



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 8, 2016 – 5:30 PM

REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

Parks & Recreation Conference Room, Suite 200
500 E. Third Street, Loveland, CO 80537

www.CityofLoveland.org/OpenLands

Notice of Meeting Posted

Call to Order

Public Comment

Approval of Meeting Minutes: May 11, 2016

City Council Liaison Report – Hugh McKean

Larimer County Open Lands Advisory Board Report – Kerri Rollins/Hugh McKean

5:30-6:30 pm Reports/Correspondence:

1. Sunset Vista Concept Plan Presentation – Kelly Smith, Parks & Open Lands Planner
2. Property Acquisition Updates (*verbal*)
3. Open Lands Projects Report (*attached*)

6:30-6:45 pm Discussion/Action:

4. Open Lands Policy Review – OL-6 Signage Policy (*attached*)
5. Placement of Sculpture on Open Lands and Natural Areas (*discussion at meeting*)

Executive Session (*if necessary*)

(24-6-402(4)(a) C.R.S.) *For information or discussion of the purchase or acquisition of real property*

News/Reminders/Events:

Open Lands in the News – [New Public Access Open Lands](#) and [HPEC Partnership](#)

June 11 – [Guided Bird Walk](#) at Morey Wildlife Reserve – 7:30-9:30 am

June 14 – [Community Stewardship Lecture](#) “Loveland Open Lands” at Grimm Brothers – 6:00pm

June 16 – [PEEPs Program](#), “What Does the Fox Say?” at Namaqua Park, 9:30 & 11 am

June 18 – [Dog Day Afternoon](#) at River’s Edge Natural Area – 1:00-3:00 pm

June 24 – [Family Nature Walk](#) at Morey Wildlife Reserve – 10:00-11:00 am

June 25, 26 – [Volunteer Trail Host Training](#) (*details to follow*)

Commission Member Discussion Topics

Adjournment

Next Regular Meeting: July 13, 2016



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CITY OF LOVELAND OPEN LANDS ADVISORY COMMISSION

Regular Meeting Minutes – May 11, 2016

Parks & Recreation Conference Room, 500 E. Third St., Loveland, CO 80537

Commissioners Present: Rick Brent, Andy Hawbaker, Ross Livingston, Jim Roode, Jean Whittaker, Bill Zawacki.

Commissioners Absent: Gale Bernhardt, Darren Pape, Nathan Thompson, Hugh McKean (City Council Liaison), Kerri Rollins (Larimer County Liaison).

Staff Present: Debbie Eley, Brian Hayes, Marilyn Hilgenberg.

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

Public Comment:

1. John Bonnema, 484 Split Rock Drive, President of the Quarry Lakes HOA, commented that the HOA would like to pursue replacing the utility poles that were removed from the north side of Mineral Lake, to provide raptor perches and possible nesting platforms.
2. Kathy Hartman, 945 E. 6th St., informed the commission about the Colorado Open Lands fundraiser on June 4 honoring all former Legacy Land Trust board members. Kathy also noted that dogs at Old St. Louis Natural Area could be a considered a contradictory use with preserving wildlife habitat.

Approval of April 13, 2016 Meeting Minutes: Ross Livingston made a motion to approve the minutes as written; Jim Roode seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously as written.

City Council Liaison Report. Hugh McKean requested a possible presentation by the Police Advisory Board to OLAC. Staff has been working with the Police Dept. on enforcement, rules, and open lands locations/addresses, to protect resources and provide public safety. Communication has been excellent. Discussion will continue at the staff level and a presentation to OLAC is not needed.

Larimer County Open Lands Advisory Board Report. Marilyn Hilgenberg reported on the March OLAB meeting. The Horsetooth Visitor Center is under construction. The Carter Lake project is delayed due to a sewer system issue. Several job openings are currently posted, including a visitor services position in the Big Thompson District and a Resource Specialist position.

