

# Updated 3/2/11 Additional: Additional: OS Definition, OS Policy 1.6; Recreation Policy 1.5

CITIZEN'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

# **ENVIRONMENT & CONSERVATION –**

continued (Watchable Wildlife)

**Begin:** 

OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

Presenter: Jim Cronk Development Services Director March 3, 2011



# **Parking Lot**

# **Parking Lot**

# Watchable Wildlife (Expert Forum suggested policies):

- **A.** Support the implementation of the Watchable Wildlife Recreation Vision for the Flagstaff Area through a collaboration of the appropriate government and private parties.
- **B.** Support the development of watchable wildlife recreation opportunities including the development of viewing areas at wildlife-rich locations around Flagstaff through collaboration of appropriate government and private parties.
- **C.** Through a collaboration of appropriate government and private parties, support the development of watchable wildlife recreation opportunities at wildlife-rich locations

#### **Staff Recommendation:**

- 1. Re-worded policy: Support the development of watchable wildlife recreation opportunities.
  - 2. Strategy: a. Support the implementation of the Watchable Wildlife Recreation Vision for the Flagstaff Area through a collaboration of the appropriate government and private parties.

(\* Watchable Wildlife Recreation Vision document needs to be vetted and approved by P&Z)

CAC Recommendation: PARKING LOT to allow for further reading. Referencing another document may not be appropriate in the RP (1/6/11).

Hold on Parking Lot until 3/3/2011 for further information.



# V. New Business:

# Open Space



# **Open Space Definition:**

# Proposed:

Open Space lands are a complex mosaic of undeveloped land with a wide variety of qualities, values and purposes affecting all other elements of the Regional Plan. These undeveloped parcels may offer scenery, ecological networks, wildlife habitats and corridors, watercourses and wetlands, opportunities for outdoor enjoyment, or historical and archaeological significance. Just as importantly, they serve as the spatial definition of urban areas. As such, they may host low-impact recreational uses, such as trails, fishing, picnicking, or sustainable agriculture. The Regional Plan identifies Open Space lands for current or future public or permitted private use and designates these lands with such tools as conservation easements, zoning classification, or other official designation for such a purpose.

#### Comments Received:

- 1. Open Space lands are a complex mosaic of undeveloped parcels may offeringscenery, ecological networks, wildlife habitats and corridors, watercourses and wetlands, opportunities for outdoor enjoyment, or historical and archaeological significance and linkages between features. Just as importantly, they serve as the separate and buffer sections of our community such as Doney park and Kachina Village. As such, they may host low-impact recreational uses, such as trails, fishing, picnicking, or sustainable agriculture (see definition of 'sustainable agriculture' attached). The Regional Plan identifies Open Space lands for current or future public or permitted private use and designates these lands with such tools as conservation easements, zoning classification, or other official designation for such a purpose. (Expert Forum)
- 2. "Just as importantly, they serve as the spatial definition of urban areas; providing buffers to land with more significant intrinsic value." (B.McKellar)
- 3. "mosaic of undeveloped or minimally developed parcels..." (M. Chavaes)



#### Synthesized:

Open Space lands are a complex mosaic of undeveloped **or minimally developed parcels** land with a wide variety of qualities, values and purposes affecting all other elements of the Regional Plan. These undeveloped parcels may offer scenery, ecological networks, wildlife habitats and corridors, watercourses and wetlands, opportunities for outdoor enjoyment, or historical and archaeological significance **and linkages between features**. Just as importantly, they serve as the spatial definition of urban areas. As such, they may host low-impact recreational uses, such as trails, fishing, picnicking, **watchable wildlife** or sustainable agriculture. The Regional Plan identifies Open Space lands for current or future public or permitted private use and designates these lands with such tools as conservation easements, zoning classification, or other official designation for such a purpose.

#### Other suggestion for Definition:

Open Space lands are a complex mosaic of undeveloped lands with a wide variety of qualities, values and purposes affecting all other elements of the Regional Plan.

