

NORTHERN COLORADO REGIONAL OPEN SPACE BOARDS MEETING

DATE: November 8, 2017

LOCATION: City of Loveland Hatfield Senior Center 700 E 4th St, Loveland

TIME: 5:00 - 7:50 PM –

Northern Colorado Regional Boards meeting

AGENDA

Purpose of Meeting: *Celebrate, Learn and Network*

5:00 Dinner - networking

5:30 Regional Meeting begins

- Welcome and Introductions
- Agency Highlight Reports
- E-bikes, Land Conservation & Trails

7:50 Wrap up and transition to separate board meetings

TIME: 8:00PM

Open Lands Advisory Board *regular* meetings (Loveland, Fort Collins & Larimer County)



PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT
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www.cityofloveland.org

LOVELAND OPEN LANDS ADVISORY COMMISSION – SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA

November 8, 2017 – 5:00 PM – REGIONAL BOARDS MEETING

8:00 PM – OPEN LANDS ADVISORY COMMISSION MEETING

Chilson Recreation-Senior Center, 700 E. 4th St., Loveland, CO 80537

www.CityofLoveland.org/OpenLands

Notice of Meeting Posted

Call to Order

Public Comment

Approval of Meeting Minutes: June 14, 2017 and October 11, 2017

City Council Liaison Report

Larimer County Open Lands Advisory Board Liaison Report

8:00-8:15 pm Reports/Correspondence:

1. Property Acquisition Updates (*verbal*)
2. Open Lands Projects Report (*attached*)
3. 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:

[New unpaved recreation trail connects Wilson to Namaqua Avenue](#), Nov. 1, 2017 News Release

[November 7](#) (6:00 pm), [November 8](#) (1:00 pm) – Parks & Rec. ADA Transition Plan Community Meetings

November 14 – Front Range Trail Dedication at Carpenter Rd. & Golden Prairie Court, 3:00 pm

November 14 – Community Stewardship Lecture Series – [Barn Owls with Scott Rashid](#) at HPEC, 6:00 pm

November 16 – [PEEPs “Turkey Turkey’s Talkin’ Wild Turkey”](#) at [River’s Edge Natural Area](#), 9:30 and 11:00 am

Commission Member Discussion Topics

Adjournment

Next Regular Meeting: December 13, 2017

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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

Regular Meeting Minutes – October 11, 2017

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

Commissioners Present: Gale Bernhardt, Ross Livingston, Darren Pape, Jim Roode, Nathan Thompson, Jean Whittaker, Bill Zawacki.

Commissioners Absent: Rick Brent, Andy Hawbaker, Kerri Rollins (LC OLAB Liaison), Don Overcash (City Council Liaison).

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

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

Approval of June 14, 2017 Meeting Minutes. Tabled until a quorum of members is present.

Approval of September 13, 2017 Meeting Minutes. Tabled until a quorum of members is present.

Public Comment. Don Lorentzen attended due to his interest in the agenda item on E-bikes.

Larimer County Open Lands Advisory Board Report. Kerri Rollins submitted updates on the following items: 1) Roof repairs are underway at the Horsetooth Area Information Center; 2) Public tours of the Malchow/Little Thompson Farm in Berthoud are being offered. The county plans several years of data collection on the property prior to development of the management plan.

Discussion/Action:

1. Colorado E-Bike Regulations and Loveland's Local Consideration. Commission members had the opportunity to test-ride several electric bikes ("e-bikes") prior to the meeting. Marilyn presented information about the current status of e-bike regulations in Loveland on trails. Type 1 and 2 e-bikes are permitted on "designated" trails (i.e., paved trails) because they are considered "non-motorized." Type 1 e-bikes are pedal-assist and Type 2 e-bikes have a throttle for assistance. Both have regulators to limit assisted speed to 18 mph. Type 3 e-bikes may assist up to 28 mph and are not permitted on Loveland's trails. Public perception of e-bikes varies, from "it's cheating" to they are noisy, too fast, and unsafe. Darren Pape made a motion that OLAC recommend that Type 1 and 2 e-bikes be allowed on City of Loveland trails where bicycles are allowed. Gale Bernhardt seconded the motion and it passed with all in favor except Bill Zawacki who abstained. Commission members also recommended a public educational campaign about bike rules and etiquette to help improve safety, understanding and shared use of trails. New bicycle police patrols will also help enforce rules and regulations and promote safety.

