Open Space Advisory Board

Agenda

Wednesday, August 12, 2026
Louisville Public Library
951 Spruce Street
6:45 PM

Members of the public are welcome to attend and give comments remotely; however, the in-person meeting may continue even if technology issues prevent remote participation.

- You can call in to +1 719 359 4580 or 833 548 0276 (toll free)
  Webinar ID # 876 9127 0986 / Passcode: 916518
- You can log in via your computer. Please visit the City's website to link to the meeting:

The Board will accommodate public comments during the meeting. Anyone may also email comments prior to the meeting.

1. **Call to Order & Roll Call**

2. **Approval of Agenda**

3. **Public Comments on Items Not on the Agenda and Items on the Consent Agenda**

   Public comments are limited to 3 minutes per speaker. When several people wish to speak on the same position on a given item, a spokesperson may be used to state that position.

4. **Board Consent Agenda**

   The following items on the Consent Agenda are considered routine, and shall be approved, adopted, accepted, etc. by a motion of the Board unless a board member specifically requests an item be considered under "Regular Business". In such an event, the item shall be removed from the "Consent Agenda" and action taken separately on said item in the order appearing on the agenda. Those items so approved under the heading "Consent Agenda" will appear in the Board Minutes in their proper order.

   A. Approval of Minutes

5. **Board Informational Comments**

6. **Staff Report**

   A. OSAB Staff Updates

7. **Regular Business**

A. 7:00 pm Discussion Item-Introduction of Amanda Accamando, Open Space Manager (10 Minutes)

B. 7:10 pm Discussion Item-Budget Update. Presented by Adam Blackmore, Director of Parks, Recreation and Open Space. (30 Minutes)

- Link to City Council July 22, 2026 Budget Retreat Materials: https://louisvilleco.portal.civicclerk.com/event/1407/files/attachment/4059
  i. Budget Calendar Pg 8-9
  ii. Personnel-Pg 70-74
  iii. OSAB Recommendations-Pg 88-89
  iv. Capital Improvement Projects
  v. Acquisition Reserve

C. 7:40 pm-Action Item: Develop PROS Guidebook (Long Range Plan & Trails System Plan) Recommendations. Presented by Susan McEachern, OSAB Chair (60 Minutes)

- Draft Guidebook to be released to the Public on August 10th.
- https://www.engagelouisvilleco.org/

D. 8:40 pm Discussion Item-Preparation for Property Acquisition Review in September. Presented by Susan McEachernm, OSAB Chair. (10 minutes).

- Property OO Board Recommendation to City Council
- Identify New Opportunities for Property Review in September

E. 8:50 pm Discussion Items for Next Meeting-

- Centennial Valley General Development Plan Amendment for Residential Development
- Property Acquisition Review

8. Adjourn

Resident Information

If you wish to speak at the meeting in person, please fill out a sign-up card and present it to the clerk at the meeting. If you are attending remotely, please use the “raise hand” icon to show you wish to speak in appropriate public comments section.

Persons planning to attend the meeting who need sign language interpretation, translation services, assisted listening systems, Braille, taped material, or other accommodation should email the City Clerk’s Office or call 303.335.4574

A 2 business notice is requested.

Si requiere una copia en español de esta publicación o necesita un intérprete durante la reunión del Consejo, por favor llame a la Ciudad al 303.335.4574 o email

City of Louisville
COLORADO • SINCE 1878

Open Space Advisory Board

Meeting Minutes

July 8, 2026
Library 1st Floor Meeting Room
951 Spruce Street
6:45pm

Call to Order – Chairperson McEachern called the meeting to order at 6:47.

Roll Call was taken and the following members were present:

- Board Members Present: Susan McEachern, Mark Poletti, Bud Talbot, Michiko Christiansen, Andy Dorsey, Brad Pugh
- Board Members Absent: Daniel Rupp (Excused), Denise Montagu (Excused)
- Staff Members Present: Ember Brignull, Andrew Bailey

Approval of Agenda – The agenda was approved by all members.

Approval of Meeting Minutes – The minutes from the May 13 meeting were approved as written.

Public Comments: No Comments

Staff Updates

- See the meeting packet for updates. Ember provided some additional details on how the drought is creating challenges in getting water into Hecla Lake and then on to Seventh Generation Farm.
- Next year there should be live footage of the Kestrel nest near the open space operations building.

Board Updates

- Andy noted that there is a proposal to develop the horse farm near the North Open Space that OSAB had designated as a high priority for acquisition. The proposal is for 186 units. It is in preliminary stages of discussion at the Lafayette Planning Commission. Board members agreed to put on the next agenda a discussion about how OSAB can respond.

