



LOVELAND OPEN LANDS ADVISORY COMMISSION

SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA

August 9, 2017 – 5:30 PM

Sweet Heart Winery, 5500 W. Hwy 34, Loveland, CO 80537

www.CityofLoveland.org/OpenLands

Notice of Meeting Posted

Call to Order

Public Comment

Approval of Meeting Minutes: June 14, 2017 and May 10, 2017

City Council Liaison Report

Larimer County Open Lands Advisory Board Liaison Report

5:45-6:30 pm Discussion/Action Items:

1. Financial Update (*attached*)

6:30-7:00 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

Events/Reminders/News:

August 4 – [Guided Nature Walk](#) at Meadowbrook Natural Area, 6:30 pm (meet at La Quinta Hotel)

August 12 – [Weed Warriors Volunteer Project](#) at Willow Bend Natural Area, 9:00-11:00 am

August 17 – [PEEPs "Of Springs and Wings"](#) (Grasshoppers) at Fairgrounds Park, 9:30 and 11:00 am

August 27 – [Astronomy Night](#) with NoCo Astronomical Society at Cedar Valley Drive, 8:00-10:00 pm

September 9 – [FEMA High Water Mark Initiative Sign Unveiling](#) at Fairgrounds Park, 1:00 pm

September 18-20 – [CO Open Space Alliance Annual Conference](#), Breckenridge

October 7 – [Annual Waterway Cleanup](#), 9:00 am-12:00 pm

CSU Study – [Colorado's Return on Investments in Conservation Easements](#)

Commission Member Discussion Topics

Adjournment

Next Regular Meeting: September 13, 2017

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PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

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CITY OF LOVELAND OPEN LANDS ADVISORY COMMISSION

Regular Meeting Minutes – June 14, 2017

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

Commissioners Present: Gale Bernhardt, Rick Brent, Andy Hawbaker, Darren Pape, Jean Whittaker, Kerri Rollins (LC OLAB Liaison).

Commissioners Absent: Ross Livingston, Jim Roode, Nathan Thompson, Bill Zawacki, Don Overcash (City Council Liaison).

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

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

Approval of May 10, 2017 Meeting Minutes. Postponed until a quorum of members present.

City Council Liaison Report. Don Overcash has been appointed the City Council Liaison to OLAC.

Larimer County Open Lands Advisory Board Report. Kerri Rollins reported on the following items: 1) the Reservoir Parks Plan is online for a 60-day public comment period; 2) the county received a \$1.3M DOLA grant for Phase I of the River Bluffs restoration project; 3) the Fossil Creek Management Plan will be updated with Fort Collins Natural Areas; 4) the visitor use study is underway at Horsetooth Mountain and Red Mountain Open Space, and at Fort Collins' Soapstone Prairie Natural Area; 5) park restorations are underway at Lions Park and River Bluffs on the Poudre River.

Photo Contest – Molly Elder, P&R Administrative Business Manager, presented the photos submitted for the 1st Annual Parks & Recreation Photo Contest, in the Open Lands & Trails and Wildlife, Nature & Landscape categories. Commission members helped select the top 3 photos in each category.

Discussion/Action:

1. Recommendation on GOCO Inspire Grant to City Council. The GOCO grant application requires a resolution from City Council approving the submittal of the grant to GOCO. Rick Brent made a motion that the commission make a recommendation to City Council to approve a resolution for a grant submittal in the amount of approximately \$2.5M, with a potential match of up to 25%. Gale Bernhardt seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

2. Naming of E. 1st St. Natural Area. More than 75 names were submitted by the public for the new E. 1st Street property that will serve as a neighborhood park and natural area for east Loveland. Staff presented the name suggestions and commission members discussed the choices. Rick Brent made a motion that the site be named Willow Park and Natural Area. Darren Pape seconded the motion and it failed. Rick Brent made a motion that the site be named Willow Bend Park and Natural Area. Darren Pape seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Reports/Correspondence:

3. Property Acquisition Updates. The Ward property on Boise Ave. is scheduled to close by the end of June. The Osborn boundary line adjustment/acquisition is still in progress. The Namaqua West

boundary line dispute is likely to be resolved soon for a summer closing. The Parkside annexation at Boedecker Lake will go to Planning Commission this month, with a condition that safe crossing/ pedestrian access be provided from the north side of W. 1st St. If the annexation is approved with this condition, the open space property can be acquired.