#### Open Space may protect:

- Ecological networks
- Wildlife habitats and corridors
- Riparian areas and wetlands
- Historical, cultural and archeological sites

#### Open Space may offer:

- Scenery
- Opportunities for outdoor enjoyment, including but not limited to fishing, picnicking and wildlife watching
- Sustainable agriculture

#### Open Space may serve as:

- Linkages between features
- Buffer for neighborhoods and highways
- Buffers for areas of high cultural and ecological value
- Spatial definition of urban areas

The Regional Plan identifies open space lands for current and future public or permitted private use and specifies tools to acquire and conserve open space. Any development on these lands will be limited to what is necessary for the allowed uses, and will be contextually sensitive and sustainably built. (BMcKellar)



#### **Staff Rational:**

- 1) Agree Add "minimally developed" as it allows trails, trail heads, visitor centers, and interpretive signs.
- 2) Agree Add "and linkages (or connections) between features". The Regional Plan will include 'sustainable agriculture' in the definitions.
- 3) In response to EF recommendation #1: Do NOT change sentence "Just as importantly..." for 'spatial definition' includes buffers in regional context, and not proprietary to specific neighborhoods.
- 4) In response to B. McKellar recommendation #2: Allow RP Open Space <u>map</u> to define "land with significant intrinsic value" through both County & City Open Space Commissions.
- 5) Recommendation of Betsy's Open Space Definition; agree that categorizing 'likes' with 'likes' makes sense; last sentence could be incorporated as two additional words in first sentence in lieu, and make sure "minimally developed" is part of the definitions.

#### **CAC Discussion:**



#### **OPEN SPACE**

#### **GOAL**

The region will have a balanced system of open lands, natural areas, wildlife corridors and habitat areas, trails, and greenways to support the natural environment that sustains our quality of life and ecosystem health.

#### **Policies:**

**OS Policy 1.1:** Form and use the appropriate <u>inter-agency institutional group</u> (federal, state, city, county and non-profit) for coordinated open space planning, acquisition, conservation and protection.

**OS Policy 1.2:** Open Spaces will be used to <u>connect neighborhoods</u> and developed areas to each other within the larger regional open space system, to <u>preserve priority open lands</u> and to <u>protect "Neighborwoods"</u>.

**OS Policy 1.3:** Preserve the <u>rural character</u> and protect the <u>natural environment</u> of the region.

**OS Policy 1.4**: Promote the development a <u>'Conservation Land System'</u> (CLS) as a means to inventory, map and prioritize and manage the 'green infrastructure' for the region.

**Suggested OS Policy 1.5:** Plan to ensure for 'green buffers' along the I-40 and I-17 corridors, as screening and a carbon sink, as well as to promote a scenic-byway.

Suggested Policy 1.6: Trails will provide connectivity between neighborhoods and open space.



#### **OPEN SPACE GOAL**

The region will have a balanced system of open lands, natural areas, wildlife corridors and habitat areas, trails, and greenways to support the natural environment that sustains our quality of life and ecosystem health.

#### Comments Received:

1. The region will have a balanced system of open lands, natural areas, wildlife corridors and habitat areas, trails, and greenways to support the natural environment that sustains our quality of life, cultural heritage, and ecosystem health. (B.McKellar)

**Staff Recommendation**: Accept addition of "cultural heritage" into Open Space Goal.

**CAC Recommendation:** 



**OS Policy 1.1:** Form and use the appropriate <u>inter-agency institutional group</u> (federal, state, city, county and non-profit) for coordinated open space planning, acquisition, conservation and protection.

#### **COMMENTS RECEIVED:**

OS Policy 1.1: Form and use the appropriate <u>inter-agency institutional group</u> Stake Holders Group (federal, state, city, county and-non-profit and interested citizens) for coordinated open space planning, acquisition, conservation and protection. (EF)

Staff Recommendation: Accept change.