- Ember will send out the past documents from board discussions about OO.

- Andy noted that Lafayette appears to be using its Wildlife Plan, which was approved by Lafayette City Council, as the basis for closing social trails in areas that are important wildlife habitat. He and Susan have both seen trail-closed signs in Lafayette, particularly along Coal Creek. He could not find any reference to social trails in the Lafayette City Code.

- Susan noted that she meets with Adam Blackmore (Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Director) twice per year, one of which was on July 1. Susan reported that Adam noted that the city has an operating deficit. There is a budget retreat recap August 20, then City Council meetings on 9/1 and 10/20 regarding the budget. The deficit means that the finance director has not approved including in the draft budget the new open space positions that OSAB supported. Also, Adam noted that the annual contribution to the acquisition reserve is currently set at 30% of the revenue from the open space sales tax, but there is discussion about changing that reserve to accommodate more operations spending. Susan reported that Adam is in favor of keeping the Warembourg project in the CIP list and of making the open space tax permanent.

Discussion Item: Meet the New Ranger, Andrew Bailey

Discussion Item-Social Trails

- Ember has approval for her and her staff to work with the Trails Tiger Team (if OSAB agrees) to develop language for the Trails Long Range plan that could give guidance and authority for staff to address social trails. The proposed language could include some criteria to more objectively decide if a social trail should be closed based on the vegetation classification, safety, future trail plans and other factors.

- The goal would be for council to approve a trails plan with that language that would then be the basis for staff action.

- Based on the plan timeline, the draft language needs to be submitted within about one week.

- Daniel, one of the members of the Trails Tiger Team, is out of town for next week. Andy volunteered to substitute for him for this process. Bud is the other member of the team.

- Board discussion included a preference for the language to include processes to gather more data, including public input, for trails that are not clearly in preserve land or have clear safety issues.

- **Action: Brad made a motion to have the Trails Tiger Team work with staff to review internal draft documents for proposed social trail language in the Trails Long Range plan and provide feedback. Mark seconded. Approved unanimously.**

- Ember will get more details to see if there is time to get a draft to the whole board after the tiger team reviews.

Update Item—Capital Improvement Process

- Ember noted that the projected city budget deficit may lead to some reductions/postponement in CIPs. The department is still pushing for the Warembourg CIP. As noted in the board updates, there are several more steps in the city budget process before CIPs are finalized.

- Likelihood of one new Open Space positions.

Finance Committee Special Meeting

- See notes in the board updates regarding the city budget situation and timeline.

Update Item- Open Space Acquisition Recommendations Ranking Process

- Susan reviewed the documents and processes used in the past rankings.

- Ember noted that board members should review the properties on the list and consider any other properties they would like to include in the list.

- The goal is to review the rankings in September and consider if we want to make any changes. The review process will give new board members a chance to weigh in.

- Bud will follow up with Denise to update her on the next steps and the homework for the new board members

Discussion Item-Agenda Items for Joint Board Meeting with Superior

- Ember noted that we should know by the end of the week if Superior, which also wants a joint meeting, will agree to meeting in September.

- Mark reported on his meeting with members of the Superior and Lafayette boards and presented some ideas for agenda items based on that meeting.

- Ember will follow up with Superior staff and see what agenda topics are interested in discussing.

Discussion Items for Upcoming Meetings

- August: PROS and Trails Long Term Plan Review; Possible memos to City Council regarding the OO property and/or regarding the open space portion of the city budget. Add any potential new properties to the acquisitions review list.
- September: Potential Property Acquisitions Review (Ember to explore inviting the City Manager for an update on her actions on acquisitions); possible update on fire mitigation efforts.
- October: Prepare for joint meeting with City Council
- November: Potential meeting with Lafayette

Adjourn – The meeting was adjourned at 9:03 p.m.

