

STAFF REPORT

DATE: March 20, 2018

TO: City Council

FROM: Ashley Feeney, Community Development Director
Katherine Hess, Community Development Administrator
Tracie Reynolds, Open Space Program Manager

SUBJECT: Approval of the Strategic Plan for the City's Open Space Program

Recommendation

Staff recommends that the City Council approve the attached resolution (Attachment 1) that approves a Strategic Plan for the City's Open Space Program (Attachment 2) which will guide decision-making under the program through 2030. This action is the culmination of the robust public outreach effort that began in 2016, at the City Council's direction.

Council Goals

This item is directly related to Goal 3 (Pursue Environmental Sustainability), Objective 2 (Continue to pursue implementation of farmland protection and habitat conservation through acquisition of open space/easements). Task A asks staff to "complete community outreach, review and update of City Open Space priorities and policy and make recommendations to City Council, including how Measure O Open Space funds are prioritized for acquisitions and maintenance of agricultural and habitat lands/easements." The Strategic Plan represents the completion of this task.

Fiscal Impact

There is no fiscal impact associated with approval of this Strategic Plan. Costs associated with preparing the Strategic Plan and this staff report have been absorbed into the approved budget for the Community Development and Sustainability Department.

Background and Analysis

In 2015, the City Council directed staff to review and update the City's priorities for spending the funds generated by the City's open space parcel tax, known as Measure O, which was passed by Davis voters in 2000. These parcel taxes, which remain in effect until 2030, must be spent on acquiring and maintaining open space within the Davis Planning Area. Since 2000, the City had been operating under the spending priorities identified in an acquisition and management plan approved by the City Council in 2002. As part of the City Council's directive, it asked staff to update this 2002 plan based on community feedback. A brief chronology of the steps staff undertook over the last two years to fulfill the City Council's directive is attached to this staff report as Attachments 3 and 4.

Strategic Plan

The Strategic Plan -- which builds on, refines, and replaces a similar plan approved by the City Council in 2002 -- is intended to address this strong community interest by providing readers with a clear roadmap for preserving and managing open space in and around the City through 2030, the final year of Measure O, the City's open space parcel tax.

At its March 2018 meeting, the Open Space and Habitat Commission unanimously voted to recommend that the City Council approve the attached Strategic Plan (Attachment 2). More information about the Commission's input into the Strategic Plan and its collaboration with staff can be found in Attachment 3.

The Strategic Plan incorporates the key themes that were expressed by the community during the 2016 public outreach effort. These themes include:

- ✓ ***More emphasis should be given to public access and recreation.*** A new subject area was created on this topic to address this community desire. It is important to note that the community said it wanted the City to continue the historic practice of using funds judiciously to purchase large swaths of agricultural lands under conservation easements (which typically are not publicly accessible). However, the community clearly stated that it would like to see the City balance this portfolio of agriculture lands with more open space closer to the City that is publicly accessible.
- ✓ ***More emphasis should be given to habitat restoration.*** A new subject area was created on this topic to address this community desire. The community clearly stated that it would like to see more funding and program emphasis on ecological restoration projects (specific habitat types that received considerable attention were: riparian forests, burrowing owl habitat, valley oak woodlands, and native pollinator habitat).
- ✓ ***More emphasis should be given to financial and program accountability.*** A new subject area was created on this topic to address this community desire. The community clearly stated that it would like to see more transparency about budgeting, grants, and acquisition priorities. It also expressed an interest in seeing the City increase its reliance on best practices at other open space agencies and its use of new funding partners and funding sources.
- ✓ ***More emphasis should be given to public engagement and partnerships.*** A new subject area was created on this topic to address this community desire. The community also expressed a strong interest in better marketing about the City's Open Space Program and about the City's open space sites. It also expressed an interest in seeing the City increase its level of engagement with private land owners and the farm community to facilitate acquisitions and public access opportunities.

The Strategic Plan is generally organized as follows:

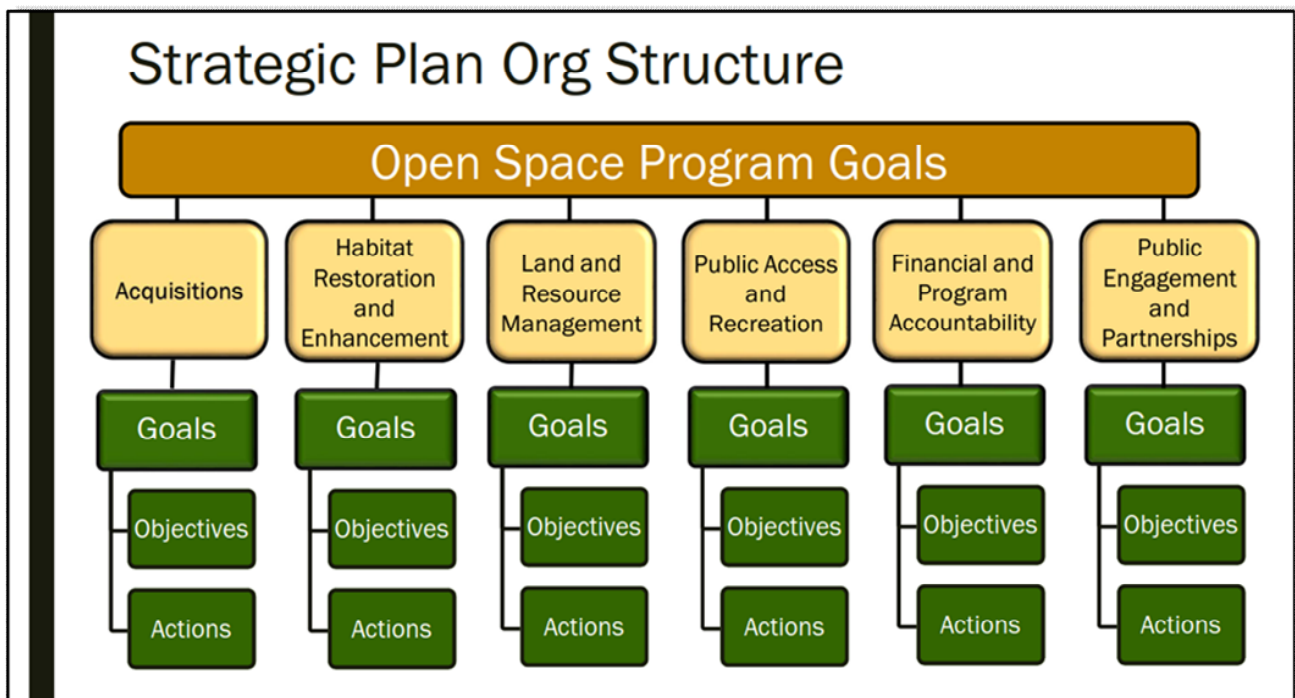
1. The opening section, *A Legacy of Open Space Preservation*, discusses the current state of the City's Open Space Program and the benefits it provides to the community and landowners. This section also describes the types of open space in and around Davis and

which ones the City owns and manages. It concludes with a discussion of the various tools the City uses to preserve open space, such as conservation easements and agricultural buffer/mitigation requirements.

2. The next section, *Roadmap to Open Space Preservation*, provides the reader with an overview of how this Strategic Plan was developed and how it is organized.
3. The rest of the Strategic Plan describes the priority goals, objectives, and action items that staff will pursue through 2030.
4. The plan concludes with a discussion of how the City will measure success, and how it will make decisions about future open space acquisitions.

The intent is to give the document a more structured, easy-to-follow format (i.e., it will include subject areas, goals, objectives, actions). The structure mimics a similar Strategic Plan produced by the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District.

The graphic below illustrates the framework for the Strategic Plan:



The rest of this staff report briefly summarizes each of the six subject areas listed above, and the goals, objectives and action items for each subject area.

Acquisitions

This subject area includes both the acquisition of a fee title interest in open space, and the acquisition of agricultural and/or habitat conservation easements. Several fundamental principles will guide all acquisitions by the City:

1. acquire land from willing sellers only,
2. acquire land within the Davis Planning Area only,
3. stretch the dollar,
4. favor conservation easements,
5. make strategic fee-title acquisitions,
6. pay fair market value,
7. take a balanced approach, and
8. seek multiple benefits.

The City will seek to protect the greatest amount of high quality open space land and resources as possible within its funding constraints. *However, despite remarkable community willingness to pay for open space protection, all undeveloped land and sensitive resources in the Davis Planning Area cannot be protected due to high land costs and multiple competing uses for the land.* In order to maximize the effectiveness of available funding, the City will use the most cost-effective open space protection tools (e.g., conservation easements) and seek to acquire open space that serves to buffer other lands from threat of conversion.

The goals, objectives and action items for this subject area are summarized below:



Goal 1: Protect land near the city limits ("urban fringe" land)

- **Obj A: Acquire strategic parcels in this category (fee title interest or conservation easements)**
- **Action a: Identify and work with willing landowners**



Goal 2: Protect land between communities ("community separator" land)

- **Obj A: Acquire strategic parcels in this category (fee title interest or conservation easements)**
- **Action a: Identify and work with willing landowners**



Goal 3: Protect land used for prime agriculture ("agricultural" land)

- **Obj A: Acquire strategic parcels in this category (fee title interest or conservation easements)**
- **Action a: Identify and work with willing landowners**



Goal 4: Protect land providing habitat ("biological & natural resources" land)

- **Obj A: Acquire strategic parcels in this category (fee title interest or conservation easements)**
- **Action a: Identify and work with willing landowners**



Goal 5: Protect open space for recreation ("public access & recreation" land)

- **Obj A: Acquire strategic parcels in this category (fee title interest or conservation easements)**
- **Action a: Identify and work with willing landowners**



Goal 6: Protect land providing views and scenic vistas ("scenic resources" land)

- **Obj A: Acquire strategic parcels in this category (fee title interest or conservation easements)**
- **Action a: Identify and work with willing landowners**

The City's priority acquisition areas remain unchanged. They are (in no order of importance):

- *Urban Fringe*: Protect land near the city limits to help define the urban limits of Davis and provide an adequate buffer between urban and rural land uses. The conservation purpose is to protect select lands and resources at greatest risk of conversion from urban expansion pressures. These lands are generally located in the historic path of development on the north and west edges of the City. This priority area is linked with the City's growth management policies encouraging infill development and coordination of university housing needs.
- *Community Separator*: Protect land between Davis and neighboring cities to preserve the unique character of each community. The conservation purpose is to protect lands between cities to provide a functional limit to urban expansion pressures from adjoining cities/counties. Davis, Woodland, Dixon, and Yolo County have signed general agreements identifying separator areas and supporting land protection within the boundaries of these areas.
- *Agriculture*: Protect prime agricultural lands and sustainable farming practices (e.g., organic agriculture) to maintain the long-term viability of agriculture in the Davis Planning Area. The conservation purpose is to protect the highest quality agricultural lands facing the greatest risk of conversion. These lands are generally located in the historic path of development to the north and west of the City.
- *Biological and Natural Resources*: Protect important wildlife habitat, sensitive species, and other significant natural resources. The conservation purpose is to protect and enhance biologically unique areas that contribute to the viability and stability of natural communities. These lands generally contain riparian corridors, remnant oak woodlands, wetlands, or remnant grasslands. This category includes lands that can be enhanced/restored to provide additional wildlife habitat.
- *Scenic Resources*: Protect land providing views and scenic vistas of significant landmarks, such as nearby and distant mountain ranges. The conservation purpose is to preserve community identity through the protection of views of significant local and regional landmarks. These lands generally overlap the Urban Fringe and Community Separator areas.

Habitat Restoration and Enhancement

This subject area includes restoring and enhancing City-owned open space areas to make them more livable for native plant and animal species. The goals, objectives, and action items in this section focus on planting more native plants and grasses on City-owned open space areas, creating better wildlife habitat, controlling invasive species using the least toxic methods possible, and providing funding for restoration/enhancement projects.

The goals, objectives and action items for this subject area are summarized below:



GOAL 1: Restore and enhance City-owned open space areas

- **Obj A: Plant more native plants and grasses**

- Action a: Budget for the supplies/staffing necessary for annual plantings
- Action b: Complete habitat restoration project at F Street and Anderson Road
- Action c: Plant native plants/grasses along Channel A, in South Fork Preserve, and along Putah Creek, if feasible
- Action d: Restore slough upstream of Covell Ditch between W. Davis and Putah Creek/Dry Slough, if feasible
- Action e: Transition walnut orchards to valley oak woodland habitat at South Fork Preserve/Wildhorse Ag Buffer

- **Obj B: Create better wildlife habitat**

- Action a: Install habitat structures/features at South Fork Preserve and other City-owned open spaces
- Action b: Install hedgerows on City-owned ag land, if feasible
- Action c: Enhance the habitat value of key City-owned open spaces for burrowing owls, if feasible

- **Obj C: Control invasive plants using the least toxic methods possible**

- Action a: Remove invasive plants along City-owned sections of the North Fork and South Fork of Putah Creek
- Action b: Work with key partners to secure grant funds to control invasive plants in South Fork Preserve
- Action c: Prioritize the use of non-chemical IPM techniques to control invasive plants on City-owned open spaces

- **Obj D: Fund and monitor restoration/enhancement projects**

- Action a: Establish pilot program to provide restoration grants to third parties
- Action b: Establish a working group of the Open Space and Habitat Commission focused on restoration projects

Land and Resource Management

This subject area includes land management practices on all City-owned open spaces, including those managed for wildlife habitat, public access, and agriculture. The goals, objectives, and action items in this section focus on:

1. *managing open spaces to improve habitat value.* This includes using data-tracking tools to monitor habitat value and gather data for land management plans. It also includes managing open spaces using the least toxic methods possible;
2. *managing open spaces to improve recreational value (if no harm to habitat).* This includes developing a better understanding of how the public uses/would like to use open spaces and making sure the public's on-going use is not harming the habitat. It also includes allowing more passive recreation uses as long as they do not harm habitat;
3. *managing agricultural lands in a way that balances habitat and farming needs.* This includes increasing the use of sustainable land management/certified organic farming practices on City-owned agricultural land, where feasible; and
4. *managing conservation easements consistent with their underlying easement documents.*

The goals, objectives and action items for this subject area are summarized below:



Goal 1: Manage open spaces to improve habitat value

- **Obj A: Use long-term, data-driven land management plans for better decision-making**
 - Action a: Develop land management plans that address site-specific needs over time
 - Action b: Integrate deed restrictions into land management plans, as required
 - Action c: Budget appropriately to ensure proper implementation of land management plans
- **Obj B: Protect and improve habitat for plants and animals, using least toxic methods possible**
 - Action a: Manage open space to improve habitat for native wildlife, using least toxic methods possible
 - Action b: Manage open space to improve habitat for native plants, using least toxic methods possible
 - Action c: Manage the Wildhorse Ag Buffer to improve the habitat for burrowing owls
- **Obj C: Develop data-tracking tools to monitor habitat value and gather data to update plans**
 - Action a: Cooperate with those doing resource-related research; integrate findings into plans
 - Action b: Establish procedures for monitoring habitat value; integrate procedures into plans
 - Action c: Purchase equipment to collect and analyze data; integrate data into plans
- **Obj D: Reduce land-use conflicts (i.e., between habitat and other uses)**
 - Action a: Minimize land-use conflicts by working with key stakeholders; integrate techniques into plans



Goal 2: Manage open space to improve recreational value, if no harm to habitat

- **Obj A: Develop a better understanding of how the public uses/would like to use open spaces**
 - Action a: Solicit feedback from the public about public use of open spaces; integrate findings into plans
 - Action b: Solicit feedback from peers about public use of open spaces; integrate findings into plans
- **Obj B: Allow more passive recreation uses in open space as long as they do not harm habitat**
 - Action a: Identify areas that should be off-limits to people, due to high habitat value; integrate findings into plans
 - Action b: Develop site-specific rules/regs for passive recreation activities; integrate rules/regs into plans
- **Obj C: Make sure the public's on-going use of City-owned open spaces is not harming the habitat**
 - Action a: Educate users about site-specific rules/regs, in partnership with others
 - Action b: Educate public safety personnel about the habitat that needs protecting from vandalism/camping
 - Action c: Enforce site-specific rules/regs, in partnership with law enforcement officials
 - Action d: Install signage that uses symbols to identify allowed passive recreation activities
 - Action e: Install and maintain trails, signage, and protective fencing/barriers to ensure proper site usage
 - Action f: Update rules/regs as new information becomes available (i.e., adaptive management of the public use)



Goal 3: Manage ag lands in a way that balances habitat and farming needs

- **Obj A: Increase the use of sustainable land management practices on City ag land, where feasible**
 - Action a: Collaborate with tenant farmers to manage City ag land in a way that balances habitat and farming needs
 - Action b: Negotiate stronger protections for natural systems as leases come up for amendment or renewal
 - Action c: Install hedgerows to enhance the habitat value of City ag land, if feasible
- **Obj B: Increase the use of certified organic farming practices on City ag land, where feasible**
 - Action a: Implement a pilot organic farming project by leasing a small plot to an organic farmer, if feasible
 - Action b: Enforce lease for the organic farm at the Cannery; if lease ends, lease to another organic farmer, if feasible
 - Action c: Discuss with tenant farmers possibly converting City ag land to organic production; implement if feasible
 - Action d: Include the topic of organic production in negotiations for any new leases or lease amendments



Goal 4: Manage conservation easements consistent with program goals/documents

- **Obj A: Develop desirable land management objectives for future conservation easements**
 - Action a: Work with land trusts/OSHC to develop land management objectives; include in future docs if possible
- **Obj B: Continue collaborative relationship with land trusts to ensure easement compliance**
 - Action a: Ensure staff read and understand the underlying conservation easement documents
 - Action b: Work with land trusts to enforce easement documents and prevent/correct any violations
 - Action c: Review annual easement monitoring reports from land trusts to ensure compliance with easement documents
 - Action d: Invite land trusts to present their annual easement monitoring reports to the OSHC once a year

Public Access and Recreation

This subject area includes increasing public access and recreational opportunities on the City's open space areas and on the City's conservation easement lands, where feasible. It also includes building a better open space network, and improving linkages between open space areas. The goals, objectives, and action items in this section focus on:

1. *providing better public access and recreational opportunities on open space lands the City owns.* This includes increasing the availability of formal hiking trails and passive recreation opportunities on open space lands the City owns. This also includes providing public access and recreational opportunities as part of habitat restoration/enhancement projects on open space lands the City owns;
2. *providing better public access and recreational opportunities on open space lands encumbered with City-owned conservation easements.* This includes taking advantage of the public access and recreational opportunities already allowed under some existing conservation easements. It also includes making sure any future acquisitions of new easements at least consider public access and recreational opportunities; and
3. *expanding the network of linkages between publicly owned open space areas.* This includes increasing the number of safe walking trails and bike paths that link publicly owned open space areas within the Davis Planning Area.

The goals, objectives and action items for this subject area are summarized below:



Goal 1: Provide better public access/rec opportunities on City fee title land

- **Obj A: Increase the availability of formal hiking trails within City fee title open space**
 - Action a: Complete hiking trail improvements within South Fork Preserve
 - Action b: Complete hiking trail improvements within the 10 acres west of South Fork Preserve
 - Action c: Complete hiking trail improvements on new open space at F Street and Anderson Road
 - Action d: Complete hiking trail improvements on any new open space lands the City acquires in the future
- **Obj B: Increase the availability of passive rec opportunities within City fee title open space**
 - Action a: Install new and improved interpretive panels highlighting the open space's unique attributes
 - Action b: Install new and improved seating areas inspired by the natural environment
 - Action c: Install new and improved signage to better educate visitors about the site itself and proper site usage
- **Obj C: Provide public access & rec opportunities as part of habitat restoration projects**
 - Action a: Ensure selection criteria for habitat restoration grants includes a project's ability to improve public access
 - Action b: Encourage OSHC to help build community support for habitat restoration projects improving public access



Goal 2: Provide better public access/rec opportunities on City easement land

- **Obj A: Take advantage of public access & rec opportunities allowed under existing easements**
 - Action a: Organize regular and on-going docent-led tours on easement lands, where allowed
- **Obj B: Make sure new easement acquisitions consider public access & rec opportunities**
 - Action a: Negotiate as much public accessibility as possible on any new purchases of easements



Goal 3: Expand network of linkages between publicly owned open spaces

- **Obj A: Increase the number of safe bike/ped connections between publicly owned open spaces**
 - Action a: Work with property owners to connect the levee system to publicly owned open spaces
 - Action b: Work with property owners to install bike/ped paths between City and Grasslands Regional Park
 - Action c: Work with property owners to install bike/ped paths between City and Willow Slough Bypass
 - Action d: Work with property owners to install bike/ped paths between City and City of Woodland
 - Action e: Work with property owners to install bike/ped paths along Channel A
 - Action f: Work with property owners to install bike/ped paths along South Fork of Putah Creek
 - Action g: Link, if feasible, the City open space at F and Anderson to other City open space

Financial and Program Accountability

This subject area includes creating an open, consistent and objective decision-making process and providing more information to the public about program budgets and financing tools. The goals, objectives, and action items in this section focus on:

1. *conducting program activities in an open, consistent, objective way.* This includes relying on written documents to guide and clarify program activities. It also includes being transparent about program activities and managing them to ensure accountability and operational efficiencies; and
2. *diversifying program funding sources to reduce reliance on general fund.* This includes identifying and securing new internal and external funding sources.

The goals, objectives and action items for this subject area are summarized below:



Goal 1: Conduct program activities in an open, consistent, objective way

- **Obj A: Rely on written documents to guide and clarify program activities**
 - Action a: Prepare a strategic plan to guide/clarify future decision-making about program activities through 2030
 - Action b: Prepare implementation plans to focus efforts on implementing the strategic plan in five-year increments
 - Action c: Prepare grant guidelines for third parties seeking City funding for habitat restoration projects on City land
 - Action d: Prepare land management plans for all the City's open space sites
 - Action e: Prepare a spreadsheet summarizing the annual program budget
 - Action f: Prepare a spreadsheet summarizing all Measure O revenues and expenditures since 2000
 - Action g: Prepare an inventory of open space sites that includes key basic site information; link to interactive map
- **Obj B: Be transparent about program activities**
 - Action a: Post on the City's website the written documents that guide and clarify program activities
 - Action b: Post on the City's website regular updates and newsworthy items about program activities
 - Action c: Report regularly to the City Council about program activities; post reports on City's website
 - Action d: Report regularly to the OSHC about program activities; post reports on City's website
- **Obj C: Manage program activities to ensure accountability and operational efficiencies**
 - Action a: Concentrate the management of program activities (including the Measure O fund) in one department
 - Action b: Designate one employee with responsibility to manage program activities (including the Measure O fund)
 - Action c: Research and implement, if feasible, relevant "best practices" used at local open space districts



Goal 2: Diversify program funding sources to reduce reliance on general fund

- **Obj A: Identify and secure new internal funding sources**
 - Action a: Use a percentage of the City's agricultural lease revenue as a way to finance program activities, if feasible
 - Action b: Sell some City ag land subject to a conservation easement as a way to finance program activities, if feasible
 - Action c: Identify and secure other possible internal funding sources as a way to finance program activities
- **Obj B: Identify and secure new external funding sources**
 - Action a: Apply for as many state/fed grants as possible, given staff resources, as a way to finance program activities
 - Action b: Identify and secure other possible external funding sources as a way to finance program activities

Public Engagement and Partnerships

This subject area includes (1) engaging the public in the City's Open Space Program and at its open space sites, and (2) developing and fostering partnerships with other interested and involved parties to achieve the City's Open Space Program goals. The goals, objectives, and action items in this section focus on:

1. *getting more people involved in the City's Open Space Program.* This includes using community organizing/outreach and technological tools to increase engagement in the City's Open Space Program;
2. *getting more people involved at the City's open space sites.* This includes using community organizing/outreach and technological tools to increase engagement at the City's open space sites; and
3. *integrating partnerships into program activities.* This includes increasing the number of partnerships with people both inside and outside the City.

The goals, objectives and action items for this subject area are summarized below:



Goal 1: Get more people involved in the City's Open Space Program

- **Obj A: Use community organizing/outreach to increase engagement in the program**
 - Action a: Organize a public workshop and develop an on-line survey every five years
 - Action b: Encourage the OSHC to be "active ambassadors" in the community for the program
 - Action c: Outreach to potential new volunteer recruits at community events
- **Obj B: Use technology to increase engagement in the program**
 - Action a: Create a mechanism on the City's website to allow the public to submit comments/questions to staff
 - Action b: Create a mechanism on the City's website to allow staff to share real-time information with the public



Goal 2: Get more people involved at the City's open space sites

- **Obj A: Use community organizing/outreach to increase engagement at the sites**
 - Action a: Organize as many community events as possible at the City's open space sites
 - Action b: Outreach to the arts community to develop an "art-in-open-spaces" program
 - Action c: Encourage the OSHC to help staff organize "friends of" community groups to help with maintenance
 - Action d: Outreach to potential new users by installing new and improved locational signage around the City
- **Obj B: Use technology to increase engagement at the sites**
 - Action a: Revamp and update the interactive open space map on the City's website
 - Action b: Create, if feasible, a smartphone application that gives site visitors easy access to website information



Goal 3: Integrate partnerships into program activities

- **Obj A: Increase the number of partnerships with people inside the City**
 - Action a: Partner with the City's Parks and Recreation Department to create better habitat in parks/greenbelts
 - Action b: Partner with the City's Public Works Department to create better habitat/public access in channels/basins
 - Action c: Set up working group with all City land managers to improve land management practices & communication
- **Obj B: Increase the number of partnerships with people outside the City**
 - Action a: Partner with U.C. Davis to implement priority open space projects of common interest
 - Action b: Partner with the Yolo Habitat Conservancy to complete open space acquisitions related to the HCP/NCCP
 - Action c: Partner with local land trusts/brokers to stay active in the market and complete open space acquisitions
 - Action d: Partner with key entities who can help the City maintain its open spaces

Next Steps

Assuming approval, staff will post the Strategic Plan on the City's website and begin using it as the guiding document for working groups and various implementation plans through 2030. This Strategic Plan will also serve as a useful tool to evaluate the success of the Open Space Program when Measure O comes up for renewal in 2030.

Attachments:

1. Proposed Resolution
2. Proposed Strategic Plan
3. Chronology of Steps Taken 2016-2018
4. May 16, 2017 Staff Report (w/attachments)

RESOLUTION NO. 18-__, SERIES 2018

RESOLUTION APPROVING THE STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE CITY'S OPEN SPACE PROGRAM THAT WILL GUIDE DECISIONS ABOUT THE ACQUISITION AND MANAGEMENT OF OPEN SPACE THROUGH 2030

WHEREAS, in 2015, the City Council directed staff to review and update the City's priorities for spending the funds generated by the City's open space parcel tax, known as Measure O, which was passed by Davis voters in 2000. These parcel taxes, which remain in effect until 2030, must be spent on acquiring and maintaining open space within the Davis Planning Area; and

WHEREAS, since 2000, the City had been operating under the spending priorities identified in an acquisition and management plan approved by the City Council in 2002. As part of the City Council's 2015 directive, it asked staff to update this 2002 plan based on community feedback; and

WHEREAS, staff conducted a robust public outreach effort in 2016 that included an on-line survey, focus groups and a public forum; and

WHEREAS, staff drafted the Strategic Plan based on the feedback received during this 2016 public outreach effort; and

WHEREAS, the Open Space and Habitat Commission reviewed and approved the Strategic Plan at its meeting in March 2018; and

WHEREAS, the Strategic Plan provides the community with a clear roadmap for preserving and managing open space in and around the City through 2030, the final year of Measure O, the City's open space parcel tax.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council approves the Strategic Plan for the City's Open Space Program that will guide decisions about the acquisition and management of open space through 2030.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the City Council this 20th day of March, 2018, by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

Robb Davis, Mayor

ATTEST:
Zoe Mirabile, City Clerk

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2030 STRATEGIC PLAN

CITY OF DAVIS OPEN SPACE PROGRAM



Riparian Habitat at South Fork Preserve, West of Mace Boulevard

A PLAN TO SUPPORT THE CITY'S SUSTAINED EFFORTS TO MAINTAIN AND ENHANCE THE RURAL AND URBAN MOSAIC THAT CONTRIBUTES TO THE HIGH QUALITY OF LIFE IN DAVIS.

MARCH __, 2018

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This Strategic Plan would not have been possible without the guidance, input and support of the following individuals:

City of Davis Residents

City of Davis City Council

- Robb Davis, Mayor
- Brett Lee, Vice Mayor
- Will Arnold
- Lucas Frerichs
- Rochelle Swanson

The Open Space and Habitat Commission

- Patrick Huber, Chair
- Jason Bone, Vice Chair
- Rachel Aptekar
- Marc Hoshovsky
- Joy Klineberg
- Roberta Millstein
- Lon Payne

City of Davis Staff

- Mike Webb, City Manager
- Katherine Hess, Community Development Administrator
- Tracie Reynolds, Open Space Program Manager
- Chris Gardner, Open Space Lands Manager
- Tim Crowder, GIS Systems Analyst
- Matt Wolf, Senior Engineering Assistant

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2030 STRATEGIC PLAN

INTRODUCTION

Davis citizens have a strong interest in open space preservation. This Strategic Plan -- which builds on, refines, and replaces a similar plan approved by the City Council in 2002 -- is intended to address this strong community interest by providing readers with a clear roadmap for preserving and managing open space in and around the City through 2030, the final year of Measure O, the City's open space parcel tax.

The opening section, *A Legacy of Open Space Preservation*, discusses the current state of the City's Open Space Program and the benefits it provides to the community and landowners. This section also describes the types of open space in and around Davis and which ones the City owns and manages. It concludes with a discussion of the various tools the City uses to preserve open space, such as conservation easements and agricultural buffer/mitigation requirements.

The next section, *Roadmap to Open Space Preservation*, provides the reader with an overview of how this Strategic Plan was developed and how it is organized.

The rest of the Strategic Plan describes the priority goals, objectives, and action items that staff will pursue through 2030. The plan concludes with a discussion of how the City will measure success, and how it will make decisions about future open space acquisitions (See Appendix A).

This Strategic Plan is part of a set of planning and management documents for the City's Open Space Program. This set of planning and management documents includes:

1. **Expenditure Guidelines (Text of Measure O)**, which provide the legal underpinning for how the City's open space parcel taxes can be spent;
2. **A Background/Midterm Progress Report**, which provides useful background on the history of open space preservation in Davis and documents progress through 2015;
3. **Five-Year Implementation Plans**, which report on recent progress and describe more specific projects for the coming five years. These shorter-term plans allow flexibility to respond to changing conditions while still pursuing consistent longer-term goals;
4. **Budget Summary Documents**, which provides residents with an easy-to-understand snapshot of the annual budget for the City's Open Space Program; and
5. **Fee-Title Land Management Plans**, which describe how the City will manage its various open space areas and the land management techniques that will be used.

All of these documents are posted on the City's website at: [\[REDACTED\]](#).

2030 STRATEGIC PLAN

A LEGACY OF OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION

Like most communities in the Great Central Valley, the history and character of Davis is tightly interwoven with the surrounding landscape. The original human inhabitants of the Davis area, the Patwin tribe, chose to live along the banks of Putah Creek since it provided for the necessities of their existence. Later, settlers chose this area because cultivation of the rich alluvial soils provided sustenance and income. The railways followed to transport agricultural goods to the population centers of northern California. Soon after, the University of California selected this



Figure 1: Milkweed on Old Lincoln Highway

area for its farm campus due in part to the quality of the soils and the existing transportation infrastructure. This abbreviated history shows that the City of Davis is truly a product of its surroundings.

Today, these surroundings continue to play an important role in defining the character of Davis. The open farms and remaining natural native landscapes around the City help create a sense of place and contribute to the vitality of Davis. Since 1958, the Davis General Plan has included open space and agricultural protection policies that recognize this important link. Civic leaders have understood

for many years that these open spaces strengthen the connection between citizens and their community by helping to define a limit to the area that they perceive as their home. Among the benefits derived from enhancing this connection is that citizens who closely identify with a place or social group are more likely to be involved in activities that build community. In addition, these open space areas contribute to the vitality of Davis by sustaining the regional ecosystem, supporting the local economy, providing opportunities for outdoor recreation and learning, and offering visual relief from urban landscapes. The overall objective of this Strategic Plan is to support the City's sustained efforts to maintain and enhance the rural and urban mosaic that contributes to the high quality of life in Davis.

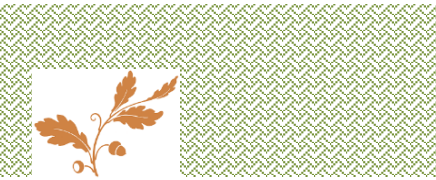
The Open Space Program Today

The City's formal Open Space Program was established in 1990 to implement long-standing policies that called for the protection of the farmlands and habitat areas that surround the community. Since that time, it has been a national model for open space preservation. The major goals of the program include (1) securing long-term protection of open space lands around Davis, (2) providing and improving long-term management and monitoring of open spaces the City owns, (3) promoting and supporting the enjoyment of public open space lands, (4) engaging citizens in planning and caring for open space areas, and (5) nurturing productive partnerships with other organizations to achieve the above goals.

The citizens of Davis also realized that accomplishing these goals would take a stable and reliable funding source. So, in 2000, Davis voters passed Measure O, an ongoing parcel tax dedicated to open space preservation and maintenance. The full text of Measure O is located in Article 15.17 (Open Space Protection Tax) of the City's Municipal Code, which can be found by [clicking here](#). Since then, Measure O funds have enabled the City to make remarkable progress towards achieving its long-term vision for land conservation within the Davis Planning Area.

Measure O, which expires in 2030, currently generates about \$650,000 a year, money that can be used to maintain the City's open space areas or leverage land acquisition and restoration grants. As of 2017, there was approximately \$5.1 million in the Measure O reserve account. A few key successes of the City's Open Space Program to date include:

- ***Thousands of Acres Protected.*** Since 1990, the City has been able to permanently protect more than 5,300 acres of land within the Davis Planning Area, which is an amount approximately equal to the footprint of the City of Davis itself. These acres include agricultural lands, riparian corridors, habitat areas, and land under threat of conversion to urban uses.
- ***Hundreds of Acres Maintained for People and Wildlife.*** The City's Open Space Program actively maintains about 235 acres of open space for the enjoyment of Davis residents and for wildlife species. These lands include ag buffers, grasslands/uplands habitat, riparian habitat and native plant sites. The largest is the 110-acre South Fork Preserve. These lands do not include stormwater conveyance channels and detention basins (i.e., Julie Partansky Wildlife Pond, West Area Pond, Toad Hollow, North Davis Channel), which are maintained by the City's Public Works Department, or the City's urban greenbelts and parks, which are maintained by the City's Parks Department.
- ***Millions of Dollars Leveraged.*** Measure O's greatest value is its leveraging potential. By itself, Measure O does not generate enough money to purchase significant tracts of land under fee title ownership or easement. Using the tremendous leveraging power of Measure O, and in conjunction with other monetary tools, the City has been able to purchase about \$22 million worth of conservation easements since 2000 using only about \$8.1 million in City funds (\$5.6 million in Measure O parcel tax dollars and \$2.5 million in other City funds).



Program Successes

- More than 5,300 acres protected
- More than 230 acres owned and maintained by the City for residents and wildlife
- More than \$14 million leveraged for open space land acquisitions

These successes are remarkable given the small number of City employees who are working to implement the City's Open Space Program. As of 2017, the City's Open Space Program was staffed by one half-time program manager, one full-time lands manager, one part-time

maintenance worker, and contract labor. More information about the City's Open Space Program and what it has accomplished over the last several decades is discussed in detail in the Background and Midterm Progress Report, which can be found by [clicking here](#).

