update

SUMMARY:

Site Development

Development for River's Edge continues to progress. Trails have been cut with material to be installed the week of June 10. Fishing access points and belly boat ramps have been constructed on Sandpiper and Dragonfly ponds. Caissons are installed for support of the new boardwalk at Bass Pond. Wetland areas have been created on all three ponds, and plant material is anticipated to be ready for installation by late July. The main entrance drive and the paved parking area off of 1st Street are prepped, and paving will begin the week of June 10. Amenities for the site will include benches from a local fabricator and will blend nicely with the natural features at River's Edge.

Open Lands staff finalized an easement agreement with Thompson R2-J, providing access to the southwest portion of River's Edge through the school district property. A crossing agreement with Agilent has been re-negotiated, and will now be achieved through a Quit Claim Deed. A project is being planned for Colorado Cares Day on July 27 to cut the single-track trail from the R2-J parking lot along Ryan's Gulch north to the River's Edge ponds. Draft agreements for both Ryan Gulch and Big Thompson Ditch companies were completed by staff working in cooperation with the City Attorney's Office and are under review by legal representation from both entities. Once comments are received by staff, final agreements will be completed.

Swartz Farmstead

Open Lands provided the City Manager's Office with the following statement of interest in the Swartz Farmstead as an initial step in developing a collaborative solution for the property with the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) and Loveland Historical Society (LHS):

The interests of the Open Lands Advisory Commission as well as those of the Open Lands Division staff for River's Edge Natural Area are as follows:

1. *The River's Edge Natural Area was purchased and designed for development with the protection and enhancement of natural habitat and wildlife as the main theme. All uses, activities and development of the site have been planned to be compatible with the natural habitat, wildlife use and long-term sustainability of the site. Public access is intended to be provided primarily for passive trail use, environmental education purposes, non-motorized fishing opportunities at the ponds, and development of wildlife habitat and wetlands to attract and maintain wildlife species. All non-compatible or disruptive activities or uses are not desired.*
2. *Future environmental education opportunities and activities are envisioned for the site as the program expands.*
3. *Access from Railroad Avenue for a secondary access point and a location for group parking for possible tours and educational activities has been planned and is desired.*
4. *Expenditures for activities, areas or structures not directly associated or intended for enhancement of wildlife, natural habitat sustainability or environmental education is not desired from Open Space funding sources.*

We look forward to hearing the interests of the Historic Preservation Commission and the Loveland Historic Society and how we might work collaboratively towards meeting common interests for the site and farmstead structures.



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LOVELAND OPEN LANDS ADVISORY COMMISSION

AGENDA ITEM: **4**

MEETING DATE: June 12, 2013

DESCRIPTION: Parks & Rec Master Plan – Schedule, Elements, Commission Involvement

SUMMARY:

The department completed interviews and selected the firm of MIG to complete the update of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The schedule for this project will be tight, with the target completion date including City Council review and adoption in early January 2014.

Representatives from MIG will be in town the week of June 17-20 to begin the process. While in town, MIG will be completing park and facility tours, meeting with City Councilors, and scheduling time with the Open Lands Advisory Commission, the Parks & Recreation Commission, and the Golf Advisory Board. **The meeting with the Open Lands Advisory Commission is scheduled for Wednesday, June 19, from 5:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. in the Parks and Recreation Conference Room.**

MIG will complete a three-phased approach. The first phase of information gathering, including inspecting/benchmarking current conditions, park and facility evaluations, and meeting with internal stakeholders, will be completed in the early part of the summer. The second phase of public outreach, including surveys and questionnaires, stakeholder meetings, and needs analysis, will be held during the late summer and early fall. The last phase of plan completion, including draft recommendations, capital and operating strategies, public review and ultimate City Council adoption, will be held in late December/early January. Staff will keep the commission posted on meeting schedules and updates during the process.

Commission Discussion/Action Recommended: Informational.



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LOVELAND OPEN LANDS ADVISORY COMMISSION

AGENDA ITEM: 5

MEETING DATE: June 12, 2013

DESCRIPTION: Open Lands Projects Report

SUMMARY:

Big Thompson River West Upland Property

The City and the landowner have signed a contract for 10 units of CBT water and a contract for 4.4 acres of land. The water transfer will be considered by the Northern Colorado Water Board on June 14. Once approved, the water should be transferred and payment for the 10 units is planned for June 28. The land contract is set to close on July 19. An application for a boundary line adjustment has been submitted to Larimer County to parcel off the 4.4 acres from the 77-acre existing parcel. Staff is also working on an agreement to ensure access to the site from Cedar Valley Drive.

Environmental Education Program

The Environmental Education Program at Viestenz-Smith concluded its spring season on May 23. Originally, 19 groups were scheduled during the 6-week program. Due to snowstorms in April and May, only 10 schools attended while 4 schools (275 students) were snowed out. In total, 545 students attended, while 85 parents were also involved in the program. Several schools continue to request that the City accept groups exceeding the 60-student maximum that the program was designed for. Additional benches will be installed at each station to accommodate larger groups beginning in the fall.

Volunteers gave 56 volunteer days, totaling over 280 volunteer hours. Volunteer recruitment included postings in the Leisure Times, City Update, United Way, and Chilson Center, with the City Update yielding the greatest number of new volunteers. The total volunteer number is 22, with 20 being active this season, a record for this group. The volunteer recognition picnic will be held in the fall, due to scheduling conflicts in the spring.

The Wildlife Program will be offered to adults this fall, as a recreation class through the Leisure Times. Dates are tentatively September 18 and October 16. The Environmental Education Program is also being expanded to include River's Edge – materials are being developed for traveling education boxes and on-site programming.