



## 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](http://www.cityofloveland.org)

### LOVELAND OPEN LANDS ADVISORY COMMISSION

MARCH 8, 2017 – 5:30 PM

#### REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

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

[www.CityofLoveland.org/OpenLands](http://www.CityofLoveland.org/OpenLands)

#### Notice of Meeting Posted

#### Call to Order

#### Public Comment

**Approval of Meeting Minutes:** February 8, 2017

**City Council Liaison Report**

**Larimer County Open Lands Advisory Board Liaison Report**

**5:45-6:00 pm Discussion/Action Items:**

1. Open Lands & Trails 2018 Budget Schedule (*attached*)

**6:00-7:00 pm Reports/Correspondence:**

2. Property Acquisition Updates (*verbal*)
3. Open Lands Projects Report (*attached*)
4. Trail Updates (*attached*)

**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:**

March 8 – [Beer for the Pier](#) – Big T Coalition fundraiser at Big Thompson Brewery – 5:00-8:00 pm

March 9 – Boards and Commissions Summit at Rialto Theater – 5:00-9:00 pm

March 10 – [Colorado Children's Day](#) at Civic Center/Library/Chilson – 11:00 am-2:00 pm

March 14 – [HPEC Stewardship Lecture](#) at Loveland Library – Vegetable Gardening – 6:00-7:00 pm

March 23 – [PEEPs "March Moose Madness"](#) at Loveland Library – 9:30 & 11:00 am

March 25 – [Guided Bird Walk](#) on Big Thompson River Trail from Fairgrounds Pk – 8:00-9:30 am

Submit your favorite natural areas & wildlife photos [Parks & Recreation Photo Contest](#)

**Commission Member Discussion Topics**

**Adjournment**

**Next Regular Meeting:** April 12, 2017

*The City of Loveland is committed to providing an equal opportunity for services, programs and activities and does not discriminate on the basis of disability, race, age, color, national origin, religion, sexual orientation or gender. For more information on non-discrimination or for translation assistance, please contact the City's Title VI Coordinator at [TitleSix@cityofloveland.org](mailto>TitleSix@cityofloveland.org) or 970-962-2372. The City will make reasonable accommodations for citizens in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). For more information on ADA or accommodations, please contact the City's ADA Coordinator*

*[ADACoordinator@cityofloveland.org](mailto:ADACoordinator@cityofloveland.org) or 970-962-3319.* “La Ciudad de Loveland está comprometida a proporcionar igualdad de oportunidades para los servicios, programas y actividades y no discriminar en base a discapacidad, raza, edad, color, origen nacional, religión, orientación sexual o género. Para más información sobre la no discriminación o para asistencia en traducción, favor contacte al Coordinador Título VI de la Ciudad al [TitleSix@cityofloveland.org](mailto>TitleSix@cityofloveland.org) o al 970-962-2372. La Ciudad realizará las acomodaciones razonables para los ciudadanos de acuerdo con la Ley de Discapacidades para americanos (ADA). Para más información sobre ADA o acomodaciones, favor contacte al Coordinador de ADA de la Ciudad en [ADACoordinator@cityofloveland.org](mailto:ADACoordinator@cityofloveland.org) o al 970-962-3319.



## 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](http://www.cityofloveland.org)

### CITY OF LOVELAND OPEN LANDS ADVISORY COMMISSION

Regular Meeting Minutes – February 8, 2017

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

**Commissioners Present:** Gale Bernhardt, Rick Brent, Andy Hawbaker, Ross Livingston, Jim Roode, Jean Whittaker, Bill Zawacki, Kerri Rollins.