Benefits to the Community

The following are just a few of the benefits the Open Space Program provides the community:

- Helps to create a healthy, livable, sustainable community
- Preserves agricultural land for the production of local products
- Preserves natural areas for wildlife habitat, including for native pollinators
- Preserves natural areas for human recreation and educational study
- Preserves community identity by providing separation between urbanized areas
- Provides connections to the land and preserves land for future generations
- Preserves view corridors and scenery
- Provides relief from urbanization

Benefits to Landowners

The following are just a few of the benefits the Open Space Program provides landowners:

- Provides peace of mind to those who would like their land to remain as farmland or natural areas
- Provides financial incentives, such as income from selling a conservation easement
- Provides an ability to continue farming and leave the land to heirs
- Provides tax advantages, such as property tax advantages, and reductions in income taxes, estate taxes, or capital gains taxes
- Provides ecosystem benefits such as crop pollination, groundwater infiltration, and flood control

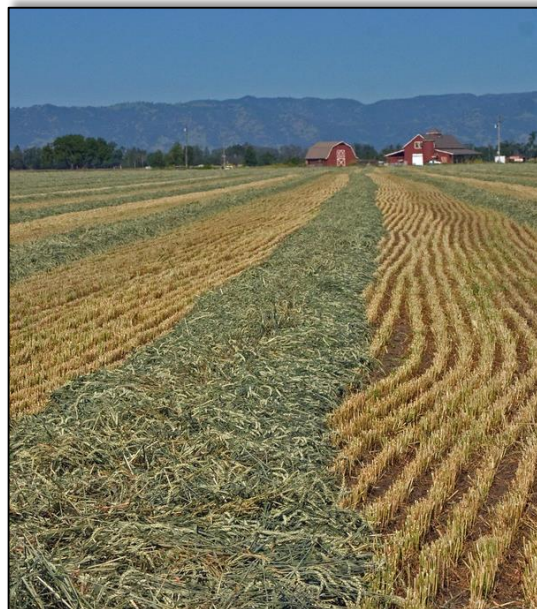


Figure 2: Agricultural land around Davis

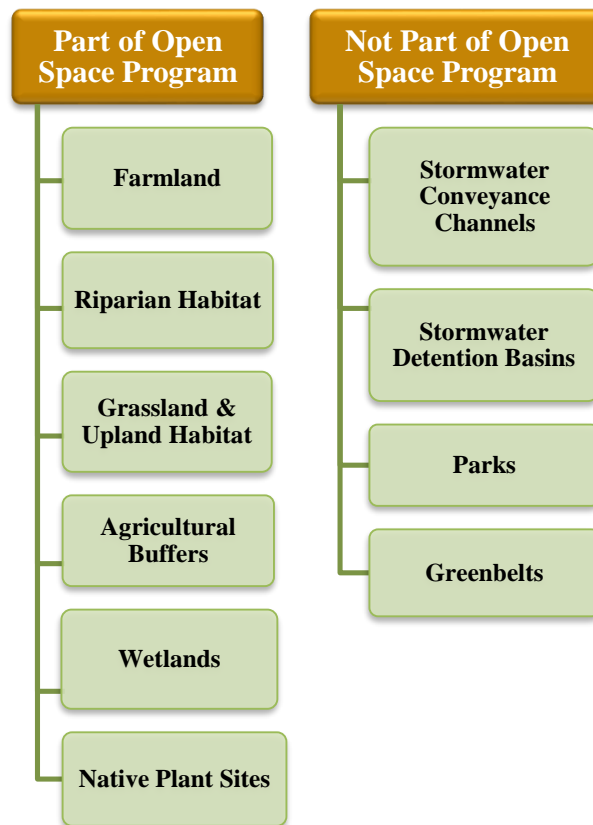
Types of Open Space in and Around Davis

Not all land that people think of as “open space” meets the definition under the City's Open Space Program. Under the Open Space Program, open space means:

“Land that is in a predominantly natural state or altered for natural resources-based uses (i.e., farming) and may include, but is not limited to, riparian habitat, agricultural lands, grassland and upland habitat, wetlands, agricultural buffers, and native plant sites.”

The definition of “open space” under the City’s Open Space Program does not include parks and greenbelts (managed by City Parks staff), or stormwater conveyance channels and detention basins (managed by City Public Works staff). The graphic below illustrates what types of land uses are considered “open space” under the City’s Open Space Program:

Figure 3: Types of open space in the City’s Open Space Program



The following summarizes the 5,333 open space acres in the Open Space Program as of 2018:

- **Farmland.** The City has protected about 4,311 acres of farmland within the Davis Planning Area. Of those acres, about 323 acres are owned by the City and leased to tenant farmers. Examples include land along the South Fork of Putah Creek leased to Los Rios Farms and Sostena Corporation and 25 acres off Mace Boulevard farmed by Bob Dettling Farms. The rest of these acres are private property, but are encumbered with City-owned conservation easements. More information about conservation easements is provided in the *Tools for Preservation* section. Examples include Miles/Kidwell Farm, Leland Ranch, and Eoff Farm.
- **Riparian Habitat.** The City has protected about 309 acres of riparian habitat within the Davis Planning Area. Of those acres, about 94 acres are owned by the City. Examples include the Putah Creek Parkway, South Fork Preserve, and the North Davis Channel (Open space staff only maintain the channel banks). The rest of these acres are private property, but are encumbered with a City-owned conservation easement. Examples include the easements the City owns along Willow Slough and Dry Slough.

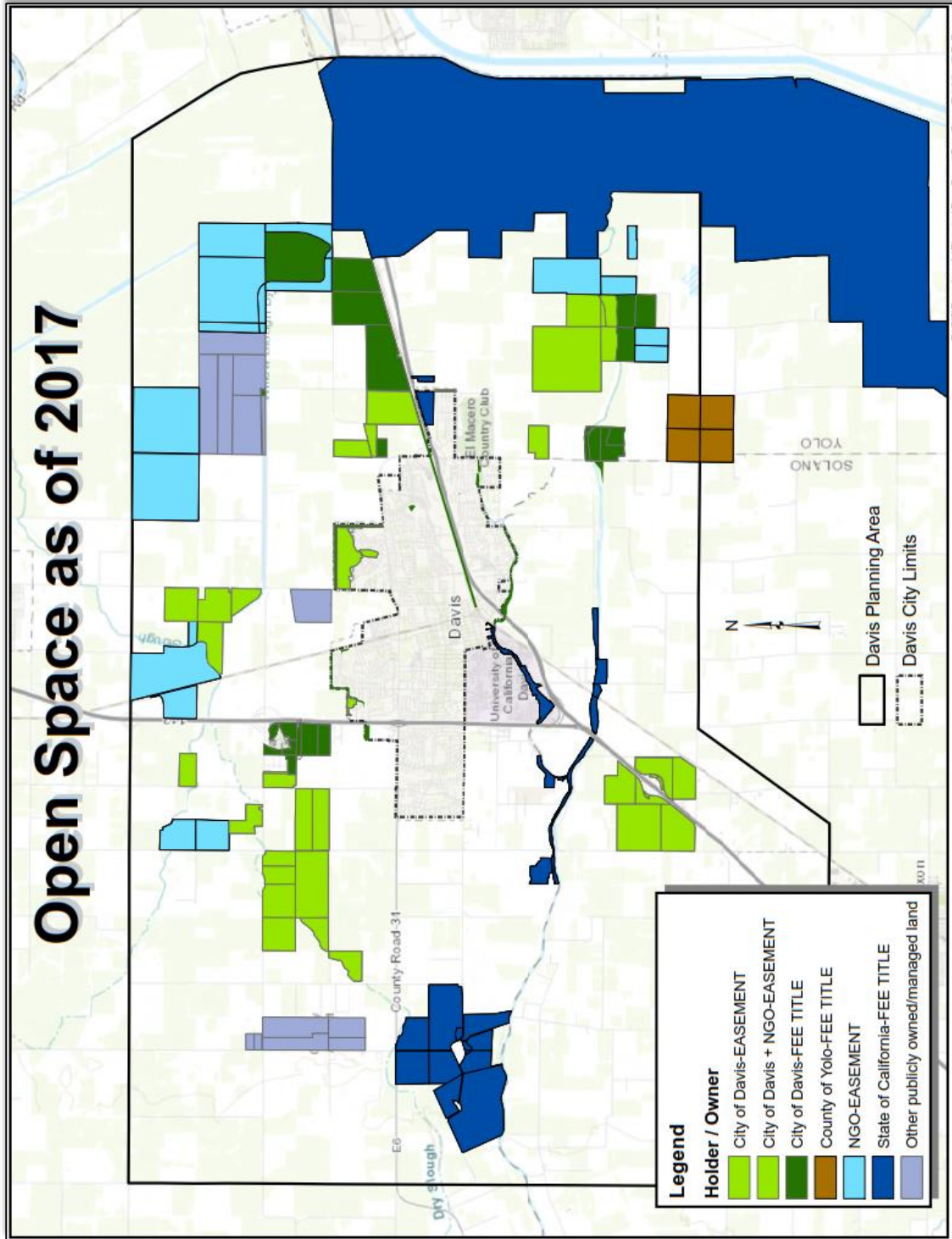
- **Grassland & Upland Habitat.** The City has protected about 91 acres of grassland and upland habitat within the Davis Planning Area. All of these acres are owned by the City. Examples include portions of Putah Creek Parkway and South Fork Preserve, and three acres adjacent to the Julie Partansky Wildlife Pond known as the North Davis Pond Upland Area.
- **Agricultural Buffers.** The City has protected about 209 acres of open space used as ag buffers between urban and farming uses within the Davis Planning Area. All of these acres are owned by the City. Examples include the Wildhorse and El Macero Ag Buffers.
- **Wetlands.** The City has protected about 404 acres of wetlands within the Davis Planning Area. All of these acres are owned by the City. Examples include the Davis Wetlands.
- **Native Plant Sites.** The City also owns about 10 acres of land within the Davis Planning Area categorized as native plant sites. Examples include the Old Lincoln Highway, the North Davis hedgerow, and sites known as Willowbank #9 and #10.

The figure below summarizes the types of open space in the Open Space Program, who owns these lands, and who maintains them. A map of these lands can be found on [Figure 5](#).

Figure 4: Summary of open space in the City's Open Space Program

Primary Land Use	Who owns land?	Who maintains land?	Examples
Farmland (≈ 4,311 acres)	Private property owners (City owns conservation easement)	Private property owners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leland Ranch • Miles/Kidwell Farm • Eoff Farm
	City (≈ 323 acres) (City owns fee title interest)	Tenant farmers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Fork - Los Rios Farms • South Fork - Sostena Corp. • Mace Blvd - Dettling Farms
Riparian Habitat (≈ 309 acres)	Private property owners (City owns conservation easement)	Private property owners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Willow Slough easements • Dry Slough easements
	City (≈ 94 acres) (City owns fee title interest)	City (Open Space staff)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Putah Creek Parkway • South Fork Preserve • North Davis Channel (Channel Banks Only)
Grassland & Upland Habitat (≈ 91 acres)	City (City owns fee title interest)	City (Open Space staff)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Putah Creek Parkway • South Fork Preserve • North Davis Pond Upland Area
Ag Buffers (≈ 209 acres)	City (City owns fee title &/or easement)	City (Open Space staff)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wildhorse Ag Buffer • Wildhorse Golf Course • El Macero Ag Buffer
Wetlands* (≈ 404 acres)	City	City (Open Space staff)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Davis Wetlands
Native Plant Sites (≈ 10 acres)	City	City (Open Space staff)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Old Lincoln Highway • North Davis Hedgerow • Willow Bank #9 and #10
Notes: * As of 2018, the City's Open Space Program had not yet taken over the management of the Davis Wetlands. The transfer of management responsibilities from the City's public works staff to the City's open space staff is expected in 2018. The Davis Wetlands was included in this table to acknowledge this expectation.			

Figure 5: Open space within the Davis Planning Area as of 2017



Open Space the City Owns and Manages

In total, the City owns about 962 acres (18%) of the 5,333 acres of open space within the Davis Planning Area. *Of those acres owned by the City, about 639 acres (66%) are publicly accessible (the remainder are leased to tenant farmers).* The City's Open Space staff currently manages all of these publicly accessible acres, except the Davis Wetlands (See Figures 6 and 7).

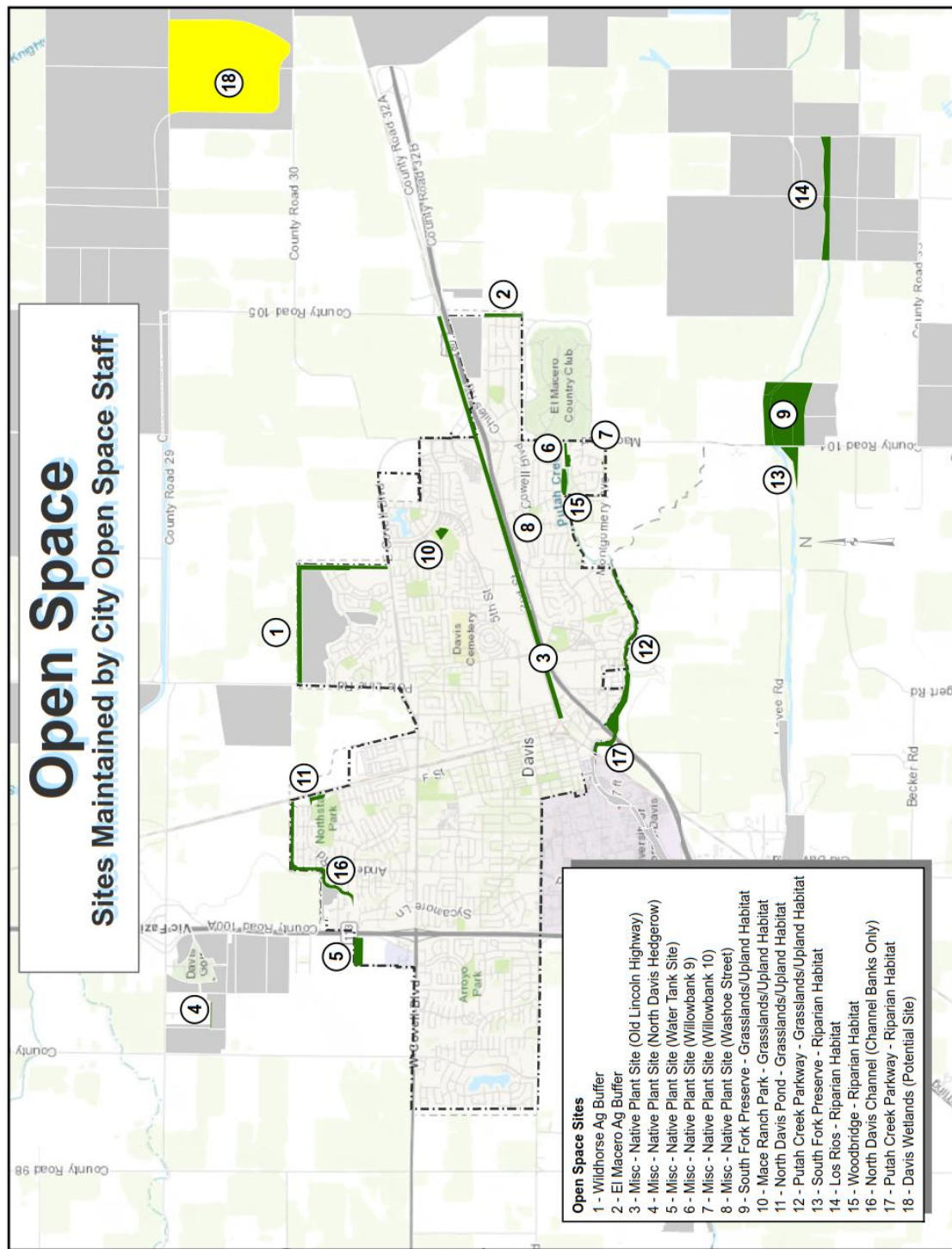
The figure below (Figure 6) and the map on the following page (Figure 7) summarizes the 639 acres maintained (or soon to be maintained) by the City's Open Space staff:

Figure 6: Open space maintained by City Open Space staff

Property	Type of Open Space	Acreage
1 Wildhorse Agricultural Buffer	Agricultural Buffer	38.00
2 El Macero Agricultural Buffer	Agricultural Buffer	3.00
3 Old Lincoln Highway	Native Plant Site	4.00
4 North Davis Hedgerow	Native Plant Site	2.00
5 Water Tank Site (at John Jones Road)	Native Plant Site	2.00
6 Willowbank #9	Native Plant Site	1.50
7 Willowbank #10	Native Plant Site	0.25
8 Washoe Street Remnant	Native Plant Site	0.10
9 South Fork Preserve	Grasslands/Upland Habitat	80.00
10 Open Space Area at Mace Ranch Park	Grasslands/Upland Habitat	4.00
11 North Davis Pond Upland Area	Grasslands/Upland Habitat	3.00
12 Putah Creek Parkway	Grasslands/Upland Habitat	4.00
13 South Fork Preserve	Riparian Habitat	32.00
14 South Fork of Putah Creek (Leased to Los Rios Farms)	Riparian Habitat	30.00
15 Woodbridge Open Space Area	Riparian Habitat	3.50
16 North Davis Channel (Channel Banks Only)	Riparian Habitat	13.00
17 Putah Creek Parkway - Riparian Habitat	Riparian Habitat	15.00
18 Davis Wetlands (Potential Future Open Space Site)*	Wetlands	404.00
Total		639.35
* As of 2018, the Davis Wetlands was still managed by the City's Public Works staff. However, it is included in this table as an open space site because it is expected to become an open space site in 2018 or 2019 and will be managed by the City's Open Space staff.		

As of 2018, these acres were maintained by one full-time employee (the City's Open Space Lands Manager), one seasonal temporary part-time worker, and contractors. Their primary job is to manage these lands for wildlife habitat and compatible human recreation. Some of the main work they do includes (1) controlling and/or eliminating invasive plant species, (2) planting native plants, trees and grasses, (3) improving the land's habitat value, (4) correcting problems resulting from vandalism and illegal overnight camping, and (5) removing garbage.

Figure 7: Map of open space maintained by City Open Space staff



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Tools for Preservation

The City uses a variety of tools to protect open space, which maximizes the effectiveness of the City's limited funding. These tools all do different things, but they work together to implement the City's Open Space Program. All of these tools are discussed briefly below:

1. **Conservation Easements.** The City can acquire a partial interest in land (i.e., an easement) that protects the land in perpetuity for agriculture or habitat. By accepting an easement on his/her land, the landowner agrees to limit what the land can be used for in perpetuity. The cost of an easement increases substantially as more property rights (such as public access) are included in the terms of the easement. The City usually co-owns the easement with a land trust. Land trust staff monitors the easement properties annually to ensure the terms of the conservation agreement are being met. The City pays for these easements using grant funds, leveraged with matching funds from the Measure O Special Tax Fund, agriculture mitigation fees, and development impact fees for open space.
2. **Land Purchases.** The City can acquire the fee title interest in land and keep it for recreational, habitat, or farming purposes, or resell the property subject to a conservation easement, such as the former Leland Ranch property near the Mace Boulevard curve. These lands usually provide public access. The City pays for these land acquisitions using grant funds, leveraged with matching funds from the Measure O Special Tax Fund, agriculture mitigation fees, and development impact fees for open space.
3. **A Stable, Reliable Funding Source.** Before the passage of Measure O in 2000, the City did not have a stable, reliable funding source to acquire and manage open space. Measure O now provides about \$650,000 every year for this purpose. Because it is a stable and reliable revenue source, Measure O has given the City of Davis an enviable advantage in the stiff competition for state and federal open space land acquisition grants.
4. **Right-to-Farm Ordinance Requirements.** In 1995, the City Council approved the Right-to-Farm and Farmland Preservation Ordinance (Ordinance 1823). The first municipal ordinance of its kind, the City's ground-breaking work has spawned similar farmland protection efforts in California and in other states. The main goals of the ordinance are to: (1) preserve and encourage agricultural land use and operations within the Davis Planning Area (See Figure 8), (2) reduce the occurrence of conflicts between agricultural and non-agricultural land uses, and (3) reduce the loss of agricultural resources by limiting the circumstances under which agricultural operations may be deemed a nuisance.

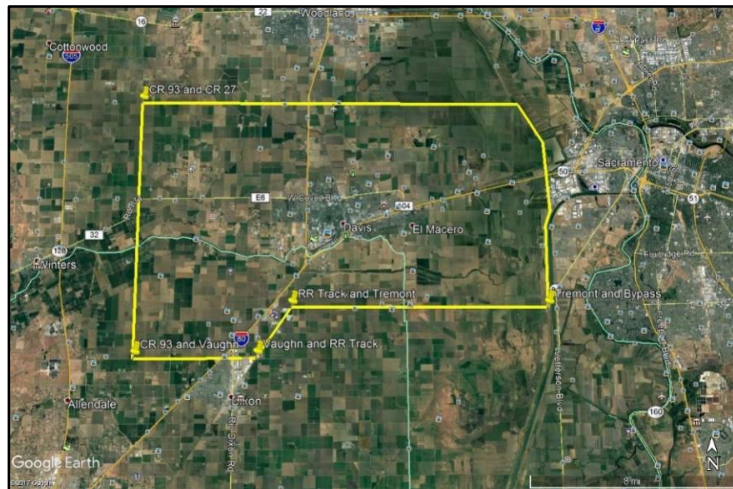
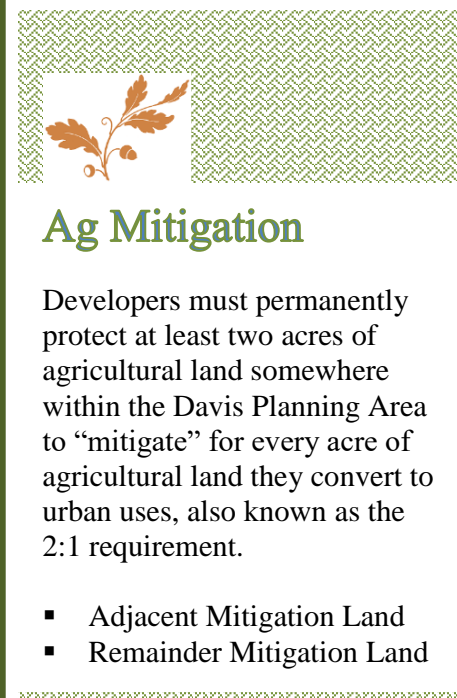


Figure 8: Davis Planning Area

To achieve the ordinance's objectives, the City Council included two key requirements that developers must comply with if they are proposing to convert land from agricultural uses to non-agricultural uses, and their project is adjacent to agricultural land: These requirements, which were updated by the City Council in 2007, are the agriculture mitigation requirement and the agricultural buffer requirement.

- a. *The agriculture mitigation requirement.*
Under the City's agricultural land mitigation requirement, developers must permanently protect at least two acres of agricultural land somewhere within the Davis Planning Area to "mitigate" for every acre of agricultural land they convert to urban uses (i.e., the 2:1 requirement). Permanently protecting the land means either buying it outright or buying a conservation easement on the land. Developers must first preserve the land directly adjacent to their project (the "Adjacent Mitigation Land"). If this adjacent land is not enough to satisfy the 2:1 agricultural land mitigation requirement, then the developer must look elsewhere within the Davis Planning Area (the "Remainder Mitigation Land"). Both of these categories are briefly discussed below:



Ag Mitigation

Developers must permanently protect at least two acres of agricultural land somewhere within the Davis Planning Area to "mitigate" for every acre of agricultural land they convert to urban uses, also known as the 2:1 requirement.

- Adjacent Mitigation Land
- Remainder Mitigation Land

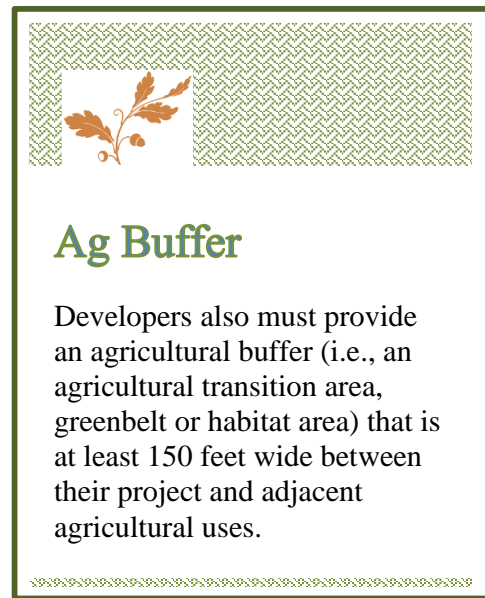
- ✓ Adjacent Mitigation Land. The developer must first protect the land along the entire non-urbanized perimeter of the project. For example, if a proposed housing development abuts farmland, the housing developer must protect that farmland. If the developer cannot protect this land for some reason, then the developer must provide the Adjacent Mitigation Land on the development site itself. The Adjacent Mitigation Land must be of a size that is economically viable as farmland (i.e., it must be a minimum 1/4 mile in width). Developers do not have to mitigate for the land being used as the required on-site agricultural buffer.
- ✓ Remainder Mitigation Land. If the Adjacent Mitigation Land is not enough to satisfy the 2:1 agricultural land mitigation requirement, then the developer must look to protect land elsewhere within the Davis Planning Area (See Figure 8). Incentives, or location-based "credits," are provided to the developer to protect land in areas targeted for permanent protection by the City, such as land within a 1/4 mile of the city limits and land within "priority acquisition areas" as determined by the City Council. These priority acquisition areas (See Figure 12 on the following pages) currently include land adjacent to the city limits, land separating the City from neighboring cities, and land providing particular agricultural, biological/natural and/or scenic benefits. This tool incentivizes developers to protect agricultural land in priority acquisition areas.

b. *The agricultural buffer requirement.*

Developers also must provide an agricultural buffer (i.e., an agricultural transition area, greenbelt or habitat area) that is at least 150 feet wide between their project and adjacent agricultural uses. This tool aims to address potential conflicts between urban and rural land uses. This tool supports farming adjacent to urban uses; thereby helping to protect agricultural land at the city's edge.

5. ***The Measure R/J Vote.*** Measure J (the Citizens' Right to Vote on Future Use of Open Space and Agricultural Lands Ordinance) was first passed by Davis voters in 2000. Measure J was included on the City of Davis' June 2010 ballot as Measure R and was approved for renewal, which extended the sunset date to December 31, 2020. Measure R requires an affirmative citizen vote for General Plan Amendments that re-designate land from agricultural or open space to urban uses. After completion of environmental review and public hearings, the City Council may choose to put a proposed land use change on the ballot for voter consideration. This tool gives the community the ability to weigh in on development proposals at the city's edge.
6. ***Conservation Partnerships.*** The City works closely with local conservation organizations to implement its open space protection goals. Close collaboration with these organizations and identification of common objectives has allowed the City to achieve the level of success it has in protecting open space. Wherever possible, the City develops partnerships with regional and national conservation organizations that share its objectives. The City also joins organizations, lobbies state and federal representatives, and participates in regional open space discussions as a way to build partnerships with regional and national organizations.
7. ***Education and Outreach.*** Education is a key factor in building strong public support for the City's Open Space Program. Appropriate and well-managed public access on City open space lands provides opportunities for citizens to learn about the natural and cultural history of the Davis area and the Central Valley. Increasing public knowledge and appreciation of agricultural and natural systems will improve support for their conservation. The City works closely with school districts, local conservation organizations (e.g.: Yolo Basin Foundation), and outside agencies to develop open space related educational materials and firsthand learning experiences.

Since its inception, the Open Space Program has led to the protection of more than 5,200 acres of agricultural land and habitat areas surrounding the City through the acquisition of lands either in fee title or under conservation easements.



ROADMAP TO OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION

This Strategic Plan builds on, refines, and replaces the 2002 Acquisition and Management Plan using results from focused public engagement efforts that were undertaken in 2016. The plan's framework consists of specific goals, objectives, and action items in six categories that will guide open space preservation for the next 15 years.

Plan Development Process

In 2002, the City adopted an Acquisition and Management Plan for open space (the "2002 A&M Plan") that provided a framework for implementing the various open space protection and stewardship goals outlined in the City of Davis's General Plan. The 2002 A&M Plan was the result of a year-long public engagement process to refine the City's open space priorities after the passage of Measure O in 2000. The purpose of the 2002 A&M Plan was to provide guidance to staff, advisory bodies, and decision-makers as they considered possible open space acquisitions and management choices. It was intended to be used in conjunction with other more site-specific selection and management tools, such as property evaluation criteria and site-specific management plans. The framework laid out in the 2002 A&M Plan was intended to:



Figure 9: Honey bee on Fremontia shrub

1. Set general goals and policies that will direct the City's effort to protect and effectively manage open space lands and resources;
2. Provide the basis for informed open space land and resource acquisition decisions;
3. Provide direction for land and resource management decisions;
4. Provide organizational guidelines for the Open Space Program budget;
5. Establish a framework for a consistent, objective, and open decision-making process; and
6. Provide a basis for evaluating the City's progress toward reaching the open space protection goals established in the City's General Plan.

In 2016, midway through the 30-year term of Measure O, the City, in partnership with the Open Space and Habitat Commission, embarked on an outreach effort to the Davis community to solicit a wide range of opinions, ideas and recommendations to strengthen the City's Open Space Program. This effort relied on three separate, but inter-related, outreach methods: (1) a community survey, (2) focus groups, and (3) a major community workshop. Each of these is briefly discussed below.

- *Community Survey.* A broad-based community survey, administered online and in paper form, was created to capture the widest range and diversity of opinions on open space matters. The online survey was available for over three months and was advertised widely. This effort resulted in 400 responses, which is a very solid response rate for a community of approximately 65,000 residents.

- *Focus Groups.* A highly focused dialogue was conducted with two selected focus groups to get feedback on very specific issues and questions that had come up over the years, and address complex and nuanced issues that a broad survey or a traditional community workshop would not have time or detail to address. These two meetings were attended by 16 individuals who have considerable familiarity and a strong interest in the City's Open Space Program. These meetings were facilitated and recorded. They helped the City staff and consultant team identify key issues, clarify and define concerns, and guide design and preparation for the major community workshop.
- *Community Workshop.* On March 9, 2016, a major community workshop was held to give residents significant time to provide input on a range of critical open space topics. The workshop, which was also facilitated and recorded, provided opportunities for residents to offer input on flip charts, written statements, and maps. Maps, written materials, and information (including the notes from the focus groups and the preliminary survey results) were made available to the approximately 40 people who attended the workshop. There were large group presentations and discussions and small group table-top discussions to elicit feedback on relevant topics and questions about open space. Input was captured on recorded flip charts and summarized in this report and also captured in map and graphic form.



Figure 10: March 2016 Open Space Community Workshop

The results of this outreach effort are summarized in a report entitled “City of Davis Open Space Program Community Involvement Process” by the U.C. Davis Extension’s Collaboration Center completed in spring 2016. To view this report, [click here](#). The City has used this community feedback as the foundation for this Strategic Plan and has incorporated as many specific community recommendations as possible into the plan’s goals, objectives, and action items.



Strategic Plan Categories

1. Acquisitions
2. Habitat Restoration & Enhancement
3. Land & Resource Management
4. Public Access & Recreation
5. Financial & Program Accountability
6. Public Engagement & Partnerships

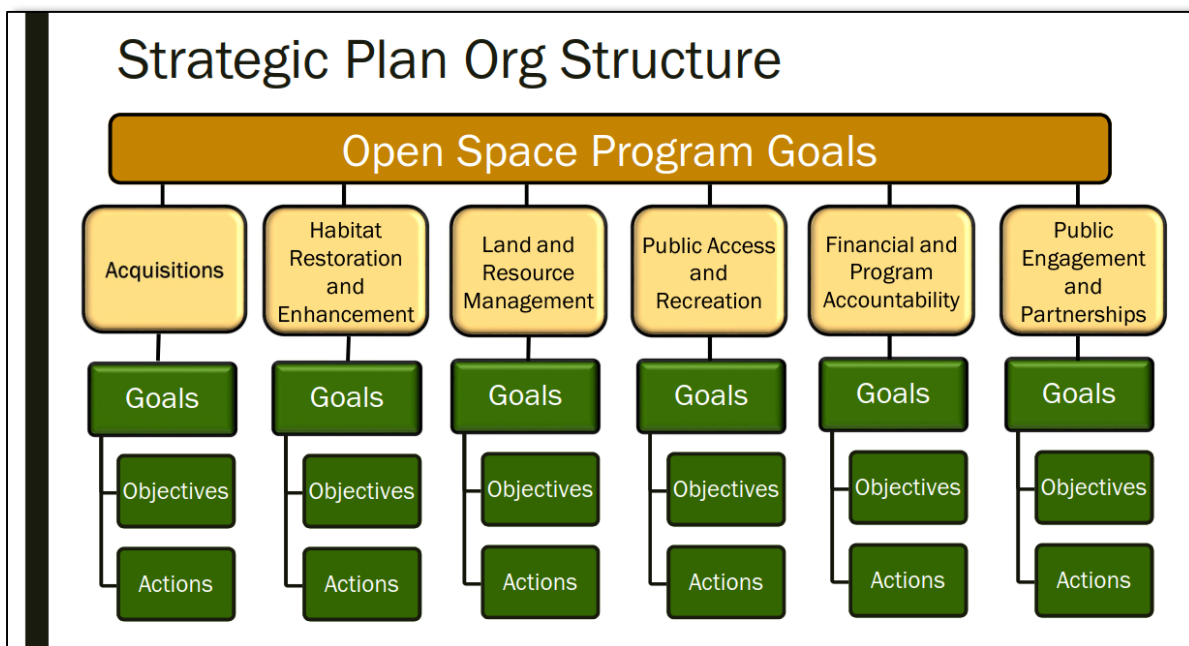
Strategic Plan Categories and Framework

This Strategic Plan for the Open Space Program focuses on goals, objectives, and action items in six specific categories:

1. Acquisitions,
2. Habitat Restoration & Enhancement,
3. Land & Resource Management,
4. Public Access & Recreation,
5. Financial & Program Accountability, and
6. Public Engagement & Partnerships.

The graphic below illustrates the framework for the Strategic Plan:

Figure 11: Plan Framework



The rest of the Strategic Plan focuses on the goals, objectives, and action items in each of the six categories listed above.

In a related effort, the City is updating a number of other guiding documents associated with the Open Space Program as well to make them more clear and responsive to the community. These other documents include:

- ✓ Expenditure Guidelines (Text of Measure O)
- ✓ Background/Midterm Progress Report on Measure O
- ✓ Five-Year Implementation Plans
- ✓ Budget Summary Documents
- ✓ Fee-Title Land Management Plans

All of these documents are posted on the City's website at: [\[REDACTED\]](#).

ACQUISITIONS

This section provides guidance to decision-makers about open space acquisitions through the year 2030. The subject area of acquisitions includes both the acquisition of a fee title interest in open space, and the acquisition of agricultural and/or habitat conservation easements.

The City carries out its open space protection goals by setting policy and acquiring conservation easements and ownership of land from willing sellers. The City is committed to an approach that maximizes preservation and enhancement of open space lands and resources. An effective, direct, and equitable method for doing so is to purchase protection (easements and fee-title) at a fair market price from willing sellers. Several fundamental principles will guide all acquisitions by the City:

1. *Acquire Land From Willing Sellers Only.* Acquire open space from willing sellers only.¹
2. *Acquire Land Within Davis Planning Area Only.* Lands or resources must be located within the Davis Planning Area to qualify for acquisition or management by the City.
3. *Stretch the Dollar.* Acquire and hold the least interest in a property necessary to carry out the City's General Plan goals for open space protection. This means the City will be limiting its fee title acquisitions and focusing on conservation easements.
4. *Favor Conservation Easements.* Use conservation easements as the primary method of open space protection. Purchasing only part of a property's rights (such as development rights) protects land at a fraction of the cost of purchasing all the rights (fee title interest), thereby maximizing the acreage that can be brought into the City's Open Space Program. Easements shall be held in perpetuity.
5. *Make Strategic Fee-Title Acquisitions.* Acquire and hold fee-title to properties where protection of unique resources, restoration, or public access is desired.
6. *Pay Fair Market Value.* Acquire land at no more than fair market value, based on a professional appraisal.
7. *Take a Balanced Approach.* Balance efforts to protect natural resources with efforts to maintain agricultural production in the Davis Planning Area.