**CAC** Recommendation:



#### OS Policy 1.1. Suggested Strategies:

- a. Use the guiding documents of the *Greater Flagstaff Area Open Spaces and Greenways Plan*, the City of Flagstaff Urban Open Spaces Plan, and the City's *Long Range Master Plan for Parks*, *Recreation and Open Space*, and County Area Plans which have Open Space Objectives as the framework for the inter-agency group.
- b. Form the inter-agency institutional framework group.

#### **Comments Received:**

Form the inter-agency Stake Holders Group (EF)

c. Use Inter-agency planning and acquisition for collaborative buying power. Ownership, operation and maintenance should center in a single entity.

#### **Comments Received:**

Use Inter-agency planning and acquisition for collaborative buying power. Ownership, operation and maintenance should center in a single entity, and may vary from parcel to parcel. (B.McKellar)

# **Suggested Additional Strategies:**

- **d.** Develop a Conservation Lands System and committee to weigh options, prioritize potential conservation of sites, and seek funding for conservation and to coordinate efforts. (EF: new strategy)
- e. Renew the 1998 MOU with cooperating agencies and assign a subgroup to implement the Watchable Wildlife Site network. (EF: new strategy)



**OS Policy 1.2:** Open Spaces will be used to <u>connect neighborhoods</u> and developed areas to each other within the larger regional open space system, to <u>preserve priority open lands</u> and to <u>protect "Neighborwoods"</u>.

#### **COMMENTS RECEIVED:**

1. Open Spaces will be used to <u>connect neighborhoods</u> and developed areas to each other within the larger regional open space system, to <u>preserve priority open lands</u> and to <u>protect "Neighborwoods"</u> and to <u>develop a network of</u> Watchable Wildlife Sites. (EF: needs discussion)

Staff Recommendation: Suggest "Open Spaces and Trails will be used..."

**CAC** Recommendation:



#### **Suggested Strategies for OS Policy 1.2:**

a. The inventory, criteria and objectives should be used as part of an open spaces management program to acquire, protect, and manage properties and their resources and values.

#### **Comments Received:**

- 1. WHAT ARE THE CRITERIA AND OBJECTIVES? (B. McKellar)
- b. Map proposed open space 'connections', 'priority open lands' and 'Neighborwoods'.
- c. Priority open lands to consider as collaborative efforts by stakeholders for preservation will include Picture Canyon and Walnut Canyon.

#### **Comments Received:**

- 1. May want to be more specific here....most of Walnut Canyon is already in a National Monument. (S. Hedwall)
- d. Implement tThe FUTS Masterplan is one means of connection by open space and trails.

#### **Comments Received:**

- 1. Use Tthe FUTS Masterplan is one means of to connection by open spaces and trails. (EF)
- e. Identify tools and clearly articulate legal means to acquire and maintain connections, priority open lands and neighborwoods.

  (EF: needs discussion)
- f. All subdivision applications be assessed for open space and recreational amenities (parks, open space and trails) within walking distance of project; either provided within subdivision or already in close proximity.

#### **Comments Received:**

Assess all subdivision applications be assessed for open space and recreational amenities (parks, open space and trails) within walking distance of project; either provided within subdivision or already in close proximity. (EF: needs discussion)



g. Permit recreational use of regional open space lands where it is consistent with the Land Use Plan and other policies.

Suggested:

Permit low-impact recreational use of regional open space lands where it is consistent with other Regional Plan policies. (BMcKellar)

#### **Comments Received – Additional Suggested Strategies:**

h. Assign implementation of network of Watchable Wildlife Sites to a subgroup of the Stake Holders Group formed from the MOU and cooperating agencies. (EF: new strategy)



OS Policy 1.3: Preserve the <u>rural character</u> and protect the <u>natural environment</u> of the region.

#### **COMMENTS RECEIVED:**

1. Acceptable, although I'm not sure I would use the phrase "rural character" to emphasize open space, maybe just the "natural environment" part of this. (M. Chavaes)

**Staff Recommendation**: Accept as written: The Existing Land Use Plan and Community Character guidelines state a balance of rural and urban character based upon residential densities. The rural character is reflective of our region as a whole, even though we realize it is not a condition of the urban core.