**Commissioners Absent:** Darren Pape, Nathan Thompson, Leah Johnson (Interim City Council Liaison).

**Staff Present:** Debbie Eley, Brian Hayes, Marilyn Hilgenberg, Michele Van Hare.

**Guests:** Jennifer Almstead (Larimer County Open Lands).

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

**Approval of January 11, 2017 Meeting Minutes:** Jean Whittaker made a motion to approve the minutes as written. Gale Bernhardt seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

**Public Comment:** None.

**Larimer County Open Lands Advisory Board Report.** Kerri introduced Jennifer Almstead, the county's new Open Lands Fund Development and Special Projects Coordinator. Jenn was previously the development director at Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado and will attend OLAC meetings in Kerri's absence. Jenn reported that the county will be conducting visitor satisfaction surveys at Red Mountain and Horsetooth Mountain open spaces, to obtain concrete data on visitor counts and demographics in preparation for management plan updates. Kerri reported that Larimer County is working with Boulder County and Colorado Open Lands to set up a field trip to the Malchow Farm during the Land Trust Alliance's national conference in October. Also, an IGA with a municipality will allow the Malchow Farm water to be shared and still maintain a viable agricultural farm. The Open Lands Advisory Board approved 13 small grants at their January meeting, awarding \$19,000 total.

#### **Discussion/Action:**

**1. Election of Vice Chair.** Bill Zawacki nominated Andy Hawbaker as Vice Chair for 2017. Rick Brent seconded the nomination and Andy accepted the nomination. The commission unanimously voted to elect Andy Hawbaker as Vice Chair.

**2. 2017 Division Work Plan.** At the beginning of each year, the divisions of the Parks and Recreation Department set goals and work plans for the upcoming year. Based on citizen feedback, priorities set by the Open Lands Advisory Commission in 2016, and available resources, staff have established the following 2017 goals for the Open Lands and Trails program: 1) Acquisition of several priority open land parcels including along the river corridor and additions to existing protected lands; 2) Development of management and stewardship plans for the Big Thompson River corridor properties, and Sunset Vista, Prairie Ridge, and Skyline natural areas; 3) Project Outdoors Inspire Initiative planning, community outreach, and implementation grant; 4) Development of local and regional trails, trail connections, and acquisitions to complete missing trail linkages; 5) Field and development projects including public access improvements, noxious weed management, and property management

projects, and 6) programming and community outreach, including increasing the number of programs, outreach events, participants, volunteers, and stewardship projects, with the help of the CO Health Foundation Grant, if successful. Budget funding is appropriated for each of these work items.

#### **Reports/Correspondence:**

**3. Project Outdoors Update.** The GOCO Inspire Initiative aims to connect more Colorado youth and families to the outdoors. Loveland has been working with the Larimer County Project Outdoors coalition to develop a plan for places, programs and pathways to nature in the southeast Loveland project area, including the Boys & Girls Club, schools, and natural areas and trails in the Big Thompson River corridor. The community has been engaged in the planning process and more than 75 participants of all ages provided valuable input during an open house event in January. Feedback indicates that citizens are interested in more access to natural areas and parks for free play and guided programs, trails for connectivity, bicycle skills and safety, a “gear library,” and urban agriculture. Barriers to recreating outdoors include lack of awareness of programs and places, time, transportation and location. The planning process will also involve working with local program providers to identify opportunities for youth and family programming, supporting state curriculum standards, promoting stewardship, internship and leadership pathways for youth, and developing sustainable partnerships with other local entities. Next steps include a teacher engagement workshop, site visits, school district coordination, additional community engagement, and prioritization of projects. Implementation grant requests of \$1-3M are due to GOCO in July.

#### **4. Property Acquisition Updates.**

- The Namaqua West property is still under contract. The adverse possession and prescriptive easement claim has not been resolved. The remainder of the property will be surveyed for purchase separately. The city will assume the current leases on the buildings and ag land once the acquisition is completed to continue current operations and maintenance practices for the near future.
- Boundary line adjustments on the two Boise Ave. properties are expected to be completed in 60-90 days to enable these acquisitions to close.