Fundamental Principles

1. Acquire Land From Willing Sellers Only
2. Acquire Land Within Davis Planning Area Only
3. Stretch the Dollar
4. Favor Conservation Easements
5. Make Strategic Fee-Title Acquisitions
6. Pay Fair Market Value
7. Take a Balance Approach
8. Seek Multiple Benefits

¹ In rare instances it may be advantageous for a property owner to request condemnation of property by the City. Condemnation will not be used by the City to acquire open space unless requested by the landowner.

8. *Seek Multiple Benefits.* Seek protection of open space lands that overlap multiple acquisition categories.

The City seeks to protect the greatest amount of high quality open space land and resources as possible within its funding constraints. *However, despite remarkable community willingness to pay for open space protection, all undeveloped land and sensitive resources in the Davis Planning Area cannot be protected due to high land costs and multiple competing uses for the land.* In order to maximize the effectiveness of available funding, the City will use the most cost-effective open space protection tools (e.g., conservation easements) and seek to acquire open space that serves to buffer other lands from threat of conversion.

Acquisition categories identify the various types of open space lands and resources identified by the City for protection. These categories help organize the City's acquisition priorities by identifying the land and resource values that are desirable to the community. They are (in no order of importance):

- *Urban Fringe:* Protect land near the city limits to help define the urban limits of Davis and provide an adequate buffer between urban and rural land uses. The conservation purpose is to protect select lands and resources at greatest risk of conversion from urban expansion pressures. These lands are generally located in the historic path of development on the north and west edges of the City. This priority area is linked with the City's growth management policies encouraging infill development and coordination of university housing needs.
- *Community Separator:* Protect land between Davis and neighboring cities to preserve the unique character of each community. The conservation purpose is to protect lands between cities to provide a functional limit to urban expansion pressures from adjoining cities/counties. Davis, Woodland, Dixon, and Yolo County have signed general agreements identifying separator areas and supporting land protection within the boundaries of these areas.
- *Agriculture:* Protect prime agricultural lands and sustainable farming practices (e.g., organic agriculture) to maintain the long-term viability of agriculture in the Davis Planning Area. The conservation purpose is to protect the highest quality agricultural lands facing the greatest risk of conversion. These lands are generally located in the historic path of development to the north and west of the City.
- *Biological and Natural Resources:* Protect important wildlife habitat, sensitive species, and other significant natural resources. The conservation purpose is to protect and enhance

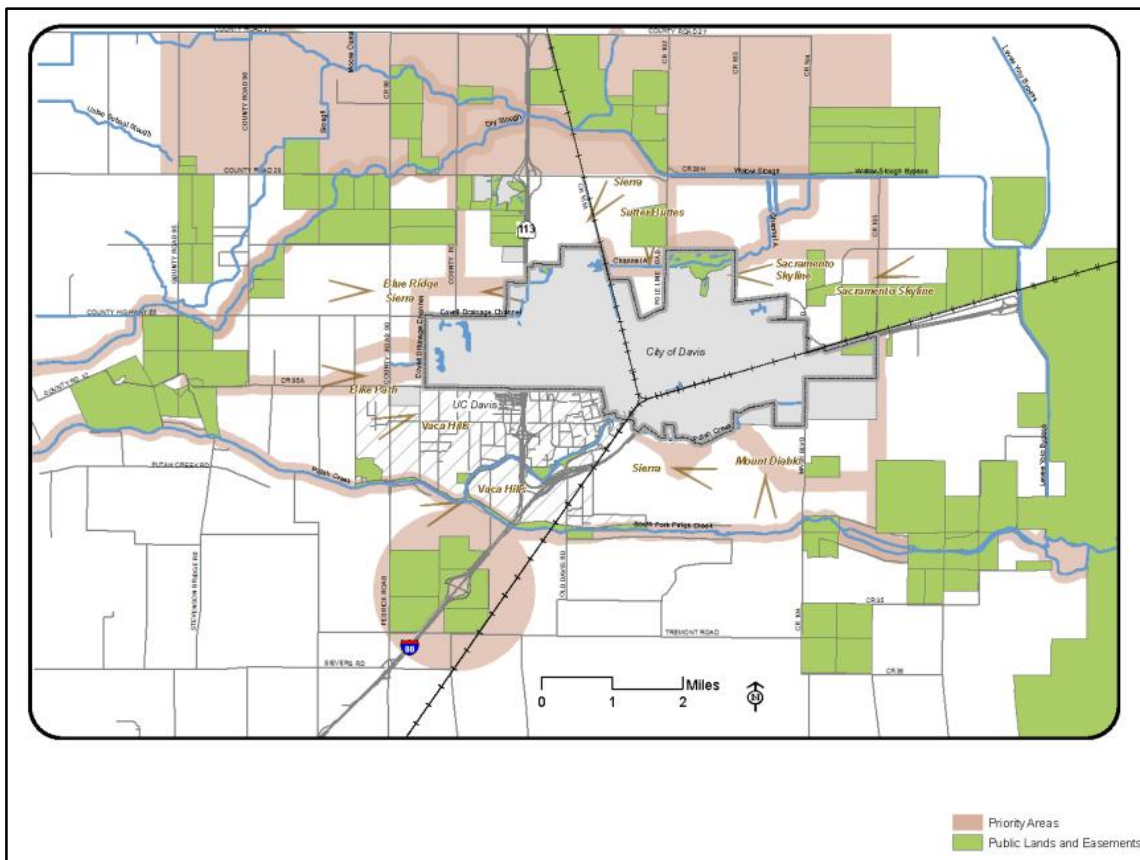


biologically unique areas that contribute to the viability and stability of natural communities. These lands generally contain riparian corridors, remnant oak woodlands, wetlands, or remnant grasslands. This category includes lands that can be enhanced/restored to provide additional wildlife habitat.

- *Scenic Resources:* Protect land providing views and scenic vistas of significant landmarks, such as nearby and distant mountain ranges. The conservation purpose is to preserve community identity through the protection of views of significant local and regional landmarks. These lands generally overlap the Urban Fringe and Community Separator areas.

A map showing the City's priority acquisition areas can be found below (Figure 12):

Figure 12: Priority Acquisition Areas



For more information about the City's decision-making process for land acquisitions, please refer to [Appendix A](#) attached to this Strategic Plan.

Goals, Objectives and Action Items

The goals, objectives, and action items for this section are summarized in [Figure 13](#) on the following page and detailed in the following section:

Figure 13: Snapshot of Goals, Objectives and Action Items – Acquisitions



ACQUISITIONS

GOAL ACQ-1: Protect land near the city limits (“urban fringe” land).

Objective ACQ-1A: Acquire land (fee title interest or conservation easements) near the city limits to help define the urban boundary and provide a buffer between urban and rural land uses.

- **Action ACQ-1A.a:** Contact key landowners who own strategic parcels on the city’s urban fringe to determine interest in selling land or conservation easements. If willing sellers are found, negotiate with them to complete an acquisition.

Strategic parcels include but are not limited to parcels: (i) north of the North Davis Riparian Corridor between F Street and Highway 113, (ii) north of Wildhorse Agricultural Buffer, and (iii) west of the Stonegate neighborhood.

GOAL ACQ-2: Protect land between Davis and neighboring cities (“community separator” land).

Objective ACQ-2A: Acquire land (fee title interest or conservation easements) between Davis and neighboring cities to preserve the unique character of each community.

- **Action ACQ-2A.a:** Contact key landowners who own strategic parcels separating Davis from nearby cities to determine interest in selling land or conservation easements. If willing sellers are found, negotiate with them to complete an acquisition.

Strategic parcels include but are not limited to parcels: (i) along the Highway 113 corridor, and (ii) along the Pole Line Road corridor between County Roads 27 and 29 and between County Roads 95 and 105.

GOAL ACQ-3: Protect land used for prime agriculture (“agriculture” land).

Objective ACQ-3A: Acquire land (fee title interest or conservation easements) used for prime agriculture to maintain the long-term viability of agriculture in the Davis Planning Area.

- **Action ACQ-3A.a:** Contact key landowners who own strategic parcels used for prime agriculture to determine interest in selling land or conservation easements. If willing sellers are found, negotiate with them to complete an acquisition.

Strategic parcels include but are not limited to parcels that also fall within the following priority acquisition categories: (i) biological & natural resources land, (ii) scenic resources land, and (iii) community separator land.

GOAL ACQ-4: Protect land providing important wildlife habitat (“biological & natural resources” land).

Objective ACQ-4A: Acquire land (fee title interest or conservation easements) that serves as important habitat for native plants and animals.

- **Action Acq-4A.a:** Contact key landowners who own land possessing unique biological and natural resources to determine interest in selling land or conservation easements. If willing sellers are found, negotiate with them to complete an acquisition.

Strategic parcels include but are not limited to parcels: (i) connecting riparian corridor “fragments” along Putah Creek, Channel A, and Willow Slough, (ii) containing remnant rare plant communities, and (iii) containing nesting locations for burrowing owls and Swainson's hawks.

GOAL ACQ-5: Protect open space for recreation (“public access & recreation” land).

Objective ACQ-5A: Acquire open space (fee title interest or conservation easements) providing public access and recreation opportunities, including biking and hiking trails.

- **Action ACQ-5A.a:** Contact key landowners who own land providing key bike and trail connections to determine interest in selling land or conservation easements. If willing sellers are found, negotiate with them to complete an acquisition.

Strategic parcels include but are not limited to parcels: (i) connecting Davis to Woodland (i.e., along the F Street ditch), (ii) connecting Davis to Grasslands Regional Park, and (iii) along Channel A.

GOAL ACQ-6: Protect land providing views and scenic vistas (“scenic resources” land).

Objective ACQ-6A: Acquire land (fee title interest or conservation easements) providing views and scenic vistas of significant landmarks, such as nearby and distant mountain ranges.

- **Action ACQ-6A.a:** Contact key landowners who own land possessing unique scenic resources to determine interest in selling land or conservation easements. If willing sellers are found, negotiate with them to complete an acquisition.

Strategic parcels include but are not limited to parcels: (i) along County Road 98 connecting Davis to Woodland that protect vistas of coastal mountains and (ii) along Mace Boulevard near the curve that protect views to Sacramento and the Sierra Nevada.

HABITAT RESTORATION AND ENHANCEMENT

This section provides guidance to decision-makers about habitat restoration and enhancement through the year 2030. The subject area of habitat restoration and enhancement includes restoring and enhancing City-owned open space areas to make them more livable for native plant and animal species. Native plants and animals in the Central Valley are stressed by loss of habitat and habitat linkages, invasive species, loss of natural fire regimes, water pollution, human disturbances during sensitive times, and other factors. Active habitat restoration and enhancement, as well as long-term habitat management (see the *Land and Resource Management* section that follows), are essential to reducing the effects of these stressors and to increase the long-term viability of these species.

The City owns significant land that currently provides, or has the potential to provide, highly valuable and varied wildlife habitat. Some of the native plant and animal species that you might see at one of the City's open space areas include:

- **Trees.** Boxelder, California buckeye, black walnut, sycamore, Fremont cottonwood, valley oak, red willow, yellow willow, and black willow;
- **Shrubs.** Coyote bush, mulefat, button-willow, California wild rose, California grape, and Mexican elderberry;
- **Grasses and Sedges.** Field sedge, Santa Barbara sedge, deergrass, meadow barley, blue wildrye, slender wheatgrass, creeping wildrye, wild oat, soft chess brome, rip-gut brome, and Italian ryegrass; and
- **Wildlife.** Birds-of-prey, songbirds, small- to medium-sized mammals, various amphibians, reptiles, various water fowl and wading birds, warm-water and anadromous fish species, and semi-aquatic mammals (i.e., water birds, amphibians, aquatic reptiles, hawks, owls, wood ducks, bats, woodpeckers, and mammals, including coyotes, beavers and river otters).



Figure 14: Burrowing owl at Wildhorse Ag Buffer

When planned properly, restoration and enhancement activities can also mitigate unwanted access and use of City property, like illegal camping and dumping.

Goals, Objectives and Action Items

The goals, objectives, and action items for this section are summarized in **Figure 15** on the following page and detailed in the following section:

Figure 15: Snapshot of Goals, Objectives and Action Items - Habitat Restoration and Enhancement



GOAL 1: Restore and enhance City-owned open space areas

- **Obj A: Plant more native plants and grasses**
 - Action a: Budget for the supplies/staffing necessary for annual plantings
 - Action b: Complete habitat restoration project at F Street and Anderson Road
 - Action c: Plant native plants/grasses along Channel A, in South Fork Preserve, and along Putah Creek, if feasible
 - Action d: Restore slough upstream of Covell Ditch between W. Davis and Putah Creek/Dry Slough, if feasible
 - Action e: Transition walnut orchards to valley oak woodland habitat at South Fork Preserve/Wildhorse Ag Buffer
- **Obj B: Create better wildlife habitat**
 - Action a: Install habitat structures/features at South Fork Preserve and other City-owned open spaces
 - Action b: Install hedgerows on City-owned ag land, if feasible
 - Action c: Enhance the habitat value of key City-owned open spaces for burrowing owls, if feasible
- **Obj C: Control invasive plants using the least toxic methods possible**
 - Action a: Remove invasive plants along City-owned sections of the North Fork and South Fork of Putah Creek
 - Action b: Work with key partners to secure grant funds to control invasive plants in South Fork Preserve
 - Action c: Prioritize the use of non-chemical IPM techniques to control invasive plants on City-owned open spaces
- **Obj D: Fund and monitor restoration/enhancement projects**
 - Action a: Establish pilot program to provide restoration grants to third parties
 - Action b: Establish a working group of the Open Space and Habitat Commission focused on restoration projects

HABITAT ENHANCEMENT AND RESTORATION

GOAL HRE-1: Restore and enhance City-owned open space areas to improve the natural habitat value for native plant and animal species.²

Objective HRE-1A: Plant more native plants and grasses, especially but not limited to those that benefit native pollinators, on City-owned open space lands to increase biodiversity. Native plant species are those occurring within the bio-region (i.e., Lower Sacramento Valley).

- **Action HRE-1A.a:** Budget for the supplies and staffing necessary to plant additional native plants every year in City-owned open space areas.
- **Action HRE-1A.b:** Complete the habitat restoration plan for the vacant City-owned land at the intersection of F Street and Anderson Road.
- **Action HRE-1A.c:** Plant additional native plants and grasses along Channel A, in South Fork Preserve, and along Putah Creek, if feasible.
- **Action HRE-1A.d:** Restore the unnamed slough upstream of Covell Boulevard Ditch between West Davis and Putah Creek/Dry Slough, if feasible.
- **Action HRE-1A.e:** Transition old walnut orchards to valley oak woodland habitat on City-owned open space land west of South Fork Preserve (West of Mace Boulevard) and at the Wildhorse Agricultural Buffer.

Objective HRE-1B: Create better wildlife habitat on City-owned open spaces that satisfies basic needs (e.g., breeding, shelter, water, food, habitat connectivity, etc.) for important native animal species.

- **Action HRE-1B.a:** Install habitat features such as downed woody debris, rock piles and perches to the existing valley oak woodland habitat at South Fork Preserve and other City-owned open space areas.
- **Action HRE-1B.b:** Install hedgerows on City-owned agricultural land to enhance the habitat value of these lands, if feasible.
- **Action HRE-1B.c:** Enhance the habitat value of the Wildhorse Agricultural Buffer and other City-owned open spaces for burrowing owls, if feasible, based on consultations with local resource experts.

² Ecological composition, structure and function all contribute to habitat value. Ecological composition refers to the total number and relative abundance of different species and habitats across the landscape. Ecological structure refers to habitat physical characteristics, such as the vertical layering (ground cover, shrubs, tree canopy) of vegetation and its horizontal coverage (within stands as well as connectivity across the landscape). Ecological function refers to active changes over time, such as food web interactions, pollination, hydrological and nutrient cycling, natural disturbances, animal migration, and seed dispersal.

Objective HRE-1C: Remove, and prevent re-infestations of, invasive plant species on City-owned open spaces using the least toxic methods possible.

- **Action HRE-1C.a:** Remove *Ailanthus altissima* and *Tamarix parviflora* in riparian corridors along City-owned sections of the North Fork and South Fork of Putah Creek to promote the re-establishment of native trees.
- **Action HRE-1C.b:** Work with key partners (i.e., Putah Creek Council and the Lower Putah Creek Coordinating Committee) to secure grant funds to conduct invasive species control in the riparian forest at the City's South Fork Preserve.
- **Action HRE-1C.c:** Prioritize the use of non-chemical Integrated Pest Management techniques to control non-native plant species on City-owned open space land.

Objective HRE-1D: Fund and monitor restoration/enhancement projects on a regular basis on City-owned open space land.

- **Action HRE-1D.a:** Establish a pilot program that awards grants of Measure O open space parcel tax funds to qualified third parties for restoration/enhancement projects on City-owned open space land. If the pilot program is successful, continue the program, as long as staffing and financial resources are available.
- **Action HRE-1D.b:** Establish a working group of the Open Space and Habitat Commission that is specifically charged with identifying, promoting and monitoring restoration/enhancement projects on City-owned open space land.

Figure 16: Habitat restoration project on North Davis Channel



LAND AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

This section provides guidance to decision-makers about land and resource management through the year 2030. This subject area includes land management practices on all City-owned open spaces, including those managed for:

- Wildlife Habitat,
- Public Access, and
- Agriculture.

The City manages its open spaces for wildlife habitat, public access and agriculture. This encourages people to enjoy the City's open spaces for walking, exercise, wildlife viewing, art, photography and other passive recreation. These areas are also managed to provide high-value habitat for resident and migratory wildlife of all kinds. In order to protect the wildlife and the habitat value of these areas, the City encourages people to stay on trails and respect the site-specific rules regarding dogs.



Figure 17: El Macero Agricultural Buffer

In general, the City will employ a systems approach to managing its open space lands and resources. A systems approach includes consideration of how a site functions within the context of surrounding land uses as well as how the various components of a site function together. Toward that end, the City is preparing site-specific management plans for each open space property. Each plan provides context and a comprehensive management strategy that will be available for staff and interested parties. These plans will ensure continuity in management practices through changes in City personnel and leadership. To view these plans, [click here](#).

This subject area also includes goals for managing the City's leases with tenant farmers on the City's agricultural land and goals for managing conservation easements on private property.

Goals, Objectives and Action Items

The goals, objectives, and action items for this section are summarized in [Figure 18](#) on the following page and detailed in the following section:

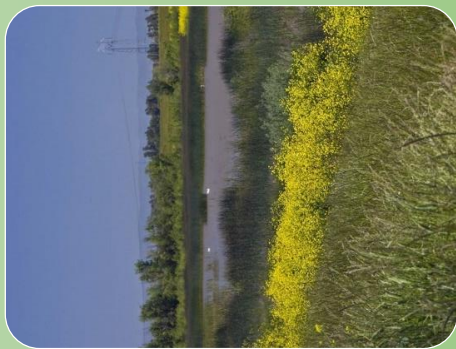
Attachment 2

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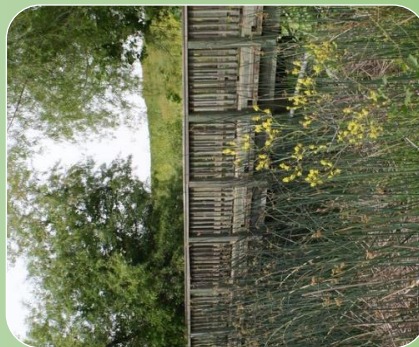
Figure 18: Snapshot of Goals, Objectives and Action Items - Land and Resource Management

Goal 1: Manage open spaces to improve habitat value

- **Obj A: Use long-term, data-driven land management plans for better decision-making**
 - Action a: Develop land management plans that address site-specific needs over time
 - Action b: Integrate deed restrictions into land management plans, as required
 - Action c: Budget appropriately to ensure proper implementation of land management plans
- **Obj B: Protect and improve habitat for plants and animals, using least toxic methods possible**
 - Action a: Manage open space to improve habitat for native wildlife, using least toxic methods possible
 - Action b: Manage open space to improve habitat for native plants, using least toxic methods possible
 - Action c: Manage the Wildhorse Ag Buffer to improve the habitat for burrowing owls
- **Obj C: Develop data-tracking tools to monitor habitat value and gather data to update plans**
 - Action a: Cooperate with those doing resource-related research; integrate findings into plans
 - Action b: Establish procedures for monitoring habitat value; integrate procedures into plans
 - Action c: Purchase equipment to collect and analyze data; integrate data into plans
- **Obj D: Reduce land-use conflicts (i.e., between habitat and other uses)**
 - Action a: Minimize land-use conflicts by working with key stakeholders; integrate techniques into plans

**Goal 2: Manage open space to improve recreational value, if no harm to habitat**

- **Obj A: Develop a better understanding of how the public uses/would like to use open spaces**
 - Action a: Solicit feedback from the public about public use of open spaces; integrate findings into plans
 - Action b: Solicit feedback from peers about public use of open spaces; integrate findings into plans
- **Obj B: Allow more passive recreation uses in open space as long as they do not harm habitat**
 - Action a: Identify areas that should be off-limits to people, due to high habitat value; integrate findings into plans
 - Action b: Develop site-specific rules/regs for passive recreation activities; integrate rules/regs into plans
- **Obj C: Make sure the public's on-going use of City-owned open spaces is not harming the habitat**
 - Action a: Educate users about site-specific rules/regs, in partnership with others
 - Action b: Educate public safety personnel about the habitat that needs protecting from vandalism/camping
 - Action c: Enforce site-specific rules/regs, in partnership with law enforcement officials
 - Action d: Install signage that uses symbols to identify allowed passive recreation activities
 - Action e: Install and maintain trails, signage, and protective fencing/barriers to ensure proper site usage
 - Action f: Update rules/regs as new information becomes available (i.e., adaptive management of the public use)





Goal 3: Manage ag lands in a way that balances habitat and farming needs

- **Obj A: Increase the use of sustainable land management practices on City ag land, where feasible**
 - Action a: Collaborate with tenant farmers to manage City ag land in a way that balances habitat and farming needs
 - Action b: Negotiate stronger protections for natural systems as leases come up for amendment or renewal
 - Action c: Install hedgerows to enhance the habitat value of City ag land, if feasible
- **Obj B: Increase the use of certified organic farming practices on City ag land, where feasible**
 - Action a: Implement a pilot organic farming project by leasing a small plot to an organic farmer, if feasible
 - Action b: Enforce lease for the organic farm at the Cannery; if lease ends, lease to another organic farmer, if feasible
 - Action c: Discuss with tenant farmers possibly converting City ag land to organic production; implement if feasible
 - Action d: Include the topic of organic production in negotiations for any new leases or lease amendments



Goal 4: Manage conservation easements consistent with program goals/documents

- **Obj A: Develop desirable land management objectives for future conservation easements**
 - Action a: Work with land trusts/OSHC to develop land management objectives; include in future docs if possible
- **Obj B: Continue collaborative relationship with land trusts to ensure easement compliance**
 - Action a: Ensure staff read and understand the underlying conservation easement documents
 - Action b: Work with land trusts to enforce easement documents and prevent/correct any violations
 - Action c: Review annual easement monitoring reports from land trusts to ensure compliance with easement documents
 - Action d: Invite land trusts to present their annual easement monitoring reports to the OSHC once a year

LAND AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

GOAL LRM-1: Manage City-owned open spaces to improve their habitat value.

Objective LRM-1A: Use long-term, data-driven management plans for all City-owned open spaces to help the City make well-informed, consistent land management decisions.

- **Action LRM-1A.a:** Develop land management plans for all City-owned open spaces that are grounded in data and address site-specific management needs, community feedback, and changing conditions over time.
- **Action LRM-1A.b:** Integrate deed restrictions into land management plans, as required in underlying land acquisition documents.
- **Action LRM-1A.c:** Budget appropriately to ensure proper implementation of land management plans.

Objective LRM-1B: Protect and improve the habitat value of City-owned open spaces for native plant and animal species, using the least toxic methods possible.

- **Action LRM-1B.a:** Manage City-owned open spaces to protect and enhance the habitat value of these lands for native wildlife species (i.e., birds, mammals, reptiles, amphibians, and invertebrates), with an emphasis on species interactions and ecosystem function. Use the least toxic methods possible.
- **Action LRM-1B.b:** Manage City-owned open spaces to protect and enhance the habitat value of these lands for native plant species. Native plant species are those occurring within the bio-region (i.e., Lower Sacramento Valley). Use the least toxic methods possible.
- **Action LRM-1B.c:** Manage the Wildhorse Agricultural Buffer to protect and enhance the habitat value of this land for burrowing owls, in consultation with local resource experts.

Objective LRM-1C: Develop data-tracking tools to monitor habitat value and compile environmental information (both historical and current) to update land management plans.

- **Action LRM-1C.a:** Cooperate with institutions, agencies, organizations, and individuals that are conducting resource-related research. Integrate findings into land management plans, as appropriate.
- **Action LRM-1C.b:** Establish protocols and procedures for monitoring vegetation and wildlife (i.e., identifying targets to monitor, the techniques to monitor them, and the tools

required to collect the desired information). Integrate protocols and procedures into land management plans, as appropriate.

- **Action LRM-1C.c:** Purchase mobile data-collecting and data-monitoring equipment (such as tablets) that can be used to collect and analyze data. Integrate data into land management plans, as appropriate.

Objective LRM-1D: Reduce land-use conflicts often associated with land management (i.e., between habitat and other uses).

- **Action LRM-1D.a:** Work cooperatively with key stakeholders (i.e., law enforcement officials and landowners/farmers adjacent to City open space) to minimize land-use conflicts. Integrate successful techniques into land management plans, as appropriate.

GOAL LRM-2: Manage City-owned open spaces to improve their recreational value, without harming their habitat value.

Objective LRM-2A: Develop a better understanding of how the community uses/would like to use the City's open space areas.

- **Action LRM-2A.a:** Solicit feedback from the public (i.e., groups, organizations and individuals) to better understand how the public uses/would like to use the City's open space areas. Integrate findings into land management plans, as appropriate.
- **Action LRM-2A.b:** Solicit feedback from peers (i.e., City staff, public agencies, and non-profit partners) to better understand their perceptions of how the public uses/would like to use the City's open space areas. Integrate findings into land management plans, as appropriate.

Objective LRM-2B: Allow more passive recreation activities on City-owned open spaces as long as they do not harm the habitat value of these lands.

- **Action LRM-2B.a:** Identify areas within City-owned open spaces that should be off-limits to people, due to their high habitat value for sensitive plant and animal species. Integrate findings into land management plans, as appropriate.
- **Action LRM-2B.b:** Develop site-specific rules and regulations for passive recreation activities. Integrate rules and regulations into land management plans, as appropriate.

Objective LRM-2C: Make sure the public's on-going use of City-owned open spaces is not harming the habitat value of these areas.

- **Action LRM-2C.a:** Educate users about the rules and regulations governing the City's open space sites, working in partnership with other key stakeholders (i.e., City staff, public agencies, non-profit partners, and other outside groups and organizations).
- **Action LRM-2C.b:** Educate public safety personnel (i.e., police, fire, and first responders) about the damage vandalism and unauthorized camping can do to the natural resources at each open space site.
- **Action LRM-2C.c:** Enforce, if necessary, the rules and regulations governing the City's open space sites, working in partnership with law enforcement personnel.
- **Action LRM-2C.d:** Install signage, printed to U.S. National Park Service standards, that uses symbols to identify allowed passive recreation activities.
- **Action LRM-2C.e:** Install and maintain trails, signage, and protective fencing/barriers to make sure the public does not enter sensitive areas and uses the open space site in accordance with the rules and regulations established for that site.
- **Action LRM-2C.f:** Update the rules and regulations established in land management plans as new information about public use becomes available (i.e., adaptive management of the public use).

GOAL LRM-3: Manage City-owned agricultural land in a way that balances the habitat value of this land with the viability of agricultural production on this land.

Objective LRM-3A: Increase the use of sustainable land management practices³ on City-owned agricultural land, where feasible and in a way that doesn't harm the economic viability of this land for agricultural production.

- **Action LRM-3A.a:** Collaborate with tenant farmers to manage City-owned agricultural land in a sustainable manner that balances protection of natural systems with the viability of agricultural production on these sites.
- **Action LRM-3A.b:** Negotiate stronger protections for natural systems as leases come up for amendment or renewal, as long as these protections are compatible with the realities of modern commercial agriculture production.

³ Sustainable land management practices include beneficial crop selection (i.e., selection of site-appropriate, pest-resistant species and varieties); diversification of crops to enhance biological and economic stability (i.e., crop rotation, cover crops); sustainable soil management practices (i.e., using cover crops, compost and/or manures, installing sediment traps, reducing tillage, avoiding traffic on wet soils, and maintaining soil cover with plants and/or mulches); efficient and humane use of inputs (i.e., maximum reliance on natural, renewable, least toxic, least energy-intensive inputs as long as they maintain productivity and profitability); and other practices, such as hedgerows, slough enhancement, vegetated drainage ditches, and vegetated filter strips (Sources: UC Davis Agricultural Sustainability Institute, Yolo Resource Conservation District).

- **Action LRM-3A.c:** Install hedgerows, where feasible, to enhance the habitat value of the City's agricultural land.

Objective LRM-3B: Increase the use of certified organic farming practices on City-owned agricultural land, where feasible and in a way that doesn't harm the economic viability of this land.

- **Action LRM-3B.a:** Implement a pilot organic farming project, if feasible, by leasing a manageable portion of City-owned agricultural land (i.e., about 25 acres) to an organic farmer. If successful, continue and expand the pilot program, if feasible.
- **Action LRM-3B.b:** Enforce the City's lease with the Center for Land-based Learning ("CLBL") to operate an organic farm on the City's property at The Cannery, where a private party is paying CLBL's cost to achieve and maintain organic certification. If the City's lease with CLBL should end, lease the City's farm property at The Cannery to another organic farmer, if feasible, as long as the City does not have to pay the cost of achieving and maintaining organic certification.
- **Action LRM-3B.c:** Discuss with existing tenant farmers the possibility of converting some of the City's agricultural land to organic production. Work with them to implement the conversion to organic production, if feasible.
- **Action LRM-3B.d:** Include the topic of organic production in negotiations with new or existing tenant farmers as the City's agricultural leases are replaced, amended and/or renewed.

GOAL LRM-4: Manage the conservation easements the City owns on private property consistent with the City's open space goals and the underlying easement documents.

Objective LRM-4A: Develop a set of desirable land management objectives for future conservation easements that encourage the fulfillment of multiple goals under the City's Open Space Program.

- **Action LRM-4A.a:** Collaborate with the Yolo Land Trust, the Solano Land Trust, and the Open Space and Habitat Commission to develop a set of desirable land management objectives for future conservation easements. Work with the Yolo Land Trust and the Solano Land Trust to incorporate as many of these desirable land management objectives as possible into future conservation easement documents.

Objective LRM-4B: Continue the City's collaborative relationship with the Yolo Land Trust and the Solano Land Trust to ensure that all private property subject to a City-owned conservation easement is being managed by the private landowners consistent with the underlying easement documents.

- **Action LRM-4B.a:** Ensure that key staff of the City's Open Space Program read and understand the underlying conservation easement documents.
- **Action LRM-4B.b:** Collaborate with the Yolo Land Trust and the Solano Land Trust to enforce the underlying conservation easement documents, and prevent and/or correct any violations of these underlying conservation easement documents.
- **Action LRM-4B.c:** Review the annual conservation easement monitoring reports from the Yolo Land Trust and the Solano Land Trust to ensure private landowners are managing lands consistent with those conservation easements.
- **Action LRM-4B.d:** Invite both the Yolo Land Trust and the Solano Land Trust once a year in the fall to present a summary of its annual conservation easement monitoring reports to the Open Space and Habitat Commission to keep the Commission apprised of its easement monitoring work.

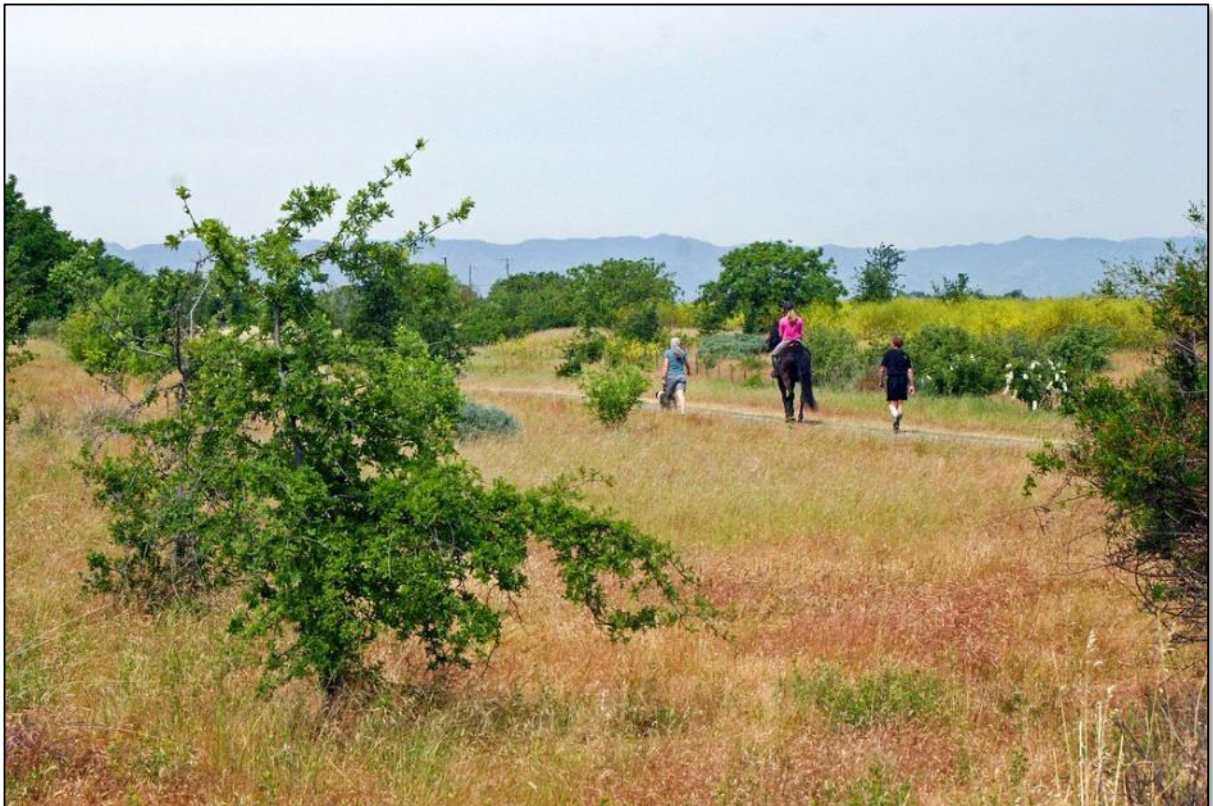


Figure 19: Equestrians and pedestrians enjoying Wildhorse Ag Buffer

PUBLIC ACCESS AND RECREATION

This section provides guidance to decision-makers about public access and recreation in the City's open space areas through the year 2030. Davis residents and visitors greatly value having access to passive recreational opportunities in open space areas. Providing that access helps taxpayers appreciate the benefits of their investment and fosters strong support for continued open space conservation. The subject area of public access and recreation includes increasing public access and recreational opportunities on the City's open space areas and on the City's conservation easement lands, where feasible. It also includes building a better open space network, and improving linkages between open space areas.

The community has expressed a great interest in being able to hike more within the City's open space areas. Residents also have expressed a great interest in being able to visit various publicly owned open space areas by bike. Ideally, the publicly owned open spaces within the Davis Planning Area should be connected by biking/walking trails, allowing people to visit multiple sites without having to get into a car. Currently, many of the City's open space areas are publicly accessible, but trail systems are limited and open space areas aren't linked by dedicated bike paths.



