

City of Longmont Open Space and Trails Comprehensive Plan

AGENDA September 12, 2001

- 5:30 - 6:30 pm Open House – review maps of the planning area
- 6:30 – 7:00 pm Presentation – learn about the program and how you can help shape the vision.
- 7:00 – 9:00 pm Community Workshop
- A. Breakout Group Exercises (15 min. each)
1. Map Exercise: Each group will be given a map, green paper, scissors and glue. Please cut and paste to reflect your group’s vision of how open space lands should be distributed in the future within the planning area.
 2. Refining of Open Space Criteria Exercise: Each group will be asked to brainstorm and suggest wording that will help bring clarity to the already established Open Space Criteria (Attributes)
 3. Defining of Passive Recreation Exercise: Each group will be asked to identify which types of activity are appropriate, inappropriate, or “in some cases” appropriate, on open space lands.
 4. Reporting Out: each group will be asked to provide a short synopsis of the three exercises to the full group. (30 min. total- all groups)
- B. Full Group Exercise
1. Visioning Exercise: as a full group we want to hear what your vision is for the Open Space and Trails Program and staffing effort. This will be a brainstorming session. From information collected at tonight’s workshop we will articulate a vision statement to bring back to you at the next public meeting to assure it is reflective of the community’s values.
 2. Dot Voting Exercise: As you leave tonight, you will find various pictures around the room. Each individual will be given a limited number of “dots” to place on those pictures that best represent your image for the future of the Open Space system.

Thank you for sharing your time and participating in helping to shape the vision for the Longmont Open Space and Trails Program

**Longmont Open Space and Trails Comprehensive Plan
Community Workshop
September 12, 2001**

Map Exercise

Assignment: Each group was given a map, green paper, scissors and glue. They were asked to cut and paste to reflect their group's vision of how open space lands should be distributed in the future within the planning area.

First Level Analysis: Comments were simply reported and attributed to each of the six citizen groups.

Six Maps were completed by citizen groups and will be analyzed along with this information.

Group #1

Acquire east of Union Reservoir as buffer zone
Keep agricultural lands so they don't develop
Link passages; minimize pockets of open space
Connect waterways
Buffer from growth of Weld County and Erie
Provide spaces in the city for regular (natural?) use
Big priority is corridor along St. Vrain, look at Boulder Creek as well. (supported by 2 other groups.
Preserve migration corridors
Keep open view of Mountains, acquire southwest area

Group #2

Provide buffers - especially east of Union Reservoir
Wildlife preservation
Access- see black lines

Group #3

City Boundary
Preservation of waterways
Access from residential to greenways

Group #4

Greenways on H66 and H119
Parks in town
Large expansive views, views to Long's Peak
Historical parcels, but don't override the value of open space

Group #5

Gravel Pits

Protect from overdevelopment
South west large contiguous tract
Wildlife buffer
Buffer west side
Nature center
Prairie dogs, herons, eagles

Group #6

Flood control
Coop with Boulder City
Riparian Environments
H66, Nelson and Hygiene

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Refining of Open Space Criteria Exercise

Assignment: Each group was asked to brainstorm and suggest wording that will help bring clarity to the already established Open Space Criteria (Attributes).

First Level Analysis: All captured comments were grouped in alignment with the existing Established Criteria.

**Established Criteria (Open Space Attributes)
As articulated in Ordinance O-2000-41:**

- ❑ **Preservation of natural areas, wildlife habitat, wetlands, agriculture and visual corridors.**

Wildlife habitat (i.e. prairie dogs, fox)
Distinguish between wildlife corridors and walking trails network
Prairie dog relocation/habitat preservation 2 (Bldr Co.)
Eagle roosting habitat
Wildlife and crucial wildlife habitat
Potential for restoring to native habitat/natural areas
Native grasslands - add
Diverse natural areas
Protecting natural resources
Riparian environment corridor/preservation
Visual corridors: views to water bodies; views to Long's Peak, other high points

- ❑ **Linkages and trails, access to public lakes, streams and other usable open space lands, stream corridors and scenic corridors along existing highways.**

Networks for walking
Transportation Corridors (bikepaths, hiking trails)
Connect Open space to bodies of water
Connect to other open space and make large contiguous parcels
Bike lanes in town – make safe, provide transportation to work
Parks – make more parks in town accessible to residents
Linkages from Residential to open public spaces
Create entryway along major entries to City along H119 and H66
Conservation of natural resources – some access
Stream Corridors - add