#### **5. Open Lands Projects Report.**

- Annual Report – The Open Lands and Trails Division 2016 Annual Report was distributed and will be available on the city website, in accordance with the requirements of the Larimer County Open Space Sales Tax.
- Parks & Recreation Dept. Photo Contest – Amateur and professional photographers of all ages are invited to enter their best original images in categories for each Parks & Rec Dept division. The contest will be open until May 31 and cash prizes will be awarded for winners in each category. See [www.cityofloveland.org/ParksRecreation/photocontest](http://www.cityofloveland.org/ParksRecreation/photocontest) for details.
- River's Edge Natural Area – The new 1<sup>st</sup> St. parking area will be opened this spring when trail connections are installed and final striping and planting are completed. Limited snow and warmer days have allowed high public use of River's Edge this winter. Although use of the site is encouraged year-round, due to unpredictability and risk, ice skating and ice fishing are not permitted on City of Loveland Open Lands and Parks water bodies. All areas have been posted with signage indicating “Unsafe Ice.”
- Ryans Gulch II Property. The house acquired with the Ryans Gulch II property has been renovated and is available for lease though the city’s property management company. All revenues will be returned to the open lands fund.

- Environmental Education/Volunteer Program – Volunteer educator training begins March 20. Details about topics and programs are available on the Open Lands website: [www.cityofloveland.org/openlands](http://www.cityofloveland.org/openlands) and information to sign up for education and trail host training is available on Signup Genius: [www.signupgenius.com/go/20F0A4EA8AD2EABF49-open](http://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F0A4EA8AD2EABF49-open). Staff is updating curriculum and materials for all EE programs for the spring season. The Bucks to Buses transportation scholarship program is open and funds are available for schools with high numbers of students who qualify for free and reduced lunch. Michele is available to present information about the Bucks for Buses program to any group that may be willing to support the scholarship.
- The February PEEPs program will be “Who is that Hooting in My Backyard?” about Great Horned Owls. The January programs on river otters had 36 participants.
- The February guided bird walk at River’s Edge will be led by Ron Harden from Foothills Audubon.

## 6. Trails Update.

- Wilson Bridge and Taft/Wilson Trail – The Wilson Bridge piers and abutments were installed in January and the bridge is scheduled to be placed on February 15<sup>th</sup>. The 404 permit was approved in January and work on the stormwater avulsion is also progressing. The contractor has moved several car bodies and old metal parts on the south river bank, which is being lowered to create a floodplain bench to help mitigate velocity and covey more flow within the channel during flood events. The trail will remain closed from Wilson to Taft for the entire duration of construction.
- Trail Segment 10b – Namaqua to W. US 34 Underpass – JAGS construction completed forming the bridge abutments and poured concrete in January. The bridge from Viestenz-Smith should be set in mid-February. The schedule is still tracking for the trail to open in this spring.
- Front Range Trail – CDOT completed final office review in January. Minor plan corrections are almost completed. Construction will be bid in mid-February for a May start and late August completion. Clearances for Utilities and final environmental review are in progress.
- Long View Corridor Trail – Staff completed review of 35% plans and the biological report. An updated cost estimate is in progress. The most recent schedule now puts the project bidding in June 2017 for a construction start in the fall of 2017.
- Trail 10a – Wilson to Namaqua Avenue – Minor trail alignment changes are in progress, which include the new Namaqua Ave. trail underpass location. Once the conceptual alignment is approved by the City, staff will meet with the landowner to discuss the final easements and needs for this trail section. Funding has been appropriated in the 2017 budget for design and construction.
- Grant awards – Staff will be presenting the GOCO Connect Initiative Planning Grant for \$97,000 to Council on February 6<sup>th</sup> for approval. This grant will fund 75% of the design of the Namaqua Avenue Trail Underpass. Staff will be bringing the TAP grant agreements to City Council for approval in March. The \$600,000 construction Transportation Alternative Program grant will provide almost one-half of the needed funds to construct the underpass in 2019. The Namaqua Avenue Trail Underpass will provide a safe grade-separated connection between trail segments 10a and 10b at Namaqua Avenue.