2. Reauthorization of Colorado Lottery Funding. The Colorado Lottery fund expires in 2024 and the state is requesting resolutions from lottery recipients in favor of keeping/renewing the bill. Lottery proceeds in Loveland have generally fallen into three categories: GOCO (50%), Conservation Trust Funds (40%), and CPW (10%). GOCO funded projects include Open Lands acquisitions, Flood Recovery, and Inspire planning. Cons. Trust Fund dollars have helped fund the Recreation Center, Trail System, Mehaffey and Youth Sports Parks. CPW funds have included Fishing is Fun grants, fish stocking, trail grants, wildlife management and local State Wildlife Areas. Jim Roode made a motion

that OLAC recommend supporting the continuation of Colorado Lottery funds. Bill Zawacki seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

Reports/Correspondence:

3. Property Acquisition Updates. Brian provided updates on the following projects: 1) The Boedecker/Parkside property is on track to close, with a Phase I environmental report showing no issues. Other due diligence to be completed includes an agreement to cross Buckingham Ditch and a final subdivision plat defining Outlot A to be purchased. 2) Staff has negotiated a license agreement with the Greeley-Loveland Irrigation Co. (GLIC) to use the Barnes Ditch road between Namaqua and Wilson Ave. as a public access trail on a temporary basis until a paved trail can be constructed on adjacent property when mining is completed. 3) Easements at Copper Ridge (north of 57th St. just east of Sunset Vista) are also being negotiated so trails can be constructed prior to development, for an off-street Recreation Trail connection.

4. Open Lands Projects Report.

Properties/Facilities/Projects/Maintenance/Operations

- Staff presented the updated concept plan for Sunset Vista Natural Area to the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) on September 18. The plan incorporated the two original trail design concepts into a final concept and considered the historical analysis and other site resources and uses. The farm structures were surveyed as part of the permitting required for the Long View Trail project and were not considered historically significant by the State Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation. HPC provided feedback on potential historic interpretive opportunities and information on available grant funding. Demolition of some of the farm structures has begun on the north side of the Louden Ditch.
- Brian Hayes passed the Real Estate Broker exam and received his Real Estate Broker's license through the State of Colorado.
- Loveland will receive the CPRA Columbine Award for the Quick-Win Properties opened in 2016.

Partnerships and Planning

- The City conducted a public meeting on September 25 to present a concept plan for the development of a trailhead and trails on Prairie Ridge Natural Area in northwest Loveland. Prairie Ridge is a 785-acre open space jointly purchased by Fort Collins, Larimer County and Loveland in 2000 and is the largest open space Loveland manages. The parcel is co-owned by Loveland and Fort Collins, and Larimer County and Colorado Open Lands co-hold the conservation easement. Since the purchase, the property has remained inaccessible to the public. The eastern two-thirds of the property is farmed in dryland wheat while the remaining one-third is short-grass prairie. The Open Lands Division intends to continue its farming lease with the local farmer for the next several years. The farmer is amenable to the proposed trailhead and trail system, and is agreeable to work around the development. The proposed project includes a soft-surface trail system comprised of a 1-mile ADA accessible trail segment, a 3-mile easy trail loop, a restroom and a parking lot. Potential regional connections to Coyote Ridge, Rimrock Open Space, and Loveland's Recreation Trail will be developed later. The City of Loveland, City of Fort Collins and Larimer County have been cooperating throughout the planning process to develop the Trail Master Plan. About 30 residents attended the public meeting and provided feedback and more than 250 people have responded to the on-line survey regarding this project. Survey feedback to date shows that the majority of respondents (75%) use Coyote Ridge trails to access other open spaces and trails (Blue Sky Trail, Rimrock OS, Devil's Backbone OS and Horsetooth Reservoir). Also, 90% of visitors surveyed travel 4 miles or more during an average visit. Only 3% of survey respondents indicated that they would not use the proposed Prairie Ridge trail

system. A large majority of respondents would also use trail connections to other open spaces and trails if available. Nearly half indicated that they would use the proposed 3-mile loop system at Prairie Ridge as well.