City of Louisville
PARKS & RECREATION

MEMORANDUM

To: Open Space Advisory Board
From: Open Space
Date: August 12, 2026
Re: Information Item 5: Staff Updates

General:

1. 101 Cherry Street Property- Two acres, adjacent to the Warembourg Open Space, will become Open Space. Utilities will be installed underground on the parcel, after which point Open Space staff will take on management responsibilities of the new Open Space property.
2. Hiring:
    a. Open Space Maintenance Technician: The application period will close on August 2, 2026, and staff will begin the interview process in the coming weeks with hopes of having the position filled by the beginning of September.
    b. Natural Resource Supervisor: The position was posted at the beginning of August, and staff have begun reviewing applications. We hope to fill this position by the end of September.
3. PROS Long Range Plan Tentative Schedule for City Council Adoption
    a. 8/3—Draft plans to City Council for review/reference
    b. 8/10—Begin 30-day public review of the drafts on Engage Louisville
    c. 8/25—City Council special meeting to review drafts and receive discussion/direction. Also, review feedback received to date and seek clarity on how to use feedback to drive plan revisions.
    d. 9/11—Final day of public comment/review on Engage Louisville
    e. 9/21—Final versions reviewed with council at CMO briefings and/or emailed for review prior to packet posting
    f. 10/6—Final council presentation (if needed) and adoption of both plans

Natural Resources:

1. Staff attended a training and networking event with local weed managers.
2. The Boulder County Youth Corps team helped remove old fencing on Aquarius and Walnut Open Space. They also helped with noxious weed control efforts on North and Davidson Mesa Open Space properties.

Maintenance & Trails:

3. Staff have been collaborating with Boulder County Open Space and City of Louisville Public Works staff to convey Colorado Big Thompson River Collective water from Hecla Lake to Harney Lastoka farms. Staff approved Boulder County to install a water pump with a noise barrier to move the water to the farm as needed for the rest of the growing seasons.
4. The Open Space team is wrapping up its season with the Boulder County Youth Corps on August 4th. Projects included interpretive education signs installed at Warembourg, Coyote Run, and North, as well as the completion of the Daughenbaugh parking lot fence
5. Staff continue to utilize trail counters to monitor visitation. Counts for June are as follows: Dutch Creek: 9,320 pedestrians, 9,793 cyclists; Harper Lake: 10,649 pedestrians, 3,849 cyclists; Hecla Lake: 9,862 pedestrians, 3,309 cyclists. These represent a 0.8% decrease for Dutch Creek, a 0.9% increase for Hecla, and a 4.7% increase for Harper compared to June 2025
6. Staff will continue to mow trail corridors on all open space trails. 80.62 acres mowed as the most recent total this season.
7. Staff completed a collaborative effort with the Forestry department to remove a hazard tree on Hecla Lake Open Space. The project was completed on July 30, 2026.

Resource Protection:

8. Rangers continue to assist the Police Department with large number of private property wildlife calls. The PD's code enforcement position, which would normally handle these calls, is still unfilled.
9. Louisville Rangers participate in and have helped make possible numerous training courses intended to better prepare them to serve a diverse public, including individuals living with disabilities.
    a. Louisville is a member agency of Rocky Mountain Ranger Association (RMRA), which means rangers are eligible to attend numerous cross-training opportunities with other, larger agencies. These training courses have included:
        i. Mental Health First Aid (a three-year certification)
        ii. Interacting with People with Disabilities
10. A new RMRA program that Sr. Ranger White-Patarino helped to bring into being as part of his role as Association Chair was the Language Development Program.
    a. Rangers can choose from a set of approved, accredited classes from Front Range Community College. When participants complete the course, RMRA reimburses the cost of the course.
    b. The two debut courses RMRA has chosen are "Speed Spanish for Law Enforcement" and "Discover American Sign Language."

11. Louisville rangers attend Ranger Excellence School (RES) and the Colorado Open Space Alliance (COSA) conference on a roughly annual basis. Coursework at RES and COSA, in large part through the participation of RMRA, includes classes and sessions that specifically prepare rangers for serving diverse communities. These trainings have included:
    a. Introduction to Crisis Intervention. This one was very intense and included scenario-based training with professional actors portraying individuals in crisis for different reasons – substance abuse, PTSD, Alzheimers/dementia, etc.
    b. How to Work with Co-Responders.
    c. Spanish for Rangers
    d. Welcoming Non-traditional Communities to Open Space
    e. De-escalation Techniques for Homeless Contacts

Education and Volunteers:

12. Agents of Discovery: The free App was launched on July 20 with two "missions" (i.e., games) - a fishing mission at Harper Lake and a wayfinding mission to highlight the new signage at Davidson Mesa. As of 7/27/26, the missions have been played 24 times. Posters and flyers advertising the new program were posted throughout City of Louisville facilities, open spaces, and parks. We plan to release 1-2 new missions each month to keep the community engaged and discover new Open Space areas each month. Upcoming fall missions include- Wildlife of Harper Lake, Picnic Poachers, Spooky Science, Trails Maintenance 101, Become a Bark Ranger, and Caring for Land, Water, and Wildlife.
13. The city has moved to a new online volunteer management program, which will be implemented for Open Space volunteers starting in 2027.