Figure 20: Bicyclists on Putah Creek Parkway

Goals, Objectives and Action Items

The goals, objectives, and action items for this section are summarized in **Figure 21** on the following page and detailed in the following section:

Attachment 2

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Figure 21: Snapshot of Goals, Objectives and Action Items - Public Access and Recreation

Goal 1: Provide better public access/rec opportunities on City fee title land

- **Obj A: Increase the availability of formal hiking trails within City fee title open space**
 - Action a: Complete hiking trail improvements within South Fork Preserve
 - Action b: Complete hiking trail improvements on new open space at F Street and Anderson Road
 - Action c: Complete hiking trail improvements on any new open space lands the City acquires in the future
 - Action d: Complete hiking trail improvements within City fee title open space
- **Obj B: Increase the availability of passive rec opportunities within City fee title open space**
 - Action a: Install new and improved interpretive panels highlighting the open space's unique attributes
 - Action b: Install new and improved seating areas inspired by the natural environment
 - Action c: Install new and improved signage to better educate visitors about the site itself and proper site usage
- **Obj C: Provide public access & rec opportunities as part of habitat restoration projects**
 - Action a: Ensure selection criteria for habitat restoration grants includes a project's ability to improve public access
 - Action b: Encourage OSHC to help build community support for habitat restoration projects improving public access

Goal 2: Provide better public access/rec opportunities on City easement land

- **Obj A: Take advantage of public access & rec opportunities allowed under existing easements**
 - Action a: Organize regular and on-going docent-led tours on easement lands, where allowed
- **Obj B: Make sure new easement acquisitions consider public access & rec opportunities**
 - Action a: Negotiate as much public accessibility as possible on any new purchases of easements

Goal 3: Expand network of linkages between publicly owned open spaces

- **Obj A: Increase the number of safe bike/ped connections between publicly owned open spaces**
 - Action a: Work with property owners to connect the levee system to publicly owned open spaces
 - Action b: Work with property owners to install bike/ped paths between City and Grasslands Regional Park
 - Action c: Work with property owners to install bike/ped paths between City and Willow Slough Bypass
 - Action d: Work with property owners to install bike/ped paths between City and City of Woodland
 - Action e: Work with property owners to install bike/ped paths along Channel A
 - Action f: Work with property owners to install bike/ped paths along South Fork of Putah Creek
 - Action g: Link, if feasible, the City open space at F and Anderson to other City open space

PUBLIC ACCESS AND RECREATION

GOAL PAR-1: Provide better public access and recreational opportunities in open space the City owns in fee title.

Objective PAR-1A: Increase the availability of formal hiking trails within open space the City owns in fee title.

- **Action PAR-1A.a:** Complete hiking trail improvements at South Fork Preserve to enhance the walking experience and allow visitors (including people with disabilities) to experience all of the preserve's natural habitats, including the riparian corridor.
- **Action PAR-1A.b:** Complete hiking trail improvements on the 10 acres west of South Fork Preserve to enhance the walking experience and allow visitors (including people with disabilities) to experience this property's rich riparian corridor. Apply for grant funding to implement this project.
- **Action PAR-1A.c:** Complete hiking trail improvements on the three acres located at the intersection of F Street and Anderson Road to create a new publicly accessible open space with a hiking trail.
- **Action PAR-1A.d:** Complete hiking trail improvements on any new open space lands the City acquires in the future, whenever feasible and appropriate. Apply for grant funding to implement these projects.

Objective PAR-1B: Increase the availability of passive recreational improvements (i.e., interpretive panels, seating areas, site signage) within open space the City owns in fee title.

- **Action PAR-1B.a:** Install new and improved interpretive panels to educate the public about the open space's unique natural attributes (i.e., historical and biological) and its contribution to the regional ecosystem.
- **Action PAR-1B.b:** Install new and improved seating areas inspired by the natural environment (i.e., tree rounds, logs) to allow visitors to rest and reflect.
- **Action PAR-1B.c:** Install new and improved site signage to better educate visitors about the site itself and proper site usage (i.e., site map, self-guided tour information, site environmental information, and site rules and regulations).

Objective PAR-1C: Provide public access and recreational opportunities as part of City-funded habitat restoration projects, where feasible and appropriate.

- **Action PAR-1C.a:** Make sure the selection criteria for habitat restoration grants using City funds includes a proposed project's ability to improve and/or provide public access and recreational opportunities.
- **Action PAR-1C.b:** Encourage members of the Open Space and Habitat Commission to help build community support for new and/or improved public access and recreational opportunities being considered as part of City-funded habitat restoration projects.

GOAL PAR-2: Provide better public access and recreational opportunities in open space under conservation easements the City owns (where allowed).

Objective PAR-2A: Take advantage of public access and recreational opportunities already allowed under existing conservation easements.

- **Action PAR-2A.a:** Organize regular and on-going docent-led tours of riparian corridors located on conservation easements along Dry Slough and Willow Slough, as allowed under the existing underlying conservation easement documents between the City and the private property owner.

Objective PAR-2B: Make sure City-funded acquisitions of conservation easements (both habitat and agricultural easements) consider options for improving and/or providing public access and recreational opportunities, where appropriate.

- **Action PAR-2B.a:** Negotiate as much public accessibility as possible on any new purchases of agricultural and/or habitat conservation easements.

GOAL PAR-3: Improve and expand on the network of bike and walking trails that link publicly owned open space lands.

Objective PAR-3A: Increase the number of safe bike and pedestrian connections between publicly owned open space lands within the Davis Planning Area.

- **Action PAR-3A.a:** Work with the State Department of Water Resources and the Central Valley Flood Control District to open the levee system to the public for walking, running, and biking linkages to the City's open space lands. If feasible, implement this project.
- **Action PAR-3A.b:** Work with Yolo County to complete a Class I bike loop in the County's right-of-way that runs from the City of Davis's city limits along County Road 104 past the City's South Fork Preserve to Yolo County's Grasslands Regional Park and back again. If feasible, implement this project.
- **Action PAR-3A.c:** Work with property owners to connect Willow Slough Bypass to the City of Davis by biking/walking trails. If feasible, implement this project.

- **Action PAR-3A.d:** Work with property owners to connect the City of Davis to the City of Woodland via walking/biking paths along F Street (i.e., the F Street Ditch). If feasible, implement this project.
- **Action PAR-3A.e:** Work with property owners to install walking/biking paths along Channel A. If feasible, implement this project.
- **Action PAR-3A.f:** Work with property owners to install walking/biking paths along the South Fork of Putah Creek between the City's South Fork Preserve and the Putah Creek riparian corridor lands owned by the Regents of the University of California. If feasible, implement this project.
- **Action PAR-3A.g:** Link the City-owned open space site at the intersection of F Street and Anderson Road to other City-owned open space along the eastern and southern edges of Julie Partansky Pond to create a new publicly accessible open space with a hiking trail. If feasible, implement this project.



Figure 22: Hiker on Wildhorse Agricultural Buffer

FINANCIAL AND PROGRAM ACCOUNTABILITY

This section provides guidance to decision-makers about financial and program accountability through the year 2030. The subject area of financial and program accountability includes creating an open, consistent and objective decision-making process and providing more information to the public about program budgets and financing tools.

The money to run the Open Space Program comes from several different sources:

1. The City's General Fund,
2. The Open Space Protection Special Tax Fund (the Measure O Fund),
3. Agriculture mitigation fees, and
4. Development impact fees for open space.

Currently, the City's annual budget reports these funds separately so it is difficult to determine the overall budget for the Open Space Program. This lack of clarity has led to public confusion and frustration about the Open Space Program budget and what Measure O funds are being spent on year to year. A background report that explains how Measure O funds were spent during the period 2000-2015 can be found by [clicking here](#).



Figure 23: Davis Wetlands

Clearly, more transparency about the Open Space Program budget needs to occur to provide more financial accountability and foster more trust and understanding between the community, the City Council, and City staff. Toward that end, City Open Space staff has prepared an easy-to-read budget summary that provides a snapshot of the Open Space Program budget. To view this document, [click here](#).

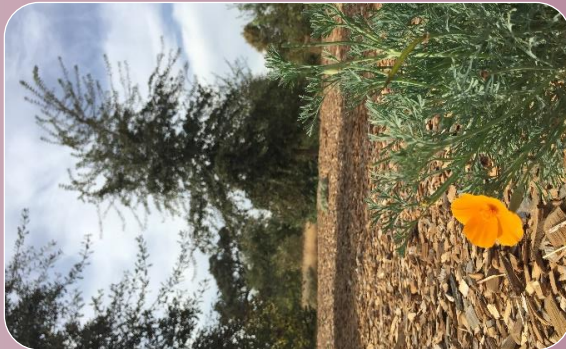
Goals, Objectives and Action Items

The goals, objectives, and action items for this section are summarized in [Figure 24](#) on the following page and detailed in the following section:

Figure 24: Snapshot of Goals, Objectives and Action Items - Financial and Program Accountability

Goal 1: Conduct program activities in an open, consistent, objective way

- **Obj A: Rely on written documents to guide and clarify program activities**
 - Action a: Prepare a strategic plan to guide/clarify future decision-making about program activities through 2030
 - Action b: Prepare implementation plans to focus efforts on implementing the strategic plan in five-year increments
 - Action c: Prepare grant guidelines for third parties seeking City funding for habitat restoration projects on City land
 - Action d: Prepare land management plans for all the City's open space sites
 - Action e: Prepare a spreadsheet summarizing the annual program budget
 - Action f: Prepare a spreadsheet summarizing all Measure O revenues and expenditures since 2000
 - Action g: Prepare an inventory of open space sites that includes key basic site information; link to interactive map
- **Obj B: Be transparent about program activities**
 - Action a: Post on the City's website the written documents that guide and clarify program activities
 - Action b: Post on the City's website regular updates and newsworthy items about program activities
 - Action c: Report regularly to the City Council about program activities; post reports on City's website
 - Action d: Report regularly to the OSHC about program activities; post reports on City's website
- **Obj C: Manage program activities to ensure accountability and operational efficiencies**
 - Action a: Concentrate the management of program activities (including the Measure O fund) in one department
 - Action b: Designate one employee with responsibility to manage program activities (including the Measure O fund)
 - Action c: Research and implement, if feasible, relevant "best practices" used at local open space districts



Goal 2: Diversify program funding sources to reduce reliance on general fund

- **Obj A: Identify and secure new internal funding sources**
 - Action a: Use a percentage of the City's agricultural lease revenue as a way to finance program activities, if feasible
 - Action b: Sell some City ag land subject to a conservation easement as a way to finance program activities, if feasible
 - Action c: Identify and secure other possible internal funding sources as a way to finance program activities
- **Obj B: Identify and secure new external funding sources**
 - Action a: Apply for as many state/fed grants as possible, given staff resources, as a way to finance program activities
 - Action b: Identify and secure other possible external funding sources as a way to finance program activities



FINANCIAL AND PROGRAM ACCOUNTABILITY

GOAL FPA-1: Conduct program activities using an open, consistent, and objective decision-making process.

Objective FPA-1A: Rely on written documents to guide and clarify program activities.

- **Action FPA-1A.a:** Prepare a strategic plan for the City's Open Space Program which will guide and clarify future decision-making about how the City acquires, restores and manages open space through 2030.
- **Action FPA-1A.b:** Prepare implementation plans that will focus the City's efforts on implementing the strategic plan in five-year increments.
- **Action FPA-1A.c:** Prepare grant guidelines for third parties seeking City funding for habitat restoration projects on City-owned open space sites.
- **Action FPA-1A.d:** Prepare land management plans for all the City's open space sites.
- **Action FPA-1A.e:** Prepare a brief, easy-to-understand spreadsheet summarizing the annual budget for the City's Open Space Program.
- **Action FPA-1A.f:** Prepare a brief, easy-to-understand spreadsheet summarizing all revenues and expenditures that have flowed through the Measure O open space parcel tax fund since 2000, the year Measure O was passed by Davis voters.
- **Action FPA-1A.g:** Prepare an inventory of the City's open space sites that includes key basic information (i.e., site size and location, site amenities, directions, public accessibility information, features, unique plant and animal species, and trail systems). Link this inventory to an interactive map so users can see where these sites are located.

Objective FPA-1B: Be transparent about program activities.

- **Action FPA 1B.a:** Post on the City's website the written documents that guide and clarify program activities (i.e., the strategic plan, implementation plans, grant guidelines, land management plans, budget spreadsheet, Measure O spreadsheet, and open space inventory/interactive map).
- **Action FPA-1B.b:** Post on the City's website regular updates and newsworthy items to keep the community informed about program activities and accomplishments.
- **Action FPA-1B.c:** Report regularly to the City Council about program activities, including how Measure O funds are being spent, program accomplishments, planned

activities for the coming year, and program challenges and needs. Post these reports on the City's website (in the form of staff reports).

- **Action FPA-1B.d:** Report regularly to the Open Space and Habitat Commission about program activities, including how Measure O funds are spent, the upcoming annual program budget, planned activities for the coming year, and program accomplishments and challenges. Post these reports on the City's website (in the form of meeting minutes).

Objective FPA-1C: Manage program activities in a way that maximizes accountability and operational efficiencies, specifically governance of the Measure O fund.

- **Action FPA-1C.a:** Concentrate the management of program activities (including the Measure O fund) in the Community Development and Sustainability Department.
- **Action FPA-1C.b:** Designate the City's Open Space Program Manager, who resides in the Community Development and Sustainability Department, as the sole person responsible for managing program activities (including the Measure O fund).
- **Action FPA-1C.c:** Research and implement, if feasible, relevant "best practices" used at local open space districts.

GOAL FPA-2: Diversify program funding sources so that program activities are less reliant on the general fund.

Objective FPA-2A: Identify and secure new internal funding sources

- **Action FPA-2A.a:** Use a percentage of the City's agricultural lease revenue as a way to finance program activities, if feasible.
- **Action FPA-2A.b:** Sell some of the City's agricultural land subject to a conservation easement as a way to finance program activities, if feasible.
- **Action FPA-2A.c:** Identify and secure other possible internal funding sources as a way to finance program activities.

Objective FPA-2B: Identify and secure new external funding sources

- **Action FPA-2B.a:** Apply for as many state and federal grants as possible, given staff resources, as a way to finance program activities.
- **Action FPA-2B.b:** Identify and secure other possible external funding sources as a way to finance program activities.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND PARTNERSHIPS

This section provides guidance to decision-makers about public engagement and partnerships through the year 2030. The subject area of public engagement and partnerships includes:

1. Engaging the public in the City's Open Space Program and at its open space sites, and
2. Developing and fostering partnerships with other interested and involved parties to achieve the City's Open Space Program goals.

Increasing the level of public engagement in the City's Open Space Program and at the City's open space sites themselves is an effective way to build community and increase understanding and awareness of the City's unique open space areas and of the program in general.



Figure 25: Volunteers doing restoration work on Putah Creek Parkway

Goals, Objectives and Action Items

The goals, objectives, and action items for this section are summarized in **Figure 26** on the following page and detailed in the following section:

Figure 26: Snapshot of Goals, Objectives and Action Items - Public Engagement and Partnerships



Goal 1: Get more people involved in the City's Open Space Program

- **Obj A: Use community organizing/outreach to increase engagement in the program**
 - Action a: Organize a public workshop and develop an on-line survey every five years
 - Action b: Encourage the OSHC to be "active ambassadors" in the community for the program
 - Action c: Outreach to potential new volunteer recruits at community events
- **Obj B: Use technology to increase engagement in the program**
 - Action a: Create a mechanism on the City's website to allow the public to submit comments/questions to staff
 - Action b: Create a mechanism on the City's website to allow staff to share real-time information with the public

Goal 2: Get more people involved at the City's open space sites

- **Obj A: Use community organizing/outreach to increase engagement at the sites**
 - Action a: Organize as many community events as possible at the City's open space sites
 - Action b: Outreach to the arts community to develop an "art-in-open-spaces" program
 - Action c: Encourage the OSHC to help staff organize "friends of" community groups to help with maintenance
 - Action d: Outreach to potential new users by installing new and improved locational signage around the City
- **Obj B: Use technology to increase engagement at the sites**
 - Action a: Revamp and update the interactive open space map on the City's website
 - Action b: Create, if feasible, a smartphone application that gives site visitors easy access to website information



Goal 3: Integrate partnerships into program activities

- **Obj A: Increase the number of partnerships with people inside the City**
 - Action a: Partner with the City's Parks and Recreation Department to create better habitat in parks/greenbelts
 - Action b: Partner with the City's Public Works Department to create better habitat/public access in channels/basins
 - Action c: Set up working group with all City land managers to improve land management practices & communication
- **Obj B: Increase the number of partnerships with people outside the City**
 - Action a: Partner with U.C. Davis to implement priority open space projects of common interest
 - Action b: Partner with the Yolo Habitat Conservancy to complete open space acquisitions related to the HCP/NCCP
 - Action c: Partner with local land trusts/brokers to stay active in the market and complete open space acquisitions
 - Action d: Partner with key entities who can help the City maintain its open spaces



PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND PARTNERSHIPS

GOAL PEP-1: Get more people involved in the City's Open Space Program.

Objective PEP-1A: Use community organizing/outreach as a way to increase public engagement in the City's Open Space Program.

- **Action PEP-1A.a:** Organize a public workshop and develop an on-line survey every five years to collect feedback from the community about program activities.
- **Action PEP-1A.b:** Encourage members of the Open Space and Habitat Commission to be "active ambassadors" in the community for the City's Open Space Program.
- **Action PEP-1A.c:** Outreach to potential new volunteer recruits at community events, such as the Davis Farmers Market and the City's "Community Day of Service."

Objective PEP-1B: Use technology as a way to increase public engagement in the City's Open Space Program.

- **Action PEP-1B.a:** Create a mechanism on the City's website/social media sites to allow the public to leave comments and/or ask questions about the City's Open Space Program.
- **Action PEP-1B.b:** Create a mechanism on the City's website/social media sites to allow staff to share real-time information (i.e., photos, plant and animal sightings, and short stories) about the City's Open Space Program.

GOAL PEP-2: Get more people involved at the City's open space sites.

Objective PEP-2A: Use community organizing/outreach as a way to increase public engagement at the City's open space sites.

- **Action PEP-2A.a:** Organize as many public events as possible at the City's open space sites (i.e., staff-led tours, volunteer days, field trips, scientific research efforts, academic field studies, and other educational events/workshops).
- **Action PEP-2A.b:** Outreach to the arts community to develop an "art-in-open-spaces" program as a way to attract new users to the City's open space sites.
- **Action PEP-2A.c:** Encourage members of the Open Space and Habitat Commission to help staff organize "friends of" community groups to help maintain open space sites.
- **Action PEP-2A.d:** Outreach to potential new users by installing new and improved locational signage at strategic locations around the City to better publicize the location of the City's open space sites.

Objective PEP-2B: Use technology as a way to increase public engagement at the City's open space sites.

- **Action PEP-2B.a:** Revamp and update the interactive open space map on the City's website to provide the public with better information about the City's open space sites.
- **Action PEP-2B.b:** Create, if feasible, a smartphone application that would allow visitors to the City's open space sites to easily access site information from the City's website (i.e., the use of Quick Response ("QR") codes).

GOAL PEP-3: Integrate partnerships into program activities.
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Objective PEP-3A: Increase the number of partnerships with people inside the City.

- **Action PEP-3A.a:** Partner with the City's Parks and Recreation Department to create better habitat in the City's parks and greenbelts.
- **Action PEP-3A.b:** Partner with the City's Public Works department to create better habitat and public access along the City's stormwater detention channels and in its stormwater detention basins.
- **Action PEP-3A.c:** Establish a working group with other City land managers (i.e., in the Parks and Recreation and Public Works departments) to share effective land management techniques, resolve conflicts and inefficiencies, and improve inter-departmental communication and cooperation.

Objective PEP-3B: Increase the number of partnerships with people outside the City.

- **Action PEP-3B.a:** Partner with U.C. Davis to implement priority open space projects of common interest.
- **Action PEP-3B.b:** Partner with the Yolo Habitat Conservancy to complete open space acquisitions (fee title or easement) related to the Yolo Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Communities Conservation Plan ("HCP/NCCP").
- **Action PEP-3B.c:** Partner with local land trusts and land brokers to stay active in the market and complete open space acquisitions (fee title or easement).
- **Action LRM-3B.d:** Partner with key entities (i.e., governmental agencies, conservation organizations, and volunteers) who can help the City maintain its open spaces. Integrate successful partnerships into land management plans, as appropriate.

MEASURING SUCCESS

Every five years, the City will develop a five-year implementation plan based on the goals, objectives and action items included in this Strategic Plan to guide its efforts during the five-year periods of 2017-2021, 2022-2026, and 2027-2031. Progress reports on these five-year implementation plans will be given monthly at the Open Space and Habitat Commission and annually at the City Council. At these public meetings, the community will be able to assess progress in each of the Strategic Plan's six specific categories: (1) Acquisitions, (2) Habitat Restoration and Enhancement, (3) Land and Resource Management, (4) Public Access and Recreation, (5) Financial and Program Accountability, and (6) Public Engagement and Partnerships. These ongoing assessments will seek to answer two important questions:

- Is the City accomplishing the action items set forth in this Strategic Plan?
- Have the successfully completed action items led to accomplishing the goals and objectives set forth in this Strategic Plan?

The City's most recent five-year implementation plan can be found on the City's website by [clicking here](#).



Figure 27: Meandering Path at Wildhorse Ag Buffer

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Decision-Making Process for Land Acquisitions

Attachment 2

Appendix A

Decision-Making Process for Land Acquisitions

This appendix provides a summary of the decision-making process that will be followed by the City before a land acquisition (either fee title or conservation easement) occurs as part of the City's effort to further the goals of the Open Space Program.

The goal of this appendix is to provide decision-makers with an objective open space property evaluation system. It establishes the framework for a consistent, objective, and open acquisition process. The implementation of this process will enable staff, advisory bodies, and decision-makers to clearly understand their respective roles in a typical open space transaction. Providing an open process with opportunities for public participation helps garner community support for both the individual transaction and the program as a whole.

This appendix seeks to answer five basic questions:

1. What are the principles that will guide the City's acquisition decisions?
2. What types/categories of land will the City purchase/protect?
3. How will the City find out about potential acquisitions?
4. How will the City evaluate potential acquisitions?
5. What is the process for acquiring/protecting open space?

What are the Principles that will Guide the City's Acquisition Decisions?

The City carries out its open space protection goals by setting policy and acquiring conservation easements and ownership of land from willing sellers. The City is committed to an approach that maximizes preservation of open space lands and resources. An effective, direct, and equitable method of doing so is to purchase protection (easements and fee-title interest) at a fair market price from willing sellers. Several fundamental principles will guide all acquisitions by the City:

1. *Acquire Land From Willing Sellers Only.* Acquire open space from willing sellers only.⁴
2. *Acquire Land Within Davis Planning Area Only.* Lands or resources must be located within the Davis Planning Area to qualify for acquisition or management by the City.
3. *Stretch the Dollar.* Acquire and hold the least interest in a property necessary to carry out the City's General Plan goals for open space protection. This means the City will be limiting its fee title acquisitions and focusing on conservation easements.
4. *Favor Conservation Easements.* Use conservation easements as the primary method of open space protection. Purchasing only part of a property's rights (such as development rights) protects land at a fraction of the cost of purchasing all the rights (fee title interest), thereby maximizing the acreage that can be brought into the City's Open Space Program. Conservation easements shall be held in perpetuity.

⁴ In rare instances it may be advantageous for a property owner to request condemnation of property by the City. Condemnation will not be used by the City to acquire open space unless requested by the landowner.

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Decision-Making Process for Land Acquisitions

5. *Make Strategic Fee-Title Acquisitions.* Acquire and hold fee-title to properties where protection of unique resources, restoration, or public access is desired.
6. *Pay Fair Market Value.* Acquire land at no more than fair market value, based on a professional appraisal.
7. *Take a Balanced Approach.* Balance efforts to protect natural resources with efforts to maintain agricultural production in the Davis Planning Area.
8. *Seek Multiple Benefits.* Seek protection of open space lands that overlap multiple acquisition categories.

The City seeks to protect the greatest amount of high quality open space land and resources as possible within its funding constraints. *However, despite remarkable community willingness to pay for open space protection, all undeveloped land and sensitive resources in the Davis Planning Area cannot be protected due to high land costs and multiple competing uses for the land.* In order to maximize the effectiveness of available funding, the City will use the most cost-effective open space protection tools (e.g., conservation easements) and seek to acquire open space that serves to buffer other lands from threat of conversion.

What Types/Categories of Land Will the City Purchase/Protect?

Acquisition categories identify the various types of open space lands and resources identified by the City for protection. These categories help organize the City's acquisition priorities by identifying the land and resource values that are desirable to the community. They are (in no order of importance):

- *Urban Fringe:* Protect land near the city limits to help define the urban limits of Davis and provide an adequate buffer between urban and rural land uses.
- *Community Separator:* Protect land between Davis and neighboring cities to preserve the unique character of each community.
- *Agriculture:* Protect prime agricultural lands and sustainable farming practices (e.g., organic agriculture) to maintain the long-term viability of agriculture in the Davis Planning Area.
- *Biological and Natural Resources:* Protect important wildlife habitat (including land that can be restored/enhanced to provide additional wildlife habitat), sensitive species, and other significant natural resources.

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- *Scenic Resources*: Protect land providing views and scenic vistas of significant landmarks, such as nearby and distant mountain ranges.

How will the City Find out About Potential Acquisitions?

The City will use various methods to find out about potential open space land acquisitions. The methods listed below are just some of the actions the City will take to find out about possible open space land acquisitions:

- Contact key landowners, either directly or indirectly through land trusts and/or brokers, to inform them about the Open Space Program and determine interest in selling land or easements in the targeted key priority acquisition areas outlined in the 2030 Strategic Plan.
- Partner with the Yolo Habitat Conservancy to complete open space acquisitions (fee title or easement) related to the Yolo Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Communities Conservation Plan, more commonly called the Yolo HCP/NCCP.
- Partner with local land trusts and land brokers to stay active in the market and complete open space acquisitions (fee title or easement acquisitions).

How will the City Evaluate Potential Acquisitions?

The following list illustrates some of the key considerations the City may discuss when thinking about acquiring an open space property or conservation easement. These considerations are not intended to limit the discussion of the positive or negative attributes of a proposed acquisition by the City. Instead, they should be used to assist in the analysis of whether a particular parcel or resource should be protected by the City. The following considerations should not be considered static and should be modified to address changing conditions and unique circumstances:

Location and Size Considerations

For potential acquisitions under the Urban Fringe, Agriculture and Scenic Resources categories, considering the site's location is more critical than its size. For potential acquisitions under the Community Separator, Agriculture, and Biological & Natural Resources categories, considering the site's size is more critical than the site's location. Some of the key questions that should be discussed during the site evaluation process include:

- Is the site within the probable path of development?
- Will acquiring this site increase the possibility of creating an open space "island" (i.e., a small open space area surrounded by urban development)?
- Is the site considered prime farmland?
- Does the site provide uninterrupted views of significant local and regional landmarks?

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Decision-Making Process for Land Acquisitions

- Will the protection of this site help to protect other open space in the same area?
- Is the site large enough to sustain typical agricultural operations?
- What is the site's soil quality and overall agricultural production potential/value?
- Is the site large enough to provide useable habitat for plant and animal species?
- What are the surrounding land uses and will they be compatible with the use of the protected open space in the future?

Connectivity and Adjacency Considerations

For potential acquisitions under all acquisition categories, considering the site's ability to connect/link other existing open space areas and the site's location adjacent to other existing open space areas is critical. Some of the key questions that should be discussed during the site evaluation process include:

- Does the site link together, or help to link together, existing protected open spaces?
- Does the site increase the size of existing protected open spaces?
- Will the site's protection contribute significantly to the protection of other high priority open space lands or resources?

Relative Risk of Conversion Considerations

For potential acquisitions under all acquisition categories, considering the site's relative risk of being converted to urban uses in the short- and mid-term is critical. Some of the key questions that should be discussed during the site evaluation process include:

- What is the site's zoning?
- What is the status of the site's Williamson Act contract?
- Is the site already served by critical infrastructure, such as roads and utilities?

Relative Scarcity Considerations

For potential acquisitions under the Urban Fringe, Scenic Resources, and Biological & Natural Resources categories, considering the site's relative scarcity is critical. Some of the key questions that should be discussed during the site evaluation process include:

- Is the site in a scarce land use category and therefore more important to protect?
- Will this site provide additional opportunities for public access and recreation (e.g., hiking, biking, wildlife viewing, etc.) that are currently in scarce supply?
- Is the site's land use type in general decline in the Davis Planning Area?
- How much of this land use type is already protected as open space?
- Does this site support sensitive species?

Attachment 2
Appendix A
Decision-Making Process for Land Acquisitions

Biodiversity Considerations

For potential acquisitions under the Biological & Natural Resources category, considering the site's ecological value and biodiversity are critical. Some of the key questions that should be discussed during the site evaluation process include:

- Does the site have a variety of habitat types?
- Does the site currently have (or did it historically have) riparian, upland, and wetland habitats?
- What is the site's ecological value (e.g., unique habitat, species diversity, protection of listed species or species in local decline, etc.)?

Land Management Considerations

For potential acquisitions under all acquisition categories, considering how the site can and should be managed in perpetuity is critical. Some of the key questions that should be discussed during the site evaluation process include:

For fee title properties:

- Can the land be acquired with reasonable effort in relation to its cost?
- Does the site have any title issues, boundary disputes, or pending legal actions?
- Does the City have the human and financial resources to manage the site appropriately in perpetuity?

For easement properties:

- Can the easement be acquired with reasonable effort in relation to its cost?
- Does the site have any title issues, boundary disputes, or pending legal actions?
- Will the landowner commit to furthering the conservation goals of the site (i.e., sustainable farming practices, voluntary protection of sensitive natural resources, etc.)?
- Is the landowner insisting on provisions in the easement that would diminish the property's conservation values?
- Are the human and financial resources in place to enforce and monitor the easement in perpetuity?

What is the Process for Acquiring/Protecting Open Space?

This section of the appendix is intended to guide the City in a typical open space land acquisition. Though there are numerous intermediate steps and each acquisition is unique, the following outline of the steps involved in a typical land transaction illustrates the critical decision points and opportunities for public input. A typical land acquisition includes the following general steps, after a parcel has been identified for acquisition:

Attachment 2
Appendix A
Decision-Making Process for Land Acquisitions

1. Make contact with the property owner(s) or broker(s) to discuss possible acquisition of fee title interest or conservation easement.
2. Request a “letter of interest” from the landowner(s), if necessary, that states the landowner(s) interest in discussing a possible acquisition and allows City staff/representatives to do a property evaluation and site visit.
3. Complete a preliminary property evaluation, which includes a property description, an initial analysis of the property’s consistency with the goals of the Open Space Program, and possible acquisition funding sources.
4. Present the preliminary property evaluation to the Open Space and Habitat Commission for discussion and direction on appropriate next steps (public input opportunity). Work with the Commission’s working group on acquisitions to refine the preliminary property evaluation if necessary.
5. Discuss the potential acquisition opportunity with the City Council in closed session to get direction from the City Council on appropriate next steps.

If direction is given from the City Council to proceed, the following steps are necessary:

1. Hire professionals to complete appraisal, environmental site assessment, title reports, and other pertinent documents and information.
2. Hire professionals to complete required analysis under the California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”).
3. Negotiate terms/draft transactional documents for acquisition of fee title interest or conservation easement, whichever is applicable. Discuss the status of negotiations with the City Council in closed session, if necessary. Keep the Open Space and Habitat Commission informed of the status of negotiations (public input opportunity).
4. Present the final terms of the transaction to the Open Space and Habitat Commission for recommended action on transaction (public input opportunity).
5. Present the final terms of the transaction to the City Council for recommended action on transaction and budget approval (public input opportunity).

If direction is given from the City Council to proceed, staff will work to execute the transaction documents and complete the acquisition.

The acquisition process outlined above provides an overview of a typical open space land transaction. However, the City Council may modify the process in exceptional cases (subject to legal requirements) where there is a high risk of loss without accelerated action by the City.

Attachment 3

Chronology of Steps Taken 2016-2018

The following is a brief chronology of the steps staff undertook over the last two years to fulfill the City Council's 2015 directive associated with the City's Open Space Program:

- ***January 2016 – On-line survey was launched.*** A broad-based community survey, administered online and in paper form, was created to capture the widest range and diversity of opinions on open space matters. The online survey was publicized widely and available for over three months. This effort resulted in 400 responses, which is a very solid response rate for a community of approximately 65,000 residents.
- ***January 2016 – Two focus groups were held.*** A highly focused dialogue was conducted with two selected focus groups to get feedback on very specific issues and questions that had come up over the years, and address complex and nuanced issues that a broad survey or a traditional community workshop would not have time or detail to address. These two meetings, which were facilitated and recorded, were attended by 16 individuals who have considerable familiarity and a strong interest in the City's Open Space Program.
- ***March 2016 – Public forum was held.*** A major community workshop was held to give residents significant time to provide input on a range of critical open space topics. The workshop, which was also facilitated and recorded, provided opportunities for residents to offer input on flip charts, written statements and maps. Maps, written materials, and information (including the notes from the focus groups and the preliminary survey results) were made available to the approximately 40 people who attended the workshop. There were large group presentations and discussions and small group table-top discussions to elicit feedback on relevant topics and questions about open space.
- ***June 2016 – Summary report of community feedback completed.*** The City's consultant for this public outreach effort, the U.C. Davis Extension Collaboration Center, completed its summary report of all the community feedback received.
- ***June 2016 – Commission approved consultant's summary report.*** The Open Space and Habitat Commission approved the consultant's summary report. That final report has been posted on the City's website and can be found at the end of Attachment 3.
- ***June – August 2016 – Set of open space guiding documents was developed.*** Staff worked closely with a working group of the Open Space and Habitat Commission to incorporate all the community input received during the public outreach effort into useful guiding documents for the future. These guiding documents included: (1) a 15-year Strategic Plan to replace the 2002 acquisition and management plan, (2) five-year implementation plans, (3) land management plans, (4) a simple budget summary document, and (5) an updated Measure O background report. More information about all these guiding documents can be found in Attachment 3.
- ***August 2016 – May 2017 – Staff drafted the Strategic Plan and the updated Measure O background report.*** During this 10-month period, staff carefully reviewed the consultant's summary report mentioned above and incorporated as many of the

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Chronology of Steps Taken 2016-2018

community's recommendations into the draft Strategic Plan as possible. Staff also drafted the updated Measure O background report during this time period.

- ***May 2017 – Commission approved subject areas and goals for Strategic Plan.*** The Open Space and Habitat Commission approved the goals for the following six subject areas for the Strategic Plan: Acquisitions, Habitat Restoration and Enhancement, Land and Resource Management, Public Access and Recreation, Financial and Program Accountability, and Public Engagement and Partnerships.
- ***May 2017 – City Council approved subject areas and goals for Strategic Plan.*** The City Council affirmed the selected subject areas and goals for the Strategic Plan and directed staff to return with a finalized Strategic Plan (see Attachment 4).
- ***June 2017 – Commission approved objectives for Strategic Plan.*** The Open Space and Habitat Commission approved the objectives for the Strategic Plan, but also reserved the right to review them again during the final review of the entire Strategic Plan.
- ***September 2017 – Commission provided feedback on Strategic Plan.*** The Open Space and Habitat Commission discussed all the draft action items for the Strategic Plan, and provided comments on the draft. No action was taken.
- ***November 2017 – Commission provided additional feedback on Strategic Plan.*** The Open Space and Habitat Commission again discussed all the draft action items for the Strategic Plan, and provided comments on the draft. No action was taken.
- ***December 2017 – Commission approved action items for Strategic Plan.*** The Open Space and Habitat Commission provided additional edits/comments and approved the action items for the Strategic Plan, as edited.
- ***March 2018 – Commission approved entire Strategic Plan.*** A working group of the Open Space and Habitat Commission spent several weeks reviewing the entire Strategic Plan and providing edits and comments to staff. On the recommendation of that working group, the Commission approved the Strategic Plan in its entirety (See Attachment 2).

Attachment 4

STAFF REPORT

DATE: May 16, 2017

TO: City Council

FROM: Mike Webb, Assistant City Manager
Katherine Hess, Community Development Administrator
Tracie Reynolds, Manager, Open Space Program

SUBJECT: Update to the March 2016 public outreach effort seeking community feedback on the City's Open Space Program and Measure O, the open space parcel tax

Recommendation

Staff recommends that the City Council receive this informational update, affirm the direction being pursued, and direct staff to return in July with a finalized strategic plan for the City's Open Space Program for the City Council's consideration and approval.