**Commission Member Discussion Topics.** Rick Brent noted that he disagrees with the renaming of the Namaqua Skyline property, due to the natural association with the adjacent Namaqua Hills subdivision. Rick Brent asked if a webcam could be placed at the bald eagle nest site for public viewing. Staff noted that a game cam is installed in the Morey Wildlife Reserve area, a barn owl nest box webcam will be online soon, and bald eagle monitoring is underway at the Boedecker nest site.

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 7:10 pm.



## OPEN LANDS ADVISORY COMMISSION

**AGENDA ITEM:** **1**

**MEETING DATE:** March 8, 2017

**DESCRIPTION:** Open Lands & Trails 2018 Budget Information

**STAFF PRESENTER:** Marilyn Hilgenberg

### **SUMMARY:**

Staff annually evaluates and analyzes the Open Lands and Trails budget and identifies budget issues for discussion with the Open Lands Commission. Because of the timing of the 2018 Budget Schedule, information presented in this packet is preliminary and will be revised before the June submittal date.

#### **1A. 2018 City Budget Proposed Schedule**

March 3, 2017	Capital Improvement Program Submittals Due
April 11, 2017	City Council Study Session for 2018 Budget Development
April 17, 2017	Base Budgets Distribution (salary, rates, allocations, etc)
May 10, 2017	Budget Presentation to OL Commission (Operations & Capital)
June 2, 2017	Department Budgets due to Budget Office
July 12, 2017	Budget Conferences with Departments and City Manager
September 12, 2017	Study Session on 2018 Recommended City Budget
October 3, 2017	Public Hearing and 1 <sup>st</sup> Reading on 2018 Adopted Budget
October 17, 2017	2 <sup>nd</sup> Reading on 2018 Adopted Budget

#### **1B. Open Lands and Trails Capital Plans**

Capital Project budget proposals were submitted by Departments to the Finance Department March 3<sup>rd</sup> and will be discussed with City Management staff and City Council during the 2018 Budget process. Open Lands Sales Tax and Open Lands Capital Expansion Fees were used to meet our capital open lands goals and Conservation Trust (Lottery) and Trails Capital Expansion Fees were used to fund trail projects. Provided below are projects identified in the next 5 years for the Department Open Land and Trail Funds. Division funding priorities align with the standards set forth in the 2014 Parks & Recreation Master Plan. The timing of projects is dependent upon available fund cash flow and staff resources.

**Loveland Parks and Recreation - OPEN LANDS SALES TAX FUND #202 & OPEN LANDS CEF FUND 263****Financial Forecast 2018-2022**

Updated 2/22/17

PROJECTED FUNDS	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	TOTAL
Total Cash in Fund	8,699,956	6,145,623	6,566,706	6,224,864	6,596,120	5,378,189	
Designated Cash - Future Operation/Mnct^	3,031,024	3,000,000	3,000,000	3,000,000	3,000,000	3,000,000	
Available Cash Balance	5,668,932	3,145,623	3,566,706	3,224,864	3,596,120	2,378,189	
<b>Revenues</b>							
County Open Lands Tax^	2,844,663	2,800,000	2,856,000	2,913,120	2,971,382	3,030,810	17,415,975
CE, Leases, Fees & Other	48,415	48,415	48,415	48,415	48,415	48,415	290,490
Interest	65,250	61,456	65,667	93,373	131,922	134,455	552,123
Grants/Partnerships	382,679	148,429					531,108
<b>Total Revenue</b>	3,341,006	3,058,300	2,970,082	3,054,908	3,151,720	3,213,680	18,258,589
<b>Total Revenue &amp; Resources</b>	12,040,962	9,203,924	9,536,788	9,279,772	9,747,840	8,591,869	
<b>Expenditures</b>							0
<b>Operating Expenditures</b>							0
Base Operating Expenditures	868,339	927,349	1,016,835	1,068,031	1,131,611	1,178,990	6,191,156
New Operational Suppliments	32,000	59,869	20,089	30,620	13,040	30,693	186,311
<b>Operating Expenditures</b>	900,339	987,218	1,036,924	1,098,651	1,144,651	1,209,683	6,377,467
<b>Capital Outlay</b>							0
Operating CapitalEquipment/Vehicles/Signage			25,000	25,000	50,000	25,000	125,000
Acquisitions, Developement & Water	3,640,000			510,000	2,975,000	2,730,000	9,855,000
Restoration/Site Development	1,355,000	1450000	2,050,000	850,000		250,000	5,955,000
Partnerships		200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	1,000,000
<b>Capital Sub-Total</b>	4,995,000	1,650,000	2,275,000	1,585,000	3,225,000	3,205,000	16,935,000
<b>Ending Working Cash Balance</b>	6,145,623	6,566,706	6,224,864	6,596,120	5,378,189	4,177,186	
	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>