Education Events Past:

14. Saturday, July 11, 2026, from 8:00 to 10:00 AM, Pulling for Louisville on Davidson Mesa Open Space.
15. Sunday, July 19, 2026, from 7:30 to 9:30 AM, Davidson Mesa on Canvas (Open Space Plein Air Series) on Davidson Mesa Open Space. 5 participants.
16. Friday, July 24, 2026, from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM, Noxious Weed ID Booth on Davidson Mesa Open Space.
17. Tuesday, August 4, 2026, from 6:00 to 6:45 PM, Web World at the Louisville Library. Participation is not available at time of publication.

Education Events Upcoming:

18. Sunday, August 16, 2026, from 8:00 to 10:00 AM, North Open Space on Canvas (Open Space Plein Air Series) at North Open Space.
19. Wednesday, September 2, 2026, from 4:30 to 6:30 PM, Wildlife Day Celebration at Harper Lake Open Space.
20. Sunday, September 6, 2026, from 7:30 to 9:30 PM, Open Space Stargazers: Summer Constellations at Aquarius Open Space.

City of Louisville
PARKS, RECREATION & OPEN SPACE

MEMORANDUM

To: **Open Space Advisory Board**

From: **Ember Brignull, Open Space Superintendent**

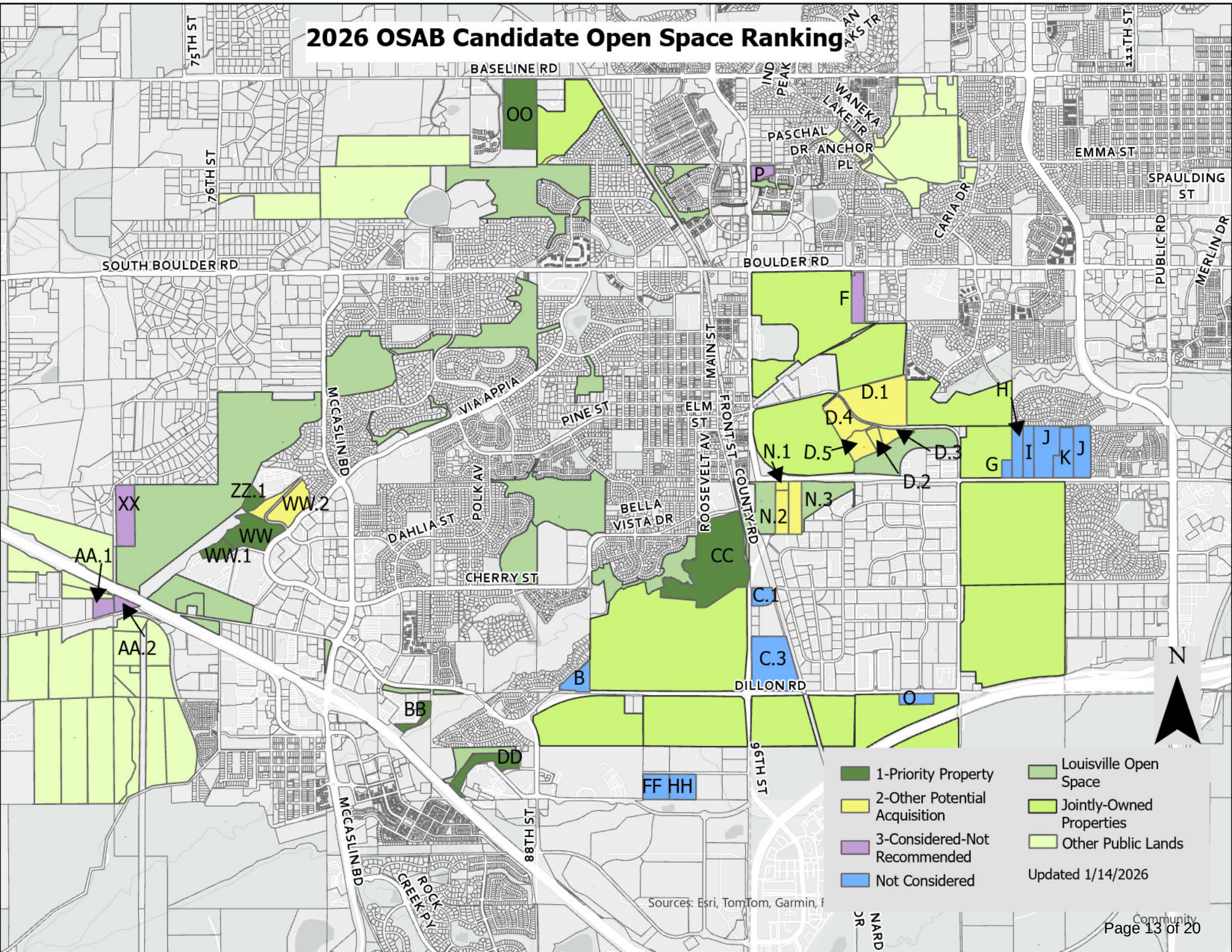
Date: **August 12, 2026**

Re: **Discussion Item 8: Budget Update. Presented by Adam Blackmore, Director of Parks, Recreation, and Open Space**

Purpose: OSAB has requested a director update regarding the 2027-2028 Budget to better understand the: budget Calander; personnel requests & scope of positions; and status of the OSAB recommendations, CIP's, and acquisition reserve.

Background: On July 22, 2026 City Council hosted a Budget Retreat to discuss the 2027-2028 Budget. The Power Point Presentation for this meeting can be found by following this link: https://louisvilleco.portal.civicclerk.com/event/1407/files/attachment/4059. Helpful Power Point page number references:

1. Budget Calander- Pg 8- 9
2. Personnel- Pg 70-74
3. OSAB Recommendations- Pg 88-89


2026 OSAB Candidate Open Space Ranking
BASELINE RD
SOUTH BOULDER RD
BOULDER RD
EMMA ST
SPAULDING ST
PASCHAL DR
ANCHOR PL
WANEKA LAKE TR
CARIA DR
PUBLIC RD
MERLIN DR
75TH ST
76TH ST
111TH ST
MCCASLIN BD
VIA APPIA
PINE ST
ELM ST
MAIN ST
FRONT ST
COUNTY RD
ROOSEVELT AV
POLK AV
DAHLIA ST
BELLA VISTA DR
CHERRY ST
DILLON RD
88TH ST
96TH ST
ROCK CREEK PY
OO
P
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D.1
D.2
D.3
D.4
D.5