- Great Outdoors Colorado staff, board members and peer reviewers completed 17 site visits statewide to review Tier 2 Inspire Initiative projects. The GOCO Youth Initiatives Committee will review projects in October and notify coalitions in early November whether they will be recommended for funding. Coalitions recommended for funding will present to the committee on November 15.

Programs/Environmental Education/Volunteer Program

- The fall school environmental education program is underway and will run throughout September and October, providing experiential learning to grade school children at River's Edge Natural Area. The popular year-round preschool environmental education program PEEPs continues to have strong attendance and provides an excellent opportunity for young children to be exposed to outdoor learning topics.
- Volunteer training sessions for Environmental Educators and Trail Hosts in September recruited and trained 10 new volunteers for public outreach and educational programs.
- A very successful "Mariana Butte Trail Guided Hike" was held in September. It was a beautiful evening with more than 30 participants taking advantage of this opportunity to discover this new community trail and learn more about wildlife, plants and nature.
- Loveland had great participation in its dedication ceremony for the new High Water Mark Sign at Fairgrounds Park on September 9. The Parks and Recreation and Storm Water Departments worked together 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, river hydrology and flood safety.

5. Trail Updates.

- A new connection to the City's Recreation Trail from Rossum Drive to the new W US 34 underpass and trail to Namaqua Ave. is under construction by Colt and Steel contractors. This trail will directly link Mariana Butte neighborhoods to the City's Recreation Trail System for the first time. The project will be completed by year-end.
- The contract for construction of the Long View Corridor Trail will be awarded soon, to begin construction of this joint trail project with Larimer County and Fort Collins to connect Sunset Vista Natural Area to Cathy Fromme Prairie in Fort Collins. Grant funding expires summer of 2018 so trail work will begin in November and be complete summer 2018.
- Construction of the Front Range Trail in north Loveland is nearing completion and a ribbon cutting ceremony will be scheduled for later this fall. This trail will provide an off-street trail connection from the Recreation Trail near Boyd Lake to Fort Collins on the east side of town.

Commission Member Discussion Topics.

1. Jim Roode commented that he attended a Big T river tour and was impressed with the restoration at Viestenz-Smith Mountain Park. It appears to be similar to pre-1976 flood conditions.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 7:15 pm.



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LOVELAND OPEN LANDS ADVISORY COMMISSION

AGENDA ITEM: 3

MEETING DATE: November 8, 2017

DESCRIPTION: Open Lands Project Report

SUMMARY:

Properties/Facilities/Projects/Maintenance/Operations

- ❖ Some 30 community volunteers and staff had a very successful waterway cleanup project on October 7th along the Big Thompson River at Boise Avenue for the Annual Waterway Cleanup Day. This 24-acre parcel was purchased this summer and has much hidden flood debris in the waterway and river corridor. Debris included numerous tires, car parts, and other large debris, totaling approximately 30 cubic yards of flood debris.
- ❖ A group of 30 employees from Bio-Life volunteered at Oxbow Natural Area on October 13th and removed more than 30 cubic yards of flood debris.
- ❖ The City is working with a local contractor to replace a failing pipe under the Recreation Trail at River's Edge Natural Area which has cause a sink hole. Work will begin in November and will require a detour in the Recreation Trail through this section.
- ❖ Structures on the Ward West Open Lands property have been removed including an old residence and maintenance building. Demo work will be complete in November.
- ❖ Demolition of the old farm structures has been completed on the north side of the Louden Ditch at Sunset Vista Natural Area. This open land will host Loveland's connection to the Long View Regional Trail, natural areas and wetlands, interpretive signage, nature trails, and a trailhead with parking. Construction of the Long View Trail project will begin late fall 2017.
- ❖ The Open Lands and Trails Team, Debbie Eley and Brian Hayes were recognized during the City's Employee Awards Luncheon for their productive work for the City.