**OPEN LANDS CEF**

PROJECTED FUNDS	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	TOTAL
Beginning Working Cash Balance	2,036,566	530,252	964,513	1,485,296	1,004,673	1,140,115	
<b>Revenues</b>							
Open Lands CEF	451,125	499,990	482,170	311,380	311,380	430,680	2,486,725
Interest	13,593	5,303	9,645	22,279	20,093	28,503	99,416
City Loan for Economic Incentitives	28,968	28,968	28,968	28,968	28,968	28,968	173,808
<b>Total Revenue</b>	493,686	534,261	520,783	362,627	360,441	488,151	2,759,949
<b>Total Revenue &amp; Resources</b>	2,530,252	1,064,513	1,485,296	1,847,923	1,365,115	1,628,265	
<b>Expenditures</b>							
HPEC - Phase I- Environmental Center							0
OL Acquisitions	2,000,000			843,250		500,000	3,343,250
Restoration/Site Development		100,000			225,000		325,000
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	2,000,000	100,000	0	843,250	225,000	500,000	3,668,250
<b>Ending Working Cash Balance</b>	530,252	964,513	1,485,296	1,004,673	1,140,115	1,128,265	
	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	

\* Policy: Loveland may designate up to 10% of Annual Sales Tax for projects with other agencies.

Interest and CEF projections based on figures provided by Budget Department

- ^Larimer Country Open Lands Sales Tax Sunsets in 2043. Assumption is that the long term maintenance/operations of Open Lands will be funded in this fund

- ^Larimer Country Open Lands Sales Tax Extension beginning in 2019 Changed % to Cities- Loveland receives \$265K less annually

- ^2015 Loan to City for Economic Incentives Approved by City Council (\$250K- repayable in 10 years)

- Assumes 3% inflation on operating costs annually.

- Although not always projected in cash flow budget estimates, grants will be pursued and will costs associated with some open land projects.