Reports/Correspondence

1. **Property Acquisition Updates.** Brian reported that the 79-acre Pfeiff property on E. 1st St. closed on May 5. Structures on the property will be removed by the seller within 6 months. Signage and gates will be installed. Funding from the Parks Division (\$300K) contributed to the purchase price, for a future neighborhood park co-located on the site. High Plains Foundation provided \$200K. The city will work together with Timberlane Farm, New Vision School, the Boys & Girls Club, and High Plains Env. Center on a visioning/master plan process to manage the site for multiple uses. The 8-acre Nicholson Tract T property east of Oxbow Natural Area on the Big Thompson is scheduled to close on May 20. Staff will also pursue a boundary line adjustment on the west Oxbow parcel, for ownership north to the river. The 12-acre Mihelich property east of Namaqua Skyline is scheduled to close on May 31. Staff is still

talking with the landowners of three additional adjacent parcels regarding possible acquisition. The 78-acre Ward Trust property west of Morey Wildlife Reserve may close as early as August. This is an option contract through the Trust for Public Land. The county will present an initial review to OLAB for their \$250K partnership and holding the GOCO-required conservation easement. A \$500K GOCO open space grant has been awarded and will also be used at closing.

2. Open Lands Projects Report. “Quick-win” Projects: Oxbow and Mariana Butte Natural Areas are open for walk-in access. All five new/restored sites, including these and Morey Wildlife Reserve, King’s Crossing and Old St. Louis, will open when sign kiosks with site maps and rules are installed. The May *City Update* utility bill insert featured open lands and natural areas that are open for public access throughout the city. River’s Edge Natural Area is the featured Open Lands *Site of the Month* for May. The milkweed planting project went well on May 7, with 70 volunteers planting 1,700 native milkweed plants. Blustery weather hampered other events, such as the bird walk and family nature walk. Dog Day Afternoon is planned for May 14, to educate the public about responsible pet ownership, natural area stewardship and places to recreate with dogs. Environmental Education programs are wrapping up, with more than 420 students and 75 adults reached this season. Staff and volunteers adapted to the new site and weather when needed. The April *River Ecology* public program was cancelled due to snowy weather.

3) Trail Updates. The Open Lands and Trails Division has been restricted and will now include open lands, natural areas, and trails. Open Lands funding will come from the County Open Space Sales Tax and the City’s Open Lands Capital Expansion Fee (CEF). Trail funding is provided by Conservation Trust (Lottery) proceeds and a Trails CEF. The City Manager has asked that OLAC help oversee and advise on trail issues, since the two areas overlap in many places. The trail system has gone beyond the Recreation Trail loop, and includes many soft-surface trails in natural areas and open lands. Connections to and through open lands are planned, as well as regional trail connections beyond Loveland. Trail updates and financial information will be provided regularly.

Discussion/Action:

4. Open Lands Policy Review – OL-18 Management/Stewardship Policy. Changes to Policy OL-18 included a provision to combine adjacent similar parcels with existing conserved open lands for management and stewardship plans and purposes. Also, four categories of management types were identified for purposes of public access, resource management, and maintenance tracking. Rick Brent made a motion recommending approval of Policy OL-18 as amended. Jean Whittaker seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

5. 2017 Proposed Open Lands & Trails CORE Budgets. Proposed budgets were similar to 2016, with cost of living increases and costs estimated for operations and maintenance based on management types, including an additional \$32K for management, primarily for weed control. Management and maintenance tracking in 2016 will help provide better financial information for future planning. Trail operations are funded from Conservation Trust Funds. City Council discussed CEFs at their April 10 meeting and reduced the rate for Police, Fire and General Government slightly. Other funds were not affected.

A Conservation Trust maintenance reserve policy sets aside 10% of Lottery funds for future trail maintenance. The reserve fund currently has \$3M, which is now needed for regional trail projects. The commission was asked to consider reducing the reserve to \$500K, approximately two years’ worth

of maintenance funding. Ross Livingston made a motion to amend the reserve policy based on staff recommendations. Jim Roode seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