3. Open Lands Projects Report.

Weed Management. A research project at Wild Natural Area is underway to study the efficacy of various control methods for feral rye, an aggressive non-native grass species. **River's Edge**

Additional Parking. A new parking area and trail access have been opened at 970 W. 1st Street, with 25 parking spaces, two accessible parking spots, and new trail connections for access to Jayhawker and Dragonfly Ponds. **High Plains Environmental Center Grand Opening.** Open Lands staff

supported the May 13 Grand Opening of the new High Plains Environmental Center. The City contributed \$400,000 toward the construction of the new center and is collaborating with High Plains on environmental education and local stewardship and restoration projects. **Game Camera.** Open Lands staff installed a game camera and has documented numerous wildlife species using city natural areas, including deer, elk, wild turkeys, coyotes, and many others. **Partnerships and Planning.** In

partnership with the Colorado Avian Research and Rehabilitation Institute, two Barn Owl Boxes have been built and installed on City open land properties to encourage additional owl nesting. One of the boxes has an active nest with four eggs (as of May 27). The owls will be monitored and banded for future identification and research. **Public Outreach/Environmental Education/Volunteer Program.**

Implementation of the new Offero data management software is moving forward. Staff is working with the software developer to configure and customize the system for Loveland, and to convert existing Open Lands volunteer data to the new system. The volunteer and program registration software will be rolled out later this summer. **Awards and Recognition.** Colorado Addicted Trailbuilders Society (CATS) received a 2016 Larimer County Environmental Stewardship Award to honor CATS' dedication and accomplishments pertaining to the new sustainable trails at Mariana Butte. The Larimer County Commissioners and Environmental & Science Advisory Board will present the award on July 10. Also, Loveland Open Lands received a 2017 Columbine Innovation Award from the Colorado Parks &

Recreation Association for "Quick Wins for the Community," for providing new public access to five neighborhood natural areas throughout the community in 2016. The award will be presented during the CPRA Annual Conference in Keystone in October. **Youth Representation on Boards & Commissions.** The city is looking into adding youth members on boards and commissions. OLAC members are in favor of having a youth member on the commission. **Boards & Commissions**

Member Survey. Staff distributed a city survey for members to provide feedback on various aspects of the commission. **Raptor Ridge Habitat Conservation Plan.** The new owners of Raptor Ridge Equestrian (Lazy J Bar S Conservation Easement) are working with partners including Loveland Open Lands, Audubon Society, Colorado Open Lands and consultants on a plan to protect and improve the conservation values of the property.

4. Trail Updates.

Wilson-Taft Recreation Trail Project. Reconstruction of the Recreation Trail from Taft to Wilson Avenue is complete and the trail and new Wilson Pedestrian Bridge are open for public use. This was a major flood restoration project resulting from the 2013 flood and the completion was celebrated with a ribbon-cutting on June 3, National Trails Day. **Trail Segment 10b – Namaqua Rd. to West US 34 Underpass.** This project is complete and the new trail and bridge opened to the public in May. **Front Range Trail.** The IGA was approved in May and construction will begin in June. Larimer County is managing the construction and contracting for the project. Construction is scheduled for completion in late August 2017. **Long View Corridor Trail.** Final bid packages are being prepared. Staff has been

working with Larimer County and Fort Collins to finalize the IGA. Larimer County will be managing the construction and grant administration for the project. The IGA will be brought to City Council this summer with construction to commence this fall. Grant funding expires Summer of 2018 so all work must be complete over the winter and spring.

Commission Member Discussion Topics.

- 1) Rick Brent suggested that a future OLAC meeting be held at Sweet Heart Winery. The owners have given their OK.
- 2) Jean Whittaker noted that she nominated Bob Trout from the Loveland Initiative for Monarch Butterflies (LIMB) for a Larimer County Environmental Stewardship Award and Bob will also be receiving this award on July 10.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 pm.