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N.1
N.2
N.3
XX
ZZ.1
WW.2
WW
WW.1
AA.1
AA.2
CC
C.1
C.3
B
O
BB
DD
FF
HH
N
1-Priority Property
2-Other Potential Acquisition
3-Considered-Not Recommended
Not Considered
Louisville Open Space
Jointly-Owned Properties
Other Public Lands
Updated 1/14/2026
Sources: Esri, TomTom, Garmin,

Open Space Advisory Board Highest-Priority Property Acquisition Recommendations
October 2025

Coal Creek Business Park Land (Parcel BB)

Property Features: Approximately 5 acres. A small but high-value riparian parcel adjacent to Coal Creek with trail connectivity along the Coal Creek Trail.
Property Goals: Protect the riparian nature and rich habitat of the property. Provide a buffer against nearby commercial development.
OSAB Recommendation: OSAB recognizes that the property is zoned Commercial Business and recommends preservation of acreage adjacent to Coal Creek Trail.

Baseline Horse Property (Parcel OO)

Property Features: Approximately 34 acres. A large, scenic, and ecologically rich site that includes a barn and farmhouse on land long used for agriculture. It offers critical wildlife habitat, an irrigation ditch, trail connectivity options, and buffering opportunities. Bordered by Lafayette and Boulder County Open Spaces, which connect to Louisville's North Open Space.
Property Goals: Retain the rural nature of the property. Increase open space acreage and provide continuity with adjoining open space properties.
OSAB Recommendation: OSAB recommends that the city work with Lafayette and Boulder County to negotiate a conservation easement, perhaps with the right to develop two custom home properties along the northwestern edge.

Southwest of GHX (Parcel ZZ.1)

Property Features: Approximately 5 acres. Bordered to the west by a powerline easement and Davidson Mesa Open Space.
Property Goals: Retain the rural nature of the property. Expand Davidson Mesa Open Space and enhance trail access opportunities as the surrounding area becomes more developed.
OSAB Recommendation: OSAB recognizes that the property is zoned Planned Community Commercial and recommends preservation of contiguous acreage and potential trail connectivity to Davidson Mesa through the development process. An ideal location for an additional trailhead to reduce overuse of the McCaslin trailhead.

