



PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

Civic Center • 500 East Third Street, Suite 200 • Loveland, Colorado 80537

(970) 962-2727 • FAX (970) 962-2903 • TDD (970) 962-2620

www.cityofloveland.org

LOVELAND OPEN LANDS ADVISORY COMMISSION

August 8, 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 Bryan Harding, Parks & Recreation Planning Manager

Public Comment

Approval of Meeting Minutes: June 13, 2018

City Council Liaison Report

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

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

1. Recreation Trail Wayfinding Signage Program
2. Development of a Department Drone Policy

6:30-7:30 pm – Reports/Correspondence:

3. Property Acquisition Updates
4. Open Lands Project Report
5. Trail Updates

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:

Loveland Reporter-Herald: “[Natural Areas Need Names](#)” (7/27), [New Trail](#) (7/26), [Storytelling](#) (7/20)

[2018 Parks & Recreation Photo Contest Winners](#)

August 16 – [PEEPs Preschool Program “Here Fishy, Fishy”](#) at Fairgrounds Park, 9:30 and 11:00 am

August 17 – [Storytelling Evening at River’s Edge Amphitheater](#), 7:00-8:00 pm

August 18 – [Long View Trail & Sunset Vista Grand Opening](#), 8:00-11:00 am, Ribbon cutting 10:00 am

August 24 - [Friday Fun - Community Picnic with Open Lands](#) at River’s Edge, 6:00-8:00 pm

August 25 - [Full Moon Hike & Astronomy Night](#) with NoCo Astronomical Society at Old St Louis, 8:00-10:00 pm

Commission Member Discussion Topics

Adjournment

Next Regular Meeting: September 12, 2018

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CITY OF LOVELAND OPEN LANDS ADVISORY COMMISSION

Regular Meeting Minutes – June 13, 2018

Parks & Recreation Conference Room, 500 E. 3rd St., Loveland, CO 80537

Commissioners Present: Gale Bernhardt, Mike Hinterberg, Ross Livingston, Jim Roode, Jean Whittaker, Bill Zawacki, Rick Brent (via phone), Don Overcash (Council Liaison).

Commissioners Absent: Andy Hawbaker, Darren Pape.

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

Guests: None.

The public meeting was called to order at 5:35 pm.

Approval of May 18, 2018 Meeting Minutes. Jean Whittaker made a motion to approve the minutes as written. Jim Roode seconded the motion and the minutes were approved unanimously (including an email approval from Darren Pape who could not be present).

Public Comment. None.

City Council Liaison Report: The Commission discussed the importance of having representation from the City Council at the OLAC meetings so that the councilor understands the issues and can speak to open lands and trails issues when they come up at City Council. The Commission values having regular communications with Council members. Commission members also inquired about City Council Capital Expansion Fee discussions. Commission members voiced the importance of Open Lands and Trails fees in meeting the goals of the Open Lands program.

Larimer County Open Lands Advisory Board Liaison Report: Marilyn reported that the County staff are still in the process of finalizing their recruiting process for the Open Lands Manager position. Marilyn also indicated that she communicated to the County Open Lands Board that Loveland would like to be part of the discussion when fee discussions occur regarding Devil's Backbone Open Space.

Discussion/Action:

1. Property Reviews. Brian Hayes, Open Lands Coordinator, presented two open land property reviews for the Commission's consideration. OL-18-CW is a 137-acre property located along the Big Thompson River Corridor in southeast Loveland. It is rated high for Environmental/ecological, scenic, outdoor recreation, and connectivity values. The owner would like to close on the property in early 2019 so staff will be asking that the funds appropriated for the property be moved from the 2018 budget and included in the 2019 budget.

OL-18-KB is a 22.5-acre property located along County Road 20E in southeast Loveland. The owner would like the property to be preserved for open space and would like benches or some feature to honor the heritage of her family on the site. The site is adjacent to the proposed OL-18-CW acquisition, Kauffman Conservation Easement, Koppes Conservation Easement and Big Thompson Ponds State Wildlife Area. The property buffers Natural Areas Sites #3 and #4 on The Big Thompson River and provides wildlife corridors, incredible views, agricultural values and access to County Road 20E.