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CITY OF LOVELAND OPEN LANDS ADVISORY COMMISSION

Special Meeting Minutes – May 10, 2017
Mariana Butte Golf Course, 700 Clubhouse Drive, Loveland, CO 80537

Commissioners Present: Gale Bernhardt, Rick Brent, Andy Hawbaker, Ross Livingston, Jim Roode, Jean Whittaker, Bill Zawacki, Steve Olson (City Council Liaison), Jennifer Almstead (LC OLAC Liaison Alternate).

Commissioners Absent: Darren Pape, Nathan Thompson.

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

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

Approval of April 12, 2017 Meeting Minutes. Rick Brent made a motion to approve the minutes as written. Jim Roode seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Larimer County Open Lands Advisory Board Report. Jenn Almstead reported that the county's visitor use study is moving forward with surveys this summer.

City Council Liaison Report. Steve Olson has been appointed as City Council Liaison to the Open Lands Advisory Commission. However, Steve also serves on the Citizen's Finance Advisory Board, which meets at the same time as OLAC.

Discussion/Action:

1. Discussion of Mariana Butte Trail. A discussion with members of the Golf Advisory Board was held following a joint site visit to Mariana Butte Trail. Commission and board members discussed ways to improve communication, signage, and public access management strategies for the Mariana Butte Trail System, to incorporate into the trail analysis and signage plan.

2. 2018 Proposed Open Lands and Trails CORE Budgets. The proposed budgets for Open Lands and Trails were presented and will be submitted to the Budget Office in May. The base numbers are assigned based on the previous year and an automatic 3.5% increase is applied. Any other changes or additions must be justified. Open Lands Sales Tax revenues have been tracking higher than expected, but will decrease when the new ballot language takes effect at the end of 2018. Capital Expansion Fees are only used for capital projects, to address increased growth. Open Lands projects are identified from the 10-year capital plan. Additional operating costs are based on adding more than 800 acres to the Open Lands portfolio in the last two years, and the associated increases in maintenance costs. Other increases in operating costs address additional management and programming needs. Conservation Trust funds come from Lottery proceeds at about \$700-800K per year and are used to pay for Trail System capital projects and operations. A trail sign program is proposed for the Recreation Trail System, including wayfinding, directional and identification signage. Additional trail expenses also include the design of the Namaqua Ave. bridge and underpass.

3. Project Outdoors Prioritization. Staff developed a prioritization exercise for the options identified during the Project Outdoors planning process, for public input to rank potential components to include in the GOCO Inspire implementation grant. Commission members were asked for their input to help prioritize Places, Programs and Pathways to connect youth and families to the outdoors.

Reports/Correspondence:

4. Property Acquisition Updates. The 12-acre Ward river property east of Old St. Louis Natural Area is expected to close in June. The Osborn parcel east of Boise Ave. should also close in the next 30-60 days. A June closing is also anticipated for the remaining parcel at Namaqua West. The Parkside development at Boedecker Reservoir will be required to provide street crossings from the north through the development review planning process as well as a trail easement for a public trail. If agreements to use the Home Supply Ditch for trail connections to the east and west can be secured, the Parkside trail corridor could be purchased.

5. Open Lands Projects Report. The new parking area and trail access projects at River's Edge Natural Area is close to completion, and will provide additional access to Dragonfly and Jayhawker Ponds. Volunteers helped spread and tamp trail material during an Earth Day project, and completed several hundred feet of new trail. Volunteers from the Colorado Addicted Trailbuilders Society (CATS) continue to work on trails in the Mariana Butter area. Another volunteer project in May was a successful restoration planting day at Morey Wildlife Reserve, where 200 additional wetland plants were installed and protected. The contract with Squarei for the new Offero software has been approved and signed.

6. Trail Updates.

Trail Segment 10b – Namaqua Rd. to West US 34 Underpass – This new trail segment should be open in the next week.

Wilson Bridge and Taft/Wilson Trail – The railing at the new bridge needs to be installed, but the trail and bridge should be open by June 3 for the National Trails Day event and bridge ribbon-cutting.