Centennial (Parcel WW)

Property Features: Approximately 19 acres. Bordered to the west by a powerline easement and Davidson Mesa Open Space.

Property Goals: Preserve diminishing grassland habitat. Expand Davidson Mesa Open Space and enhance trail access opportunities as the surrounding area becomes more developed.

Supporting Parcel: If WW is preserved, OSAB would support preservation of WW.1 as well. Acquisition of WW.1 alone would not be recommended.

OSAB Recommendation: OSAB recognizes that the property is zoned Planned Community Commercial and recommends preservation of contiguous acreage and potential trail connectivity to Davidson Mesa through the development process. If Council chooses to develop this area, OSAB would strongly support preservation of at least part of this parcel for a trail connection

Centennial 1 (Parcel WW.1)

Property Features: Approximately 6 acres. Bordered to the west by a powerline easement and Davidson Mesa Open Space.

Property Goals: Preserve diminishing grassland habitat. Increase open space acreage as part of Davidson Mesa Open Space and trail access opportunities as the surrounding area becomes more developed.

Supporting Parcel: If WW is preserved, OSAB would support preservation of WW.1 as well. Acquisition of WW.1 alone would not be recommended.

OSAB Recommendation: OSAB recognizes that the property is zoned Planned Community Commercial and recommends preservation of contiguous acreage and potential trail connectivity to Davidson Mesa through the development process.

Red Barn Property (Parcel CC)

Property Features: Approximately 68 acres. Includes a historic barn and farmhouse on land long used for agriculture. Coal Creek runs through the property. Bordered to the west by Dutch Creek Open Space and to the south by Boulder County Open Space.

Property Goals: Retain the rural nature of the property. Increase Open Space acreage and continuity with adjoining open space properties.

OSAB Recommendation: OSAB recognizes that the property has a conservation easement, but it includes the rights to develop two additional homes. Maintaining the property in its current state would preserve a true jewel of the city's agricultural heritage. To maintain the rich riparian habitat along Coal Creek, OSAB would recommend not adding creekside trails since the existing trail system connects adjacent open space properties very effectively

Avista Hospital North Property (DD)

Property Features: Approximately 15 acres. Adjacent to existing open space and golf course. Excellent viewsheds. Potential trail connection to Highway 36 bike route.

Property Goals: Consider trail to link with Highway 36. Increase Open Space acreage and continuity with adjoining open space properties.

OSAB Recommendation: OSAB recognizes that the property adjoins the current Avista hospital, which opposes trails on the property. Reconsider a trail once medical facilities are no longer active on the site.