#### CAC Recommendation:

- a. Identify and give examples of 'rural character', how the built environment can be respectful of the natural environment. Give clear examples of what this means: i.e. Fort Valley Corridor's views, ridgelines, scenic highway corridors, and 'green' setbacks.
- b. Identified significant natural and cultural resources, wildlife habitats and scenic views will be protected from development. (See CLS)
- c. Any development on these lands will be limited to what is necessary for the allowed uses, and will be contextually sensitive and sustainably built. (BMcKellar).



OS Policy 1.4: Promote the development a 'Conservation Land System' (CLS) as a means to inventory, map and prioritize and manage the 'green infrastructure' for the region.

#### **COMMENTS RECEIVED:**

- 1. Needs discussion/clarification. This one really is a strategy, not a policy. Are we talking about a CLS for privately held and City owned lands? We already have a network of National Forests, National Park units, State and County lands, what exactly would we be developing here? (M. Chavaes)
- 2. Use conservation design and a Conservation Lands System (CLS) to complement or connect existing federal, state, County and City lands to enhance selected environmental or historical values. The intent is conserve key parts of our environment and history which might otherwise be lost in a way that also complements development. Conservation should not preempt development but may compete for some lands. (EF: needs discussion)

# **Expert Forum Suggested Strategies for Policy 1.4:**

- a) Form a stakeholder group to flesh out a process to select, and conserve the lands in the CLS, working with City and County staff.
- b) Use existing sources of information including but not limited to, City and County staff and records, NAU, MNA, State and Federal Agencies, RIFA and the mapping in the Regional Plan to determine suitable land for potential inclusion. Consider developing a few new information sources if the parties in Strategy 1 agree they are essential to address the policy effectively.
- c) Use a wide range of strategies to implement the policy, including but not limited to: easements, transfer of development rights, donations, purchase and conservation planning integrated with development. Work with willing landowners and developers to provide a competitive alternative to traditional development. Condemnation should not be considered.



d) Integrate recreation planning with the city, county, state and federal land management into land use planning. Working together, identifies connections, complementary uses and lands to consider for the CLS.

**Staff Recommendation**: "Promote the development of a Conservation Land System (CLS)."

CAC Recommendation:



#### OS Policy 1.4:

#### **Suggested Strategies:**

- a. Utilize the 'green infrastructure' as an ecosystem framework to maintain and promote ecological integrity and enhance human wellbeing, which protect and enhance: unique aesthetic values, unusual terrain, scenic vistas, unique geologic formations, dense or unique vegetation, wildlife habitat and corridors, important riparian areas, air sheds, non-motorized transportation corridors, and set aside for recreational use such as hiking, skiing, bicycling, nature studies, and other similar uses.
- b. Clearly map and articulate the 'green infrastructure' as a means to establish a Conservation Land System.
- c. Use 'inter-agency planning' Stake Holders Group to utilize and implement Conservation Land System.

#### **Comments Received:**

1. Use 'inter agency planning' Stake Holders Group to utilize and implement Conservation Land System. (EF)

#### **Comments Received -- Suggested new strategies:**

- d. Form a committee to flush out a proposal for a CLS in time to become a part of the <u>Regional Plan which goes to the voters.</u>
  (EF: new strategy)
- e. Incorporate restoration into management under the CLS and prioritize unique habitat such as escarpments and springs. (EF: Larry Stevens) (EF: new strategy)



# From City Open Space Commission: Suggested OS Policy 1.5.

Plan to ensure for 'green buffers' along the I-40 and I-17 corridors, as screening and a carbon sink, as well as to promote a scenic-byway.

**Staff recommendation:** Accept as written: the need for adequate 'green buffers' has arisen greatly with the proposal of future highway widening projects. The environmental, community character and noise pollution could be improved by adequate buffers of ponderosa pine and native shrubs. This policy was suggested by the City's Open Space Commission.

Also it could be considered as a STRATEGY under O.S. Strategy 1.3.a as Scenic Highway Corridors.