- ❑ **Conservation of natural resources including, but not limited to, forest lands, range lands, agricultural lands, aquifer recharge areas, and surface water.**

Conservation of natural resources – some access
Agricultural preservation as town buffers

- ❑ **District parks devoted to low-impact recreational uses.**

Clarify District Parks; Open Space
Dogs – define leashed, on command, free
Motorized vehicles – limit use
Campgrounds – limited development
Environmental Education (nature center, naturalists)

- ❑ **Implementing greenways and open space policies or strategies of the Longmont Area Comprehensive Plan.**

Partner with Boulder City and Boulder County within Boulder County
Check NUPUD outlots as these may not need to be purchased

- ❑ **Urban shaping buffers between or around municipalities or community service areas and buffer zones between residential and non-residential development.**

Buffer for various development
Agricultural preservation as town buffers
Urban buffer: north of H66; west of 75th; east of County Line Road
Preservation of inter urban pockets

Other Comments:

General

Preserving
Variety of uses
Quality of life

Historic Preservation

Historic Values –add to but don't override importance of other open space values 2
Historical parks, preservation
Historical Sites

Other

Flood Control
Mineral Rights (non-severed, or purchase if severed)
Open water – consider for purchase

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Definition of Low Impact Recreational Uses

Assignment: Each group was asked to identify which types of activity are appropriate, inappropriate, or “in some cases” appropriate, on open space lands.

First Level Analysis: Information recorded by each citizen group was consolidated into one page and put in alphabetical order. In the quick sort on the next page, the items in blue appear on both the appropriate and “in some cases” appropriate columns. Those items in red appear in both the “in some cases” appropriate, and not appropriate columns. The number following an item indicates how many groups listed that item, otherwise, the item was listed by one group.

In addition to the information recorded by each group, general comments were made during report out: quiet activities, no spectator activities, address safety if necessary with lights, keep need for level of maintenance low (including plant materials), put everything in appropriate places, have designated areas for specialized uses, no collecting/harvesting plant or wildlife, use seasonal closures for protection of wildlife.

Activities recorded by each group: (see next page)

Appropriate	Appropriate in Some Cases	Not Appropriate
<p>Art Bird watching 3 Environmental education Fishing – catch and release Hiking (walking/jogging/nature) 4 Low energy Meditation Photography Reading Vehicles (non-motorized) Viewing areas Wildlife preservation</p> <p>Other comments: Pack it in/pack it out Rule posting/signage Speed zones/limits</p>	<p>Agriculture Archery Bird watching Boating/canoeing Camping – (tent special permit) 2 Competitive Events (sanctioned racing, polo) 2 Cross Country Skiing 2 Cycling 3 Disc golf 3 Dog areas 6 (total) (Off-leash area 2) (On-leash area 2) Dog parks Equestrian 4 Fires Fishing 5 Frisbees Geo-caching Hiking (walking/jogging) 3 Hiking (off path) Hunting Improvements - limited Picnicking 2 Conservation Areas (roadless) Seasonal closures (resource concerns-wildlife reproduction, restoration) Skating – inline Special events Swimming?? 2 (pools) Trails/paths – improved 2 Tubing</p> <p>Other Comments: Drinking Fountain Garbage Cans Handicapped Access Lighting Night use Parking lots Phones Restrooms Restrooms (trail head only)</p>	<p>Access to wildlife areas Archery Camping Collecting Commercial Concessions Fires 2 Fireworks Golf course 2 Hang-gliding/parachuting Hunting/trapping 3 Vehicles - Motorized (disabled vehicle excepted) (including boats) 6 Noisy/explosive Sports – organized 3 Weapons Wildlife feeding</p> <p>Other comments: Parking - paved</p>

**Longmont Open Space and Trails Comprehensive Plan
Community Workshop
September 12, 2001**

Visioning Exercise

Assignment: Back together as a full group we wanted to hear what individuals held as their vision for the Open Space and Trails Program and staffing effort. This was a brainstorming session. Participants were told that from information collected at the workshop we would articulate a vision statement to bring back to them at the next public meeting to assure it is reflective of the community's values.

Dot Voting Exercise: As participants left for the evening, participants were told that they would find various pictures around the room reflecting what open space might look like to them in the future. Each individual was given 3 blue "yes dots" and 1 orange "no dot" to place on those pictures that best represented their image for the future of the Open Space system.

First Level Analysis: All comments were grouped according to theme.