Front Range Trail – Bid opening was on April 13 with 13 bidders. The lowest bid was not accepted due to CDOT qualifying criteria. The next lowest bidder, Zak Dirt, was approved with a bid price of \$1,252,890.00. The Loveland portion of work is \$311,827. An amendment to the existing IGA will be brought to City Council in early June to adjust the final reimbursement of funds to reflect our 25% contribution to the project. The contract will be signed in late May, with construction starting after Memorial Day.

Long View Corridor Trail – The CDOT review went well and only minor plan changes were required. Staff is coordinating with Xcel Energy to relocate the power lines on the south side of 57th Street and coordinating the bid schedule with the consultant in May. The schedule puts construction starting in the fall of 2017.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 pm.



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LOVELAND OPEN LANDS ADVISORY COMMISSION

AGENDA ITEM: **1**

MEETING DATE: August 9, 2017

DESCRIPTION: Open Lands and Trails Financial Update

SUMMARY:

Financial sustainability is an important component in the management of Loveland's Open Lands and Trails programs while achieving the goals of the Division. The following tables show funds associated with open lands and trails and the actual financial results of the first seven months of 2017.

Open lands operation and capital are funded from Loveland's share of the Larimer County Open Space Tax and the city's Open Lands Capital Expansion Fee assessed on residential starts. Year to date, collection of the Open Lands Sales Tax and Capital Expansion Fees are tracking below budget estimates. On the expense side, operations are tracking in-line with budget estimates and capital expenditures are less due to delays in anticipated acquisitions and projects.

Trails are funded from Loveland's share of Conservation Trust Dollars generated by the Colorado Lottery and a Trail Capital Expansion Fee assessed on residential starts. Year to date, collection of the Lottery Dollars and Capital Expansion Fees are tracking below budget estimates. On the expense side, operations are tracking in-line with budget estimates and capital expenditures are less due to delays in anticipated trail projects.

The cash balances are adequate to fund planned and appropriated capital projects through the end of the year.

Financial Summary
Loveland Open Lands Fund
January 1, 2017 to July 31, 2017

2017 Total Budget

Beginning Cash for Open Lands 1/1/17 (Fund 202)	\$ 9,284,226	
Revenues:		
County Open Space Tax	\$ 1,418,218	\$2,844,663
Interest/Investment Income	\$ 50,560	\$ 45,483
Flood Recoveries	\$ 19,032	
Partnerships & Misc. Revenue	\$ 36,940	\$ 382,679
Total	<u>\$ 1,524,750</u>	<u>\$3,272,825</u>
Expenses:		
Operating Expenditures to date	\$ 525,280	\$1,141,817
<i>Personnel Services</i> \$ 241,778		
<i>Supplies</i> \$ 6,869		
<i>Purchased Services</i> \$ 215,005		
Capital Expenditures*	\$ 3,115,228	\$4,355,360
Total	<u>\$ 3,640,508</u>	<u>\$5,497,177</u>
Ending Cash Balance Open Lands Fund 202 (8/1/17)	\$ 7,168,468	

Breakdown of CASH Balance in Open Lands Fund 202 of 8/1/17 [Unaudited Figure]

Fund 202 - funds earmarked for 2017 OL Acquisitions and Capital	\$ 1,300,500
Fund 202 - cash balance for Maintenance Reserve	\$ 3,000,000
Fund 202 - cash balance for Meadowbrook Ridge	\$ 31,249
Total	<u>\$ 4,331,749</u>

Financial Summary
Open Lands Capital Expansion Fund
January 1, 2017 to July 31, 2017

2017 Total Budget

Beginning Cash for OL Capital Expansion Fund 1/1/17 (Fund 263)	\$2,270,128	
Revenues:		
Fee from Residential Building Permits	\$ 171,072	\$ 451,125
Interest/Investment Income	<u>\$ 20,958</u>	<u>\$ 42,561</u>
Total	<u>\$ 192,030</u>	<u>\$ 493,686</u>
Expenses:		
Capital	0	\$2,000,000
Total	<u>\$ 0</u>	<u>\$2,000,000</u>
Ending Cash Balance Open Lands CEF (8/1/17)	\$2,462,158	

