



LOVELAND OPEN LANDS ADVISORY COMMISSION

January 10, 2018 – 5:30 PM

Parks & Recreation Conference Room, 500 E. Third St., Loveland, CO 80537
www.CityofLoveland.org/OpenLands

Notice of Meeting Posted

Call to Order

Introduction of New Commission Member – Mike Hinterberg

Public Comment

Approval of Meeting Minutes: June 14, 2017 and November 8, 2017

City Council Liaison Report

[Larimer County Open Lands Advisory Board Liaison Report](#)

5:45-7:00 pm – Discussion/Action Items:

1. Election of Officers
2. Chimney Hollow CE Powerline Easement (*attached*) – Larimer County, Northern Water
3. Big Thompson River Conservation and Recreation Update – Meegan Flenniken, Larimer County
4. Big Thompson River East Property Review
5. Addition of Youth At-Large Commission Member

7:00-7:30 pm – Reports/Correspondence:

6. Colorado Parks & Wildlife Grant Presentation – Prairie Ridge Trail Project
7. Property Acquisition Updates (*verbal*)
8. Open Lands Projects Report (*attached*)
9. 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:

January 10 – [Volunteer Fish Habitat Improvement Project](#) at River's Edge Natural Area, 10am-12pm

January 11 – PEEPs Preschool Program “[A Warm & Wooly Winter](#)” at Loveland Library, 9:30 and 11:00 am

Commission Member Discussion Topics

Adjournment

Next Regular Meeting: February 14, 2018

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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 – November 8, 2017
Chilson Recreation-Senior Center, 700 E. 4th St., Loveland, CO 80537

Commissioners Present: Gale Bernhardt, Andy Hawbaker (regional boards meeting), Ross Livingston, Jim Roode, Jean Whittaker, Bill Zawacki, Kerri Rollins (LC OLAC Liaison)(regional boards meeting).

Commissioners Absent: Rick Brent, Darren Pape, Nathan Thompson, Don Overcash (Council Liaison).

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

The public meeting was called to order at 8:00 pm.

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

Approval of October 11, 2017 Meeting Minutes. Bill Zawacki made a motion that the minutes be approved as written. Jim Roode seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Public Comment. None.

Larimer County Open Lands Advisory Board Report. Commission members participated in the Annual Northern Colorado Regional Open Space Meeting prior to the commission meeting. Highlight reports from each agency, included Larimer County Open Lands, were presented, and breakout session topics included various issues surrounding regional trails.

Reports/Correspondence:

1. Property Acquisition Updates. Brian provided an update on the Boedecker/Parkside property acquisition, on track to close this month. The acquisition will consist of approximately 17 acres (to be platted as Outlot A), including land along the Home Supply Ditch for a trail corridor, and the “peninsula” area west of the ditch.

2. Open Lands Projects Report. Staff provided the following project updates.

Properties/Facilities/Projects/Maintenance/Operations

- The annual waterway cleanup project took place on October 7 at the new 24-acre Ward Boise parcel purchased in 2017. 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 13 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 require a temporary 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 property 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.

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 1-mile ADA-accessible trail segment, a 1.5-mile soft-surface trail, a restroom and a parking lot. Potential regional connections to adjacent open lands and trails will be developed later. Staff from Loveland, Fort Collins, Larimer County, and other agencies have been collaborating throughout the planning process to develop the 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.
- Volunteers from Pheasants Forever completed a pollinator project at Kings Crossing Natural Area. They tilled and supplemented the soil and seeded native species to improve habitat for pollinators.
- River Warriors, a Veteran's group, assisted the City with the annual Waterway Cleanup and were given 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. Preschool environmental education programs (PEEPs) will continue through the fall and winter, providing 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.

3. Trail Updates. Staff provided the following trail updates.

- A new connection to the City's Recreation Trail is under construction from Rossum Drive to the new W 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.
- 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 east Loveland is nearing completion and a Ribbon Cutting is planned for November 14. This trail will provide a second off-street trail connection to Fort Collins.

- A license agreement approved between Greeley-Loveland Irrigation Company (GLIC) and the City allows for public use of the unpaved trail along the ditch road between Namaqua and Wilson Avenue. This temporary trail connection closes the missing gap in the City Recreation Trail loop until a permanent trail solution is secured.
- 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. These projects have provided new public access to 120 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 Member Discussion Topics.

1. Jim Roode made a request on behalf of Loveland Fishing Club to submit a Fishing is Fun grant through Colorado Parks & Wildlife to improve fishing access and fish habitat along the west shoreline of Bass Pond at River's Edge Natural Area. Club members will work with Open Lands and CPW staff to explore possibilities for habitat and access improvements.