Executive Summary

This memo updates the City Council on the work that has transpired since the March 2016 public outreach effort seeking community feedback on the City's Open Space Program and the use of Measure O funds, a parcel tax Davis voters approved in 2000 to acquire and maintain open space within the Davis Planning Area. Over the last 14 months, staff has been working with the Open Space and Habitat Commission to incorporate the community feedback received during this public outreach effort into guiding documents for the future.

This staff report will (1) summarize the community input received, (2) describe how staff, in collaboration with the Commission, is turning this input into guiding documents, including an open space strategic plan that will guide actions over the next 15 years, (3) describe how that strategic plan builds on the 2002 Open Space Acquisition and Management Plan approved by the City Council, (4) describe the subject areas, goals, objectives and actions that will be included in the strategic plan, and (5) discuss other key actions that have been taken over the last year.

Council Goals

This report is directly related to Goal 3 (Pursue Environmental Sustainability), Objective 2 (Continue to pursue implementation of farmland protection and habitat conservation through acquisition of open space/easements).

Task A specifically asks staff to "complete community outreach, review and update of City Open Space priorities and policy and make recommendations to City Council, including how Measure O Open Space funds are prioritized for acquisitions and maintenance of agricultural and habitat lands/easements."

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Fiscal Impact

This staff report provides information to the City Council and does not ask the City Council to take action on any particular recommendation. As such, there is no fiscal impact to the City. Costs of compiling data and preparing this staff report have been absorbed into the approved budget for the Community Development and Sustainability Department.

Background and Analysis

Measure O, a parcel tax to fund open space acquisitions and maintenance, was passed by Davis voters in 2000 with a 30-year term. In 2015, midway through the Measure O term, both the City Council and the Commission believed it was necessary and appropriate to review how the parcel tax had been spent over the last 15 years and to check in with the community to discuss how the parcel tax should be spent over the next 15 years. The approach for soliciting community feedback relied on three separate, but inter-related, outreach methods: (1) a community survey, (2) focus groups, and (3) a community workshop. Each of these is briefly discussed below:

- ***Community Survey.*** A broad-based community survey, administered online and in paper form, was created to capture the widest range and diversity of opinions on open space matters. The online survey was publicized widely and available for over three months. This effort resulted in 400 responses, which is a very solid response rate for a community of approximately 65,000 residents.
- ***Focus Groups.*** A highly focused dialogue was conducted with two selected focus groups to get feedback on very specific issues and questions that had come up over the years, and address complex and nuanced issues that a broad survey or a traditional community workshop would not have time or detail to address. These two meetings in late January 2016 were attended by 16 individuals who have considerable familiarity and a strong interest in the City's Open Space Program. These meetings were facilitated and recorded. They helped staff identify key issues, clarify and define concerns, and guide design and preparation for the major community workshop event in March 2016.
- ***Community Workshop.*** On March 9, 2016, a major community workshop was held to give residents significant time to provide input on a range of critical open space topics. The workshop, which was also facilitated and recorded, provided opportunities for residents to offer input on flip charts, written statements and maps. Maps, written materials, and information (including the notes from the focus groups and the preliminary survey results) were made available to the approximately 40 people who attended the workshop. There were large group presentations and discussions and small group table-top discussions to elicit feedback on relevant topics and questions about open space. Input was captured on recorded flip charts, summarized in a final report, and captured in map and graphic form.

The ultimate goal was to use the results from this public outreach effort to update the Open Space Acquisition and Management Plan, which was approved by the City Council in 2002. The

Attachment 4

City's consultant for this effort, the U.C. Davis Extension Collaboration Center, summarized the community feedback received in a report (See Attachment 1). The bulk of this staff report summarizes the key findings in this report, and discusses how staff (in collaboration with the Commission) proposes to incorporate these key findings into guiding documents for the Open Space Program in the future.

Summary of Community Feedback

The good news is that almost 75% of the community has a favorable view of Measure O, based on the survey results (See Attachment 1). About 70% of the community generally has a favorable view of the Open Space Program and a similar 70% is well aware of the program. In general, the following aspects of the program are working well, based on the community feedback received:

- Measure O has been very effective at leveraging grant funds and protecting agricultural land from development
- The City's past emphasis on conservation easements has stretched the dollars further
- The City's partnerships with local land trusts are working well
- Fee title acquisitions along riparian corridors are extremely valuable for many reasons
- Land management costs, including staff costs, have generally been kept low (except during the recent economic downturn)
- Measure O funds for the most part have been spent wisely

However, community members also offered many suggestions for improving the City's Open Space Program and for improving the way residents experience the City's open space areas (See Attachment 1). The community feedback can be grouped into six main subject areas:

1. Acquisitions
2. Habitat Restoration and Enhancement
3. Land and Resource Management
4. Public Access and Recreation
5. Financial and Program Accountability
6. Public Engagement and Partnerships

These six subject areas will provide the organizational structure for a strategic plan for the Open Space Program. This strategic plan, which builds on and will replace the Open Space Acquisitions and Management Plan approved by the City Council in 2002, will guide actions under the City's Open Space Program over the next 15 years. This strategic plan, along with other guiding documents, are discussed in greater detail below.

Turning Community Input into Plans

Since March 2016, staff has been working closely with a working group of the Open Space and Habitat Commission to incorporate all the community input received into useful guiding documents for the future. The City's consultant for the public outreach effort finished its

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summary report in June 2016 (See Attachment 1). The Open Space and Habitat Commission approved the report at its June 2016 meeting, and the report was posted on the City's website.

Over the summer of last year, staff and the working group worked together to develop the following set of guiding documents, based on the community input received:

1. ***A 15-Year Strategic Plan*** – This plan builds on, and will replace, the Open Space Acquisition and Management Plan approved by the City Council in 2002 (the “2002 A&M Plan”). It is designed to guide open space decisions over the next 15 years. It differs from the 2002 A&M Plan in some key ways:
 - ✓ It will include more subject areas. In addition to acquisitions and land management, the strategic plan will include four additional subject areas: (1) habitat restoration and enhancement, (2) public access and recreation, (3) financial and program accountability, and (4) public engagement and partnerships.
 - ✓ It will include a more structured format (i.e., it will include subject areas, goals, objectives, actions). The structure mimics a similar strategic plan produced by the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District.
2. ***Five-Year Implementation Plans*** – These plans will focus staff and Commission efforts on implementing the Strategic Plan in five-year increments.
3. ***Land Management Plans*** – These plans will provide guidance to open space maintenance staff and the public about how the City's key open space areas are managed. They also will help to ensure consistency in land management practices over time so that long-term goals, such as habitat restoration and enhancement, can be achieved.
4. ***A Simple Budget Summary Document*** – This short, easy-to-understand summary document will provide the public with a quick look at the Open Space Program budget. Again, this document will be similar to a summary budget document produced by the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District.
5. ***An Updated Measure O Background Report*** – This report builds on and updates a draft background report on Measure O revenues and expenditures since 2000, which was produced by the City and the Commission in 2013. The updated report will include all the information that was presented to the City Council in December 2015, during a workshop on Measure O revenues and expenditures since 2000.

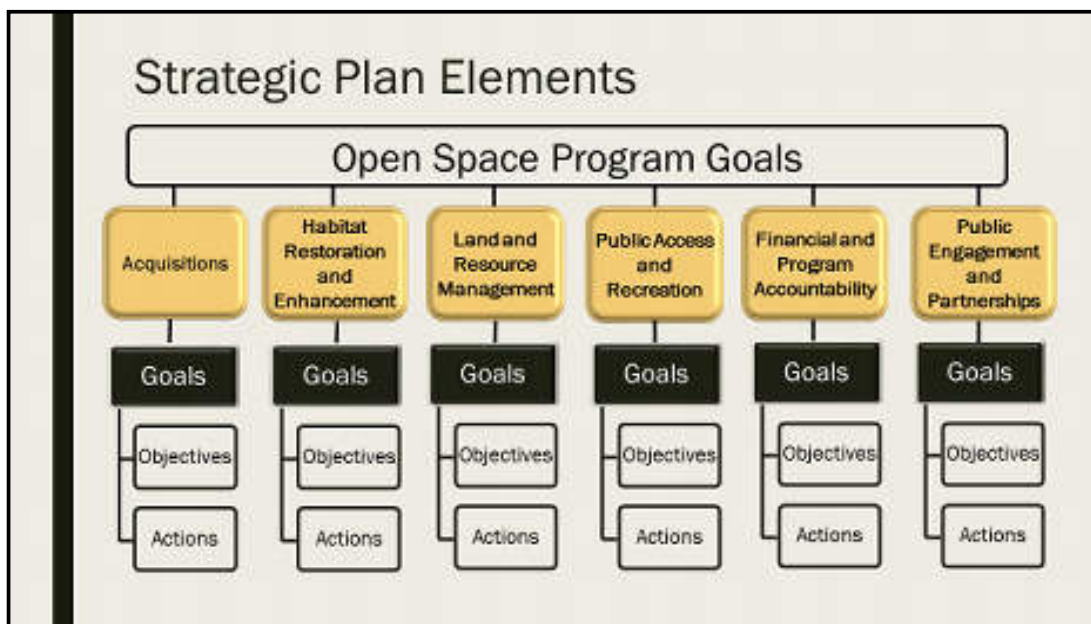
Staff spent the end of last year drafting the strategic plan and the updated Measure O background report. The rest of this staff report focuses on the strategic plan subject areas and goals. Staff has spent the last several months working with the Commission to approve the subject areas and goals for the strategic plan. The Commission approved the subject areas and goals at its May meeting. More work still needs to be done to finalize the objectives and actions associated with each goal. Staff intends to complete this work over the next two months.

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Finally, this staff report concludes with a short discussion of other key actions taken over the last year to respond to the community feedback received during last year's public outreach effort.

Strategic Plan Organizational Chart

Staff relied on similar strategic plans prepared by other open space agencies, including the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District, as a starting point for the City's strategic plan. Staff also worked closely with a Commission working group to develop the subject areas for the City's strategic plan. The chart below illustrates how the core of the strategic plan will be organized:



As mentioned, the Commission has approved the subject areas and the goals under each subject areas, but has not yet finalized all the objectives and actions under each subject area. Staff intends to complete this work over the next two months. Once finalized, staff will bring back the final draft strategic plan for the City Council's consideration and approval.

The following sections summarize each subject area and the goals for each subject area.

ACQUISITIONS

This section in the strategic plan will guide decisions about open space acquisitions over the next 15 years. The subject area of acquisitions includes both the acquisition of a fee title interest in open space, and the acquisition of agricultural and/or habitat conservation easements. Owning an easement means the property remains in private hands but cannot be developed in the future.

In general, the community feedback the City received on this subject focused on the following:

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- More emphasis should be given to habitat protection (especially along riparian corridors)
- More emphasis should be given to parcels closer to the City limits
- More emphasis should be given to parcels providing public access
- More strategic and innovative approaches should be taken to future acquisitions

In sum, the community did not deviate much from the broad priority acquisition categories (or goals) that were created under the 2002 A&M Plan. These priority acquisition categories (or goals) include:

1. Goal -- Protect land on the “urban fringe” of the City (i.e., acquire land/easements within a ¼ mile of City limits)
2. Goal -- Protect “community separator” land (i.e., acquire land/easements in between the communities of Davis, Dixon and Woodland)
3. Goal -- Protect “agriculture” land (i.e., acquire land/easements on prime agricultural lands)
4. Goal -- Protect “biological and natural resources” land (i.e., acquire land/easements on prime habitat lands)
5. Goal -- Protect “scenic resources” land (i.e., acquire land/easements on prime scenic lands)

In response to the community feedback received, and in response to discussions with the Commission, staff is proposing to add a sixth priority acquisition category (or goal) to the strategic plan:

6. Goal -- Protect “public access and recreation” land (i.e., acquire land/easements that provide public access and recreation)

The objectives and actions in this section of the strategic plan will focus on acquiring land and easements in these six priority acquisition categories.

It is important to note that the community said it wanted the City to continue the historic practice of using funds judiciously to purchase large swaths of agricultural lands under conservation easements. However, the feedback suggests that the community would like the City to balance this portfolio of agriculture lands with more open space closer to the City, more habitat and habitat improvements, and more land allowing public access.

The community also said it would like to see a more strategic approach to acquisitions in the future, which is discussed under Financial and Program Accountability discussed later in this staff report.

HABITAT RESTORATION AND ENHANCEMENT

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This section in the strategic plan will guide decisions about habitat restoration and enhancement over the next 15 years. The subject area of habitat restoration and enhancement includes restoring and enhancing City-owned open space areas to make them more livable for native plant and animal species.

In general, the community feedback the City received on this subject focused on the following:

- More funding and program emphasis should be given to ecological restoration projects (specific habitat types that received considerable attention were: riparian forests, burrowing owl habitat, valley oak woodlands, and native pollinator habitat)

In response to the community feedback received, and in response to discussions with the Commission, staff is proposing to create a new subject area devoted to this subject in the strategic plan and to add the following goals:

- Goal -- Restore and enhance City-owned open space lands

The objectives and actions in this section of the strategic plan will focus on planting more native plants and grasses to increase biodiversity, removing invasive species, installing other habitat improvements that benefit native animal species, and selecting restoration projects for Measure O grant funding.

LAND AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

This section in the strategic plan will guide decisions about land and resource management over the next 15 years. The subject area of land and resource management includes land management practices on all City-owned open spaces, including those managed for habitat, public access, and agriculture. It also includes goals for managing the City's conservation easements on private property.

In general, the community feedback the City received on this subject focused on the following:

- The City's open space areas should be managed to provide better habitat
- The City's open space areas should be managed to provide better public access
- Land management plans should be developed and available to the public

In response to the community feedback received, and in response to discussions with the Commission, staff is proposing to create a new subject area devoted to this subject in the strategic plan and to add the following goals:

- Goal -- Manage City-owned open space lands for habitat for native plant and animal species
- Goal -- Manage City-owned open space lands for appropriate public access & recreation

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- Goal -- Manage City-owned agricultural lands
- Goal -- Manage conservation easements on private property

The objectives and actions in this section of the strategic plan will focus on (1) developing and using land management plans, (2) instituting best management practices, (3) creating new environmental data-tracking tools, (4) working with stakeholders to minimize land-use conflicts (i.e., between habitat and other uses), (5) clarifying community needs and expectations and developing guidelines for appropriate public access, (6) managing and monitoring public access to balance the public's enjoyment of the land with the land's primary value as habitat and/or agriculture, (7) minimizing evidence of human use and impacts through site design, use regulations, and visitor education, (8) increasing the use of sustainable land management practices and certified organic farming practices where feasible and in a way that doesn't harm the economic viability of these lands, (9) developing a set of desirable objectives for future conservation easements, and (10) continuing the City's collaborative relationship with local land trusts to monitor and enforce the City's conservation easements.

PUBLIC ACCESS AND RECREATION

This section in the strategic plan will guide decisions about public access and recreation in the City's open space areas over the next 15 years. The subject area of public access and recreation includes increasing public access and recreational opportunities on the City's open space areas and on the City's conservation easement lands, where feasible. It also includes building a better open space network, and improving linkages between open space areas.

In general, the community feedback the City received on this subject focused on the following:

- More walking trails should be provided in open space areas
- More emphasis should be given to public access in acquisitions and restoration projects

In response to the community feedback received, and in response to discussions with the Commission, staff is proposing to create a new subject area devoted to this subject in the strategic plan and to add the following goals:

- Goal -- Provide better public access and recreational opportunities on City-owned open space lands (under fee title ownership)
- Goal -- Provide better public access and recreational opportunities on City-owned conservation easements on private property, where already allowed
- Goal -- Improve and expand on the network of hiking and biking trails that link publicly owned open space lands

The objectives and actions in this section of the strategic plan will focus on (1) installing more hiking and biking trails, (2) installing more passive recreational improvements, (3) ensuring City-funded habitat restoration projects consider appropriate public access and recreational

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opportunities, (4) considering and pursuing opportunities for public access and recreation when acquiring new open space lands, (5) partnering with non-governmental organizations to develop structured and supervised public access events on certain conservation easement lands(as allowed under the easement documents between the City and the private property owner), (6) considering and pursuing opportunities for public access and recreation when acquiring new habitat and agricultural conservation easements, and (7) increasing bike and pedestrian connections between publicly owned open space lands within the Davis Planning Area.

FINANCIAL AND PROGRAM ACCOUNTABILITY

This section in the strategic plan will guide decisions about financial and program accountability over the next 15 years. The subject area of financial and program accountability includes creating an open, consistent and objective decision-making process and providing more information to the public about program budgets and financing tools.

In general, the community feedback the City received on this subject focused on the following:

- More transparency about budgeting, grants, and acquisition priorities is needed
- The City should increase its reliance on best practices at other open space agencies
- The City should increase its use of new funding partners and funding sources

In response to the community feedback received, and in response to discussions with the Commission, staff is proposing to create a new subject area devoted to this subject in the strategic plan and to add the following goals:

- Goal -- Conduct program activities using an open, consistent, and objective decision-making process
- Goal -- Ensure that Measure O revenues and expenditures are consistent and supportive of Measure O requirements and intents
- Goal -- Increase public transparency about the Open Space Program budget
- Goal -- Use and leverage a variety of open space financing tools to acquire/protect, restore/enhance, and manage City-owned open space lands

The objectives and actions in this section of the strategic plan will focus on (1) developing written publicized protocols for making decisions about open space acquisitions, restoration and enhancement projects, and land and resource management practices, (2) implementing City policies and protocols to clarify governance of the Measure O fund, eliminate competing interests, and ensure accountability to the public, (3) reporting regularly to the Open Space and Habitat Commission and the City Council about how Measure O funds are being collected and spent, (4) developing, and making publicly available an historical cash flow summarizing all revenues and expenditures that have flowed in and out of the Open Space Program since 2000 (if feasible) and an annual budget for the Open Space Program as a whole, (5) reporting to, and seeking feedback from, the City Council and the community on a regular basis on the progress of

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the Open Space Program, including program accomplishments, planned activities for the coming year, and program challenges and needs, and (6) pursuing outside funding sources to finance open space acquisitions, restoration and enhancement projects, and land management activities.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND PARTNERSHIPS

This section in the strategic plan will guide decisions about public engagement and partnerships over the next 15 years. The subject area of public engagement and partnerships includes educating and engaging the public in the City's Open Space Program and at its open space sites, and developing and fostering partnerships with other interested and involved parties to achieve the City's Open Space Program goals.

In general, the community feedback the City received on this subject focused on the following:

- More public information should be provided about the City's Open Space Program and about the City's open space sites
- The City should increase its level of engagement with private land owners and the farm community to facilitate acquisitions and public access opportunities

In response to the community feedback received, and in response to discussions with the Commission, staff is proposing to create a new subject area devoted to this subject in the strategic plan and to add the following goals:

- Goal -- Educate the public about the City's Open Space Program and open space areas
- Goal -- Engage the public in the City's Open Space Program and at its open space areas
- Goal -- Develop and foster partnerships with other interested and involved parties to achieve the City's Open Space Program goals

The objectives and actions in this section of the strategic plan will focus on (1) increasing the public's knowledge of the City's Open Space Program, its open space areas, and its open space land management practices, (2) improving the City's use of technology to publicize and collect information, (3) increasing public engagement in the City's Open Space Program and at the City's open space areas to build community and strong support for the program, and (4) developing and fostering partnerships to acquire new open space land and conservation easements, create better habitat and public access on City-owned land, and create better habitat and public access on non-City-owned land, including land owned by the Regents of the University of California.

Other Key Actions Taken Over the Last Year

In addition to completing drafts of the strategic plan and updated Measure O background document, staff also took other key steps over the last year to respond to the community feedback received during last year's public outreach effort. These actions include:

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- ***Applied for a state grant to fund public accessibility improvements.*** In October 2016, the City applied for a grant from the California Department of Parks and Recreation (Habitat Conservation Fund Program) to help fund public accessibility improvements at South Fork Preserve, a 110-acre nature preserve adjacent to the South Fork of Putah Creek at County Road 104. If funded, the project will construct about 2,500 feet of new trails along the creek's riparian corridor and a new boardwalk/overlook deck. The new trails will also help to better protect the preserve's sensitive habitat by channeling visitors to designated areas. The project also will improve existing trails to make them accessible to people with disabilities. This grant application was approved by both the Commission and the City Council. Staff expects to hear if the City was awarded the grant in July.
- ***Acquired about 10 acres of new open space.*** In January 2017, the City purchased a 9.5-acre property west of South Fork Preserve. The property is directly adjacent to the City's existing nature preserve (South Fork Preserve), and includes about a half mile of dense riparian forest. Two-thirds of the \$419,000 purchase price was paid with Measure O funds and one-third was paid with open space development impact fees. This acquisition was approved by both the Commission and the City Council. In the future, staff plans to install a trail system so that the public can better enjoy the riparian habitat.
- ***Prepared draft land management plans.*** Staff has prepared draft land management plans for South Fork Preserve and the Wildhorse Agricultural Buffer. Staff intends to present the key elements of these draft management plans to the Commission for discussion in June or July. The goal is to agree on a standardized table of contents for the City's land management plans, so that the plans are consistent across properties.
- ***Started a restoration project at F Street and Anderson Road.*** Over the last several months, staff has been working with members of the community who would like to see a three-acre vacant property adjacent to North Davis Pond transformed into a native plant site with paths and seating areas. Staff intends to use a combination of Measure O funds and open space development impact fees to fund the restoration project. The project will not preclude a landing area for a possible bike overcrossing on the site in the future.

Next Steps

Over the coming weeks, staff will continue working with the Commission to finalize the remaining sections of the strategic plan and bring the final draft to the City Council for approval.

Attachments:

Attachment 1: Final Report – Public Outreach Effort – Spring 2016



City of Davis Open Space Program Community Involvement Process Spring 2016



City of Davis Open Space Program Community Involvement Process

Spring 2016

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I. Introduction

Objectives and Approach

The City of Davis' Open Space Program was formally established in 1990 to protect and restore open space in the Davis Planning Area. A variety of tools and approaches have been used to protect and manage habitats, agricultural lands and riparian corridors since that time. In total, over 5,000 acres of land have been set aside in permanent protection. With the passage of Measure "O" in year 2000, the residents of the City of Davis have been providing a reliable source of funds for the Open Space Program to expand land protection and management. The measure is set to be reconsidered in 2030. The City's Open Space and Habitat Commission (the "Commission"), with the support of the Davis City Council, felt that 2015, mid-way through the Measure O time period, was a perfect opportunity to both inform and get widespread feedback from Davis residents and others who were interested in how the Open Space Program was working, and what needed to be improved. The Commission wanted the City to provide public accountability and transparency about the effective use of Measure O funds. In addition, the Commission wanted to solicit ideas and concerns, and identify new priorities and recommendations for the Open Space Program as the City looks into the future to refine the program.

The City hired UC Davis Extension's Collaboration Center to work with City staff and the Commission to gather feedback from Davis residents and others, and translate that information into useful policy and management recommendations to help guide the program into the future. The primary objective was to provide an open and transparent venue for all community members to learn about, discuss, evaluate and suggest improvements to the City's Open Space Program. This report summarizes that feedback.

The approach for soliciting feedback relied on three separate, but inter-related, outreach methods: (1) a community survey, (2) focus groups, and (3) a major community workshop. Each of these is briefly discussed below.

Community Survey. A broad-based community survey, administered online and in paper form, was created to capture the widest range and diversity of opinions on open space matters. The online survey was available for over three months. To spread the word about the survey and engage the community, the City and the Commission:

- Published news about the survey and links to the survey on the City's website and other websites available to the City, such as Facebook and Nextdoor Davis;

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- Contacted the local paper to publish stories about the outreach effort and links to the survey;
- Emailed the survey to a wide variety of local organizations engaged in the preservation and management of agriculture and habitat lands;
- Emailed the survey to residents registered on the City's website to receive information about open space issues;
- Distributed paper surveys at City Hall, the Yolo County Library, and at the Davis Farmers Market.

This effort resulted in 400 responses, which is a very solid response rate for a community of approximately 65,000 residents.

Focus Groups. A highly focused dialogue was conducted with two selected focus groups to get feedback on very specific issues and questions that had come up over the years, and address complex and nuanced issues that a broad survey or a traditional community workshop would not have time or detail to address. These two meetings in late January were attended by 16 individuals who have considerable familiarity and a strong interest in the City's Open Space Program. These meetings were facilitated and recorded. They helped the City staff and consultant team identify key issues, clarify and define concerns, and guide design and preparation for the major community workshop event in March.

Community Workshop. On March 9th, a major community workshop was held to give residents significant time to provide input on a range of critical open space topics. The workshop, which was also facilitated and recorded, provided opportunities for residents to offer input on flip charts, written statements and maps. Maps, written materials, and information (including the notes from the focus groups and the preliminary survey results) were made available to the approximately 40 people who attended the workshop. There were large group presentations and discussions and small group table-top discussions to elicit feedback on relevant topics and questions about open space. Input was captured on recorded flip charts and summarized in this report and also captured in map and graphic form.

Most of this input is considered valuable and contributes to the summary comments and conclusions at the end of this report. All of the direct input (in "raw" form) is also contained in the report appendix. The information contained in this report is intended to

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be used by the Commission, City staff, and those residents and citizens interested in open space protection to help shape policy and implementation decisions about future open space acquisition, management, maintenance, access, budgeting, partnerships, and other aspects of the program. Because of the volume of comments, and the long lists of ideas and suggestions, it can be challenging to select key themes and critical priorities. The Summary and Conclusions section of the report takes a first step in this direction, but it is incumbent on City staff and the Commission to grapple with all of these relevant opinions and ideas as the City collectively looks toward the future.



West Davis Pond native landscape area.

Background on the Open Space Program

The City's Open Space Program implements long-standing Davis General Plan goals and policies to preserve farmland and habitat areas surrounding the city. The goals of the program are: (1) securing long-term protection of open space lands around Davis, (2) providing and improving management and monitoring of City-owned open spaces, (3) promoting and supporting the enjoyment of public open space lands, (4) engaging citizens in planning and caring for open space, and (5) nurturing productive partnerships with other organizations.

There are four primary policy "tools" that the City uses to accomplish these goals.

Tool #1: Agricultural Mitigation Requirement. In 1995, the City approved the Right to Farm and Farmland Preservation Ordinance (City of Davis Municipal Code 40A). The objectives of the ordinance are to: (1) protect and encourage continued agricultural land use and operations within the Davis Planning Area; (2) reduce the occurrence of conflicts between agricultural and urban land uses; and (3) reduce the loss of agricultural resources by limiting the circumstances under which agricultural operations may be deemed a nuisance. To help achieve these objectives, developers must permanently protect at least two acres of agricultural land somewhere within the Davis Planning Area to "mitigate" for every acre of agricultural land they convert to urban uses. Permanently protecting the land means either buying it outright or buying a conservation easement on the land. Developers must first preserve the land directly adjacent to their project. If this adjacent land is not enough to satisfy the 2:1 agricultural land mitigation requirement, then the developer must look elsewhere within the Davis Planning Area. Developers can partially satisfy this requirement by paying an in-lieu fee. Incentives, or location-based "credits," are provided to the developer to protect land in areas targeted for permanent protection by the City, such as land within a ¼ mile of the city limits and land within "priority acquisition areas" as determined by the City Council.

Tool #2: The Agricultural Buffer Requirement. Also as part of the above ordinance, developers must provide an agricultural buffer (i.e., an agricultural transition area, greenbelt or habitat area) that is at least 150 feet wide between their project and adjacent agricultural uses. This tool is designed to reduce potential conflicts between urban and rural land uses.

Tool #3: Multiple Funding Sources. The Measure O open space parcel tax is one of three funding sources the City uses to acquire open space and conservation easements. The City also uses agriculture mitigation in-lieu fees and development impact fees to finance open space acquisitions. These funds are often used as

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matching funds for grants to acquire land and easements with willing sellers at fair market value. These funding sources have leveraged millions of dollars of matching state and federal funds to protect open space in the Davis Planning Area.

Tool # 4: Measure R/J Vote (City of Davis Municipal Code 41). Measure J (the Citizens' Right to Vote on Future Use of Open Space and Agricultural Lands Ordinance) was first passed by Davis voters in 2000. Measure R was passed in 2010 to extend the voting requirements until December 31, 2020. Measure J/R requires an affirmative citizen vote for General Plan Amendments that re-designate land from agricultural or open space land to urban uses. There have been two such votes in the City, and in each case, the development proposal was turned down by the voters.

How much land has been protected?

Since 1994, over 5,200 acres of land have been permanently protected in the Davis Planning Area. Those acres include land adjacent to the city limits, land separating the City from neighboring cities, and land providing particular agricultural, biological/natural and/or scenic benefits.

Before the passage of Measure O in 2000, the City did not have a reliable funding source to acquire land and conservation easements. The City's innovative acquisition program was funded primarily through sporadic grant funding and agricultural mitigation in-lieu fees paid by development projects. Despite the unreliability of these funds, the City was able to protect more than 2,400 acres of sensitive habitat and prime agricultural lands in perpetuity around Davis. The City was also able to acquire 220 acres of open land in fee title, much of which is accessible along riparian corridors today.

In 2000, Measure O, or the "Open Space Protection Special Tax Fund," was approved by 70% of Davis voters. Measure O is a parcel tax to fund open space acquisition and maintenance. The tax rate is \$24 per year for a typical market-rate single-family home, with other rates depending on land use type. The parcel tax currently generates approximately \$650,000 annually. Since passage of Measure O as a stable and predictable funding source, the City has been able to permanently protect an additional 2,833 acres of farmland and habitat areas within the Davis Planning Area. Most of these acres remain privately owned. The City, either by itself or in partnership with the Yolo Land Trust, owns the conservation easements recorded on these lands. The conservation easements prevent the acres from ever being developed.

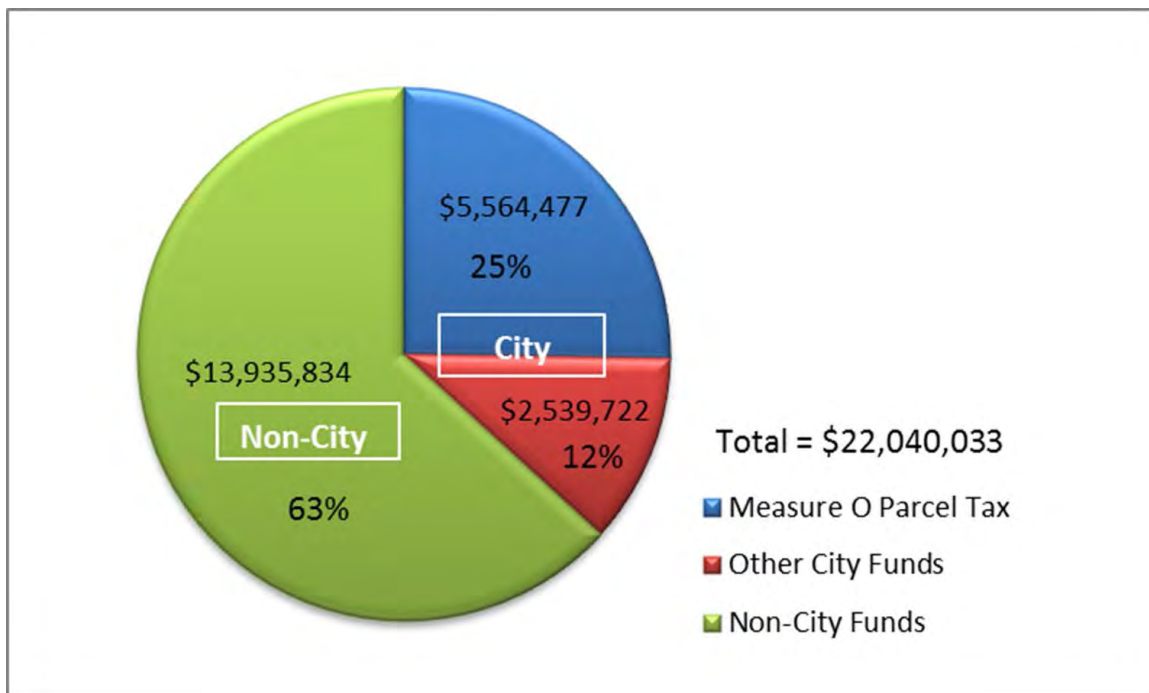
All of the 2,833 acres of open space protected since 2000 are located within the Davis Planning Area within key priority acquisition areas, as approved by the City Council in

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2002 in the Open Space Acquisition and Management Plan. The priority acquisition areas include urban fringe properties, community separators, agricultural land, scenic resources, and biological/natural resources.

What have Measure O parcel taxes been spent on over the last 15 years?

Open Space Acquisitions. By itself, the Measure O parcel tax is not enough money to purchase significant tracts of land under fee title ownership or easement. Its greatest value is its leveraging potential. Because it is a stable and reliable revenue source, Measure O has given the City of Davis an enviable advantage in the stiff competition for state and federal land acquisition grants. For every \$1 the City has spent on purchasing land and easements, it has leveraged about \$1.70 in grant funds. Since Measure O passed, the City has secured \$22 million worth of conservation easements using only about \$8.1 million in City funds (\$5.6 million in Measure O parcel tax dollars and \$2.5 million in other City funds), as shown in the chart below.



Open Space Maintenance. Measure O also helps to maintain and manage 220 acres of open space lands that are directly owned by the City. About 184 of these acres are publicly accessible, including the Wildhorse agricultural buffer, the Putah Creek Parkway, and South Fork Preserve. The total cost to provide this work is shared between the City's General Fund and the Measure O Fund. Since 2000, about \$2.2

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million of this cost has been paid for by the Measure O Fund.

The Open Space and Habitat Commission

The Open Space and Habitat Commission (the “Commission”) worked with City staff to organize and conduct this comprehensive community input process at the midpoint of the Measure O funding period. This concentrated effort is just part of the Commission’s and City’s long-standing roles to engage interested citizens. The Commission has conducted monthly public meetings for twenty years (since 1996), and it continues to meet regularly and seek public input at all of their meetings. City staff is available at any time for additional comment, feedback and volunteer assistance. The Commission was established in 1996 to do the following: (1) advise the City Council and staff on all open space issues, programs, and projects; (2) monitor and facilitate the implementation of the City’s open space objectives and identify solutions to implementation problems; (3) serve as a focal point for the community and City government for open space projects and issues; (4) identify implementation opportunities; (5) generate public support through education and promotion; (6) monitor implementation for consistency with the Open Space Element; (7) facilitate volunteer activities and cooperative ventures; and (8) monitor problems and identify solutions.

This public involvement process and the results documented in this report are one piece of the Commission’s responsibilities.

Report Organization

Following this introductory chapter, the information in this report is organized into three simple sections:

- (1) Community Input, which provides direct or summarized information from the large community workshop, the two smaller focus groups, and the community survey.
- (2) Summary and Conclusions, which identifies themes, common elements, and key policy questions and improvement suggestions that were brought up in multiple venues and with different perspectives.
- (3) Appendix, which provides much of the “raw” materials used at the public events like agendas, notes, and written materials used at the workshops. In addition, all of the detailed comments and suggestions in the community survey are located in the Appendix.

II. Community Input

Community Workshop

Approach and Method

On March 9, 2016, approximately 40 residents engaged with City staff, members of the Commission, and the UC Davis Collaboration Center consulting team to discuss all aspects of the City's Open Space Program. The agenda for the meeting is shown in the appendix. The meeting began with a brief presentation by Marc Hoshovsky, a member of the Commission, who talked about the City's Open Space Program and its history, accomplishments, and challenges. Jeff Loux of the UCD consulting team then presented the preliminary results of the Community Survey (which at the time had about 300 participants) that had been available for a couple months prior to the workshop. The survey was concluded in early April 2016 with over 400 participants, and the results are contained in this report. Greg Bourne, also of the UCD consulting team, described briefly the results of two focus groups held in late January 2016. The focus groups were made up of citizens who had worked on open space issues for many years and had a strong interest in the City's Open Space Program. The results from the Focus Groups are also included in this report, and were available at the meeting.