6. Property Review – West Big Thompson River. The former Nomina Nursery property on Namaqua Road (currently owned by Paul Ehrlich) is listed for sale at \$3.2M. The 55-acre property includes approximately 25 acres of developable land above the floodway/floodplain, with 15 acres already annexed in DR zoning and suitable for low-density residential. The water rights include 3rd priority rights on the Big Thompson, which can be used on site or possibly on adjacent Loveland Ready-Mix property. The property is the historic location of Mariano Medina's homestead and ferry service across the river, dating back to the 1850s. The site does not appear to contain a valuable resource for gravel mining. The river corridor is a high priority for open lands acquisition and potential trail connections, and the historic value of the site is important to the city's heritage. Rick Brent made a motion recommending that staff pursue acquisition of the entire property, with the intent to sell off the developable portions. Ross Livingston seconded the motion. Jim Roode noted that he would prefer more flexibility to pursue various options for acquisition and working with the seller to determine the best option. The motion failed. Jim Roode made a motion that OLAC authorize staff to purchase the property in the manner they best see fit. Jean Whittaker seconded the motion. Rick Brent noted that the intent needs to be clear that we would dispose of the developable land. The motion failed. Jim Roode made a motion that OLAC authorize staff to purchase the property in the manner they best see fit, with the intention to dispose of some or all of the developable land if feasible. Rick Brent seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. Staff will complete all due diligence, including researching the water rights/value and an appraisal, and will work with the City Attorney's Office on a contract. A site visit for the commission will take place on May 23 at 4:30 pm.

7. Waters Edge Annexation. At the May 5 Planning Commission meeting, an annexation request was presented on the Waters Edge development, north of CR 16 and the recent Luxor open lands acquisition in Ryans Gulch. Neighbors presented a signed petition recommending that the land be purchased for open space instead. The parcel was part of the property owned by the Luxor seller, and was previously reviewed by OLAC and determined not to be a priority for acquisition with limited available funding. The southern parcel was a higher priority based on the regional trail connection, the active golden eagle nest, and higher valued natural areas. The Planning Commission voted in favor of annexation, but also recommended that City Council should consider purchasing the land for open space. The commission agreed that property along the river corridor, such as the Ehrlich property discussed earlier, offers a much greater value and public benefit than this parcel.

Reminders:

PEEPs Program, "Of Trees and Stars" at Namaqua Park, May 19 at 9:30 & 11 am

June *Site of the Month* events at Morey Wildlife Reserve – volunteer trail-building project for National Trails Day, guided bird walk & family nature walk activities.

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



LOVELAND OPEN LANDS ADVISORY COMMISSION

AGENDA ITEM: **3**

MEETING DATE: June 8, 2016

DESCRIPTION: Open Lands Project Report

SUMMARY:

Quick Win Projects – All five “quick-win” sites are now open to the public, with kiosks, signage, animal-resistant trash cans, and doggie bag receptacles installed. Maps are posted at each site and online, along with site-specific rules and regulations. Public response to these new sites has been very positive.

River's Edge – Featured *Site of the Month* for May. The special event planned for May 14, Dog Day Afternoon, was postponed due to inclement weather and is rescheduled for June 18. Visitors will have the opportunity to learn about responsible pet ownership and natural area stewardship at stations throughout the site sponsored by local businesses. Local open lands and parks to visit with dogs will also be highlighted, along with the allowed uses and rules of each area.

Fishing line recycle tubes assembled and donated by the Loveland Fishing Club have been installed throughout River's Edge to improve wildlife habitat, public safety and aesthetics. Access through the Mineral Addition property is being constructed, including new trails, fencing, gates and signage, and should be opened later this month.

Trees donated by the Ketterer family have been planted at River's Edge, Centennial Park and Westside Park. The memorial tree donated by OLAC in memory of Brian's mother will be planted at the overlook entrance to River's Edge north of Bass Pond.

Morey Wildlife Reserve – Featured *Site of the Month* for June. On June 4, a group of 16 enthusiastic volunteers celebrated National Trails Day® with a successful trail-building event at Morey Wildlife Reserve. Volunteers helped complete 1/4-mile of natural-surface walking trail by removing vegetation from the trail alignment, placing "crusher fines" (crushed granite) on the trail, and then spreading, raking, leveling and tamping the material in place. A guided bird walk is planned for June 11, and a family nature walk will be held on June 24.

Environmental Education/Volunteer Program – An Open Lands Active Generation Tour was offered on May 31, with 10 participants. Sites throughout Loveland were visited and information about the Open Lands Division was presented. The program was very well-received. Training for new Volunteer Trail Hosts is scheduled for June 25 and 26.