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



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LOVELAND OPEN LANDS ADVISORY COMMISSION

AGENDA ITEM: 8

MEETING DATE: January 10, 2018

DESCRIPTION: Open Lands Project Report

SUMMARY:

Properties/Facilities/Projects/Maintenance/Operations

- ❖ Work to replace a failing pipe under the Recreation Trail at River's Edge Natural Area began Jan. 2 and will require a three week closure of the Recreation Trail. A short detour for trail users is provided through River's Edge.
- ❖ Electric service is being restored to the storage building on Oxbow East Natural Area, lost during the 2013 flood.
- ❖ All conservation easements held or co-held by Loveland were monitored in 2017, with no major violations reported. Staff will renew Loveland's certification to accept conservation easements with a donative component. The Colorado Division of Real Estate requires this certification to be renewed annually.

Partnerships and Planning

- ❖ On January 1, members from the local Audubon Society conducted the annual Christmas Bird Count on numerous open lands in and around Loveland. Access was provided to closed sites for this valuable citizen science project that gives Loveland and other local agencies a snapshot of the species and numbers of birds in our area. Several bird species were found only on Open Lands properties and no other location in the entire Loveland count circle (~175 sq. mi.), indicating the importance of conserving these lands.
- ❖ Staff met with Berthoud's Parks, Open Lands, Recreation and Trails Committee to mentor them on how Loveland has gone about the development of a comprehensive recreation trail system.
- ❖ Open Lands was awarded a GOCO grant for \$18,000 to fund the Larimer County Conservation Corps for two weeks of saw crew time to help remove and treat Russian olives and other invasive species at the new Ward Boise property, which will greatly improve habitat in this stretch of the river corridor.
- ❖ Funding from a Colorado Water Conservation Board grant through Larimer County will be used to complete Russian olive removal from Oxbow Natural Area and the river corridor through Fairgrounds Park this winter. Old St. Louis and Cottonwood Run Natural Areas were treated in 2017 using this grant funding and the treatments have been very successful. Staff from Larimer County Weed District provides assistance by mapping treatment areas, creating photopoint records, monitoring and retreated cut stumps as needed, and compiling reports for submittal to CWCB.

- ❖ Loveland Fishing Club is working with Colorado Parks and Wildlife to improve fish habitat in Bass Pond at River's Edge Natural Area by bundling recycled Christmas trees and weighting the bundles to sink in deep water, which will provide structure for fish and other aquatic species. The volunteer project is scheduled for Jan. 10. Signup is available on Offero (<https://offeroloveland.org>).

Programs/Environmental Education/Volunteer Program

- ❖ Staff and volunteers hosted a very successful "Opt Outside" bird walk and trail hike on the Mariana Butte Trail on November 26. Dozens of citizens enjoyed the opportunity to get outside and enjoy the great weather.
- ❖ An Open Lands and Trails Volunteer recognition dinner was held on December 7. Volunteers provided nearly 5,000 hours of service to the City in 2017 and are an integral part of the programming and stewardship of the Loveland Open Lands and Trails Program.
- ❖ Open Lands staff is piloting a new after-school environmental ed. program at Bill Reed Middle School this year with funding from the Colorado Health Foundation grant. The second quarter "Art in Nature" program was very successful, with students learning about and using a variety of media and techniques in outdoor spaces including River's Edge. The third quarter session will cover orienteering and map-and-compass navigation and the fourth quarter class will use GPS units to learn about mapping and GIS. These classes will be transferable to other middle schools interested in offering after-school outdoor programming.
- ❖ A new Raptor Nest Monitoring program is being implemented for the 2018 nesting season as a citizen science initiative to systematically compile data on nesting raptors. Volunteers will be trained to identify raptors and collect data on nesting species on Open Lands properties. Training will be offered jointly with Larimer County and Fort Collins on January 23. Interested volunteers should contact staff for information about signing up.
- ❖ Spring environmental education planning is underway, with reservations for school groups now available, additional program information going out to schools/teachers later this month, and volunteer training scheduled for the week of March 19. Sign up on [Offero](#).
- ❖ Several volunteer stewardship projects are being planned for spring, including early season Weed Warriors and other habitat improvement projects. Projects will be listed on Offero, the city website and event calendar, Facebook, and other social media and news outlets.





LOVELAND OPEN LANDS ADVISORY COMMISSION

AGENDA ITEM: 9

MEETING DATE: January 10, 2018

DESCRIPTION: Trail Updates

SUMMARY:

- ❖ Construction of a new connection to the City's Recreation Trail from Rossum Drive is nearing completion and is planned to be complete in early 2018. This trail link will connect Mariana Butte neighborhoods to the City's Recreation Trail System for the first time. The new connection adds about $\frac{3}{4}$ mile of additional concrete trail in Loveland to be open in early 2018.



- ❖ The north Front Range Trail officially opened in November, providing the first paved trail connection between Loveland and Fort Collins. Loveland is working with Larimer County on the development of an IGA to share maintenance duties related to this trail. Loveland will mow, take care of trash, and perform snow removal. Larimer County will complete weed management and safety services.

- ❖ Construction of the Long View Corridor Trail is underway. 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. Rough grading of the alignment is continuing and bridge abutments for drainage crossings will be installed next.

Commission Action Recommended: Informational.