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Following the presentations, participants in the workshop were asked to join one of five tables located around the room; each with a facilitator and recorder team, and each with a particular topical specialty: (1) Overall Open Space Program; (2) Open Space Acquisition Priorities; (3) Budget, Management and Maintenance; (4) Public Access; and (5) Ecological Restoration. Participants were encouraged to provide input on a series of focused questions and open-ended improvement suggestions at each table. The input was captured on flip charts and in some cases directly onto maps. After about 30 minutes, participants were invited to shift to a different topical table and provide input in “round two.” After another 30 minutes, participants moved to a third table/topic and provided input.

Following these three break out discussions, all of the residents got back together to compare notes, provide any final feedback and ask questions. All of the results of the workshop, including a compilation of the mapped results are provided on the following pages in this report. All three “rounds” for each topic area table are summarized together since they addressed the same basic questions. The notes are not precisely consistent because the facilitator and recorder team varied for each table, the number of participants and key questions varied, and the amount of information collected varied, but the consultant team has tried to integrate each table.



Community Workshop Results

1. Overall Open Space Program Table Results

This table was designed to solicit feedback about the City's Open Space Program and open space issues in general. Overall, each group had many positive things to say about the Measure O fund and how it supports open space objectives. Most of the discussions focused on the improvements that the City's overall open space program could strive to make. Some of the major discussion areas were:

- Improve public communication, engagement and information sharing - leverage the website and further improve it to "market" the City's open space amenities and options and leverage social media to promote ideas, news, important information, and collect public feedback, etc.
 - Promote open space more - have tours/meetings in open space locations or leverage website/social media to highlight the open space areas.
 - Improve connectors to remote open space habitat - try to add additional bike or hiking trails or add new open space areas to expand connections to remote open space areas.
 - Add specific habitat management plans for agricultural buffers and open space areas.
 - Engage the community to look for volunteers/groups to help maintain the open space areas.
-

2. Open Space Acquisition Priorities Table Results

This table was designed to solicit feedback about the type and location of open space the City should try to purchase/protect in the future. As such, this table focused on two key questions: (1) What type of lands should be the highest priority and why; and (2) What specific places, projects and strategies should the City focus on in the future. Input was collected on flip charts, but also on working maps of the Davis Planning Area. The map and legend shown at the end of this section combine the mapped ideas from the open space acquisition priorities table, the ecological restoration table, and the public access table. Community comments were combined where participants identified similar locations or resources. Some of the major discussion areas were:

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General Comments

- Does the City have an overall acquisition strategy?
- How aggressive has City staff been in looking at areas near the urban fringe and at creative alternative financing tools?
- Urban limit line: what would this do to property values? Is Measure R/J really an urban limit line or not? An urban limit line is stronger than Measure R/J and a more comprehensive solution and should be looked at.
- Measure R is doing well. It helps us to determine where to grow and not to grow.
- City Council a few years back passed a policy directed away from buying the urban fringe. This gave the impression to land owners and developers that the City was supporting edge growth.
- Restoration areas are a possibility for more public access.
- Public access on conservation easements is limited, and this is a problem.
- We need a strong City policy to protect the urban fringe.
- The City should leverage developer's money to buy other areas.

What types of land should be the highest priority for acquisition/protection?

There were individuals who supported each of the open space acquisition priorities allowed under Measure O and the Open Space Program. However, the most "votes" or comments were in favor of closer in urban fringe lands where public access might be a possibility, riparian corridors where habitat could be protected and/or restored, and large tracts of agricultural lands to protect scenic vistas, farming opportunities, and particularly where multiple benefits might be gained such as habitat, community separation, flood management, and farm land protection. Suggestions for priorities included:

- Urban fringe lands -- close in so we can access it (multiple people agreeing).
- Public access -- any feasible bike trail, look at the Davis to Woodland connection (multiple people agreeing).
- Riparian corridors -- especially close to town (multiple people agreeing).

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- Prime agricultural lands – take advantage of scenic landscapes and use as community separators (multiple people agreeing).
- Habitat connectivity along sloughs is critical.
- Connectivity -- north of town, use as community separator.
- Pollinator habitat -- areas without pesticides, hedge rows, gems within City limits.
- Overlap -- urban fringe and public access.
- Agricultural land that incorporates riparian corridors.
- Orchards -- important for Swainson's Hawks and habitat conservation.
- Rare habitat areas such as Swainson's hawk habitat and vernal pools.
- Preserve vistas from the City to the coastal mountains.
- Measure O should not be directed to funding around City boundaries. The land is too expensive and we may wish to grow someday there.

What specific places and locations are appropriate for acquisition/protection?

- Putah Creek connection -- fill in the gaps.
 - o For bike trails
 - o Use natural boundary sloughs north and south of the City as an acquisition area
- Public access along Channel A.
- North side of North Davis ditch between F Street and Highway 113.
- The City owned fee title land north of the City – sell it, place an easement on it, and get a farmer in there to manage it and use the funds for acquisition.
- Road 98 – connecting Davis to Woodland; seek agricultural easements and protect vistas of mountains.
- F Street ditch -- benefits for urban and agricultural land runoff.
 - o Along sloughs = multiple benefits
 - o Also connected to pollinator benefits
- Other green belts such as the West Davis Ponds.
 - o Restoration + public access -- areas that people can readily access.

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- o Public access within the City that isn't captured within the survey.
- Los Rios Property -- secure a conservation easement

What acquisition strategies and opportunities are high-priority?

- Government programs are fine, but we need to look to the private sector to further leverage funding.
 - HCP + NCCP -- parcels that are too expensive, partnership can leverage more funding and great opportunities.
 - \$15 million -- can we leverage this by buying bonds? This would allow us to buy bigger parcels, more land or more expensive land today.
 - Zoning to promote the purchase of riparian areas next to agricultural land; this does not require money.
 - Partnership between the City and the County NCCP to leverage larger land areas. It is a waste of public funds to buy lands that have real estate speculative value. We also need to allow room for growth.
 - Pay more along riparian corridors next to conservation easements.
-

3. Budget, Management, and Maintenance Table Results

This table was designed to solicit feedback about the Measure O budgeting process, and what Measure O parcel tax revenue has been spent on over the last 15 years, including costs associated with the management and maintenance of the City's open space areas. Some of the major discussion areas were:

- **Initiate Best Practices.** City should look at "best practices" for open space maintenance costs as a percent of revenue to determine if the 33% ratio (i.e., the City's stabilized maintenance costs/open space parcel tax ratio) is reasonable. Some workshop participants thought the City's 33% ratio seemed high, but didn't know how that ratio compared to other cities/public agencies.
- **Provide Better Accounting Transparency.** City should be more transparent about grant funds received for open space and where those grant funds show up in the City's accounting system. For example, in the past, some open space grants flowed through the Measure O Fund (i.e., Fund 135 in the City's Budget), but others did not. City should clarify why this happens.

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- ***Provide Better Management of City Lands for Habitat.*** City should manage the Wildhorse Agricultural Buffer and other open space areas in a way that provides better habitat for burrowing owls and other wildlife. City should enlist resident volunteers to help with this effort.
 - ***Develop Management/Maintenance Plans for the City's Open Space Areas.*** City should develop management/maintenance plans for the City's open space areas so that residents and City staff better understand what is being done to maintain these open space areas and why certain work is being done or not done. City should enlist resident volunteers to help with this effort.
-

4. Public Access Table Results

This table was designed to solicit feedback about the state of public accessibility on the City's open space areas and on open space in general, and how that public accessibility can be improved in the future. Some of the major discussion points were:

- The City should ask which farm owners would be willing to allow access on the fringe of property for walking/running to stay off the road from the bikers and cars.
- The City should buy a linear strip along key properties that would allow that same access mentioned above.
- The City should ask which farmers might like to have people out to talk about their business and lands.
- The City should have an easy-to-use website with updated detailed information about where the open space is, how to access the space properly, and what the boundaries are.
- Once you arrive at the open space, there should be signage that maps out the space, self-guided tour signs for the plants and wildlife identification (and people want to know they aren't trespassing).
- There should be a mobile app to be user-friendly to provide same information listed above with possible GPS features.
- Locked gates were an issue, "we want access to what lands we have as public access."

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- Improve connectivity; we want to ride/walk/jog all the way around start by making connections that make sense.
 - Articles in the Davis paper, to help encourage new people to explore open space.
 - Make it possible to run/walk/bike all the way around the City.
 - Locked gates, better access points, disclose what the access points are.
 - City should engage with community groups (West Davis pond), bike group, etc.
 - Work with volunteer groups to help protect open space (West Davis Pond).
 - Signage: self-guided tour/map out the area we can use.
 - Add restrooms/water along Putah creek.
 - Better connectivity around the City.
 - Build partnerships with the community to help care for the open space.
 - Provide levee access.
 - Move the railroad tracks and use that to connect Woodland and Davis for pedestrians.
 - Buy farm property and just get the piece you need for access (reformat the parcel so the land owner is only selling a linear piece); won't cost as much as full fee title and will provide access.
 - More open space that model West Davis Pond, let people see the wildlife from a protected distance.
 - Some open space may not be safe for women.
 - Provide more information on open space to the public.
 - Improve the trails along the levee and consider paving.
-

5. Ecological Restoration Table Results

This table was designed to solicit feedback about which open space lands the community would like to see restored/rehabilitated into better habitat for plant and animal species. As such, two main themes were discussed at this table: (1) restoration type and (2) potential locations. Participants were given three dots which they could place on any of the restoration types. The following summarizes the scores and the discussion that ensued:

- ***Riparian forest (11 votes)***: The restoration type receiving the most votes from participants at the restoration table was riparian forest. Participants placed a high value not only on the ecological characteristics of riparian forest but also, due to its linear nature, to the role they can play in linking other natural sites together. Some members of the group urged that riparian zones should serve as the backbone of wider natural areas that contain multiple ecosystem types. Riparian areas included not only Putah Creek, but also Willow Slough, Willow Slough Bypass, and other sloughs in the Davis Planning Area (DPA).
- ***Burrowing owl (10 votes)***: There was a large degree of support for spending future open space funds on preservation and restoration of burrowing owl populations. This was the single highest vote getter for expenditure of open space funds on a single species. Some potential sites for habitat enhancement include Mace Ranch Innovation Center, South Fork Preserve, and Wild Horse Ag Buffer.
- ***Valley oak woodland (9 votes)***: Of the roughly 13,000 acres of valley oak woodland that are estimated to have occurred historically in the DPA, today zero acres remain. Therefore, there was a high level of support for finding sites to do large valley oak woodland restoration. This goes beyond the scattered planting of trees among other vegetation across sites and is focused on larger blocks of exclusive woodland. There could also be a source of revenue in woodlands as timber land.
- ***Native pollinators (5 votes)***: Native pollinators were seen as not just important in their own right but also by the economic role they play for agriculture in the DPA. They were also the ecological type identified as being best suited for habitat enhancement within the City of Davis boundary.

Other restoration categories were offered but received a smaller number of votes. These categories included: broader riparian corridors (3 votes); salmon spawning

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habitat (2 votes); perennial grassland (2 votes); wetlands (1 vote); valley elderberry longhorn beetle (1 vote); Swainson's hawk (1 vote); vernal pools (0 votes); and rare plants (0 votes).

Some specific locations that the community mentioned as good candidates for restoration included:

- **Covell Ditch** along the north side of Covell Boulevard west of Highway 113 should be enhanced. This potential animal movement corridor is the upper end of Channel A, plus potentially a link to West Pond and Stonegate Basin. Covell Ditch should be widened and planted to best enhance use by wildlife.
- **Stonegate Basin** is a flood detention area in West Davis. While it is currently a weedy open area, enhancements could be made to increase its habitat value. Ideally, it would be connected to both West Pond and Covell Ditch. These connections would need to be made under Lake Boulevard and Covell Boulevard, respectively, and would thus be expensive improvements.
- **The unnamed slough upstream of Covell Ditch** between West Davis and Putah Creek/Dry Slough could serve as a useful wildlife linkage if enhanced.
- **The parcel(s) between South Fork Preserve and Grasslands Regional Park** should be purchased and valley oak woodland restored to the site. This would link two existing publicly owned open space areas and would provide for the full ecological transition from riparian forest to upland grassland ecosystems.
- **Urban fringe areas** should be considered for restoration activity.
- **The undeveloped site on the northeast edge of North Star Pond** (next to F Street) should be planted to support native pollinators and other wildlife.
- **The South Fork Preserve** should have more native plantings and walkways should be installed.
- **Willow Slough Bypass** should be connected to the City. This would include biking/walking trails enabling residents to get there without driving.

Workshop attendees also had a number of questions and additional ideas and suggestions related to the restoration topic:

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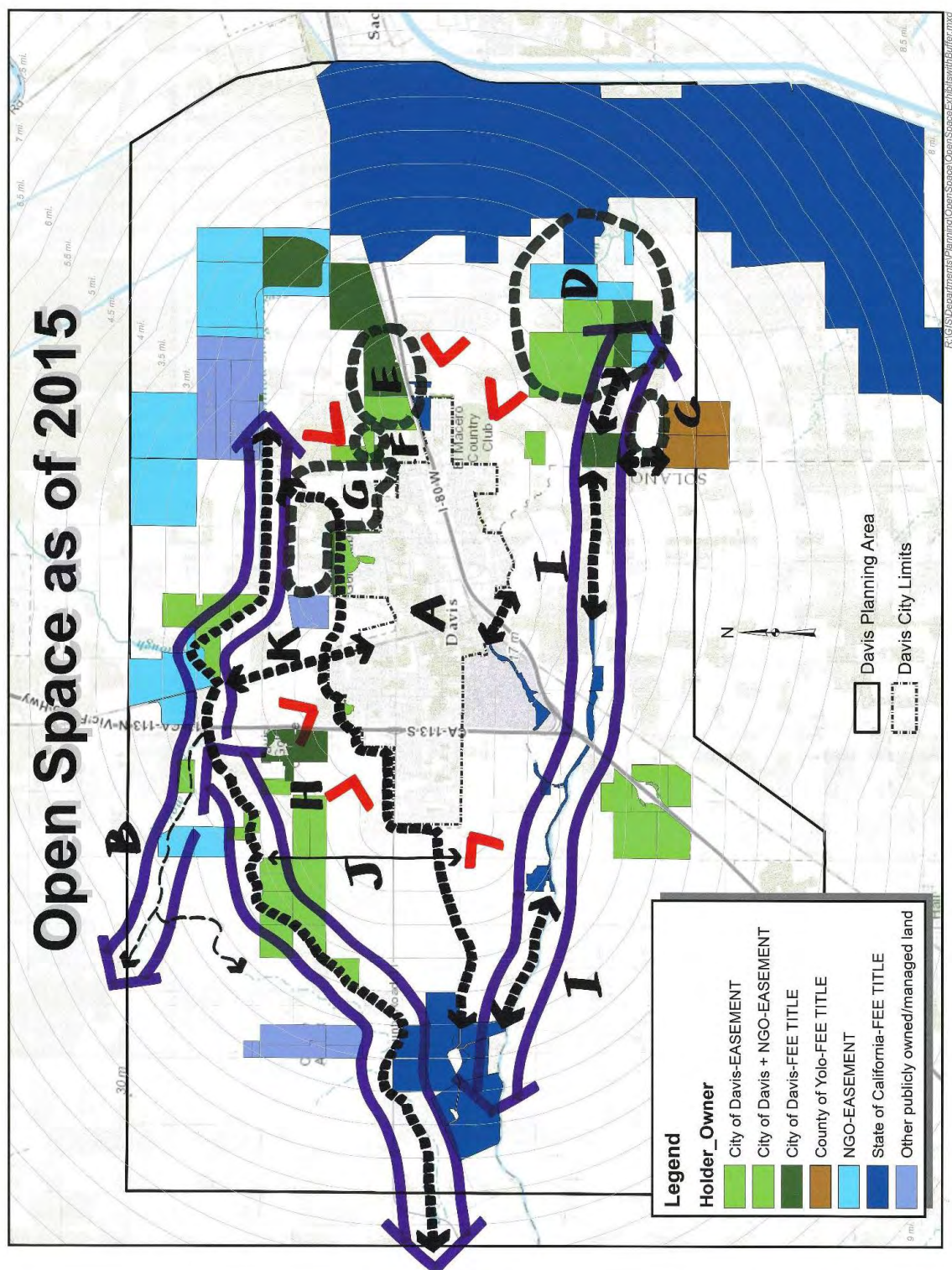
- Can the Department of Public Works be used to do restoration work in the City of Davis boundary?
 - Can the City partner with Yolo County to do restoration work on County land?
 - There are potential VELB restoration opportunities at Channel A and Putah Creek.
 - Enhancements could be done at Wildhorse Ag Buffer.
 - There needs to be attention on hydrology for riparian forest restoration.
 - Invasive species such as Arundo and Tamarisk should be removed from riparian areas.
 - Perhaps the City's Open Space Program could include a program for lawn removal and replacement with native species.
 - Instead of site-specific projects, could ongoing programs be implemented that could help with education?
 - More money should be spent to enhance habitat within the urban areas of Davis.
 - A focus should be on restoration without the use of chemicals.
 - Rare plants should not be installed near urban areas.
 - Wetlands should not be a priority – there are already quite a few acres of wetland in the vicinity.
 - Natural areas should be linked to allow wildlife movement.
-

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Final Session: All Participants' Concluding Remarks

In the final facilitated session, participants' comments and questions were recorded as follows:

- It would be great to hold a workshop in Yolo County regarding open space and growth policies and issues outside the City as well.
- We appreciate the diverse audience who was present tonight, but we are missing even more diverse populations, people of color, low-income communities and others. We need a concentrated outreach effort.
- We should consider looking at "best practices" in other places that do a good job protecting open space like Marin County doing public – private partnerships, or Boulder, Colorado and their acquisition program, or Sonoma County Open Space District.
- City of Davis needs a transparent website like Sonoma County.
- We need to establish as a priority connecting riparian corridor "fragments" along Putah Creek and Willow Slough.
- We need enough City staff to get all the open space work completed.
- We need to tap into volunteer energy and community passion. For example, people will mobilize around protecting burrowing owl habitat; these type of efforts can greatly extend City staff capacity.
- When we put Measure O back on the ballot, it is heartening to see the energy, dedication and passion that we have in this room and in the City for open space protection.



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Map Legend	
A	Isolated, small parcels within the city for restoration and/or public access.
B	Multi-benefit riparian corridors: habitat, public access, farmland, infrastructure.
C	Critical habitat and open space connector opportunity.
D	Continue to acquire large tracts of farmland near bypass and Los Rios lands.
E	City owned parcels in fee title – opportunity to sell land back to a farmer with a conservation easement and use funds for other open space.
F	Critical parcels to retain as open space – forms east and north edge of city.
G	High priority area for large farm parcels as open space, although development potential too because of sewerage connection.
H	Continue to protect key vistas from city and roads of Vaca Hills and Siena.
I	Need to complete acquisitions on South Fork Putah Creek for habitat and public access.
J	Road 98 Corridor is a strategic corridor for farmland protection.
K	Complete bikeway and path along old rail corridor linking Davis and Woodland.

Focus Group Results

Open Space Focus Groups

On January 27th and 28th, 2016, the City convened two groups of stakeholders who have long familiarity and interest in the City's Open Space Program to discuss successes, issues, concerns and ideas for future program refinement. The focus groups were intended to supplement the March 9th community workshop (and the survey), and to allow in-depth and focused conversation on a small set of key topics. The focus groups were also instrumental in helping the consultant and staff team design and develop the larger community workshop. The stakeholders represented many viewpoints about open space from farming to habitat restoration to urban growth issues. Each meeting began with introductions, followed by an overview of the agenda, ground rules, background on the project and objectives for the focus group.

The following is a summary of the main themes from those focus groups. The meeting agenda, participants and full notes are in the Appendix.

Summary of Main Themes

The first topic of discussion was to identify what works well with the City's Open Space Program today.

- The Measure O \$24 parcel tax leverages considerable other funding like federal and state grants; up to \$20 million of outside funds in 15 years.
- The predominance of easements make the dollars go further (as opposed to direct fee acquisition).
- For the Yolo Land Trust (YLT), Measure O has been critical as a funding source.
- Measure O is why YLT gets serious consideration in highly competitive grants; stable funding.
- Fee title acquisitions along the Putah Creek are great, and having the City as a partner is helpful.
- Impressed that we are keeping the cost of land management relatively low.
- Excellent staff from the City and volunteer Commission has kept the program on track.
- Measure O has been effective in protecting agricultural land from development.
- Commend the group for handling input from the community well, but could move toward more public meetings, updates, more input from community.
- The priority map from the campaign is still pretty good.

Attachment 4

The second major topic of discussion was to identify concerns and issues associated with the Open Space Program, and how to address those concerns. The concerns are organized into five themes.

1. What was included in the campaign for Measure O vs. what has been accomplished?

- The map on the campaign materials shows priority open space acquisition lands up against the City limits; monies spent for the past 15 years have been for conservation easements averaging two miles from the city limits.
- There is no public access in the lands purchased.
- No policy is in place for restoration projects.
- The City Council has recently committed up to one-third of parcel tax monies (for 50 years) for the HCP/NCCP that could be land far removed from Davis and inaccessible to the public.
- The proposed restoration grant program of \$150,000 should be increased, flexible and open to non-501(c) 3 group proposals with monies run through the City much as the arts program has done.
- Priority in the last 15 years should be placed on accessible land (near?) Davis or in sight of the City limits to correct the over-reliance on conservation easements far from the City limits.
- Only \$4 million has been spent in past 15 years.
- Acquisition thus far has been great as community separators, but nothing significant has been purchased along riparian areas.

2. What about program transparency?

- Insufficient public transparency in the process of distributing Measure O funds.
- Lack of transparency about funds and prioritization; needs to be posted on the website and show what has been acquired; Sonoma County has done this and is a good role model.
- Need to define "open space;" is it public access, or land that we don't want to see developed, or what?
- Need to have genuine engagement with land owners.
- We understand that for active real estate transactions, negotiation is a closed process; but the process for acquiring land should be transparent and shouldn't just rely on just the Open Space Coordinator.
- How has open space Commission communicated with various conservation groups?

Attachment 4

3. What should be the priorities for future purchases/easement?

- Nearby farmers and land owners are waiting for more money to be willing sellers, but the City can't pay more than fair market value for that land.
- More public access on acquisitions, like trails and bike paths (e.g., Putah Creek, Yolo Bypass).
- We need to be aware of where the City might want to grow; we don't want to buy easements that hems in potential growth when needed in the future.
- Explore the prioritization system used by Sonoma County for use in Davis.
- Need to be careful about prioritizing a piece of land which has not been through an initial "willing seller" determination.
- Future development around Davis is likely north of town so this should be the focus of acquisitions.
- Need to identify lands within the City which could be the subject of restoration.
- The program has been deficient in protecting natural habitat, greenbelts and land closer to the City.
- Conservation easements offer better leverage of funds.
- How do we go from a passive approach to actively identifying priorities for habitats and greenbelts?
- A barrier to acquiring land closer to the City is that it's prime development property and perceived to be higher than fair market value.
- We should identify parcels and rank properties of interest, identifying what we want to target.
- Should identify land that brings the highest value to the community regardless of cost.
- The County changed its ag mitigation policy recently; the City is trying to put land into easements between the Road 27-29 corridors; the County Ag mitigation program and City's efforts should be aligned; let's protect lands that are under threat of urbanization.
- Need to focus on linking corridors.

4. How can we improve public access?

- Prime habitat and working farms/easements should not have public access.
- Public access should be restricted to fee title properties.
- People should be able to "see across" public land; being able to get inside it all is overrated since prime habitat and agricultural land should not be disturbed, at least during certain times of year.
- A critical aspect of Measure O is providing nature experiences near Davis.
- Need to be looking at open land around Davis for non-motorized access (e.g., bike access to the Yolo Bypass).

Attachment 4

- Enhancing public engagement by opening access on planting days seems like a potential opportunity.

5. What issues are associated with acquiring and managing land?

- How does Measure O relate to Measure R and J?
- When in the City it is easy to point to land and say, “that should be open space,” but need to have genuine engagement with the land owners; need to engage neighbors and understand their interests.
- Need a strategic plan focusing on acquiring fee title land for public access.
- Experience demonstrates that it’s challenging to find long-term funding to maintain City-owned properties; finding a way to pay for proper maintenance and management is critical.
- Need more creative/proactive approaches to land acquisition.
- How to maintain property is a concern, whether it’s City-owned or easement; once established, how well does a property owner maintain that property? Long-term maintenance is a problem either way.
- The RCD looks at how we can bring funding to a project so that there isn’t a cost to the land owner.
- One of the things RCD does is maintain farmland; some land owners are up for it, some are too busy; always looking for steady streams of funding to maintain farm edge habitat.
- Volunteer groups can do a lot of habitat work; natural resources tend to have the least cost as far as maintenance. The map definitely emphasizes riparian/water resources.
- Using land as investment, like Mace 391, might open up opportunities for other areas.
- There might be an opportunity where the City can purchase land then lease out a portion for farming, portion for public, portion for habitat; negotiating a lease where farmer takes care of trees.
- USDA will pay for establishing riparian corridors.
- There are new farmland conservancy programs being put in place; the good news is there’s more funding coming up for conservation.
- Easements on land near sewer extensions will help keep it from development.
- When a City gets involved in farming easements, it fails; need to let farmers farm the land.
- Easements stay in property ownership; the issue is property tax lost to the County.
- Working with Yolo County Bikeway Plan might be a way to integrate open space planning and leverage funding.

Attachment 4

The third major topic of conversation was to explore and obtain ideas for enhancing public awareness and engagement.

- The City needs to decide what they are going to promise or commit to prior to the meeting – others felt this could not occur until after the meeting.
- Should get the word out to neighborhood groups and cities around Davis.
- Send letters to property owners in the region.
- Contact Farm Bureau Members, NGOs in towns, Tree Davis, etc.
- Making negative comments about the Measure O will not push it forward and may threaten the likelihood of continuing the program in the future.
- When being critical of the program need to applaud successes at the same time; celebrate Measure O and then suggest how it can be done better.
- After the workshop should be more and stronger outreach to the community.
- Create a link with local community groups.
- Showcase program success and benefit to the community.
- Marketing efforts: mailers, partnerships, community awareness.
- Take advantage of UCD; figure out ways for internship opportunities to help us achieve goals.
- Engage students in the Davis School District to appreciate this ethos that is part of their community and connect with it.
- Need to make connections with the issues of specific groups (e.g., bikeways with the biking community groups) and develop some synergy.
- Bring in agriculture's role in addressing climate issues; we should keep climate change on the table and see what can be brought into the discussion.

Open Space Survey: Methodology

The UCD consultant team, in collaboration with the City and the Commission, created a 19 question survey in order to better understand Davis residents' perception and feeling toward the City's Open Space Program. The survey consisted of five sections: (1) general information, (2) program objectives and acquisition priorities, (3) funding, (4) public use and access, and (5) conclusion. Participants were presented with multiple-choice questions, open-ended questions, and were asked to rank various priorities. The information collected was collated and converted into a summary.

Online Survey. The online survey was hosted on Survey Monkey and a link was made available on the City's website and distributed via email and social media outlets. Mechanisms were put in place to ensure participants only answered the survey once.

Paper Survey. A physical survey was created with identical questions as the online version. The paper survey was available at the City's offices and at the Yolo County Library in Davis. It was also distributed at the Davis Farmer's Market. The completed paper surveys were inputted manually into the online survey system.

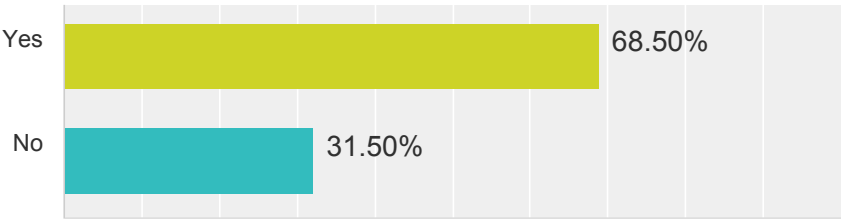
Results. Over 400 people took the survey; this is a fairly solid sample size and indicates the high level of community interest in open space. The questions and answers are summarized on the pages that follow. For those questions that had lists of open ended answers (such as provide examples of access opportunities, or in what ways can this process be improved), the long list of answers is shown in the report appendix. For each question, we state the question and options just as it appeared in the survey and then show the results graphically and by percentage.



Survey Results

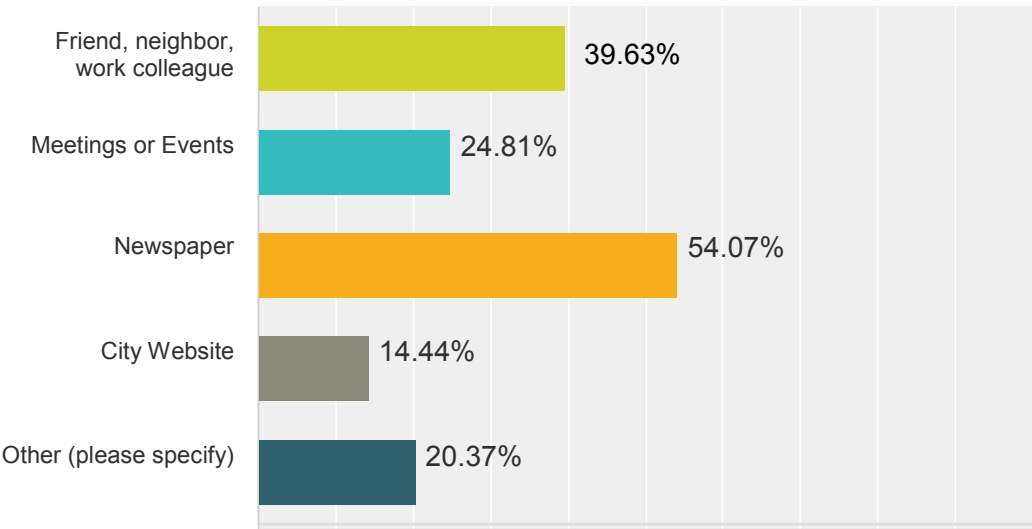
Q1 Have you heard of the City’s Open Space Program?

Answered: 400 Skipped: 0



Q2 If so, how? (Check any that apply)

Answered: 270 Skipped: 130

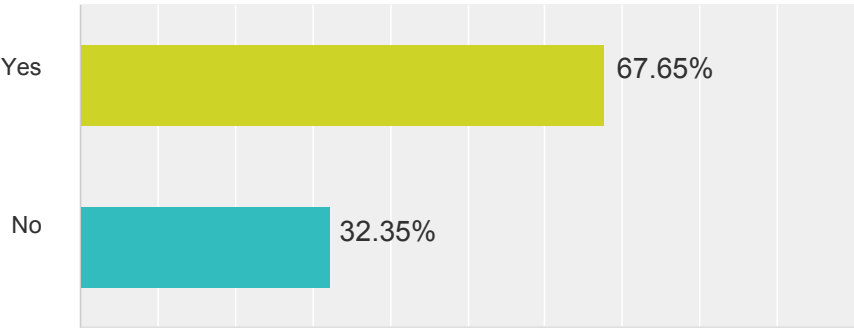


* For specific answers, please see Survey Details in the Appendices.

Attachment 4

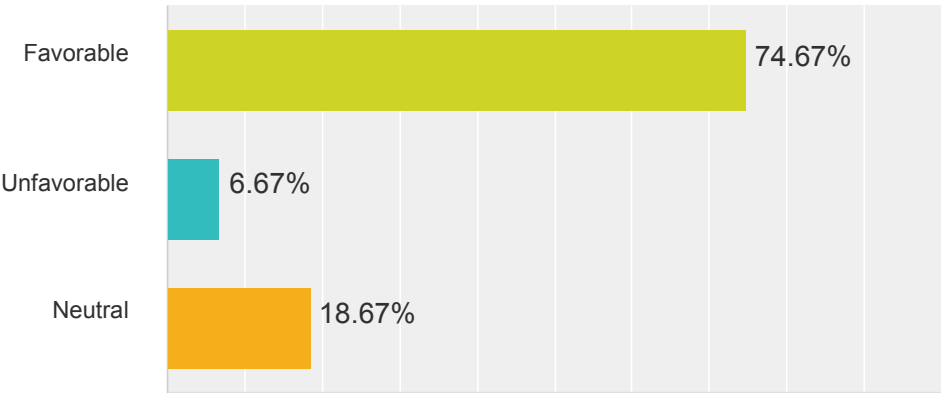
Q3 Are you aware of Measure “O”, the \$24 per year tax on each parcel in Davis that is used to partially fund the Open Space Program?

Answered: 374 Skipped: 26



Q4 In general, what do you think about the parcel tax?

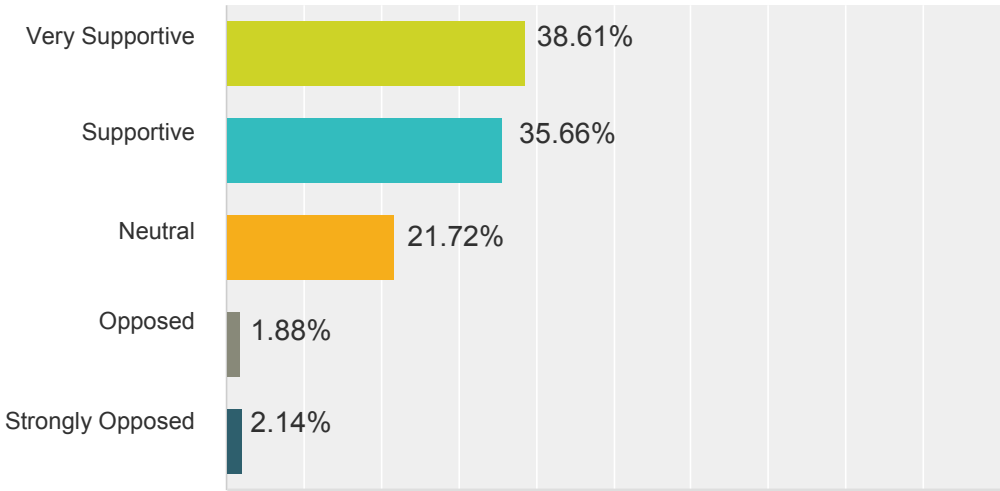
Answered: 375 Skipped: 25



Attachment 4

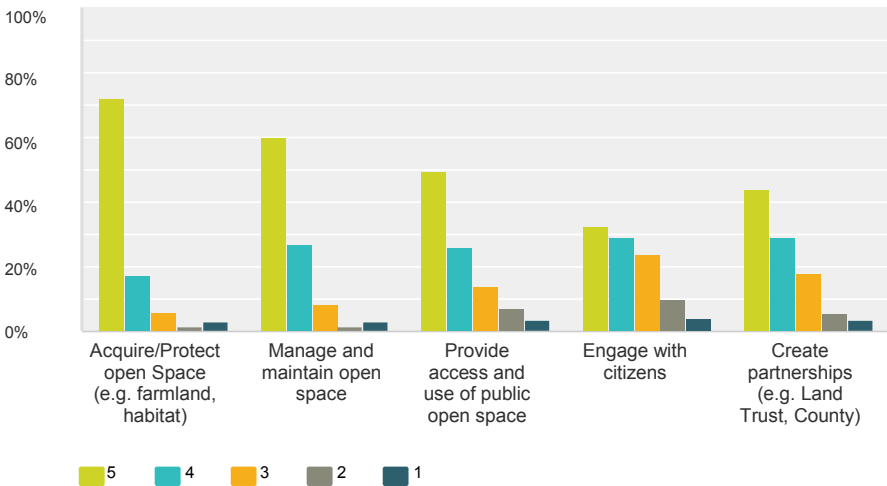
Q5 How would you describe your overall impression of the Open Space Program? (Please select one)

Answered: 373 Skipped: 27



Q6 The objectives of the City’s Open Space Program are noted below. Please indicate the level of importance you place on each one by selecting the number that applies. 5 is very important, 1 is not important.