LOVELAND OPEN LANDS ADVISORY COMMISSION

AGENDA ITEM: **4**

MEETING DATE: June 8, 2016

DESCRIPTION: Open Lands Policy Review – OL-6 Signage Policy

SUMMARY:

Policies and Procedures for Open Lands are reviewed annually by Open Lands Staff and every five years by Open Lands Staff with the Open Lands Advisory Commission. In February 2016, OLAC reviewed and recommended approval of the majority of the Open Lands Policies, with the exception of OL- 6 Signage and OL-18 Management and Stewardship Process and Plans, which required more extensive revisions to more closely align with current practices. In May, OLAC reviewed and recommended approval of OL-18. The attached draft Policy OL-6 includes changes to the signage policy for review and recommendation. The previous version of OL-6 contained a detailed table with examples of signage for each property type and sign category. The updated policy outlines general categories and types of signage for natural areas and open lands properties, including regulatory, interpretive, identification, maps and wayfinding.

Commission Action Recommended: Review and recommend the attached Open Lands Policy to the Open Lands and Trails Manager and the Director of Parks and Recreation.

**SUBJECT:**

Open Lands Policy for Signage

EFFECTIVE DATE:

June 2016

REVIEW SCHEDULE:

Annually in January by Open Lands Staff. Every five years by Open Lands Advisory Commission (OLAC) or more frequently if recommended by staff.

PURPOSE:

To clarify the policies and procedures of the City of Loveland with respect to signage of open lands and natural areas.

SCOPE:

The natural areas and other open lands addressed by these policies were acquired by the City of Loveland with dedicated funds from sales taxes that were approved by the voters of Larimer County for the specific purpose of protecting natural areas and open lands. The policy also applies to natural areas acquired by the City of Loveland prior to the passage of the Open Lands Sales Tax in 1996.

RESPONSIBILITY:

Open Lands Staff

BACKGROUND:

Staff has used the following policy regarding signage on Open Lands.

APPROVAL:

Elizabeth R. Anderson
Director, Parks and Recreation

Marilyn Hilgenberg
Open Lands and Trails Manager**POLICY:**

Natural Area and Open Lands signage shall be approved by staff and consistent with the guidelines outlined below.

Signage will be utilized on Loveland's Open Lands and Natural Areas for the following:

1. Regulation and Enforcement
2. Information and Education
3. Identification and Wayfinding

Regulation and Enforcement

In order to communicate rules, regulations and safety conditions to the public, signage will be used throughout Loveland's open lands sites. Examples include Rules and Regulations, Fishing and Wildlife Management signs, and traffic, pedestrian and parking signage.

Rules and Regulations for each Open Lands site should be posted at the entry point(s) of the site. Signage should reflect the most current regulations approved by the Parks and Recreation Director and posted on the City's website.

Information and Education

Signage will be used to communicate key information and educate the public regarding the intended use and appropriate stewardship of each open lands site.

Larger publically accessible sites will have informational kiosks to communicate information to users and identify the sites as City of Loveland Open Lands. Kiosks will typically contain site-specific maps, rules, regulations, and other resource or event information. No advertising is allowed on City of Loveland Open Lands or natural area properties.

Sites may also include educational information from Colorado Parks & Wildlife and/or other open lands agencies regarding awareness and safety. This could include wildlife warnings and information, fishing regulations and stewardship, Waterway Cleanup Signage, Fishing Line Recycle Tubes, etc.

Interpretive Signage will be used on sites open for public access that lend themselves to unique natural resources, wildlife, plants, birds, views, or historical features. Special signage or learning stations may be installed to promote environmental education and public programming.

Signage will comply with requirements of grant agreements, when applicable. Grants and partnerships will be recognized for their contribution at the open lands or natural area (e.g., Great Outdoors Colorado, Colorado Parks & Wildlife, Colorado Open Lands).

Identification and Wayfinding

Identification of open lands sites is an important component of communication with citizens. Each open lands site should be signed with the name of the property or identify it as part of the City of Loveland's open lands program.

In order to adequately direct citizens to the location, addresses should be assigned and address signs installed at the entry point of each open lands area. This is also necessary to provide accurate locations for emergency services.

Wayfinding signage and maps will be posted on-site (and on the City's Website) to allow users to navigate each site and be able to find the available amenities. Signage will be used to delineate trails and publically accessible areas.

Signage will be also used to prohibit access to adjacent private properties, restoration areas and closed sites (e.g., "No Trespassing" per Section 9.48.010 of the City Municipal Code).