



## PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

Civic Center • 500 East Third Street, Suite 200 • Loveland, Colorado 80537  
(970) 962-2727 • FAX (970) 962-2903 • TDD (970) 962-2620

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

### CITY OF LOVELAND OPEN LANDS ADVISORY COMMISSION

Special Meeting Minutes – November 9, 2016

Horsetooth Area Information Center, 4200 W CR 38 E, Fort Collins, CO 80526

**Commissioners Present:** Gale Bernhardt, Ross Livingston, Jim Roode, Nathan Thompson, Jean Whittaker, Kerri Rollins (Larimer County Liaison)(regional boards meeting).

**Commissioners Absent:** Rick Brent, Andy Hawbaker, Darren Pape, Bill Zawacki, Hugh McKean (City Council Liaison).

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

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

**Approval of October 12, 2016 Meeting Minutes:** Approval of minutes was tabled until quorum of members is present.

**Public Comment:** None.

**City Council Liaison Report.** Hugh McKean was elected to the State House of Representatives for District 51 and will resign his Council position once sworn in. A new liaison will be appointed by Council.

**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 were presented, and breakout session topics included agricultural land conservation, leases and public engagement opportunities.

#### **Discussion/Action**

**1. Discussion of Potential Lease Agreement – Wild Natural Area.** On November 2, commission and staff members visited the potential lease area at Wild Natural Area proposed for a vineyard by the adjacent Sweetheart City Winery. Based on the site visit, the proposed area has been reduced from 7 acres to 5.5 acres, leaving a wider corridor along the river for wildlife habitat and possible public access. Other items to be considered as part of the lease include shared use parking on the winery property for public access to Wild Natural Area, maintenance of the leased area, including weed control, vegetation management, herbicide/pesticide use, signage/awareness of Open Lands, and timing. The potential lease will be included in the Big Thompson River Management Plan being drafted for natural areas along the river corridor by a CSU grad student intern.

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

**2. Property Acquisition Updates.** The Namaqua West property is under contract to close with a late December closing date. Two properties along S. Boise Ave. (Ward-Boise and Osborn) are also moving forward, with offers sent to landowners.

**3. Open Lands Projects Report.** The following written updates were provided:

- River's Edge Natural Area – Construction has begun to enhance accessible parking and trail access off 1<sup>st</sup> Street. The parking area is scheduled for completion in early December and staff will complete connections to other River's Edge trails.
- “A Bigger Vision for the Big T” – The Big Thompson Conservation and Recreation Plan was recently recognized with the Resiliency Award by the Colorado Chapter of the American Planning Association.
- High Plains Environmental Center – Construction on the new High Plains Environmental Center has begun, with a projected completion date of first quarter of 2017. The City contributed \$400K toward construction of the new center and is working collaboratively with High Plains staff.
- Annual Waterway Cleanup – More than 40 volunteers helped removed debris and trash from the Big Thompson River at Oxbow Natural Area during the Annual Waterway Cleanup on October 8. At least 60 cubic yards of debris were taken out of the river corridor, including a trailer that had been wedged under a bridge abutment since the 2013 flood. The hard working volunteers included kids, adults, members of the Big Thompson 4-Wheelers Club and OLAC.
- Make a Difference Day – Employees from HP Enterprise volunteered to help remove old wire fence and repair trails on the southwest side of River's Edge on October 28<sup>th</sup>, as part of the United Way Make a Difference Day campaign.
- GOCO Inspire Grant – The Larimer County Project Outdoors Coalition is working in cooperation with the Boys & Girls Clubs in Loveland and Fort Collins, as well as the Thompson and Poudre school districts, to involve youth in the planning process to identify places, programs, and pathways to connect more youth and families to the outdoors.
- Environmental Education/Volunteer Program – Environmental education field trips for school groups will be wrapping up the season next week. The CSI Critter Scene Investigation event on October 22 at Morey Wildlife Reserve was very successful, with 56 participants, including many families, scout groups, and adults. The Volunteer Appreciation Dinner on October 19 was a wonderful opportunity to honor and thank volunteers for their service and recognize those individuals earning 5- and 10-years of service awards. A new “Bucks for Buses” fundraising program provides scholarships to help cover transportation costs for schools to attend field trips at River's Edge that otherwise would not be able. The Environmental Education program applied for a grant from the Colorado Health Foundation to promote health and wellness in Loveland through the City's trail system and environmental education programs. The grant request has passed the first round of review so far, and awards will be announced this winter.

**4. Trails Update.** The following written updates were provided:

- Trail Segment 10b – Namaqua to West US 34 underpass – The contract has been approved for JAGS construction and notice to proceed will be issued on November 7. All easements are now complete. The bridge from Viestenz-Smith Park will be used for the GLIC ditch crossing. The schedule is still tracking for the trail to open in the spring of 2017.
- Front Range Trail – Final construction plans were sent to Larimer County on November 3. Clearances for environmental are in progress and CDOT will complete their reviews and approve the project over the winter. The project is behind schedule due to issues with stormwater at the trail crossing at Trilby in Fort Collins. Advertising for bids is scheduled for March 2017. Construction should start in May and be completed in late August 2017.

- Long View Corridor Trail – Staff completed review of 30% plans and sent responses to the consultant. CDOT review of the 30% plans may be delayed due to additional changes proposed by Fort Collins. Loveland traffic staff asked for a wider shoulder adjacent to the proposed left turn lane on 57<sup>th</sup> Street. The consultant is preparing an updated cost estimate and will include this additional request. The updated schedule puts the project bidding in June 2017 for a construction start in the fall of 2017.
- Trail 10a – Wilson to Namaqua Avenue – Surveying and CAD files were completed in October and conceptual alignment is scheduled for November. Staff will meet with the landowner to discuss the easements and needs for this trail section. Funding has been appropriated in the 2017 budget for design and construction in 2017.
- Grant awards – A \$600,000 CDOT Transportation Alternative Program grant was awarded for design and construction of the Namaqua Trail Underpass at the crossing of Namaqua Avenue where trail segments 10a and 10b join. The project has also been recommended by GOCO staff for the remaining design/engineering costs and awards will be announced in December.
- Wilson Bridge and Taft/Wilson Trail – The project was bid in September and RMC Consultants was awarded the contract, with notice to proceed anticipated for the end of November, pending the approval of the FEMA scope changes and clearance for environmental work. The trail will be closed from Wilson to Taft for the duration of construction until April 2017. Stormwater staff will manage this project for the restoration of the bridge, trail and stormwater improvements.

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 pm.