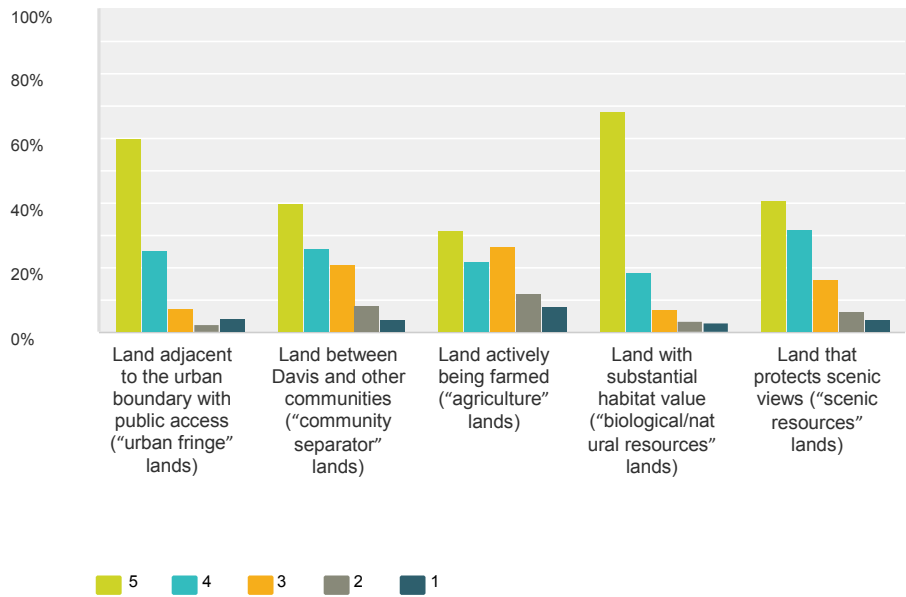
Answered: 353 Skipped: 47



Attachment 4

Q7 The City currently focuses its efforts on acquiring and managing land in five broad categories. Please indicate the level of importance you place on each type of land acquisition by selecting the number that applies. 5 is very important, 1 is not important.

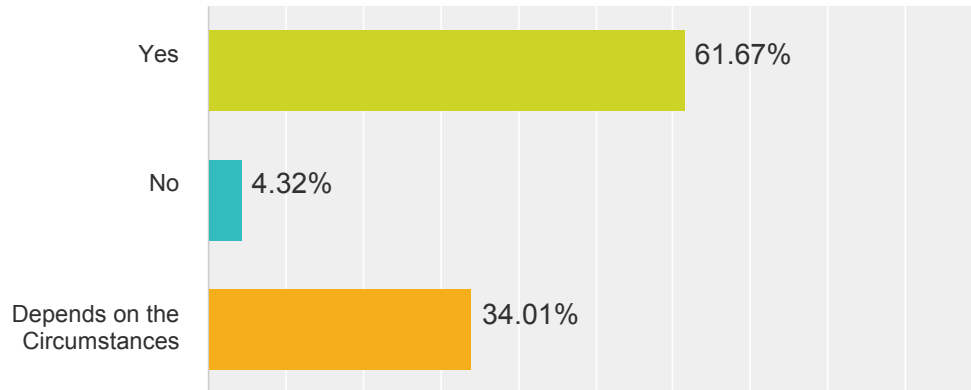
Answered: 351 Skipped: 49



Attachment 4

Q8 Since 1990 the City has permanently protected nearly 6,000 acres around the City of Davis, most of it farmland under conservation easements, using many tools including Measure “O” money. Do you generally agree with this approach?

Answered: 347 Skipped: 53

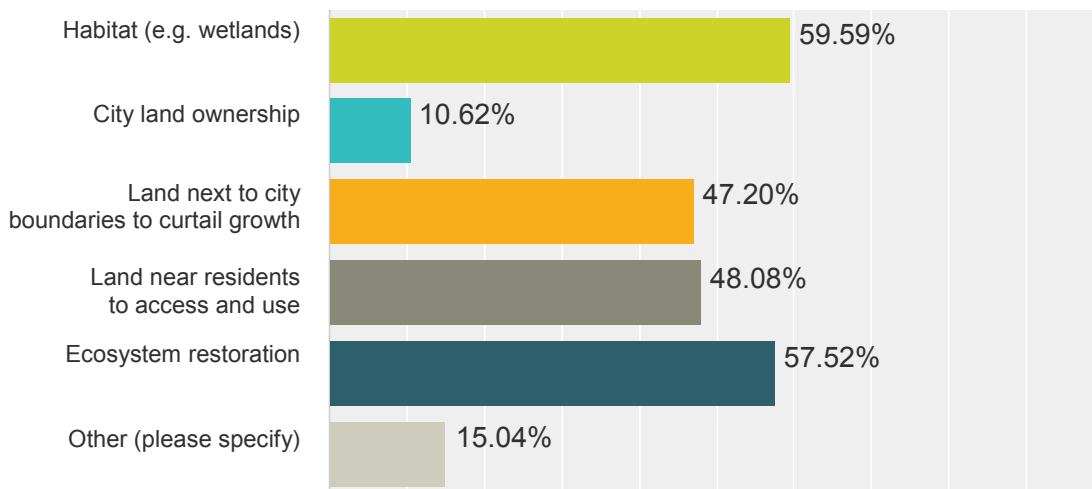


* For specific answers, please see Survey Details in the Appendices.

Q9 What other acquisition strategies would you recommend as a higher priority? (Check any or all that apply)

Answered: 339 Skipped: 61

More emphasis on...

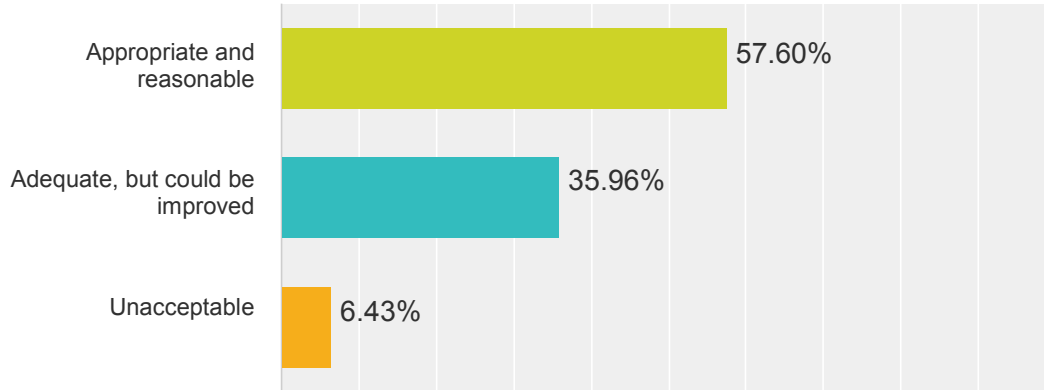


* For specific answers, please see Survey Details in the Appendices.

Attachment 4

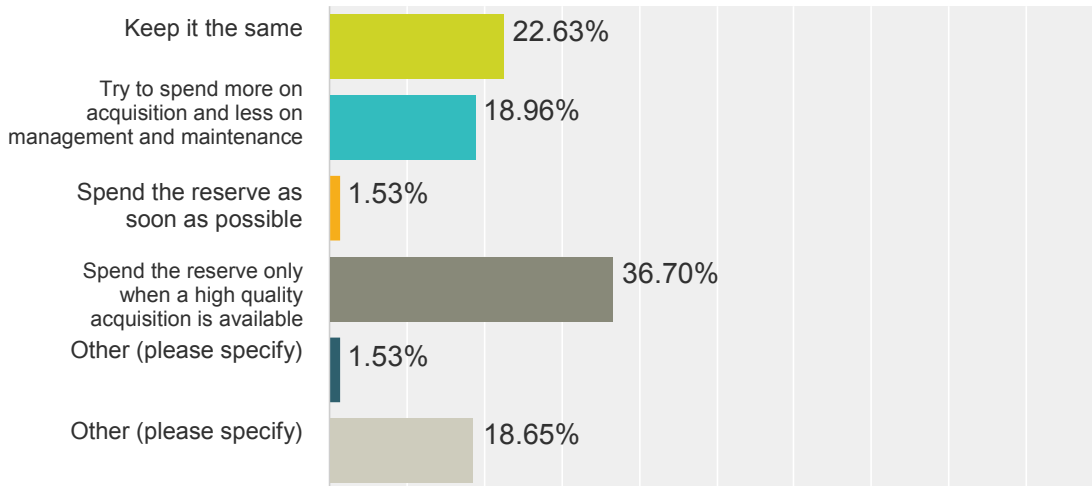
Q10 Do you think the fund allocation is: (Please check one)

Answered: 342 Skipped: 58



Q11 If it were feasible what changes would you suggest in the allocation of funds? (Please check one)

Answered: 327 Skipped: 73

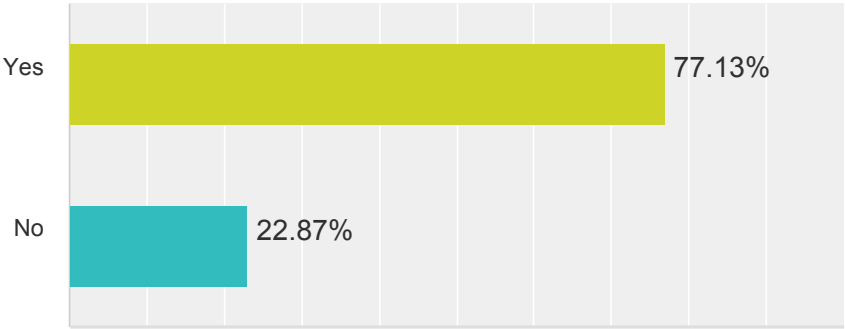


*For specific answers, please see Survey Details in the Appendices.

Attachment 4

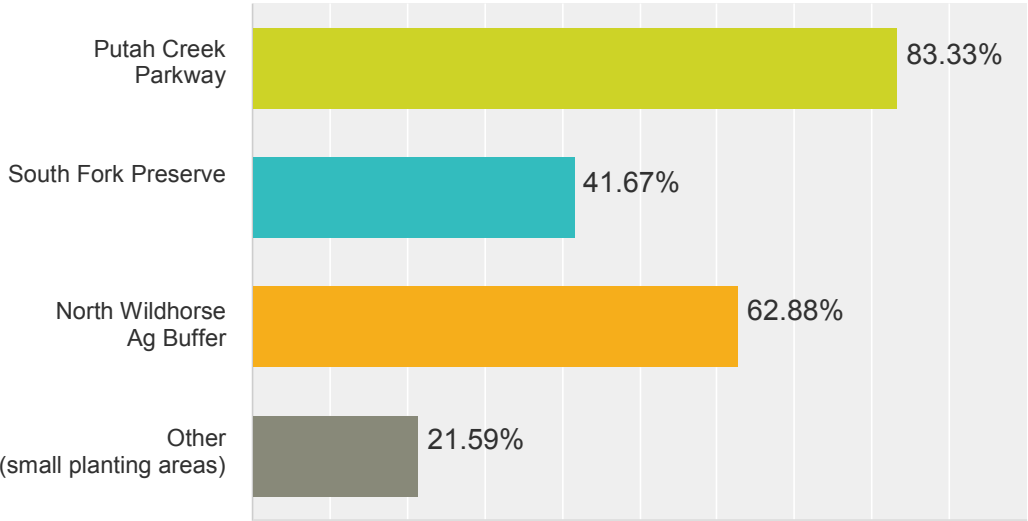
Q12 Do you go to any of these areas?

Answered: 341 Skipped: 59



Q13 If so which areas? (Please check any that apply)

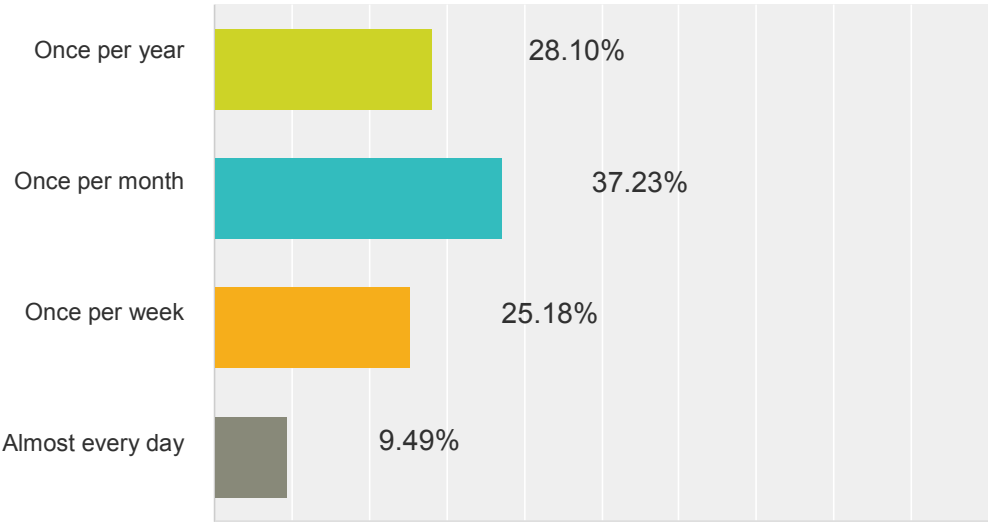
Answered: 264 Skipped: 136



Attachment 4

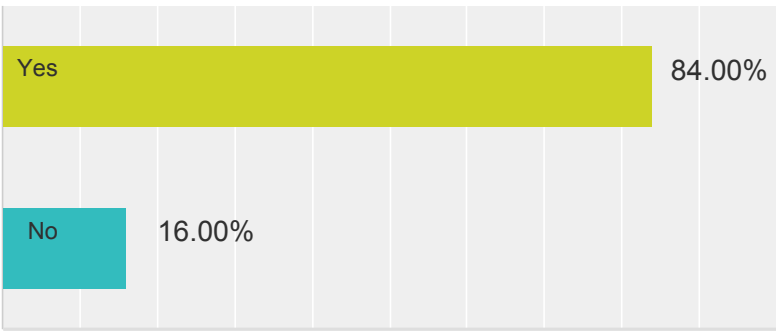
Q14 On average, how often do you use these areas?

Answered: 274 Skipped: 126



Q15 Would you like to see more of these edge of the city areas accessible for walking and other uses?

Answered: 325 Skipped: 75



*For specific answers, please see Survey Details in the Appendices.

Attachment 4

Q16 How can the City be more effective in reaching out to the community and communicating the Open Space Program?

Answered: 175 Skipped: 225

Visual Summary of Responses

For a full list of responses, please see Survey Details in the Appendices.

Nextdoor Hear Social Media Forums Measure
Transparency Farmer's Market City Council
Signage Newsletter Enterprise
Accountability Public Citizens
Open Space Letting Program Plan
Community Students Maps Hold Events
Newspaper Explain Signs Tours Email Bill

Summary of Responses

For a full list of responses, please see Survey Details in the Appendices.

- Presence at farmers market and/or community gathering spots
- More robust online presence and outreach via social media such as Nextdoor and Facebook.
- Increase and improve signage.
- More frequent articles in the Enterprise.
- More educational resources about open space, how it is acquired, where and how to use the space.
- Public access to maps.
- Increase transparency and accountability.
- Open forums and events.
- More frequent City Council updates
- More community focused outreach, including current and incoming students.
- Open Space specific email communications.
- More programs to engage the community.
- More information for citizens.
- Opportunities for community and stakeholder input

Attachment 4

Q17 What additional suggestions of any type do you have to improve the Open Space Program?

Answered: 151 Skipped: 249

Visual Summary of Responses

For a full list of responses, please see Survey Details in the Appendices.

Volunteers Signs Wild Horse Fight Funding
Acquisition Green Habitat Proactive
Access Open Space Cats
Community Gardens Davis Local Farmers
Land Trees Public Buffer Program Explain
Money Led Burrowing Owl Signage Growth

Summary of Responses

For a full list of responses, please see Survey Details in the Appendices.

- Better manage, identify, strategize land acquisitions
- Need more public access to open spaces.
- Concern about increased public access.
- Concerns about urban sprawl and expansion
- Natural habitat preservation, protection of species such as the Burrowing Owl
- More paths like Wild Horse
- Maintenance of Wild Horse
- Embrace and partner with local farmers
- Transparency and creativity with how money is spent
- Be proactive
- Open up opportunities for volunteers
- Areas for community gardens
- More events surrounding open space (celebratory, educational, etc.)

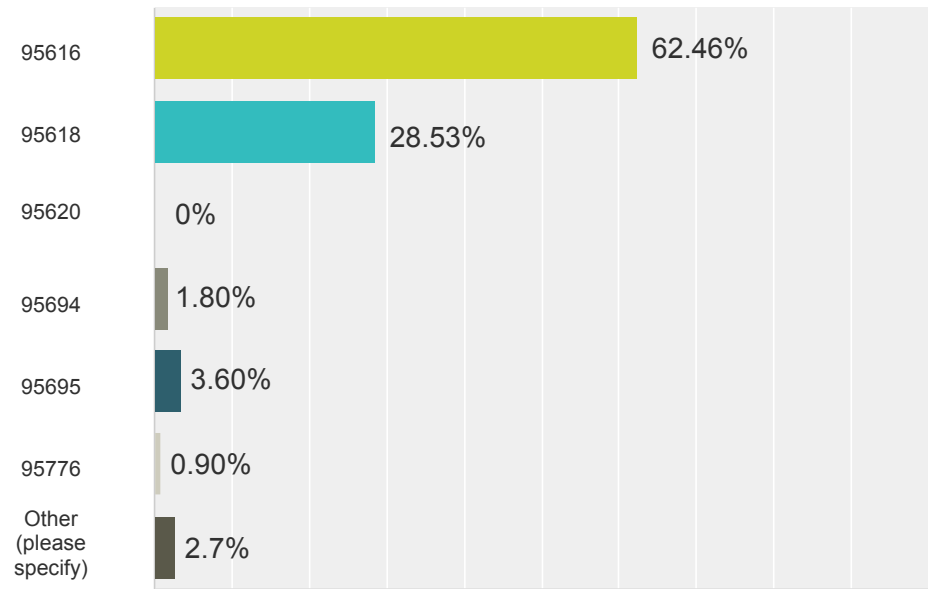
Attachment 4

Q18 If you would like to receive updated on the David Open Space Project, please include your email below. (Optional)

Answered: 136 Skipped: 264

Q19 In what ZIP code is your home located?

Answered: 333 Skipped: 67



* For specific answers, please see Survey Details in the Appendices.

III. Summary and Conclusions

Summary of Community Input

It is difficult to summarize the large amount of input and information generated through this process. What the consultant team has tried to do in this section is reflect as accurately as possible, what the community said, and do so in a way that follows the logic and structure of how the Open Space Program is organized, advised and managed. It will be up to City staff, the Commission, and citizens to absorb this input, forge policy recommendations, and recommend program changes or improvements to the Open Space Program that will guide its management into the future. The summary includes responses from the Community Workshop, two Focus Groups, and the Community Survey.

Overall Impressions of the City's Open Space Program

It is clear from the feedback received that the vast majority of commenters strongly support the concept of protecting habitat and farmland in and around the Davis Planning Area, and generally support the program, City staff, the Commission and its broad objectives. This was borne out in the survey, focus groups and workshop. Similarly, there is strong support for Measure O and for continuing it into the future.

A number of comments and survey responses emphasized what was *working well* with the program:

- Measure O parcel tax leverages considerable other funding like federal and state grants.
- The predominant use of conservation easements allows the funds to go much further.
- Partnerships are critical like the Yolo Land Trust, Yolo County and the State Department of Conservation.
- Fee title acquisitions along riparian corridors like Putah Creek are extremely valuable and offer restoration, access and open space benefits.
- Land management costs and staff costs are generally kept low (with an exception during the recent economic downturn).
- Excellent staff from the City and volunteer Commission has kept the program on track.
- Measure O has been effective in protecting agricultural land from development.
- Based on the survey alone, almost 75% of the community is favorable toward Measure O. 70% of the community is generally favorable toward the program and a similar 70% are well aware of the program. About 60% of the community believes Measure O funds are being spent wisely, with others suggesting various ways to improve or refine.

Attachment 4

Conversely, there were several general themes around **program improvement** that came up in the small and large workshops and through the survey:

- The program has not been well publicized in the past and elements like budgeting, grants and priorities have not been transparent. A variety of outreach methods were suggested to address this ranging from social media to improved web site presence to working with neighbor groups and volunteers, and even engaging students in the Davis school system.
- Similarly, public information about established open spaces, especially those with public access, can be improved. This include information on what open space lands are accessible, and improved information once you arrive such as signage, interpretive information, material about the program, etc.
- The program has emphasized conservation easements on farmlands for logical reasons, but the portfolio needs to be “re-balanced” to emphasize habitat protection (especially riparian corridors), closer-in parcels and public access to the degree it is feasible (e.g., cost, willing sellers, available parcels).
- To accomplish this, there may be a need for a more strategic and innovative approaches to future acquisition involving ideas like “dividing up” parcels (e.g., a narrow sliver for public access owned in fee title and the rest in easement), or identifying parcels that have multiple benefits like ground water recharge, habitat and open space (which could suggest creative funding source mixes).
- Complimentary to the above comment, many participants believed that a focused and strategic approach to identifying high priority acquisition opportunities is warranted. The Open Space Acquisition and Management Plan could provide a logical vehicle for accomplishing this, last updated some years ago.
- There may also be a need to seek new funding partners and sources like private foundations, developers, water-related public agencies, habitat conservancies, etc.
- Many respondents in the workshop, survey and focus groups believed that the program could better engage private land owners and the farm community, and that could lead to possible accessible lands or ecological restoration associated with agriculture.
- 84% of survey respondents believed that we need more walking trails in open space areas.
- A number of participants in the survey, workshop and focus groups suggested the need for more explicit and publicly available land (and water) management plans for some of the open space areas already in fee title or easement.
- Ecological restoration guidelines need to be finalized; more funding directed to this set of activities, and there needs to be flexibility in what types of organizations that are eligible for funding.

Attachment 4

- A number of respondents suggested looking at other open space districts and agencies (in particular Sonoma County Open Space District) for best practices around management and maintenance costs, acquisition priority setting, and public information and transparency.

Open Space Acquisition Priorities

Open space acquisition is a complex topic, and the lengthy lists provided in the notes may be difficult to interpret. There is certainly strong support for each of the various types of open space allowed under Measure O (e.g., farmland, habitat, public access). However, open space areas closer-in to the City; habitat lands, especially along riparian corridors and those which could connect protected parcels; and lands where some form of public access is possible were mentioned most frequently. That is not to take away from those who supported the need for continuing to acquire conservation easements on large tracts of prime farmland (especially to the north of the City), where there may be willing sellers, and where the land costs are lower and more acreage can be acquired. At the risk of over-generalizing, it appears that the community wants to continue the historic practice of using funds judiciously to purchase large swaths of agricultural lands under conservation easements, while balancing the portfolio with more open space closer to the City, and more emphasis on riparian corridors, specific habitat improvements, public access, and a more strategic approach. Specific agricultural land opportunities included lands along the Willow Slough complex to the north, along Putah Creek to the south, adding to the community separator from Woodland and Dixon, and “filling in gaps” where lands are already preserved such as along Putah Creek.

In particular, many participants in the workshop, focus groups and survey suggested that connecting segments of riparian corridors should be very high priority, offering habitat, possible access and scenic benefit. A number of specific suggestions are shown below. Specific habitat types that came up multiple times included riparian forests, burrowing owl, and valley oak woodlands.

A number of place-specific acquisition opportunities were highlighted by the community such as:

- North Fork of Putah Creek – need channel continuity, restoration and access.
- South Fork of Putah Creek – public access is key.
- Agricultural lands in easements along key corridors like Road 98
- Agricultural easements and riparian protection for Los Rios lands to complete a key linkage in the corridor south of the City
- Riparian lands and wetlands along all of the sloughs and creeks such as Willow Slough and Willow Slough Bypass.
- Farmland now owned by the City in fee title north of the City limits should be sold back to a farming interest with a conservation easement to free up funds

Attachment 4

Open Space Restoration Priorities

Participants believed that there should be more funding and program emphasis on ecological restoration to provide wildlife habitat, and where appropriate, limited public access. Specific habitat types that received considerable attention were: riparian forests, burrowing owl habitat, valley oak woodlands, and native pollinator habitat. Participants believed that creative partnerships (e.g., private donors, Yolo Habitat Conservancy, Yolo County, developers) could augment this effort, as well as taking better advantage of volunteers. In particular, although there are disagreements about the County's NCCP (Natural Communities Conservation Plan), it would provide a viable partner for combining the benefits of open space and habitat, and improving ecological restoration opportunities.

A number of specific restoration sites were noted. Many of these represent those "close in" sites that were discussed under open space acquisition priorities. Other areas represent lands with high ecological value and corridors that link such opportunities.

- Covell Ditch along the north side of Covell Boulevard
- Channel A through the City
- Stonegate Storm Water Retention Basin
- South Fork Preserve and Grasslands Park
- South Davis Putah Creek Parkway south end
- Undeveloped site near Northstar Pond
- South Fork Putah Creek Preserve
- Putah Creek Floodplain
- Wildhorse Urban/Agricultural Transition Area/Buffer
- Willow Slough Bypass

Public Access

Public access is also a complex topic since most conservation easements on private farmland do not allow for public access because of concerns for liability, vandalism, trespass, harm to crops and equipment, etc. Public access has typically been limited to the City's fee title lands or the occasional partnership arrangements. Participants suggested creative approaches for certain farm parcels like access only on fringe areas, or divided acquisitions where a small piece of land (e.g., in fee title) might allow access. Participants also recommended that linear features like levees, drainage channels, and riparian corridors could be more accessible (e.g., eliminating locked gates, negotiating for access, connecting to established trail segments), even within a larger farm parcel that was off limits.

Attachment 4

Survey respondents indicated that over 77% of those surveyed go to the some of the established open space areas; with over 83% using Putah Creek Parkway and almost 63% using the north Wildhorse Agricultural buffer area. Many of them (10%) almost every day, and others (25%) once per week. This suggests the importance of strong management and maintenance of these areas, possibly considering additional convenience facilities, and continued publicity about these areas, and information available once one goes to the open space.

Participants suggested numerous facility improvements in the areas where public access already exists such as better signage, restrooms and water availability, safe trails, and environmental education. Better information was also a theme such as a mobile app to the open space areas, news articles, and better web-based outreach, working with neighborhood organizations and volunteers and additional community meetings. Finally, participants suggested expanding partnerships to broaden access (e.g. water agencies, wildlife conservancies, community groups, and private donors). Some specific locations where access was suggested included:

- Completing the “round the City” bike and walking loop using open space areas.
- Completing the Putah Creek Parkway trail.
- Developing the Davis to Woodland trail/bikeway along a rail line and/or farm land.
- Public access along some of the lands along Willow Slough.
- Connect the South Fork Preserve to the Yolo Bypass (leverage State flood improvements).

Management, Maintenance, and Budgeting

Participants were generally satisfied with City staff’s overall management of the program; although communication and outreach have not been very effective in past years. Most people were supportive of this current effort to reach out and gather substantial public input.

In terms of administrative work, participants believed that the City should be more transparent about grant funds received for open space and where those grant funds show up in the City’s accounting system. In addition, some residents felt that the City’s expenditures on administration and management/maintenance remains too high, and suggested looking at other communities as a comparison of best practices.

On the land management side, some participants believed the City should manage the various fee title lands (e.g. Wildhorse Agricultural Buffer) to provide better habitat for species like burrowing owls and other wildlife and could enlist volunteers to help with this effort. Participants also wanted to see the City develop management plans for each of the City’s open space areas so that residents and City staff better understand what is being done to maintain areas and protect wildlife.

Attachment 4

Outreach and Awareness

Much of the input on outreach and awareness has been captured in other topical areas, but there were many suggestions for improvement in program transparency, community interaction and communication and information about the program, funding issues and specific places, such as:

- Improved web site with timely updates on budgets, grants, projects, and opportunities for volunteer efforts, and related matters.
- Need better definitions of open space and better information on public access opportunities.
- Need more engagement with land owners (especially those closer to the City who have not been interested in selling) and farmers with easements or potential easements about access options and restoration potentials.
- More clarity on acquisition strategy and priorities (an updated plan would help). Many suggested that the original priority acquisition map is still a good starting place.
- Closer coordination with urban growth issues both in the City and County.
- More news articles, workshops, events, clean-up day, docent led walks, Farmer's Market, school news, social media, bike and running events, and other opportunities for outreach.
- Take time to work with associations, volunteer organizations, clubs, etc., who could be advocates.
- Use venues such as the City utility bill, Davis Enterprise, social media and web site to share current information.
- Keep the momentum going from this outreach project. Hold periodic community workshops and meetings about specific issues.

Attachment 4



IV. Appendices



Community Workshop

Agenda Community Workshop: City of Davis Open Space Program

March 9, 2016: 6:30-9:00 pm
Davis Senior Center

OVERALL WORKSHOP OBJECTIVE: To provide an open and transparent venue for all community members to learn about, discuss, evaluate and suggest improvements to the City's Open Space Program.

1. INTRODUCTION (6:30-6:45 pm)

- Meeting Objectives, Agenda Review, Workshop Procedures (UC Davis Collaboration Center)
- Introductions of Elected Officials, Open Space Commissioners, Workshop Sub-Committee, and Staff

2. PRESENTATIONS ON THE OPEN SPACE PROGRAM (6:45-7:10 pm)

- Overview of the Open Space Program (Marc Hoshovsky, Davis Open Space Commission)
- Summary of the results of the Survey and the Open Space Program Focus Groups (UC Davis Collaboration Center)

3. INTERACTIVE SESSIONS – WORLD CAFÉ (7:10-8:30pm)
(Community)

There will be three “rounds” for community members to engage in discussions/interactions at any of the content tables – each approximately 20-30 minutes. The following tables will be available:

- o **General Open Space Dialogue** (1 table): this station will include discussion of the original Measure O language and intent, discussion about general goals and approaches for the program, and discussion of the various “tools” that help protect open space including Measure R/J and the agricultural buffer and mitigation requirements.

Attachment 4

- ***Open Space Lands and Acquisition Priorities*** (3 tables): these stations describe existing open space land, and then focus on future acquisition options and priorities, and criteria for land and conservation easement purchase including “next to City lands” and public access opportunities.
- ***Open Space Program Management, Maintenance and Budget*** (1 table): this station focuses on the way Measure O funds are leveraged and spent, how the program is administered and the land management aspects of the program including public access and restoration opportunities.
- ***Public Access Opportunities*** (1 table): this station focuses on the existing and potential future opportunities for public access in open space areas, and discusses the pros and cons of access close to the city, connecting bikeways, in farm areas, riparian habitat areas, etc.
- ***Open Space Restoration*** (1 table): this station focuses on the emerging guidelines for restoration projects in the open space lands and potential for improvements and additions in the future.

4. **COMMUNITY DIALOGUE & WRAP-UP (8:30-9:00 pm)**

(Community and UC Davis Collaboration Center)

- Additional questions and discussion with full community group
- Workshop review and conclusions
- Next steps

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Focus Groups

City of Davis Open Space Outreach Initiative

Focus Groups – January 27 & 28

Greg Bourne, Facilitator

Meeting Agenda

- 7:00 Introductions
- 7:05 Review Agenda and Ground Rules
- 7:10 Project Overview: Exploring Ways to Improve the Open Space Program
 - Survey
 - Focus groups
 - Student project
 - Outreach activities
 - Community workshop
- 7:15 Focus Group Meeting Objectives
 - Gain insights on major issues
 - Gather ideas on how to address the major issues
 - Obtain input on approaches to engage the public in meaningful ways
- 7:20 What is Working Well with the Open Space Program?
- 7:35 Major Issues and Ideas for Moving Forward
- 8:30 Ideas for Enhancing Public Awareness and Engagement
- 8:50 Next Steps
- 9:00 Adjourn

**City of Davis Open Space Focus Group
Combined Notes
January 27 and 28, 2016**

Attendees for the January 27 meeting:

1. Jean Jackman – Co-Coordinator of Measure O, columnist in Davis Enterprise
2. Jeff Main – Farmer, West of Woodland
3. Andrew Fulks – UC Davis Arboretum
4. Cork McIsaac – Has easement with City of Davis; President of farm management firm
5. Michelle Clark – Yolo Land Trust
6. Steve Greco – UC Davis Professor Landscape Architecture and Ecology Design
7. Stephen McCord – Water Quality Consultant
8. Fraser Shilling – Former Planning Commissioner
9. John Brenan – Real Estate / Farm Manager

Attendees for the January 28 meeting:

1. Jonathan Bayless – Interested in open space due to parks background
2. Ed Whisler – Grew up in Davis; Prop 70 Committee; North Davis Ponds Co-founder
3. Heather Nichols – Working with UCD on Putah Creek Parkway, and with Putah Creek Council on North Davis Riparian Greenbelt Project
4. Greg Schmidt – Cattleman; holds easements
5. Eric Vink – DPC, early advisor to land trust; interested in the land acquisition component
6. Pam Nieberg – Sierra Club and part of leadership team for original Measure O campaign
7. Matt Williams – Finance and Budget Commission; candidate this June for City council.

Introduction

Ground Rules = 1) Share Time 2) Be respectful of other's points of view and 3) Focus on forward thinking

Were expecting someone from the City of Davis to come

Want some retrospective thinking, "what we learned," but don't want to focus that much on the past

Overview

Greg gives summary of project and where it is now
Public Meeting is in March

What is Working Well with the Open Space Program?

Themes:

- Wants to go back and look at what was voted for on the ballot
- \$24 per parcel tax is a minor tax in Davis and people hardly notice
- Easements make the \$ dollars go further, instead of direct acquisition.

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- Easements require a willing seller close to the city, but not very smart long-term planning when it comes time for the population to grow.

Notes:

6/9 of focus group voted for the Open Space Measure back in 2000

For Yolo Land Trust (YLT), Measure O has been critical for their funding source; rely on public funds for easements on active ag. land; use Measure O to match federal and state funds/grants; just do agricultural easements. It is in YLT's mission to do habitat easements, but have not now.

Cost share with Yolo Land Trust?

Land owner can put up 25%, don't have CWCB funds in any of YLT projects; Measure O is why YLT gets looked at in highly competitive grants. It is stable funding.

We all want farmland preserved; wants to go back and look at what was voted for on the ballot; there were 700 volunteers in this effort

Fee Title Acquisitions along the Putah Creek (dark green on the map) are really helpful and have the City has a partner is good. Want to know what specifically was Measure O has funded on the map?

\$24 per parcel tax, he is a new resident and didn't vote it. From the property owner moving in, never heard anyone complain. In Davis, everyone pays for the big school tax and this is minor tax. He works in these issues and that is not the case in other places. Sonoma and Marin have a .5% sales tax, b/c land is expensive in that area.

Owns cattle ranch; can testify to other open space efforts being done in Mendocino, but was not able to pass a ballot.

Sonoma and Marin is .5% sales tax and gets a bunch of money and can do a lot with their funds.

Impressed by how money has been spent – need a breakdown of costs. Pretty impressed that we are keeping price low with land management.

Attorneys and Real Estate fees can be expensive

Easements make the \$ dollars go further, instead of direct acquisition.

When a city tries to get involved in farming easements, it fails; don't do it. Work with the farmers. Easements require a willing seller close to the city, but not very smart long-term planning when it comes time for the population to grow. Don't want little spaces here and there.

Does money go to the city? Easements stay in property ownership. Issue = property tax lost to the county.

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Major Issues and Ideas for Moving Forward

Themes:

- No public transparency in the process of distributing Measure O funds
- Nearby farmers and land-owners are waiting for more money in order to be willing sellers. City can't pay more than market value for that land.
- Lack of transparency about funds and prioritization; needs to be posted on the website and show what has been bought. Sonoma County has done this and is a good role model.
- Want to see more attempts for public access on acquisitions, like trails and bike paths.
- How does this tie into Measure J?
- The discussion is where is the city going to grow, and don't want to buy easements there
- Prime habitat and working farms/easements should not have public access. If you do a fee title, then maybe public access is ok
- Need to define "open space." Is it public access or land that you don't see development?
- When in the city or not living on the land, easy to point to a map and say, "that should be open space," but need to have genuine engagement with the land-owners.
- Real Estate Deal. Most of the time the negotiation is closed process. But shouldn't have just one person (Open Space Coordinator) behind the process either.
- Thinks the City actually did a good job with what the open space map looks like now, even though they did not communicate well. Ex. bikeway path from Davis to the Yolo Bypass.
- Measure O can't be used for NCCP – State Management Authorization permit.