The following "visions" were captured from the brainstorming session:

Connectivity

Flow in and out of populated versus open areas,
Create flow through the city
Interconnectivity

Restoration

Restore and preserve riparian activities
Converting areas back to a natural space
Restoration back to prairie, natural condition

Diversity

Diverse natural resources
Diverse areas that meet diverse needs of the community
Protect new corridors
Purchase property on behalf of citizens as a whole

Management Issues

Be specific when acquiring land, keep within category/purpose/definition
Structure usage of land over time; restrictions and perpetuity
Who is the advisory committee? - Parks and Recreation Advisory Board
Acquisition - be specific when you get it as to what it can be used for for the long term
Plan for long term maintenance

Preserve and Protect

Maintain St. Vrain corridor (flood plain)
Protect the waterways (St. Vrain, Left Hand Creek)

Future

Provide ability to balance out growth in community
Acquire for the future, not to address just what is here now
Be stewards for future generations
Look at Jefferson County Open Space Vision statement

Wildlife

Provide for prairie dog habitat relocation within Boulder County
Protect migration corridors - access to water and food
Mitigate wildlife habitat from construction
Wildlife considerations

People**Don't leave the people out**

Respect adjacent landowners rights
Can't overlook landowner's wishes and rights
Family/children usage/outings



City of Longmont Open Space & Trails



City of Longmont Open Space and Trails Comprehensive Plan AGENDA October 24, 2001

- 6:00 pm Open House - Familiarize yourself with efforts to date. Staff will be available to answer questions.
- 6:30 pm Welcome and Introduction
Presentation and Review of Findings
Citizen Survey
Vision, Mission
Low-impact Recreation Definition
Wildlife and agricultural land mapping
- 7:30 pm Small Group Breakouts - citizens will be asked to participate in small groups to further explore the following topics:
A. Acquisition Strategies: Selection and Prioritization
B. Prairie Dog Issues
C. Gravel Mining Issues
D. Infill versus Buffering Issues
If the number of participants is large enough we will also do...
E. Trail Issues
- 8:00 pm Small Group Reports
- 8:30 pm Questions to Citizens: Are we on track? Have we missed something? What haven't you heard yet?
- 9:00 pm Adjournment. Please complete your survey and leave it with us.

Thank you for sharing your time and participating in helping to refine the vision for the Longmont Open Space and Trails Program

**City of Longmont Open Space and Trails Comprehensive Plan
Community Meeting, October 24, 2000
Small Group Breakout Session Summary**

Gravel Mining Issues

This group provided comment on the options for land eligible for gravel mining included in the Citizen Opinion Survey.

Option A: Buy the land and the mining rights, mine and sell the gravel, and then reclaim the land for open space. Use the proceeds from the mining to buy additional open space.

- + Get royalties that can return to the open space program. Don't become an operator - be the landowner and lease to an operator.
- + Partner on reclamation plan to a far greater level. Use the opportunity to enhance habitat and arrange uses on the site (including recreation) in the best way.
- + Could result in water storage facilities/flood control.
- + Use as a wetlands bank option: effluent polishing, recreational ponds/fishing.
- + Recovery of resource - keep it mining out of the mountains
- + Good stewardship of natural resource - responsibly done.
- + This is an engine that drives the open space tax and fuels the economy that support open space.
- Will require greater level of staff administration.
- City would be involved in "development" related activity.
- May require surrounding landowner buy-in during mining process.

Option B: Buy the land after private owners have mined the gravel and have done the reclamation work.

- + Simpler than Option A. Requires less staff time.
- + Buy for less "in theory" as it no longer has resource value.
- + Immediate recreational use with ponds, trails, and access.
- + Habitat is established, wildlife can return.
- + Less cost to enhance/develop character of open space.
- + Good stewardship of natural resources.
- Limited input on end reclamation plan.
- Potential of neighbor concerns during mining.

Option C: Buy the land and mining rights now to prevent mining altogether on the land.

- + No disruption due to existing wildlife habitat.
- + Agricultural use can remain intact.
- + Can work if gravel is expensive to recover.
- Less opportunity to create diverse habitat.

Prairie Dog Issues

General Comments

People in this group felt that it was appropriate to buy open space property specifically to provide a place to relocate prairie dogs affected by local development and city projects.

They noted that prairie dogs are a good food source for wildlife including: eagle, hawk, coyote, and fox.

Wildlife pockets in the city enhance the quality of life for residents.