-2017 Grant from TAP and GOCO for Longview Trail Project \$388,192.60

## Loveland Parks and Recreation - CONSERVATION TRUST FUND #201 and TRAILS CEF #262

## Financial Forecast 2018-2022

Updated 2/13/17

## CONSERVATION TRUST (Lottery-Designated Fund for Recreation Trails)

PROJECTED FUNDS	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	TOTAL
<b>TOTAL CASH</b>	4,884,288	2,461,368	3,067,536	2,101,250	2,527,675	2,883,045	
Designated Cash for Future Operation/Mnct	500,000	500,000	500,000	500,000	500,000	500,000	
Beginning Working Cash Balance	4,384,288	1,961,368	2,567,536	1,601,250	2,027,675	2,383,045	
<b>Revenues</b>							
Lottery Funds	740,000	743,700	740,000	743,700	747,419	754,911	5,220,885
Grants/Other	208,000	519,440	600,000				1,327,440
Interest	36,632	24,614	30,675	31,519	50,553	72,076	318,146
<b>Total Revenue</b>	984,632	1,287,754	1,370,675	775,219	797,972	826,987	6,866,471
<b>Total Revenue &amp; Resources</b>	5,868,920	3,749,122	4,438,211	2,876,469	3,325,647	3,710,032	
<b>Expenditures</b>							
Base Recreation Trail Operations & Maintenance	252,740	291,586	301,791	308,794	319,602	342,366	2,147,667
New Operational Suppliments	38,500			40,000		60,000	138,500
<b>Capital Outlay</b>							
<b>Recreation Trail</b>							
Segment 12- Denver to Boyd Lake (D)	44,000						44,000
Taft Avenue Trail Connection at the Big T	50,000						50,000
Segment 10- Wilson to Namaqua	541,831						541,831
Namaqua Bridge Oversize for Future UP	150,000	75,000	150,000				375,000
Segment 8- 29th St Imprv/43rd & Wilson	235,000						235,000
Segment 7- N. Hwy 287 to 57th Louden Ditch (D)	809,542						809,542
57th and Taft Trail/Connections- LV Trail	1,163,990						1,163,990
Namaqua Avenue Underpass	30,000	130,000	1,166,600				1,326,600
South Front Range Trail					123,000	1,589,000	1,712,000
Trail Wayward Signage Program	100,000						100,000
<b>North Lake Park Renovation</b>	226,949	185,000	483,570				895,519
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	3,407,552	681,586	2,336,961	348,794	442,602	1,991,366	9,539,649
<b>Net Change in Working Cash Bal</b>	(2,422,920)	606,168	(966,286)	426,425	355,370	(1,164,378)	
<b>Ending Cash Balance</b>	2,461,368	3,067,536	2,101,250	2,527,675	2,883,045	1,718,667	
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	TOTAL

## TRAILS CEF

PROJECTED FUNDS	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	TOTAL
Beginning Working Cash Balance	1,750,878	894,140	1,201,071	1,203,362	211,722	668,255	
<b>Revenues</b>							
Trails CEF	268,875	297,990	287,370	185,580	185,580	185,580	1,667,655
Interest	13,132	8,941	12,011	18,050	4,234	16,706	83,113
Grants and Other Revenues	208,000						208,000
<b>Total Revenue</b>	490,007	306,931	299,381	203,630	189,814	202,286	1,468,762
<b>Total Revenue &amp; Resources</b>	2,240,885	1,201,071	1,500,452	1,406,992	401,537	870,541	
<b>Expenditures</b>							
<b>Rec Trail Development/Acquisition</b>							
Segment 10a- Wilson to Namaqua	99,903						99,903
Segment 10b- Namaqua to W Hwy 34	392,492						392,492
Segment 10c- Rossum to W Hwy 34	473,806			336,000			809,806
Front Range Trail System	380,544		297,090	859,270			380,544
Segment 12- Denver to Boyd Lake (D)							1,156,360
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	1,346,745	0	297,090	1,195,270	0	0	2,839,105
<b>Net Change in Working Cash Bal</b>	(856,738)	306,931	2,291	(991,640)	189,814	202,286	
<b>Ending Working Cash Balance</b>	894,140	1,201,071	1,203,362	211,722	401,537	870,541	

Unfunded: Future Trail Pedestrian Aerterial Street Underpasses/Crossings

Designated Cash Emergency Reserve: Amount of \$500,000 to be reviewed Annually by the Commission

Long Term operation and maintenance of recreation trail projected to be funded in Conservation Trust Fund

T= Temporary Trail Connection, D= Developer Dependent and L= Not part of the Trail Loop

Interest and CEF projections based on figures provided by Budget Department

-2017 Grant from TAP and GOCO for Longview Trail Project and Namaqua Ave UP Planning