Bill Zawacki made a motion that staff move forward to acquire these properties for open land purposes and the purchase of OL-18-KB only occur if OL-18-CW is acquired first. Michael Hinterberg seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously

2. Open Lands Property Naming (4 Sites). Open Lands properties are named in accordance with the Open Lands Naming Policy. Several properties have been acquired that need to be officially named through the Naming Policy process. The Commission discussed how to proceed forward with naming Ryan's Gulch II (2400 W CR 16), Namaqua West (731 N. Namaqua Ave.), Ward Boise (1321 S. Boise Ave.) and Boedecker Parkside (W. 1st St.). Gale Bernhardt made a motion to name the Namaqua West Property "Medina's Crossing" and to name the other three properties using a public naming contest. Bill Zawacki seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Staff will start this process and bring recommendations back to OLAC for consideration.

3. Review of Maintenance Reserve Policy

The Commission reviewed its currently designated cash policy regarding Loveland's share of the Larimer County Open Space Sales Tax designated for "Maintenance/Restoration" of open lands. For consistency with other City funds, staff recommended that the designated cash reserve be reduced from \$3 million to \$1.2 million, equal to one year of operations. This will allow the City to acquire highly rated natural areas while still having adequate reserves for emergencies. Jean Whittaker made a motion to approve this new reserve policy and Jim Roode seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Revised Policy:

B18 Loveland will set aside a minimum of \$1,200,000 in the Open Lands Fund as an Emergency/Liability reserve. These funds will be held in a designated reserve account and would only be utilized in an emergency, to assure the long-term sustainability of the open lands properties.

Reports/Correspondence:

4. Environmental Education and Community Outreach Update: Michele Van Hare, Environmental Education Coordinator, gave an update to the Commission on 2018 programs to date. The Commission discussed the Offero software system and the changes it has made to the program and communications. The Commission asked about the cost-benefit. Michele summarized attendance and participation numbers and discussed the new programs being offered.

5. Property Updates. Staff has been working with Larimer County on a transfer of two county-owned parcels at the south end of Madison Ave. to provide an off-street trail connection from the Mirasol/Winona neighborhood to Old St. Louis Natural Area and the Big Thompson River corridor. This project received a \$129K grant from the Colorado Health Foundation to assist with this project. Brian also reported that the old structure has been demolished at Oxbow Natural Area.

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

Properties/Facilities/Projects/Maintenance/Operations

- The draft Management Plan for Sunset Vista is available for review on-line.
- Weed management is one of the greatest challenges on open lands this time of year.
- A private donor has donated a small van to be used for Loveland's Environmental Education and Public Outreach Program.
- The Commission discussed a citizen request to allow kayaks at River's Edge. At this time, no change in policy is recommended but it will be reviewed with other policies at the beginning of 2019.

Partnerships, Planning and Grants

- Governor Hickenlooper signed HB18-1400 on May 18 at Sunset Vista Natural Area. The governor talked with those present about regional trails and challenges.
- CDOT is planning on replacing the highway bridge at I-25 and the Big Thompson River which will open up the possibility of a trail underpass, expanded regional trails and additional water capacity.

Programs/Environmental Education/Volunteer Program

- Live owl and kestrel webcams on an open land site have allowed the community to watch the nesting process.
- On May 12, more than 20 members of the community participated in a stewardship project at River's Edge Natural Area, planting thousands of native milkweed seeds to encourage pollinator species, including the Monarch Butterfly. Staff worked with Bob Trout from the Loveland Initiative for Monarch Butterflies to promote and coordinate the project.
- Volunteer trail host training on May 20 recruited 8 new trail hosts and provided comprehensive information and authentic training situations with visitors at River's Edge Natural Area. Trail hosts actively help monitor and report on public use of open lands and trails.
- Spring environmental education programs wrapped up the season on May 23, hosting programs at River's Edge for 25 school groups, from kindergarten to 5th graders. Volunteer educators help make these programs possible, donating hundreds of hours of their time and talents.
- A special Astronomy Night program was held on May 25, in partnership with Sylvan Dale Ranch and the Northern Colorado Astronomical Society. Public response was overwhelming and space was limited due to limitations on available telescopes from NoCoAstro volunteers.