Breakdown of CASH Balance in Open Lands CEF Fund 263 of 8/1/17 [Unaudited Figure]

Fund 202 - funds earmarked for 2017 OL Capital	\$ 2,000,000
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Financial Summary
Conservation Trust Fund – Loveland's Trails
 January 1, 2017 to July 31, 2017

2017 Total Budget

Beginning Cash for Open Lands 1/1/17 (Fund 202)	\$ 4,983,247	
Revenues:		
County Open Space Tax	\$ 350,704	\$ 740,000
Interest/Investment Income	\$ 31,692	\$ 26,250
Flood Recoveries	\$	
Partnerships & Misc. Revenue	\$	\$ 388,190
Total	<u>\$ 382,396</u>	<u>\$1,154,440</u>
Expenses:		
Operating Expenditures to date	\$ 147,957	\$ 292,738
<i>Personnel Services</i> \$ 103,119		
<i>Supplies</i> \$ 7,079		
<i>Purchased Services</i> \$ 37,759		
Capital Expenditures*	\$ 403,838	\$3,462,576
Total	<u>\$ 551,796</u>	<u>\$3,755,314</u>
Ending Cash Balance Conservation Trust Fund 201 (8/1/17)	\$ 4,813,848	

Breakdown of CASH Balance Conservation Trust Fund 201 of 8/1/17 [Unaudited Figure]

Fund 201 - funds earmarked for 2017 Acquisitions, Flood, and Trail Projects	\$ 3,058,738
Fund 201 - cash balance for Maintenance Reserve	<u>\$ 500,000</u>
Total	<u>\$ 3,558,738</u>

Financial Summary
Trails Capital Expansion Fund
 January 1, 2017 to July 31, 2017

2017 Total Budget

Beginning Cash for OL Capital Expansion Fund 1/1/17 (Fund 263)	\$ 1,662,354	
Revenues:		
Fee from Residential Building Permits	\$ 102,094	\$ 268,875
Interest/Investment Income	<u>\$ 10,021</u>	<u>\$ 4,931</u>
Total	<u>\$ 112,115</u>	<u>\$ 273,806</u>
Expenses:		
Capital	\$ 422,699	\$ 1,346,745
Total	<u>\$ 422,699</u>	<u>\$ 1,346,745</u>
Ending Cash Balance Open Lands CEF (8/1/17)	\$ 1,351,770	

Breakdown of CASH Balance in Trail CEF Fund 262 of 8/1/17 [Unaudited Figure]

Fund 202 - funds earmarked for 2017 Trail Projects	\$ 700,000
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LOVELAND OPEN LANDS ADVISORY COMMISSION

AGENDA ITEM: 3

MEETING DATE: August 9, 2017

DESCRIPTION: Open Lands Projects Report

SUMMARY:

Properties/Facilities/Projects/Maintenance/Operations:

- ❖ Crews have been busy with summer maintenance including mowing, weed and vegetation management, and maintenance of public use areas.
- ❖ There is a sink hole at River's Edge Natural Area, just west of the Recreation Trail, that has been caused by a failing ditch pipe. The pipe will be replaced this fall when the ditch is not running but will require a trail closure during construction and reroute through River's Edge.
- ❖ The City's Bikeways and Trails map has been updated and will be available for public distribution in mid-August.
- ❖ Staff participated in annual training for compliance with the "Migratory Bird Treaty Act." In addition, to support wildlife in and around Loveland, Owl and Kestrel boxes have been installed on Open Land sites. In late July, researchers from the CO Avian Research and Rehabilitation Institute ([CARRI](#)) banded a baby barn owl at a Loveland site.
- ❖ Structures on the Ward West Open Lands property have been mitigated for asbestos in order to prepare for demolition in the near future.



