



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

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 Loudon 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.