Property Name	Parcel	Size (acres)	Existing Conservation Easement	Zoning (See note at bottom)	Acquisition Strategy	Narrative/Notes
Priority Property						
Coal Creek Business Park Land. West of Dillon; Noth of Coal Crek Trail	BB	5.04	Y	CB	Fee Simple	Small but high-value Coal Creek riparian parcel with rich habitat, trail connectivity, and strong conservation potential as a buffer against nearby commercial development.
Baseline Horse Property. South of Baseline; West of Callahan Open Space.	OO	33.71		County - RR	Conservation Easement	Large, scenic, and ecologically rich site with high conservation value—offering critical wildlife habitat, trail connectivity, fire mitigation potential, and buffering opportunities—where securing at least a conservation easement (ideally through partnership with the county and Lafayette) is essential to prevent development impacts.
South West of GHX	ZZ.1	4.72		PCC	Fee Simple or Partial Developer Land Dedication	Small but strategic extension of Davidson Mesa with habitat value, scenic views, and potential for a trailhead, while buffering against possible commercial development.
Centennial- (Middle)	WW	19.27		PCC	Fee Simple or Partial Developer Land Dedication	This parcel has important conservation value with strong trail connectivity to Davidson Mesa, Centennial, and south Louisville, featuring notable topography and natural areas that complement WW.1.
Centennial 1-(Western)	WW.1	6.03		PCC	Fee Simple or Partial Developer Land Dedication	Parcel with natural vegetation and views that would expand Davidson Mesa habitat and connectivity, though bordered by an Xcel easement.
Red Barn Property. North of jointly owned Warembourg and West of County Road	CC	67.54	Y	AG	Fee Simple	Existing county conservation easement limits development to the existing house plus two additional houses. However, if the property were available for sale, its unique location and riparian habitat make it a priority purchase to maintain rural character and riparian health
Avista Hospital Noth Property	DD	15			Developer Land Dedication	
Other Potential Acquisition						
Mayhoffer-North of Empire Road	D.1	14.75	Y	County -Ag	TBD	Valuable mainly as part of a combined D2, D4, and D5 conservation easement to restrict building near Coal Creek.
Centennial-Eastern	WW.2	19.6		PCC	TBD	Medium parcel with limited habitat value but potential as a fire buffer, trail link, and development buffer, best pursued with nearby WW and ZZ properties.
SE of HWY 42 & 96 th St. (Western)	N.2	8.28		County -Ag	TBD	Best conserved with N2 and N3 to enable potential Coal Creek Trail realignment and access.
SE of HWY 42 & 96 th St. (Eastern)	N.3	9.9		County -Ag	TBD	Best combined with N2 and N3 to enable Coal Creek Trail access and potential realignment.
Western most Conservation Easement; South West of Empire Road.	D.4	11.05	Y	County -Ag	TBD	Conservation easement.
South East of HWY 42 & 96 th St.- (Western, smallest)	N.1	1.65			TBD	Best conserved with N2 and N3 as a buffer; provides no creek access alone.
Southern Most Conservation Easement; West of Empire Road	D.5	8.9	Y	County -Ag	TBD	Creek protected through a conservation easement.
South of Empire Road adj. to Mayhoffer	D.2	3.33		County -Ag	TBD	Conservation easement.
South of Empire Road adj. to Mayhoffer	D.3	5			TBD	Best conserved with other D properties.
Considered But Not Recommended					TBD	
Santillies- SE of S.Bldr Rd & 95th St.	F	9.13		PCC	TBD	Small parcel with views and trail access that could serve as a community buffer or park, but has low open space value and is more suitable for development.
South of Davidson Mesa & US 36 (Eastern)	AA.2	2.68			TBD	Parcel south of 36 providing potential trail connections from Davidson Mesa to Marshall Trail.
South of Davidson Mesa & US 36 (Western)	AA.1	4.71			TBD	Parcel south of 36 with potential trail connections.
South East of Pascele Drive & HWY 42. Seventh Day Adventists	P	4.9		County - RR	TBD	A small parcel with mountain views and trail connections that could serve as a neighborhood buffer or parkland, but offers low open space value and is likely better suited for development.
West of and adjacent to Davidson Mesa	XX	19.03			TBD	Excellent views; City of Boulder Open Space & Mountain Park adjacent land.

AG= Agriculture; PCC= Planned Community Commercial, CB=Commercial Business

Strategies and Tools for Open Space Property Acquisition

12/10/2015 Revised 2/4/2026

Summary: acquisition discussions between OSAB, City Manager Malcolm Fleming, and OS staff (with input from Louisville, Boulder County & Jefferson County Open Space staff)

Tool	How it works	Advantages	Disadvantages
Real Estate Retainer	While many large open space agencies have staff dedicated to land acquisitions, this is impractical or unfeasible for smaller agencies due to cost and infrequency of opportunities. A smaller municipality could extend its reach through an established network of real estate brokers in the area. Real estate brokers tend to be the first individuals with knowledge of potential land coming on the market for sale, and may have relationships with landowners in the area. A municipality could provide a select group of brokers with its target acquisition list either to pursue transactions, or simply to keep the municipality abreast of potential target acquisition opportunities. It is typical in the real estate industry for a seller to pay all brokerage commissions/compensation.	Expands the reach of smaller municipalities' beyond staff resources at minimal additional costs, and may result in additional opportunities.	May result in a conflict if multiple brokers identify the same target acquisition at the same time, an event more common in a smaller municipality real estate market.
Right of first refusal/Option Agreement	The right of first refusal is a contract between the buyer and seller that specifies that the land may be acquired by the buyer at a future date. This gives the municipality the opportunity to match an offered purchase price within a specified time period should a landowner receive a legitimate offer to sell. A purchase option is simply a right that the municipality holds to purchase the land by a specified date at a specified price. A right of first refusal and a purchase option can be either donated to the municipality or sold.	Keeps the opportunity open, keeps the dialogue going, inexpensive.	Money paid to the seller for the right of first refusal/option is forfeited if the city cannot or will not purchase the land at the specified time and price.
Fee Simple Acquisition	Most acquisitions of open space have historically been fee simple purchases.	Fee acquisition has the advantage of giving the city full control over the management of the properties' resources, and provides the greatest flexibility for decision making about the best ways to address visitor access, agricultural management, ecological restoration, and other management issues.	Most expensive of all acquisition tools