Staff provided the following trail updates

- Open Lands & Trails staff hosted a very successful National Trails Day event at Oxbow Natural Area, featuring the new Rossum Drive trail connection, a stewardship project to build a new soft-surface trail through Oxbow East, a guided bird walk at Morey Wildlife Reserve, and a public expo event with demos on bike safety, trail etiquette, Leave-No-Trace, and wildlife activities. More than 50 volunteers and staff helped with the trail-building project, 18 participants attended the bird walk, and many neighbors and trail users stopped by the event.
- Construction of the Long View Regional Trail is proceeding, with bridge work and concrete paving, widening of 57th Street, and planting of hundreds of native trees, shrubs, and wetland plants by volunteers and crews. We anticipate a mid-summer trail completion.
- Loveland is working with the developer of the Parkside residential area to cut in a trail corridor for Loveland's planned trail along the north shore of Boedecker Reservoir on property recently purchased for Open Land purposes.

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

/s/ Ross Livingston, Chair



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LOVELAND OPEN LANDS ADVISORY COMMISSION

AGENDA ITEM: 1

MEETING DATE: August 8, 2018

DESCRIPTION: Recreation Trail Wayfinding Signage Program

SUMMARY: *In the spring of 2016, staff outlined the need for a new signage program for the City of Loveland trail system and requested funding to complete a trail wayfinding program and improve directional and information signs for the Loveland recreation loop trail. Funding was appropriated for this project in 2017 and 2018 and staff will be presenting the overall methodology and signage concepts for the commission's review and comments. With the completion of a detailed inventory of our trails system in 2017, we've identified what signage is currently on the trail and what signage is lacking. We also know that citizens are desiring a higher level of information so they can find their way to destinations, to an open space or park. The new wayfinding program will prioritize the highest needs for improved signage and fund new signs to help guide users safely and effectively. Draft concepts of the new signs for the Trail Kiosks will be provided at the meeting.*

OVERVIEW and ANALYSIS

Making connections to destinations easier and finding your way through a City can be challenging for pedestrians and cyclists – wayfinding should inform users of major destinations, critical crossings and determining safe and accessible routes for all users. Wayfinding should be inclusive and connect people to places, provide encouragement, support economic benefits and support community values.

Details and information included with trail signage and wayfinding should vary by location and need. At Trail Kiosks, signage should include the trail map, trail name, location information to key destinations (streets, major destinations and City facilities), and most of the information in the Additional Goals section, bulleted below.

At Trailheads, some Kiosks, and in park locations, alternative formats such as Braille, large format print or universal graphics, QR codes and options to obtain audio transcriptions should be made available. In Park or Natural Areas additional information regarding specific site information and interpretive signage can be added. But along the trail – wayfinding should be the priority for a shared-use path. Signage for all users should be installed.

Trail rules and guidelines should be posted with the most relevant and highest priority information posted at Kiosks and Trailheads. All other rules may need to refer to the City of Loveland website – this will help minimize excessive regulations and keep the wayfinding

system focused on location, destination and ease of movement for the user. Priorities may differ again on need and location, but “pick-up after your pet and dogs on leash” should always be on the Kiosk and main trail signs. Without trail enforcement or rangers on duty regularly – posting speed limits or other enforcement information may not be necessary. Each Kiosk location will be evaluated and signs will be customized as needed.

In the 2017 Trail Inventory Report, specific Hazards were identified and should be addressed since they affect safety and wayfinding. Pavement markings will be coordinated with Public Works (PW) and included with this new signage system. Missing paint, crosswalks and warning signage should be on the priority list for funding this year.

We will coordinate the on-street system and final wayfinding program with Public Works once we agree on our preferred design system. Pavement markings may be the best method of designating the Recreation Trail loop on some streets, such as Washington and Denver Ave. This will be explored with PW once we determine our final design.