Partnerships and Planning

- ❖ Planning and Open Lands staff applied for 2 grants (CPW and GOCO) for the development of a trail system and trailhead at Prairie Ridge Natural Area. The project includes a soft surface trail system comprised of a 1-mile ADA accessible trail segment, a 1.5-mile easy trail, a restroom, and a parking lot. Potential regional connections to Coyote Ridge, Rimrock Open Space, and Loveland's Recreation Trail will be developed later. The City of Loveland, City of Fort Collins and Larimer County have been cooperating throughout the planning process to develop the Trail Master Plan. More than 300 people responded to the on-line survey regarding this project.

- ❖ GOCO informed the Loveland Inspire Coalition that Project Outdoors was not funded for implementation. Staff will continue to work with partners and program providers to implement the vision of the plan to connect youth and families with the outdoors, creatively using other funding sources and partnerships.



- ❖ Pheasants Forever has completed a pollinator planting project at Kings Crossing Natural Area. Volunteers from the organization tilled and supplemented the soil and seeded native species to provide increased habitat for pollinators.



- ❖ River Warriors, a Veteran's group, assisted the City with the annual Waterway Cleanup Project and were allowed a unique opportunity to fish the Big Thompson from the new Open Land property at Boise Avenue. The group uses outdoor activities as therapy for Veterans suffering from PTSD.

Programs/Environmental Education/Volunteer Program

- ❖ The fall school environmental education program has wrapped up for the season with new Kindergarten and middle school programs. The popular year-round preschool environmental education program (PEEPs) will continue through the fall and winter and provides an excellent opportunity for young children to be exposed to outdoor learning topics.



- ❖ High Water Mark Signs have been installed at River's Edge Natural Area, Fairgrounds Park, and the Recreation Trail near Wilson Ave. in collaboration with Public Works and FEMA to educate the public about the impacts of the 2013 Big Thompson Flood and river hydrology.



LOVELAND OPEN LANDS ADVISORY COMMISSION

AGENDA ITEM: 4

MEETING DATE: November 8, 2017

DESCRIPTION: Trail Updates

SUMMARY:

- A new connection to the City's Recreation Trail is under construction from Rossum Drive to the new West US 34 underpass and trail to Namaqua Rd. This trail will directly link Mariana Butte neighborhoods to the City's Recreation Trail System for the first time. The project will be completed by year-end.
- Construction of the Long View Corridor Trail will commence in November. This joint trail project with Larimer County and City of Fort Collins will provide a safe, off-street trail connection from Sunset Vista Natural Area at 57th and Taft to Cathy Fromme Prairie in Fort Collins. Grant funding expires Summer of 2018 so trail work will begin in November.
- Construction of the Front Range Trail in north Loveland is nearing completion and a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony is planned for November 14 at 3 pm. This trail will provide a second off-street trail connection to Fort Collins.
- A License agreement between the Greeley-Loveland Irrigation Company (GLIC) and the City was accepted allowing for an unpaved trail along the ditch road between Namaqua Avenue and Wilson Avenue. This temporary trail connection closes the missing gap in the City Recreation Trail loop until a permanent trail solution is secured. This unpaved trail is now open.



- Staff attended the annual Colorado Parks & Recreation Association Conference and were awarded the Columbine Award for Innovation for our Trails and Open Lands Quick Win projects. Loveland was able to provide public access and outdoor opportunities at 7 new open lands owned by Loveland over the last year including trails at Mariana Butte, Morey Wildlife Reserve, Oxbow Natural Area, Kings Crossing Natural Area, Old St. Louis Natural Area and two new trails at River's Edge Natural Area. As a result of the "Quick Wins Program" there is new public access to 120 natural area acres and more than 4.3 miles of new soft-surface trails. This is a 13% increase in acres open to public access and a 22% increase in soft-surface trails in Loveland.

- A new Police Department biking patrol can be seen out on the Recreation Trail. Parks & Recreation has been working on a number of enforcement issues with the Police Department on Parks, Open Lands & Trails and the presence of police patrol is a welcome addition.



Commission Action Recommended: Informational.