## COMMISSION ACTION RECOMMENDED: Informational and Budget Discussion



## 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](http://www.cityofloveland.org)

### LOVELAND OPEN LANDS ADVISORY COMMISSION

**AGENDA ITEM:** 3

**MEETING DATE:** March 8, 2017

**DESCRIPTION:** Open Lands Projects Report

#### **SUMMARY:**

**Project Outdoors.** The February 9 teachers workshop was very productive, with a dozen enthusiastic educators offering many innovative ideas about ways they could engage their students outdoors, as well as barriers they currently face. Given the economic and time-related constraints of transporting students off-site, teachers advocated for bringing nature to the schools, in the form of environmental organizations such as High Plains Environmental Center providing curriculum and programs, or adding learning landscapes to schools. Most participants were unaware of the Colorado Environmental Education Plan (CEEP), which aligns programs with state standards, current educational units and seasons. More collaboration with Larimer Co. Conservation Corps and local colleges and universities would help address the pathways components of this project, including internships, credits and stipends for participating students. Teachers suggested that providing information on available environmental education resources would be helpful. After-school programming, such as outdoor or nature clubs, along with a “gear library” and guided programs to teach outdoor skills were also suggested.

Other recent project activities included a field trip for the Youth Advisory Council to CSU and Fort Collins Discovery Museum to learn about career pathways and internships in natural resources. Local program providers are submitting proposals for programming to include in the plan, such as field trips, clubs, camps, and clinics, in-school, after school and during the summer. Pathways opportunities are being explored with Front Range CC, CSU, and Larimer County Conservation Corps. Site visits will be conducted at schools and sites within the project area with stakeholders including students, teachers, and local residents. Once all of the potential elements are submitted and costs are estimated, a prioritization exercise will help identify projects to include in the GOCO implementation grant, with input from the public, stakeholders, and OLAC. GOCO recently changed the Tier 2 application to a 2-step process,



which will now include site visits after full applications are submitted in July, to determine which projects will move forward for Board consideration.

**Invasive Phreatophyte Removal Grant.** Grant funding from the CO Water Conservation Board is being used to for the removal and treatment of hundreds of invasive Russian olive, tamarisk and Siberian elm trees from Cottonwood Run North, Old St. Louis and Oxbow natural areas this spring. Larimer County Weed District is providing monitoring and follow-up treatment as in-kind match. The local contractor began work on Feb. 28 at Cottonwood Run.

**Kings Crossing Pollinator Garden.** The local chapter of Pheasants Unlimited requested to plant a pollinator garden to improve wildlife habitat at Kings Crossing Natural Area. Volunteers will prepare the soil, seed native species, and weed and maintain the area.

**Barn Owl Nest Boxes.** Staff has been working with the Colorado Avian Research and Rehabilitation Institute ([CARRI](#)) to install two owl boxes for nesting barn owls. One box has a live [webcam](#). CARRI staff monitor the video daily and will provide video clips of bird activity. They also plan to add nesting material to the boxes and adjust the camera angle.

**River's Edge Natural Area.** Additional fencing and boulder placement in key areas along the entrance road and parking lot will improve aesthetics and reduce safety concerns. The flood-eroded area west of Jayhawker North pond has been filled in and graded. The construction fencing has been removed and the two-rail fence will be completed north to 1<sup>st</sup> St.

**Colorado Health Foundation Grant.** CHF awarded full funding (\$85,200) for the purchase and implementation of Offero (formerly NatureTracker), a database management system for participant activity registration and volunteer management, through CHF's Activating Places and Spaces funding opportunity. This innovative tool will give the public an easy way to find and sign up for classes, programs, events and volunteer opportunities and will allow administrators, participants and volunteers to schedule, log, track, monitor and report on activities. Please try out our demo website (<http://demo.offero.com>) and the Fort Collins (<https://engage.fcgov.com/>) and Larimer County (<https://offero.larimer.org/>) systems and send along any suggestions as we set up Loveland's new system with the software developers. The CHF grant will also help fund additional equipment and materials for public outreach and events, as well as a pilot program for middle school students in orienteering, art in nature and technology mapping.

**Environmental Education/Volunteer Program.** The spring environmental education program is gearing up for a busy season, with 12 different schools registered for a total of 18 program days at River's Edge. Truscott 5<sup>th</sup> graders will be walking in on three separate visits to attend all three programs offered! Volunteers helped build and install three new Watershed activity boxes, which will allow students a hands-on lesson sculpting watersheds and observing sand deposition and erosion when they pour water down channels they've created.