Conservation Easements	Legal restriction voluntarily placed on a property by its owner. Enforcement rights are granted to a public agency or charitable organization. Easement is customized to meet landowner needs, including retention of certain rights.	Landowners can protect land in perpetuity while maintaining ownership. There are significant savings on taxes including property, income, and estate taxes. Landowners are motivated to donate CEs because Colorado allows transferable tax credits for qualified donations. Currently, a CE donor can earn up to $375,000 in state income tax credits. Under policies now in effect, these credits can be carried forward for up to 20 years and used as needed to offset state income tax payments, or sold to others.	Conservation easements are irrevocable and rights included are no longer an option for the landowner.
Trail Easements	A partial interest in a property is granted to allow entry onto another landowner's property. Trail facilities are developed within a designated area, to allow users onto the corridor to use the trail. Negotiation between trail managers and owners usually occurs. Owners may be willing to allow access for a fee or donation of the easement.	Easement acquisition is usually cheaper than outright purchase of land. There are fewer disruptions of existing land uses.	Tensions can arise between entities regarding terms or covenants. Term easements can cause problems if the landowner does not choose to renew the easement.
Parkland/Trail Dedication	City requires developers and builders to dedicate park/trail lands or pay a fee that is used to acquire and develop park and trail facilities. This exaction fee is a way to offset increased demand for parks or trails created by developer/new homeowner	Cities can conserve open spaces at the pace of land development. Developers can negotiate to construct facilities, saving costs to both parties.	Although courts generally uphold this type of exaction, it could result in litigation for requiring payment/land dedication.
Bargain Sale of Land	An agreement is created to sell land for less than fair market value between City and landowner.	Potential tax benefits exist such as charitable donations and a reduction in capital gains tax. Sellers are often motivated to see land preserved.	Less profit for seller than selling at fair market value. Conservation value restraints may limit agency ability to purchase property.

November 8, 2017

Dear Louisville City Council and Others it May Concern,

We are writing to express our concern about the proposed development of a property along Baseline Rd. At our meeting on October 11, 2017, two citizens told the board about a developer's plan for a housing development on this parcel, which currently has a single house, agricultural fields, and outbuildings associate with agriculture. Please see the October OSAB meeting packet for maps and a description of the parcel. This land is currently part of Boulder County, but if developed it would be annexed into Lafayette. However, we believe that the City of Louisville should help advocate for its preservation because the currently-proposed development would impact our City's North and Callahan Open Spaces in the following ways:

1) Lost Open Space Continuity: This parcel creates a significant bottleneck between North and Callahan Open Space parcels. In the current, agricultural usage, this bottleneck is mostly unnoticeable. If this land were fully developed with houses, this bottleneck would narrow down to approximately 400 ft wide.

2) Potential Loss of Wildlife Corridor/Ditches: This parcel contains two ditches lined by mature trees: one along the western edge of the property, one that bisects the property east-to-west. Recent bird studies on Louisville Open Space have demonstrated the importance of this sort of habitat heterogeneity to bird populations, and irrigation ditches are well known habitat dispersal corridors and refuges. If these ditches are undergrounded or significantly altered, our wildlife would be impacted.

3) Increased Land Impact: If the proposed 60 new houses are added to the land, all those new neighbors will use Louisville Open Space and the network of social trails that currently cut across that land will increase. The new neighbors will particularly be interested in cutting across the newly created bottleneck, as the shortest access to the paved trail at North.

4) Aesthetic Concerns: The large number of houses would be plainly visible, 400 feet away from the North Open Space trails. Currently this parcel functions as a community buffer.

This land may not be a natural fit for direct fee simple Open Space acquisition. It has a private parcel on its western border (the Nyland Community) and another private parcel part way along its eastern border. However, the OSAB has been advocating for the City to explore alternative methods of land conservation rather than outright purchase. This parcel may be an ideal candidate for a land conservation easement that incentivizes future owners to maintain the current building density or agricultural usage. Other solutions, such as subdividing the property, so that only the portion north of the irrigation ditch is developed, or requiring density to be clustered north of the irrigation ditch, may be appropriate as well.

We recognize that Boulder County and the City of Lafayette are the best candidates for leadership in decisions about this land, but we would argue that the City of Louisville has a distinct and pressing interest in the fate of this land. This is a perfect opportunity for the City and its partners to explore some of the land conservation methods other than fee simple acquisition, that the OSAB has been advocating for.

We urge City Council to reach out to the County and the City of Lafayette to express Louisville's willingness to explore creative options for conserving this land.

Thank you,

The City of Louisville Open Space Advisory Board