The Primary Categories for Signs are: (*hierarchy – see handout provided at the meeting*)

1. **Kiosks** – primary signage utilizing our existing “arch frame” with modifications and updated paint. Staff is considering our current all-green or -black paint for the arches. Staff has determined that white lettering on a blue background will be our main sign panel colors. The green arches and blue signage would tie into our City of Loveland Logo.
2. **Information/Trailhead** – smaller signs on posts, prefer painted uni-struts (easy to replace and store); galvanized would also be acceptable. Staff will be costing out both for final design.
3. **Directional/Decision or Trail Marker** – These signs denote turning movements and distance markers. There is currently no reason or need to keep the outdated concrete markers, as we can use our new posts and signs to tell distances based on street crossings and destinations and post mileage in outlying areas as needed. Staff will be working closely with Emergency Service providers (dispatch) before we remove the concrete markers.

Identifying Trail Corridors in Loveland

The function of the trail wayfinding program will address location (where I am in relation to where I want to go, or where I came from), destinations and directional information. One of the key factors for wayfinding is determining a logical method of naming trails by region, features or community destinations. Another option is to number or letter the trails. Since our system is looped, there are obvious breaks in some areas and not identifiable boundaries in others. People are better able to locate themselves once they understand where they are in relation to other sites or facilities. The trail wayfinding program should help users better locate themselves within the community or region they are traveling, utilizing geographic features.

Staff is proposing to use Loveland's geographic features or unique identified locations within the community to define sections of the "loop" trail system, such as the Big Thompson River, Boyd Lake, and the foothills. We will use recognizable roadways or major landmarks to help users determine their location and inform them of the best way to reach their desired location.

Proposed Trail Names

There are obvious features in Loveland and we should capitalize on them to help trail users know how to get around the City of Loveland. Staff is proposing 5 named sections of the loop trail based on regions or geographic features:

1. **Big Thompson River Trail** – This corridor will ultimately extend to the east, potentially to I-25 or beyond to Johnstown. The major feature is the river and would be defined by the trail section that generally parallels the river from I-25 to the west. Currently between S US 287 (Lincoln Ave.) to Rossum Drive.
2. **Civic Center Trail** – This corridor currently has trail from Denver Ave. (US 34 - Eisenhower Blvd) south to the river. Eventually this would be a great trail to add interpretive signage to discuss history of water and the ditch irrigation system.
3. **Boyd Lake Trail** – running parallel to Boyd Lake State Park, starting at Denver Ave. and running north of E US 34 to the north end of the State Park.
4. **North Trail** – This trail section connects the Front Range Trail to Long View Trail, between CR 9 (Boyd Lake Ave.) and CR17 (Taft Ave.). It crosses N US 287 and currently ends at the Wintergreen Subdivision, east of Sunset Vista Natural Area.
5. **Westside Trail** – currently connects from the River Trail north through the west side neighborhoods and generally runs north from W US 34 to Sunset Vista Natural Area at N Taft Ave. and W 57th St.

Other trail sections already named:

Colorado Front Range Trail – North and South – these are the 2 trails heading north and south from the City of Loveland. The north section is from the intersection of CR9 and Boyd Lake Trail heading to Fort Collins, and the south section will connect from Dotsero or Wilson Ave. heading south to Berthoud. The south trail is still yet to be defined and constructed but the north section is now complete. Portions of the Boyd Lake Trail, Civic Center Trail and River Trail are all part of the North Front Range Trail by their connection and would be identified for regional trail users on maps and in information provided at trail kiosks and noted on the trail webpage.

Long View Trail – this trail section will open in August 2018 and heads north at the intersection of the North Trail through Sunset Vista, continuing through Larimer County's Long View Open Space to the Fort Collins trail system (4.4 miles, generally paralleling Taft Ave./ Shields St.)

Future Trails and Proposed Names:

1. **Centerra Trail** – Denver Ave. east to Boyd Lake Ave. Then from Centerra we could work with them to see if they would let us sign within the subdivision around Houts and Equalizer Lake.
2. **Foothills Trail** – Rossum Dr. north to Skyline Natural Area and county trail system.
3. **Prairie Ridge Trail** - Wilson Ave. northwest to county and Fort Collins open space.