Suggestions

A city subsidy should be offered or a conservation easement acquired to continue existing prairie dog habitat or for relocation efforts. They also noted that the Division of Wildlife may have a funding source to tap.

Joint purchases of prairie dog habitat or land for relocation should be considered between the City and the County and/or State.

Developers could be required to deal with relocation costs on their own conceptually as an "impact fee." They could pay a fee to the city, for relocation as well as land cost, that could be used for the preservation of wildlife habitat as a part of the open space program.

Concerns

The issue of potential harm to horse and cattle from prairie dog holes was raised but with a caveat of not knowing whether this is really a valid issue.

Adjacent property owners should be protected from the migration of prairie dogs through plastic or vegetation barriers. This would take a source of funding but could be supplemented with volunteer effort.

The issue of cost of relocation versus survival rate was brought up, along with the concern that there may not be enough definitive data about survival rate to inform the discussion.

Trail Issues

This group discussed general trail issues and were in agreement on the following:

1. Motorized vehicles should not be allowed on trails.
2. Equestrians feel grossly under-served at the moment and would like to see more trails available for their use. The consensus was that sharing the trails with biking and hikers was not a problem but did suggest that some educational material be posted at trailheads regarding sharing a trail with horses.
3. It was mentioned that in order for trails to be useful for equestrians, the trail would need to be between 5 and 20 miles in length.

4. The current city standard of a concrete trail with crusher fines trail next to it seems appropriate for heavily used areas and in more urban setting. This accommodates the widest range of users. As the trails leave the urban area perhaps a smaller trail width and softer surface can be used. This should be assessed according to location of trail and potential user group.
5. Trails through sensitive wildlife areas could be managed like some existing trails are currently and have periodic closure according to wildlife needs.
6. An appropriate number of trails in various locations throughout the system should be made accessible in both slope and surfacing, but perhaps not every trail.
7. There was a suggestion that trail segments that can be acquired now that complete some existing loops or desired loops should be pursued first.
8. Left Hand Creek was specifically mentioned as needing a trail.

Location of Open Space -Infill versus Buffering

Statements from the Group Members:

1. Ask the general question – are we going for quantity or quality of open space?
2. Connected space provides for the best habitat.
3. Preservation of views is important.
4. Living farm limits access and use.
5. Need to distinguish between parks and open space.
6. Look at how any specific parcel fits into overall open space network.
7. Location not as important as other criteria.
8. *One opposition view to number 7 – Location is very important because if you don't buy the land now it may be gone later. Also empty space in city should be preserved over rural.*

Issues identified with Infill Open Space:

- Open Space funds may not go as far when purchasing land in town because land prices will be higher.
- Infill purchases will potentially push development to the outer edges and encourages sprawl.
- + If open space is in town, that will reduce the need to drive to enjoy it. It may be more accessible to citizens.
- + Infill parcels will preserve Longmont's heritage and access to nature.

Issues identified with Perimeter Open Space:

- + Perimeter property may be the easiest to purchase.
- + May get more land for the money on the perimeter.

Specific parcels mentioned:

1. Yeager Farm: follow through with the Comprehensive Plan and preserve half of it. (The group split on this issue, it involves other things not just open space issues)
2. Bond Farm on Spruce near St. Vrain.

Acquisition Strategies

Potential ways to stretch city's open space dollars:

1. Encourage donation of land interests
2. Focus on floodplains and other areas of potentially lower value (due to inability to develop)
3. Apply acquisition tools (fee, conservation easement, etc.) depending on property and owner's and city's needs (i.e., don't always just buy fee title)
4. Establish or help establish special districts or other neighborhood associations where neighbors would vote to tax themselves voluntarily to contribute funds to protect open space parcels important to their neighborhoods

Ideas important to selection and prioritization:

1. Include acquisition of water rights whenever that's important to the protect the values on a parcel (e.g., to maintain agriculture), either through purchase of a full or undivided interest at the time of the fee or easement purchase, or via a right of first refusal
2. Include neighborhoods in identifying needs for future uses, which will help identify important parcels (for infill parcels especially)
3. Identify selection criteria (desires for exemplary land), design a competitive process, and advertise 'grants' to landowners for those wanting to work with city who can best meet city's needs/desires/criteria.
4. Identify relatively broad/flexible criteria to identify a range of potential parcels, and then apply more specific/narrow criteria to make final selections. Perhaps set up a points system with specific criteria (wildlife habitat, trail connections, prime agricultural land etc.) and rate potential land according to these criteria. The parcel with the highest rate would be pursued first.