Partnerships and Planning:

- ❖ Colorado Addicted Trailbuilders Society (CATS) volunteers have completed their work on the Hidden Hogback Trail at Mariana Butte Golf Course, which runs along the river and connects to Oxbow Natural Area. A ribbon cutting was held on July 20th to celebrate this amazing trail and recognize all the hard work of these volunteers. Feedback for this new community trail has been very favorable.
- ❖ Loveland has submitted a GOCO Inspire grant application for Project Outdoors Loveland, an initiative aimed at connecting youth and



families in southeast Loveland with the outdoors by providing more places and opportunities. Loveland has requested \$2.3 million through this grant program, with matching funding from local resources and partners.

- ❖ Staff have been working with the consulting team and the river coalition on the Big Thompson River Master Plan and a project to remove the irrigation diversion structure in the river west of Namaqua Road. In addition, the City is working with Larimer County on plans to replace the bridge at Namaqua Road to include a future underpass at Namaqua Park and Natural Area.
- ❖ Employees from KeySight Technologies are planning a trail restoration project at River's Edge to connect the Rocky Mountain Center for Technology into the River's Edge Trail System.
- ❖ Parks and Recreation and Storm Water Departments are working with FEMA to install "High Water Mark" signage at 4 park and open land sites to educate the public about the impacts of the 2013 Big Thompson Flood and river hydrology. The public unveiling event with FEMA is September 9 at 1:00 pm at Fairgrounds Park.

Programs/Environmental Education/Volunteer Program:

- ❖ The new Offero software program will make it easier for citizens to participate and volunteer for environmental opportunities in Loveland. This user-friendly system is also used by Fort Collins and Larimer County to communicate with citizens, volunteers and program participants. Funding for the new software was provided by a grant from Colorado Health Foundation. Training for staff and volunteers on the new software will be held in early August, with a public rollout on Aug. 15.
- ❖ A second "Week of Hope" youth camp through Group Publishing performed volunteer clean-up at Sunset Vista Natural Area. These 10 youth and adult sponsors removed more than 60 cubic yards of debris from the site.
- ❖ A group of more than 30 volunteers from a local church volunteered on National SERVE Day to help with stewardship projects at River's Edge Natural Area including resurfacing of a trail section, weed removal and trash clean-up.
- ❖ Weed Warrior volunteer projects have been held at Kings Crossing and Willow Bend, to help remove noxious weed seed heads from these sites. An additional Weed Warrior project is scheduled for August 12 at Willow Bend.
- ❖ A July Critter Scene Investigation (CSI) event at Kings Crossing attracted 50 enthusiastic participants. Volunteers assist visitors with clues along the trail to help solve a wildlife mystery. The next CSI event will be held on October 21 at Morey Wildlife Reserve.
- ❖ A Stargazing Event was held at the Morey Wildlife Reserve parking area on west Cedar Valley Drive on July 31. Skies cleared just in time and 23 participants enjoyed views of the moon, stars, planets, and galaxies through a telescope provided by a NOCO Astronomical Society member. An additional program is scheduled for August 27 at 8:00 pm.





LOVELAND OPEN LANDS ADVISORY COMMISSION

AGENDA ITEM: **4**

MEETING DATE: August 9, 2017

DESCRIPTION: Trail Updates

SUMMARY:

Recreation Trail Projects:

- Bids closed this week on a new connection to the City's Recreation Trail planned from Rossum Drive to connect to the new West US 34 underpass and trail to Namaqua Road. Construction on this project is scheduled for fall with a year-end completion. This trail link will directly link Mariana Butte neighborhoods to the City's Recreation Trail System for the first time.
- Construction began on the Front Range Trail which will connect Loveland's recreation trail to Fort Collins' trail system from the Boyd Lake area. Larimer County is managing the construction with a planned completion by September 2017. Loveland is working with Larimer County and Fort Collins on a maintenance IGA for this new trail section for consistency and efficiencies in trail maintenance.
- Long View Corridor Trail is under final reviews and planned for an August/September bid project with construction to commence late fall. This joint trail project with Larimer County and City of Fort Collins will provide a vital trail connection from Sunset Vista Natural Area at 57th and Taft to Cathy Fromme Prairie in Fort Collins. The IGA for funding of this project and grant funding was approved by City Council on August 2nd. Grant funding expires Summer of 2018 so all work must be complete over the winter and spring.