Additional Goals for the Wayfinding Program

Wayfinding signage should also include information that users find useful; including environmental conditions and unique identifying markers. The list below will help inform users by identifying:

- Shared use path name
- Permitted Users – no horses, unauthorized motor vehicles, etc.
- Path Length – mileage, distance from end to end
- Change in elevations or degree of difficulty
- Average running grades – max slopes to be encountered (ADA)
- Average and Max. cross slopes (ADA)
- Average width and minimum clearances for underpasses
- Type of surface and stability of surface, if not paved

The above items meet ADA requirements as some trail sections will may not meet ADA and will help users determine safe travel paths and distances that are available for them to access.

Trail Wayfinding Project Timeline:

- Analysis, Review and Approach – June-July 2018
- Prepare Graphics – July-August
- Staff and Commission Review – August
- PW review and coordination with Sign Shop – August
- Determine Priority Signage and finalize type and locations – August
- Prepare master sign list – locations, type, size and text, based on GPS – August
- Prepare initial cost estimates for primary signs – August
- Prepare final sign graphics – September
- Request for Bids – end of September
- Contracting – October
- Installation in November-December 2018

This is a very tight schedule, and if reviews and coordination dates are missed this project may push out into 2019 for installation. Goal is to spend all funds by EOY or encumber funds by 12/15/18.

Commission Action Recommended: Discussion/informational.



LOVELAND OPEN LANDS ADVISORY COMMISSION

AGENDA ITEM: 2

MEETING DATE: August 8, 2018

DESCRIPTION: Development of a Department Drone Policy

SUMMARY:

With the increased use of drones by civilians and government agencies, Loveland Parks and Recreation would like to develop a drone policy for Loveland's Open Lands, Parks, Trails, and Recreation Facilities.

Drones, also known as unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) or unmanned aircraft systems (UAS), are aircraft that fly without a pilot on board. UAVs vary in size and capabilities—from very high-tech drones all the way down to the remote-controlled toys. Drones are gaining prominence for recreational uses, public safety, maintenance, viewing remote areas, and photography.

Many municipalities utilize drones for well-defined conservation purposes that may not otherwise be achieved by conventional methods. Typical internal uses include emergency management, resource inventorying, wildlife surveys, vegetation monitoring, cultural assessments, wildland fire management, baseline surveys or inventories, original research, conservation easement (CE) monitoring, marketing and crowd counting.

Should drones be allowed on Loveland Parks and Recreation sites? From an Open Lands and Trails perspective, why should we allow or prohibit drone operations? What should be considered in the development of a drone policy?

- Environment

- Safety

- Privacy

- Special Use Permit/Processing

- Acceptable uses

- FAA Certification and protocols

- Consistent with Department's conservation, education, and recreation mission

- Wildlife disturbance or other resource impacts

- Impact on user experience

- Communications

- Education

Commission Action Recommended: Discussion/Policy Recommendations



LOVELAND OPEN LANDS ADVISORY COMMISSION

AGENDA ITEM: 4

MEETING DATE: August 8, 2018

DESCRIPTION: Open Lands Project Report

SUMMARY:

Properties/Facilities/Projects/Maintenance/Operations

- ❖ A naming contest is underway to name 3 of the new open land areas that have been purchased over the last few years at Boise Avenue, Boedecker, and Ryan's Gulch. Name suggestions are being accepted until August 31 at: bit.ly/3newlands and will be discussed at the September Open Lands Advisory Commission meeting.



Partnerships, Planning and Grants

- ❖ Colorado Parks and Wildlife has granted Loveland a \$30K Fishing is Fun grant for the installation of an ADA Fishing Dock at Willow Bend Natural Area. Staff will work with volunteers to construct a soft-surface trail to the 4-acre pond and install the dock by summer 2019.
- ❖ We are wrapping up our final two weeks of a new program with the Loveland Municipal Court on Alternative Sentencing to have youth work on open land projects. This program has been successful for both the municipal court and the open lands program. It has provided youth with a sense of purpose and community ownership in working off their sentence. The youth have participated in 11 work days providing more than 250 hours worth of community service.