#### **Suggested Strategy 1.3 from page 17:**

a. Identify and give examples of 'rural character', how the built environment can be respectful of the natural environment. Give clear examples of what this means: i.e. Fort Valley Corridor's views, ridgelines, scenic highway corridors, and 'green' setbacks.

# **CAC recommendation:**



# **Suggested Policy 1.6**

Trails will provide connectivity between neighborhoods and open space.

#### **Strategies:**

- 1. FUTS, AZ Trail, Loop Trail, and equestrian trails are connected through trail masterplanning to each other, neighborhoods and the national forest.
- 2. The City, County and federal trail planners and builders will plan and work together.
- 3. Equestrian neighborhoods have access to national forest.

(BMcKellar)

# **CAC recommendation:**



# RECREATION



Based upon City's Parks & Recreation Commission December 2010 recommendations; these are the existing 2001 Regional Plan goal and policy revised to what the commission felt was feasible.

#### **Recreation Goal 1**

The region will have a balanced system of open lands, natural areas, wildlife corridors and habitat areas, trails, greenways, parks and recreation facilities and programs.

#### Recreation Policy 1.1

Active and passive recreational sites shall be integrated and conveniently located throughout the region to promote a healthy community for all city and county residents and visitors.

# **Recreation Policy 1.2**

Seek and plan partnerships to offer parks, recreation facilities and resources with public and private entities.

# **Recreation Policy 1.3**

Integrate parks, open space, and recreational opportunities with new or updated public facilities, when feasible.

# **Recreation Policy 1.4**

Incorporate sustainable building and maintenance technologies into parks and recreation facilities.

#### Suggested Recreation Policy 1.5

Provide accessible recreational infrastructure for citizens with disabilities or limited mobility.



#### **Recreation Goal 1**

The region will have a balanced system of open lands, natural areas, wildlife corridors and habitat areas, trails, greenways, parks and recreation facilities and programs.

# Suggestion:

 Would like to see "accessible to all citizens and visitors" added to the end of the sentence, or something along those lines.
 Many of the FUTS trails are there with some being paved and wide enough for wheel chair accessibility, but I haven't seen any playground equipment designed for handicapped children here, for example.

# **CAC** recommendation:



Active and passive recreational sites shall be integrated and conveniently located throughout the region to promote a healthy community for all city and county residents and visitors.

# **CAC** recommendation:

#### Suggested Strategies:

 Meet or exceed the need for additional active and passive recreational areas and programs as growth occurs as identified in the City and County Parks, Recreation and Open Space Masterplans.



Seek and plan partnerships to offer parks, recreation facilities and resources with public and private entities.

# **CAC** recommendation:

- Continue to maximize recreational partnerships by coordinating FUSD playgrounds and playing fields to be available to the public during non-school hours.
- Continue to maximize recreational partnerships by coordinating public and private snow-play facilities for farreaching planning, shared resources and infrastructure needs.



Integrate parks, open space, and recreational opportunities with new or updated public facilities, when feasible.

# **CAC** recommendation:

- Incorporate usable public recreation or 'green space' with all public facilities.
- Consider shared public recreation resources for all public facility projects.



Incorporate sustainable building and maintenance technologies into parks and recreation facilities.

# **CAC** recommendation:

- Use reclaim water for all irrigation needs at parks and recreation facilities.
- Sustainable building practices, such as using long-lasting building practices, contextual and recycled materials, siting the building for natural solar gain, incorporating photo voltaic systems, wind turbines, water reclamation and greywater systems, will all contribute to a high-quality parks and recreation system, help maintain the unique community character and set an example for the rest of our building community.



# **Suggested Recreation Policy 1.5**

Provide accessible recreational infrastructure for citizens with disabilities or limited mobility. (MChavaes)

**CAC recommendation:** 



# **Announcements**

# 1. Next regular CAC Meeting:

April 7, 2011, 3:30 p.m. to 6 p.m. at N.AZ Healthcare facilities

# **Agenda Items**:

- a) Any Open Space or Parks & Recreation Parking Lot Items
- b) Community Character:

# II. ADJOURNMENT