Training for educational volunteers will be held on a number of dates between March 21 and April 6. We have several returning and new volunteers, enabling us to cover the 96 volunteer "days" needed. Volunteer training dates and times are available at: [Signup Genius](#).

Two local high school students will be completing 40-hour internships in our environmental education program, arranged through Front Range Community College's Natural Resources Career Pathways Program. These students will attend training and help teach elementary students during River's Edge EE programs.

Open Lands & Trails will have a booth at [Colorado Children's Day](#) on March 10 from 11am-2pm. Any additional support meeting and greeting the public would be welcome.

The next guided bird walk will be on Saturday March 25 along the Big Thompson River trail from Fairgrounds Park to River's Edge Natural Area beginning at 8:00 am. Volunteer guide Denise Bretting is hoping to spot some early spring migrants during the walk.

The February PEEPs program on great horned owls was well attended – 20+ kids in each session. Next pre-school program is March Moose Madness on March 23 (4<sup>th</sup> Thursday due to spring break). PEEPers will be building a life-size PVC Moose – all are welcome.





## LOVELAND OPEN LANDS ADVISORY COMMISSION

**AGENDA ITEM: 4**

**MEETING DATE:** March 8, 2017

**DESCRIPTION:** Trail Updates

### **SUMMARY:**

#### **Recreation Trail Projects:**

- ❖ Trail Segment 10b – Namaqua to West US 34 underpass – Contractor plans to set the old Viestenz-Smith Bridge in March. The north trail connection is complete and work is progressing with the first 200 feet of south trail poured in mid-February. The schedule is still tracking for the trail to open in the spring of 2017.



*Trail segment 10b, south of W. US 34 underpass*

- ❖ Front Range Trail – Minor plan corrections were completed in early February. Advertising for the bids will start in mid-March. Bids will open in early April and construction should start in late May and be completed in late August 2017. Clearances for Utilities, ROW and final environmental review are complete.
- ❖ Long View Corridor Trail – Staff completed their review of the 35% plans and the biological report. The project budget has increased approx. \$200K due to the 57<sup>th</sup> St. left turn lanes and construction administrative expenses. This additional project cost was anticipated and was appropriated in the 2017 budget. Fort Collins is still dealing with ROW and floodway issues but the project is moving forward. Staff anticipates final designs will be completed by the end of March. The schedule now puts the project bidding in June 2017 for a construction start in the fall of 2017.

- ❖ Trail 10a – Wilson to Namaqua Avenue – Staff is preparing final concept plans for the new Namaqua underpass and the trail connection back to Wilson Avenue. Once the conceptual alignment is approved by the City, staff will meet with the landowner to discuss the final easements for this trail section. Funding has been appropriated in the 2017 budget for design and construction.
- ❖ Grant awards – City Council approved the GOCO Connect Initiative Planning Grant agreement for \$97,000 on February 7<sup>th</sup>. The grant will fund 75% of the design of the Namaqua Avenue Trail Underpass. Staff will be bringing the CDOT TAP grant agreement to City Council for approval on March 7<sup>th</sup>. The \$600,000 Transportation Alternative Program grant will provide almost one-half of the needed funds to construct the underpass in 2019. The Namaqua Avenue Trail Underpass will provide a safe grade separated connection between trail segments 10a and 10b at Namaqua Avenue.

### **Flood Recovery Projects:**

- ❖ Wilson Bridge and Taft/Wilson Trail – Work has proceeded quickly on the Wilson pedestrian bridge replacement. The new bridge was placed on the abutments February 15<sup>th</sup> and the crane placement went well. Progress on the remaining bank protection, concrete trail and stormwater improvements is going well. The trail will remain closed from Wilson to Taft until late April 2017. Stormwater staff is managing this project for the restoration of the bridge, trail and Stormwater improvements.



*Wilson Ave. bridge replacement*