- ❖ As a result of a generous donation by a local open lands supporter, we were able to purchase a van to be utilized for Environmental Education programming. Our programs require that we move program materials, equipment, and tables around to our various open land sites and this newly donated van will improve staff and volunteer efficiency.

Programs/Environmental Education/Volunteer Program

- ❖ The barn owl and kestrel nesting boxes installed by the Colorado Avian Research and Rehabilitation Institute were both successful, with each nest fledging five young. Live webcams allowed the public

to watch the birds during the nesting season. The adult females and all young were banded for tracking purposes. The nest boxes are now empty and the cameras have been turned off until the beginning of next year's nesting season.



- ❖ On June 14, more than 100 citizens participated in our Dog Days event at River's Edge Natural Area to learn about responsible dog stewardship and etiquette on open lands and trails.

Vendors provided information about dog health, exercise, equipment and more. Trainers demonstrated agility and rally courses and police canine units demonstrated live K-9 tactics.



- ❖ In June, a group of 20 youth from Group Publishing's "Week of Hope" mission camps worked at Sunset Vista to plant nearly 1,000 native plants to help restore the wetland areas. Plants were grown in cooperation with High Plains Environmental Center. In July, a second group of "Week of Hope" youth helped build a soft-surface trail for access along the river at the Boise Open Lands site. These summer volunteer camps provided more than 1,200 hours on Loveland's open lands in 2018.



- ❖ On July 20, more than 40 citizens participated in a storytelling event at River's Edge Natural Area. We continue to receive positive feedback on new programs and finding non-traditional events to allow local citizens to engage in the outdoors. Other summer programs included preschool environmental education, critter scene investigations, astronomy/stargazing nights, bird walks, Weed Warriors, Project Learning Tree, orienteering course, and guided hikes.



- ❖ Numerous stewardship projects have been completed on Open Lands properties this season, including weed removal, cleanups, Russian olive removal, and trailbuilding. Volunteers and participants can find events and register at: <https://offero.cityofloveland.org>



LOVELAND OPEN LANDS ADVISORY COMMISSION

AGENDA ITEM: 5

MEETING DATE: August 8, 2018

DESCRIPTION: Trail Updates

SUMMARY:

- ❖ The Grand Opening of Long View Trail will be held on August 18 at Sunset Vista Natural Area. The event will highlight the opening of the new regional trail connection, as well as three new natural areas (Sunset Vista, Fort Collins' Colina Mariposa and Hazaleus Natural Areas, and Larimer County's Long View Open Space). The event will include a ribbon-cutting ceremony and recognition of partners, funders, contractors, consultants and years of cooperative planning and implementation to accomplish this project.
- ❖ University of Colorado Health Foundation has granted \$129,000 to the City's efforts to provide a trail access from Madison Avenue into Old St. Louis Natural Area. The grant will be used for trail construction and programming to promote intergenerational activity on Loveland's open lands.
- ❖ A new trail corridor is being developed along Loveland's open lands property on the north side of Boedecker Reservoir. This trail will require a bridge across the Buckingham Ditch. Engineering of the crossing is underway and we hope to install the bridge over the winter. This open lands and trail will not be open to public access until the trail is constructed and safe access can be established.
- ❖ Work has begun on the Wilson Avenue street project which requires that the recreation trail be closed from the Big Barnes Ditch south to the Service Center. The parking lot along Wilson, just north of the Recycle Center will also be closed for the duration of the project.
- ❖ City staff have been working with CDOT to include the replacement of the Big Thompson River Bridge at I-25 in order to improve river flows and allow adequate space for a future pedestrian underpass and trail.



- ❖ City staff is working with CDOT on their PRK Study of Highway 34 from West Loveland all the way to Kersey. Staff is making sure CDOT is aware of community desires for sidewalks/trails, pedestrian underpasses, and sidewalks.
- ❖ Public Works and Parks & Recreation are working together on a “Safe Routes” grant to address missing sidewalks that will improve safety for the community.
- ❖ Parks and Recreation helped sponsor Bike to Work Day with stations at Civic Center, Mehaffey and Seven Lakes Parks.