Notes:

No public transparency until they did this Forum. Open Space Commission needs accounting; no public access on many properties; only 4 million has been spent in past 16 years. Measure has not accomplished what people thought it would. Six points on her attachment point to what was advertised; the program has not fulfilled that.

Priority map on the back table walls points to the areas around the city that not been acted upon. Farmers in those areas are waiting for more money. Can't pay more than market value for that land.

Philosophical differences are challenging

Legal language and growth pressure authorizes taking the parcel tax. Back in 2000 there is a finding that there is growth pressure surrounding the city; in order to counter that growth pressure, then comes the tax. Lack of transparency about funds and prioritization; needs to be posted on the website and show what has been bought. Sonoma County has done this. He was on the commission a few years ago. Expenditures have not been clear. Need a transparent process with engagement too. Open Space Commission tried to do that, but it got shot down by Open Space Coordinator. NCCP is complicated.

Measure O can't be used for NCCP – State Management Authorization permit. Google: A natural community conservation plan (NCCP) is the State counterpart to the federal habitat conservation plan (HCP). It provides a means of complying with the Natural Community Conservation Plan Act (NCCP Act) and securing take authorization at the State level.

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Main priority has been the wildlife corridors along Putah Creek; prioritization that is on map currently is still valid. Thinks of open space has two things: farming and buffer zone nature area. Want to see more attempts for public access like trails and bike paths. Putah Creek to Yolo Bypass is one example of a possible path. Priority map is still pretty good.

We need a more transparent process. We need to think about where we are building and having enough reserve. How does this tie into Measure J and the Cannery? The discussion is where is the city going to grow, and don't want to buy easements there. Really want to have a discussion of public access, because in some places that might be homeless encampments.

Owns easement, preference is no public access. It is a working farm. Agriculturalists, don't like public access, because it is an operating farm. If it is not in an educated setting, then takes away from the purpose (esp. if spraying pesticide or something). Public access needs to be controlled. If you do a fee title, then maybe public access is ok. Easements can be any length of time. Some can be in perpetuity.

Emphasize that public access should be done for fee titles.

A lot of conversation easements, what is year length? Answer from others: In perpetuity.

What is being described with easements and length change does not pertain to the City of Davis. If you amend a conservation easement then have to go to court order from the State Attorney's office.

Language in the staff report says there is not development pressure around the City of Davis. Is there a more holistic picture of tools? Land is not going to get developed. How do Measure J, R, and O work together? <Greg: They should put that into the March Workshop.

Sonoma County Open Space District used a tool to lay out a prioritization. Start with Sonoma County and map it out. Habitat, Historic Ag, regular Ag., categorize acquisitions.

In Sacramento Watershed project used mercury spatial tool to map out the priorities. What are the priorities? Put it down on maps.

When in the city, easy to point and say, "That should be open space," but need to have genuine engagement with the land owners. Need to engage who the neighbors are.

Really critical is the discussion. Open Space Coordinator did not discuss when he was on the Commission. There is no process for Measure O right now, just benevolent staff person making decisions.

We have the "willing seller" language. Can't say this is a priority without the willing seller's agreement. In past, have people who are against it and then move away. Keep that in mind, community vision.

Hard to do a real estate deal in a public forum. Every single project goes to city council. Appraisal takes time and years for real estate.

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Real Estate Deal. Sonoma County is the model. Most of the time the negotiation is closed process. But shouldn't have just one person behind the process either.

Future development will all be on the north part of town.

Never talked about land inside the city; land next to cemetery would have been good. We should have talked about that.

Between now and the workshop do a GIS analysis. We could do a modeling and priority maps.

Not sure if this is what we want at the workshop because then run into the problem that Cork runs into of people who are not land-owners pointing at the land.

What is the set-up for public access?

People should be able to "see across" public land. Being able to get inside it all is overrated. Prime habitat and ag. land should not be disturbed. Steve's dept. can help design that stuff.

What makes the Bay Area precious is the perseveration of land and easy access to it; we need little space here and there instead of having to drive a long ways to get to it.

We are a city in a field. We need access to nature. Need bike access to the preserves. Look at open land and how can exist them in a non-motor vehicle way. Motorized access and non-motorized access can make a huge difference in litter and what comes on the trail.

Bikeway Yolo County Plan, might be another way to integrate Open Space Plan; leverage funding.

This is an opportunity to create a park we don't have; some % of Measure O funds should go to public access space for some specific purpose.

Sonoma did that same thing that looked at "who was getting the money".

Wishes that the focus group was involving the city; our comments go nowhere.

Thinks the City actually did a good job with what the open space map looks like now. I think what the City did not communicate, but they did a pretty good job.

Need to get a strategic plan for focusing on acquiring fee titles for public access.

Doesn't live in Davis – Yolo Farm Bureau. Can put some of the money into infill vs. buying land out there? Land values are insane right now.

There is a bikeway path from Davis to the Yolo Bypass that open space land has helped with.

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Would like to see the final language of the resolution to leverage other funds and what it can be used for.

NCCP Permits State Endangered Act. Intended to mitigate for that. There is not agreement with effectiveness. Can Measure O be applied for this NCCP permits and funds?

Is there a process to access funds for habitat? Want little NGO groups to access these funds.

Yes, it will be addressed in the upcoming March forum.

Ideas for Enhancing Public Awareness and Engagement

In 2000, brought together 50 – 60 people together. Municipality needs to decide what they are going to promise or commit to at the meeting. There are lots of ways that the city has messed up before.

No one expects everything to be done, but do expect explanations of why what was done.

Got to get the word out to neighborhood groups and cities, send letters to property owners in the region. Farm Bureau Members. NGOs in towns, Tree Davis. Remind them that they are paying for it on their parcel tax. He manages the North Davis ditch project.

Negative comments about the Measure O will not push it forth. Don't attack it too much because then would make it hard to pass again.

When being critical of the work that is being done, success needs to be applauded. Celebrate Measure O and how can it be done better.

At forum, need to talk about 25 acre Davis community farm and mitigation. How are we moving the soccer fields?

Concluding Thoughts

We will do a meeting summary and won't attribute the comments. Will give the City some insight on how to host a public forum with people's interests.

Remaining Details from the Community Survey

QUESTION 2: Have you heard of the City's Open Space Program; if so, how?

- I pay taxes. Including Measure O parcel taxes.
- forwarded emails
- northdavis.nextdoor.com
- I voted yes for measure O in 2000 election.
- Through the campaign that created it
- I was a city councilmember
- Led the Council that wrote it.
- Yolo Land Trust
- Solano Land Trust
- Board of Supervisors
- Yolo Land Trust
- Social media
- Davis Vanguard
- Yolo Land Trust
- Funded Conservation Easements
- Vanguard
- Davis was involved in easements with Solano Land Trust
- work
- Through Yolo Land Trust
- Signage, I think
- City e-mail
- Land Trust
- I am a Beekeeper open space is important to Bees
- Mace Discussion
- farmers market
- Work
- Mace 391 Controversy
- campaign for measure O
- UC Davis
- UC Davis
- Class at UC Davis
- I know Mitch Sears
- Land Agent for the City of Davis
- Worked on developing the ordinance passed in 2000. Co-chaired the citizen's campaign.

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- was on the OSHC for a bit
- UC Davis Studio 30 class
- Professor
- City staff
- listserv for graduate students connected to the ecology graduate program at UC Davis
- Worked for Yolo County
- Through volunteering with Friends of the Arboretum
- Neighbor Next Door
- Worked at city
- Internet
- yes
- Tax bill
- personal interest in open space and protection of habitat
- Former OS&H Commissioner
- News
- Involved in initial campaign
- city employees
- Public debt when the community voted on Measure O
- We supported Measure O, the Open Space parcel tax
- local blogs,

QUESTION 9: What other acquisition strategies would you recommend as a higher priority?

- Developing habitat for community use.
- None
- Commitment from university leaders on viewshed
- Use the money for city recreation activities. More open space around the city is not needed. Continue county slow growth ordinances. This is a waste of 600000 - put it to good use, serve our children
- Buying land adjacent to other open space to create wildlife corridors and substantial areas of habitat
- No public access, keep land in farming only
- Beginning Farmer Program
- more accessible areas with trails, especially for children
- Strategies to ensure that developers and their consultants deliver credible and sound EIRs and other assessments of environmental impact caused by

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developments.

- restoration of city park grass fields (green belts) back to natural habitat with trail access
- The City must learn how to manage these areas for the long-term. Invasive species must be treated and removed. Wildlife must be monitored quantitatively. Objective, defensible standards must be used for success criteria.
- Protecting biological resources through habitat acquisition and habitat management
- Less emphasis on city land ownership: the more land the city purchases, the more land maintenance fees the city incurs. Conservation easements seem to be better stewardship of funds.
- Less emphasis on proximity to city boundaries
- Preserve Ag land next to city
- continued focus on preserving working farmland in area
- None
- City Boundaries and Community Separators
- Land that fills in protected corridors or adjacent to already protected land
- I think the current emphasis is fine
- Need close places to walk and see natural habitat. Would love to see valley oak woodland
- Wildlife corridors
- Beekeeping to improve ecosystem
- North Davis Ponds
- public access
- Less emphasis on extreme management, e.g. mowing and pruning, more on hand weed control by volunteers and replanting with natives and appropriate native plants that encourage wildlife. Much less emphasis on herbicides and local employees rather than out of town contractors.
- mini projects such as education signage
- retain and increase emphasis on protecting active farmland
- Right to Farm clauses
- More lands adjacent to other protected lands. Less fragmented.
- More emphasis on preserving Ag lands, purchase easements, not fee title
- less money to management and more to purchase
- multi use trails
- Access to land for beginning farmers
- Recreation open space. Biking, walking, and jogging.
- Protect greenbelts and parks from construction
- follow the plan provided by the citizens that led to Measure O

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- Planned strategically to maximize benefits for 10-50-100 years
- In particular I wish the city would not allow so much development in one area. Cannery, Ok. But then Grande too? I think the city should have obtained this open space and protected it.
- Acquisition of land to separate cities, but land is not necessarily immediately adjacent to Davis city boundaries. Also, would like more info on where Davis's "sphere of influence", as defined by LAFCO, is.
- City should get out of the open space business!
- Acquire more nesting ground for the tricolored blackbird!
- Small farm protection
- If I am happy with agriculture! I can't put anything else as a "higher priority"
- land to use as a year-round off-leash dog park
- In order to curtail outward growth inward growth with zoning must be allowed
- I do not support measure O funds being used in the yolo county habitat conservation plan (HCP)
- City land ownership for what purpose? Choice 2; I support smart high density growth, not low density growth (re: choice 3)
- land to separate Davis from other cities
- More emphasis on land next to city boundaries
- Even more farmland!

QUESTION 11: If it were feasible what changes would you suggest in the allocation of funds?

- More to purchase and develop land next to city for public access.
- Take care of what we have, well.
- Lower reserve to 20% keeping acquisition and management same proportion
- more timely transparency regarding which bordering lands to Davis are being considered for inclusion and an equal allocation thereof
- This city has a lot of open space - and we've curtailed growth for too long. We must accept that UC Davis is growing and if we continue to curtail growth, we will only hurt our student resident.
We have parks and recreation - but they are nominal. The city gym facilities are inadequate and the city pool facilities are mediocre, at best.
I strongly support allocation of these funds for a 50 meter pool in Davis.
- Improve habitat value of greenways within Davis through more naturalistic landscape design
- Eliminate Measure "O"
- More on management and maintenance

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- Spend the reserve on 'wilding' more of our existing high water need landscapes. I.e. convert more green turf lands to Mediterranean systems.
- Spend as much as possible on land acquisition now - the current development boom is about to take over again now that the building industry has somewhat recovered from the recession. What's developed is developed and what's built is built and that land is forever lost - in other words: protect the lands that are available as soon as possible in order to conserve these lands so that they cannot be developed. Help stop this wonderful town and with it decades of smart growth planning from being turned into another suburban sprawl Vacaville or Fairfield. The Cannery project was more than enough in allowing land adjacent to the Davis City boundaries from being expanded and a large plot of land being developed into a new neighborhood.
- 15% for maintenance, admin, and mgmt. is hardly sufficient. We all know that a tiny portion of that 15% is actually spent on "maintenance", and that "maintenance" has no actual ecological definition. Properties acquired for habitat must be surveyed initially to create baseline datasets, and then resurveyed on a regular basis to determine if objectives are being met. If objectives are not being met, adaptive management must change. Invasive species must be removed. Conditions for wildlife must be maintained. All of this is part of "maintenance", since "maintenance" can't be performed without objective standards and monitoring. The top reason habitat preservation and restoration projects fail is a lack of, or underfunded, maintenance programs. I do not believe the City is currently serious about actually managing/maintaining open spaces according to basic ecological standards.
- More on management and maintenance
- Acquire land, but also manage land for the intent for which it was acquired. For example, Burrowing Owl habitat needs to be maintained to support Burrowing Owls.
- Buy land as soon as possible because the land values are going higher quickly
- Continue to use easements whenever possible
- Stop borrowing money from other sources to support purchases. Only Measure 'O' money should be used for purchases. If you don't have enough money in the fund you have no business making the purchase.
- Spend some more of the money that will help with habitat restoration and wetland restoration.
- 1. Maintenance 2. Parks, greenbelts inside the urban limit that can be seen as green corridor connections and for which the city has less money for upkeep. 3. active space
- Restore grasslands to valley oak woodland with public access.

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- I'm not informed enough to say
- Protect more farmland. No farms, no food.
- I don't know enough about the issue to comment.
- Quality stewardship of land requires that adequate funds be set aside for management, maintenance, etc. It's totally appropriate to spend 15% on these things.
- More management and maintenance
- Spend more funds on opening the gates to the public reserves, in other words, allow more public access to areas that allow public access. The Putah Creek Reserve is closed most of the time.
- Engage the community in what the Australians promote as "bush regeneration", watershed restoration, slough formation, planting for wildlife and stop pesticides, herbicides and outside contractors.
- Allocate some funding for habitat restoration and/or improvement on properties already acquired or protected.
- Decrease admin costs, decrease reserve
- Lands pursued in areas voters prioritized. Lands accessible to people. Not all of Measure O money is being spent. Why? Land will only get more expensive. Community projects. Linkage bike routes to Yolo Basin or other nature areas. Buy up land, put in route link then sell to farming.
- Acquired lands that are not actively farmed need adequate management and maintenance to insure they have open space value to the City.
- Consider options for building a reserve, endowment, or other ongoing revenue stream to be able to continue maintenance of lands acquired under Measure O once Measure O expires.
- Do not acquire more land for these purposes. Many young professionals who currently rent in Davis would appreciate more home development at the lower end of the market. The City's steadfast opposition to more residential properties forces those of us out of Davis.
- Use the reserve to acquire lands next to current holdings.
- Purchase easements, not the land, you don't have to pay for maintenance and you will be able to leverage your money much better.
- Maintenance budget should be increased. I realize increasing the amount spent on maintenance may increase the amount spent on admin and mgmt., but it wouldn't have to. Davis has many wonderful community greenspaces but at times they're inaccessible, unknown, or not very well maintained.
- More on management/maintenance, esp. to help the declining burrowing owl population. Huge crisis for the species!

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- Spend more on acquisition and on management and maintenance and far less on staff salaries.
- Spend more on restoration, maintenance, and acquisition/easements of lands accessible to Davisites; less on administration; and less on easements of lands distant from the city and not accessible to Davisites.
- Minimize personnel costs. Stop empire building and buy land on city boundary.
- Do not like the move of Open Space funds to county habitat preservation and the too-high administrative costs. With move of money to JPA, nothing left for purchasing open space. County efforts don't necessarily benefit Davis residents in any direct way, as promised by Measure O, and our tax dollars should have direct benefit to residents. JPA will protect habitat, but this could be anywhere in the county, as I understand it.
- spend more on management to improve ecosystem services - vegetation planting, etc.
- not enough information above to weigh in
- More on maintaining and increased use by the citizens who paid for it.
- Allocate funds to open space accessible to off leash dogs.
- more on maintenance and management
- Honestly, I don't know enough about these things to comment.
- Be honest about the 'program'
- Please make open space available for public access for example -running/hiking trails
- Increase the reserve
- Follow the plan that was provided by citizens... that led to Measure O being placed on the ballot
- Spend on making land accessible to the community
- spend more on management and maintenance
- I need more info to answer this question.
- Focus more funds on acquiring and managing open space near the city boundary that Davis residents can access and enjoy.
- Spend some on management for public use.
- Spend the reserve only if it is necessary for protection of the land/habitat and/or to keep an open space boundary around the city (including emergency use for either).
- Spend on the reserve as soon as possible and move the administration over to the City's budget
- Get out of the land ownership business.
- increase docent program volunteering to reduce management and increase acquisition percentages
- Make sure maintenance is sufficient.

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QUESTION 15: Would you like to see more of these edge of the city areas accessible for walking and other uses?

- I would like to see a "Central Park" - "William Land Park" developed for Davis as well as the above areas. Too much city and not enough nature is detrimental.
- West Davis, north of Covell or around West Pond.
- South Davis along Montgomery avenue
- All edges
- Only if it is cost effective and appropriately prioritized among other city needs (i.e. not redundant with the location (or near location) of city-maintained recreation areas) and as equally apportioned as possible around the city.
- West Davis
- All areas of the city should have immediate access to open space.
- They are too far from the city's edge to use very often
- More connections to other habitat and recreation trails such as continuous access from the city to Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area, Lake Berryessa, Willow Slough, Davis Wetlands
- More established trails at the South Fork Preserve allowing for access to the water's edge and longer hikes along the creek.
- East Davis
- The cool bike underpass at East Covell near Monarch leads to nowhere. That would be a perfect area to purchase land and turn it into a nature trail so that the expensive (and great) bike underpass would finally receive a purpose for somebody to use it and be able to use the land adjacent to the city boundaries for walking/biking etc.
- Would love to see expanded trails along Putah creek going west and restoration of green belt grass fields back to native habitat.
- On the edge of the Cannery
- Not sure - but I'd hope they could connect to existing areas.
- Of course I would, but that obviously increases management and maintenance expenses, and I still believe - even though I love using city-edge areas - that using measure O funds for acquisition is a better strategy than using it for increasing city-edge areas. What would be a more cost-effective way of increasing city-edge open space is first acquiring an agricultural "moat" 0-2 miles from the existing city limits; requiring developers of new city-edge developments to donate an open-space buffer to the city; and after those "moat" acquisitions are complete, a greater percentage of funds could be directed towards management and maintenance of city-edge open space, as fewer funds would then be needed for acquisition (this is

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more of a 50-year time scale).

- I do not recommend greater accessibility because that would necessitate further construction and trail building, which themselves fragment and otherwise modify habitat.
- Wildhorse
- North and west Davis areas
- West Davis
- West Davis
- Basically, wherever feasible, work to protect habitat and open space that circles the perimeter of the City. Enhance natural environments like where farmland edges residential.
- More in West Davis (West Russell and West Covell) and North Davis (North Anderson)
- Mace Ranch Curve
- Anywhere along the creek.
- If possible, more access along the south fork of Putah Creek
- I think it's called Covell Ditch along the city's northern boundary. Spans F Street to Sycamore. Depending on the season, I go 1-3 times per week.
- Extended path running along Covell Drainage Channel east to Pole Line Rd., perhaps following Channel A.
- wherever it makes sense from a public safety and property perspective
- There is an area on the east side of town that has a pathway next to farmland. You can get to it at the east end of Cowell. This looks like a great area to expand for walking.
- Close to neighborhoods - within walkable distance from homes building off of green belts.
- South of Montgomery Ave.
- East Davis; would like more wood chip or gravel (non-asphalt) paths in general
- I use the West Davis Pond and would like it maintained. Great for bird and waterfowl watching.
- Anywhere they seem appropriate.
- Low income areas, and paths between housing and schools if possible.
- PROVIDED it is compatible with agriculture and habitat. Protecting agriculture and habitat is the priority not public access.
- wherever it is feasible
- immediately adjacent areas
- What we have is fine
- no place in mind

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- West Davis, Southeast Davis
- Easier connectivity
- More access to the bike path between the freeway and the railroad tracks between Mace Bl. and Poleline.
- Wherever possible.
- South Fork Preserve
- More land on Putah Creek; connect the South Fork Preserve to the Yolo Bypass via bike trail on levee; and connect the south Fork Preserve to the UCD Riparian Reserve via the levee too. Connect the Yolo grasslands park to Putah Creek (buy the land between them) to make an upland reserve with a valley oak forest.
- Connect North Davis to Davis ditch. Path along F Street next to Julie Partanksy Wildlife Area. Habitat restoration of the 2.75 acre area next to wildlife area.
- Possibly. It depends on the area.
- North and east of Davis
- Primarily in those places that enhance connectivity between existing public access areas - for example, a pathway along Channel A from Wildhorse Ag Buffer to F Street/Northern Greenbelt. Not so much in favor of public access that interferes with farming or habitat areas.
- South and west of town.
- south of el Macero and South East Davis, both sides of hwy 113
- By the Target shopping area on the east side of town.
- would love better dog off leash options
- West Davis
- Putah Creek. Seems these areas are closed off and not accessible, last I checked
- I would like to see consideration of permanent or temporary space for community gardening on the west side of the City. This could be accomplished with very small land areas, and maximize educational benefit too residents about conservation and ag heritage in our area.
- Connecting trail between Wildhorse Ag Buffer and Cannery development/ North Davis
- Enhance the Wildhorse area by creating hills. It is mostly flat. With hills the trail can be made longer or have multiple routes. Maybe good for mountain bike riding.
- Land along Pole Line road is a good candidate for increased buffers or other management; the bike trail is a great option but it is very loud and very windy at times, and the trail can't successfully be used for biking or walking.
- North Davis, near the levee/alfalfa/fields, and Wildhorse, near the farmlands. More running paths would be great
- Anywhere feasible. Access and familiarity with recreation open spaces have limited

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our family's use/enjoyment.

- Measure O money should not be spent on things the city would normally be funding. O was to preserve ag land and habitat aside from what the city would normally fund.
- Around all drainage ponds including North Davis (restore surrounding area and open up), the pond in West Davis that is fenced off and available only to surrounding homeowners who sneak into it, spend more money improving the North Davis Channel, improve water quality and habitat of all, provide access, improve greenbelts, AND develop corridor to bike/walk to Woodland, i.e., connectivity w/o cars.
- The current opportunities appear to be in north and south Davis. How about central and west? How about something that allows us to walk or ride on a path where we can see the coast range--e.g. north of Covell, past the hospital? Or south of Covell after Stonegate?
- A trail network surrounding the city would be the best with trail sections that are off-leash.
- West Davis
- I'd like to see the slough and ditch waterway networks all around Davis connected to each other with an accessible riparian corridor. This would include the ditch recently planted north of Northstar Park to where it goes along F St, over to Wildhorse, back to where it connects to the slough in ag land to the west of Davis north of Putah creek.
- Not as important where but more what. I am planning on moving away from Davis in large part because of the lack of accessible trails. I appreciate the preservation of usable ag land, but struggle to balance this with a personal need for walking trails that are not heavily manicured and maintained.
- North of the city limits
- It would be nice to have a pedestrian path or bikeway over the old Putah Creek channel connecting Hamel Ln to the bike path on the north side of the creek bed (if feasible). Maybe somewhere near the junction of Drew Circle with the bike path.
- Access seems adequate to me, but I'm not opposed to increasing access to any place in particular
- North Davis
- South Davis since I live there. I would like multi use off road dirt trails that could be shared with walkers. Along the creek if possible.
- Yes if accessible to dogs.
- I'm open to any locations. Wanted to use this space to say I'm not clear on the specific locations of Putah Creek Parkway and South Fork Preserve (mentioned in #13 above). Went to creek path near UCD Raptor Center (gravel parking, trail

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along creek) which was very nice. Am assuming this is one of options mentioned below. The North Wildhorse Ag Buffer I use weekly for a long run with my dog. This is a wonderful spot.

- south Davis, east Davis, north Davis
- West Davis
- Anywhere! I LOVE the Wildhorse ag buffer. I can't run on concrete, so it provides me with one of the few 'trail running' opportunities close to town and with gravel so I can run after a rain storm. I rely on it to get me out and keep me in shape!
- West Davis
- More Putah creek access.
- While the footpaths and bike trails are wonderful, I am concerned that making all areas easily accessible for uses not defined here (such as sporting and activity fields, etc.) will negatively impact the wildlife and peacefulness of those spaces.
- Running/hiking paths through Shriners property that connect wild horse ag path to the dump or to Harper Jr. High area In general more dirt/ gravel paths Paths through Covell village property that connects nugget fields/wild horse ag buffer and the cannery and the drainage ditch path north of north star that runs from f street to Covell
- North Davis including "ditch"
- Behind cannery project.
- South side of the creek
- Anywhere, just give us some off leash dog space.
- East Davis around Mace Curve
- Old East Davis
- Follow the plan provided by the citizens that led to Measure O
- West Davis
- Connections by the cannery, along the canal would be nice.
- I'd like there to be certain hours of the week when it is permissible to walk dogs off leash along the drainage on the north side of town off of F Street.
- Yes and no. Not everything needs to be developed and beautiful but more than anything, we folks who do use the parks, walk, run, bike, don't want to see so much development and regulation (the leash law in these undeveloped paths is ridiculous! the folks using the spaces at the edge of town care very much about the spaces)
- The west side of town would be nice.
- I would like more willing area like the fenced off creek area in the South.
- West Davis.
- I'm concerned that humans plus their dogs have reduced the habitat viability in the Wildhorse Ag Buffer. I would prioritize habitat value over human access in that area

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and any other area that was intended for habitat or mixed use.

- unsure
- Don't know, would have to look at a map.
- For some reason, I was not aware that the buffers are useable...even though I am a long-term Davis resident (since 1970). But I like the idea of making wild lands accessible and I would like to check out what we already have but don't know how to find out about them. Perhaps this is where Google comes in, but I think it might be good to publicize these areas more--or perhaps I have been to them but didn't know they had a name...??
- Access along the tree-lined area along farm buffers, north of Davis.
- Unsure, but a focus on connections with other existing resources (e.g. UC Davis, Fazio Wetlands, and Bike Loop etc.) would be most desirable.
- West side of Davis
- Putah Creek
- South Davis
- West Davis near Stonegate and Across from Sutter Hospital.
- East Davis
- West Davis, since that's near me
- Just two examples: South Fork Preserve has a locked gate. Why? Who locks it? The route around the City-owned Davis Wetlands east of the Wastewater Treatment Plant is off limits nearly every day during the hunting season, when no hunting is allowed there. Why? These are rich habitats for birds and other wildlife, and beautiful destinations for human visitors. For some reason, they are closed much of the time. Why?
- Anywhere - but especially include information for public about ability to access and use these spaces! Didn't know we had them!
- connecting to Arboretum

QUESTION 16: How can the City be more effective in reaching out to the community and communicating the Open Space Program?

Show these lands on all city maps. Describe access in recreation maps.

- Some of these areas are nearby but for busy people like me it would help to know where to find a map of access points quickly.
- Regular reporting (at least quarterly) via newspaper or community meeting or city council. 2. Education material for community about how money is spent 3. Dialog about spaces to preserve.
- Better signage to make it clear where the areas are.
- Signage, Workshops, Newspaper, Engage UC Davis students.

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- They could erect small signs in areas where the Open Space Program dollars are being used. I use many of these places on a regular basis but did not know they were part of the program until taking this survey.
- Work with dog owners. Identify more locations where off-leash dog walking is legal at certain times of the day or year. Work with Yolo Basin Foundation to identify a "bird of the week" or month. Publish it in the Enterprise and where/when good times to bird watch.
- Invite students at welcome week.
- JUST DO IT!
- More robust online presence.
- Perhaps by letting us know exactly where land has been preserved (via website?)
- Send a mailing with the city water bill. Nice and easy.
- Engage in education programs on the importance of habitat preservation.
- Publicize maps of the protected areas and publicize the public access opportunities.
- Newspaper.
- Explain exactly where the money is being spent.
- An increase in transparency, accountability and honesty would be nice.
- Have a representative at the farmers market. Email updates to residents.
- Include information in our water bill bi-annually to raise awareness about the program and solicit resident feedback.
- Davis Enterprise.
- More active lobbying where we can see you. At the Farmer's Market for example.
- Outreach to schools to take field trips to these areas, provide learning materials for guided tours that the schools can easily use.
- Signage at trail heads, NextDoor,
- I consider myself a well-informed individual of Davis matters yet this program was largely new to me. So that shows to me that the current outreach by the City is not effective. Do more and do it more effectively - especially: Post information often and regularly on nextdoor.com - a neighborhood networking tool that many Davis residents are using regularly. And there are other methods, too.
- Outreach through the city schools would be a great - educating the kids on the fliers that they would be bringing home, teaching them about the importance of getting involved in these kinds of projects - letting them know that as a resident of Davis they have a voice in this.
- In general the City is needs to have more modern communication methods--website and web based marketing done well. Press releases and the Enterprise are not enough.
- I didn't know the Wildhorse corridor was part of the program. Is there a sign at the gate?
- I'm not sure that's even a big deal. The local community clearly supports the OSP already, so I'd say the system is working at least to some extent. However, developing objective standards for habitat, etc. and involving technical experts to confirm these objectives are being met would bolster the reputation of the program.

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- Use social media (NextDoor, Facebook) to communicate.
- Feature articles in the Enterprise. Easily accessible info on the website. Work with the County to transition property tax bills to a digital format (they're still using *paper*?! really?!) and in each and every bill that is delivered digitally, LINK each of the parcel taxes to a nice-looking web page that provides information about the benefits and value of each of those parcel taxes. Don't waste your time and money on direct mailers or community meetings - they simply don't reach enough people, and most people are too busy to participate.
- In general, I think the City should do more to target apartment residents, which constitute ~ 55% of Davis residents (<http://cityofdavis.org/about-davis/population-and-housing>). I am unsure of the best way to do so. Perhaps announcements to children at local schools, radio advertisements, signs at local chain and major grocery stores. The idea is to target people beyond those that show up to the Farmer's Market, which is undoubtedly a pre-selected audience.
- Social media is helpful, including NextDoor.
- I'm a first year PhD student and (though it is ultimately my responsibility) it would be great to have more outreach for incoming students of all levels.
- Newspaper, mailings.
- Opinion pieces in the Enterprise Speak to community groups and schools.
- NextDoor neighbor website.
- Postings in those areas.
- Directed emails - not just lumped in with other city news. Advertisement in the paper. Ask UC Davis to post in their weekly emails. Send through neighborhood websites and ask them to share. Do you have a Facebook page for those who use Facebook?
- Not sure.
- Advertise the map currently on the City web site. Ensure consistency between the web site and other outreach materials -- e.g. the survey says there is access at the Putah Creek Parkway and the web site says the Putah Creek Riparian Reserve. Are they the same thing? Provide directions and/or suggestions similar to Yolo Hiker for the areas with public access. Create brochures and staff tables at the Farmer's Market. Create a "Friends of the City of Davis Open Space" group or coordinate more closely with Rotary or other non-profits to help maintain and patrol areas with open space access. Ensure the South Fork Putah Creek Reserve gates are open on a regular basis so people know it is open for use.
- Farmers Market table.
- use the NextDoor online communities to broadcast
- More open meetings and more publicity about program and public forums e.g. a city bulletin board at central location like COOP, whole foods, farmers market --community gathering spots
- Presentation of Potential open space for acquisition
- More effective communication (email subscription) for city residents
- Table at the Farmer's Market, host more information sessions and post info on City website.

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- Provide a vision that leads to an increase in the funding for the program.
- This survey is a good tool to begin with, but more community workshops are needed, as well as an active media campaign.
- Regular, clear, published multiple places accounting.
- Educating citizens on the importance of agriculture.
- Create a beginning farmer program on city owned land.
- Provide information to residents about where the open space is and how best to access and use it.
- Have a table at community events.
- Simple signage around the trails would be a good start. FYI this survey was way too geared to people that are super familiar with the open space program. I can't possibly have an opinion about how money is spent!
- Signs around town.
- Partner with land trust.
- Davis Enterprise.
- Reach out and communicate. This is the first such communication I have received.
- Need an improved social media campaign!
- Send information with monthly utility bills to increase awareness.
- Maybe a weekly or monthly column in the Davis Enterprise about open space walks around Davis.
- The City should provide a detailed accounting of how Measure O funds have been spent.
- I think the City does a good job letting people know about the Open Space Program, but could send out mailers, or do more community outreach.
- Emails like this one. Lawn signs or the street banners.
- Signage that indicates "this area funded by Measure O".
- The city has done a good job. Occasional articles in the enterprise highlighting an area, like the creek area on mace on the creek.
- By getting public involved with restoration trail access - they would care more if we could walk there. Get grants for school kids to help plant pollination gardens etc.
- Signage in the spaces that have benefited from this program - I run in the Wildhorse ag buffer almost every day and had never heard of the Open Space Program, even though I'm a direct recipient of its benefits!
Signs with maps along the bike loop that point out all of the amazing spaces Davis has! A second Davis bike loop to lead people there!
- Publicizing at the farmer's market.
- Market with maps of trails and green spaces around town; mark trails, greenways, walking paths that are part of the program.
- Distribute maps.
- Put up some signs, update the Wiki, Facebook.
- I'm not sure. Use all types of Social Media. Send info via the schools.
- Access maps and more communication.

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- More PR, more meetings, more transparency.
- Email.
- Hold to general plan in city areas.
- Putting info in the City Service Bill Create a newsletter.
- More Frequent Public workshops like the one planned in March.
- The best way is to solicit volunteering. The West Davis Ponds volunteer group and the North Davis Ponds volunteer group are good examples of how synergies can exist when citizens work together.
- Include a description of the spaces on paper and online maps; add small signs at or near the spaces.
- Newspaper articles, email list serves, community groups.
- Fund community groups for restoration and management with a little money for tools and gloves and a meeting space.
- Perhaps additional, informational articles/e-announcements; holding some regular public walks (i.e. beginner bird- walks or plant walks by volunteers) at these places and then having a news story written about that event.
- I would like to hear more about how acquisitions and on-going restoration and maintenance of sites have had a positive effect for native species and ecosystems. Partnership with university researchers interested in monitoring the sites may help with this.
- Collaborate more with the Yolo Conservation Plan.
- Transparency of what we voted for and website with future plans such as Sonoma does with spatial prioritization tool.
- Involve the community in stewardship activities and docent walks.
- Have more open space workshops. Encourage more people to attend the Open Space and Habitat Commission meetings.
- The publicly accessible areas are all poorly marked and identified. The City needs a standardized, consistent, and thorough signage program for the open space (and all parks for that matter). Each public access point should have a sign or signs clearly identifying the open space, the purpose of the open space, and what the appropriate activities in that open space area are.
- Social media; banners over the road like are used to announce the Turkey Trot, etc.; direct mailings
- Invest the community in determining and implementing the uses of specific and clearly delineated pieces and parcels within the whole.
- Seek more stakeholder input.
- Interpretive signage, public programs.
- Can't think of more--you have a commission, present to City Council, put out press releases, update the website...
- Hold events in these area throughout the year on various days of the week and at various times of the day.
- Advertising at the farmers markets.
- Signage.

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- I am a volunteer on the Putah Creek Parkway. This area has multiple users and still many of my friends and neighbors don't know it is there. We need to educate more of the public about how unique the Davis conservation activities are.
- Enterprise, and notes going home through the school.
- Show the community the successes that you have had.
- Open forums.
Put feature articles in The Enterprise.
- I'm not sure what's currently being done, but fliers or posters around town, at the market, on campus; listservs, newspaper ads, classes at the university.
- Acquire and preserve more open land. The community will automatically learn about it.
- Using University classes to hold workshops for public- University and city partnership.
- The website and other materials may be sufficient already, but I have not seen them. I suppose including links to resources in city newsletters, city website front page, news sources might help draw more attention to what is out there.
- Have a workshop on Measure O and how funds are used.
- You're off to a good start with the March workshop, just a little late. Keep them going. Develop a program for citizens to apply for restoration funding of existing city-owned land.
- Report on progress. Fully account for how funds are spent.
- Seeking community input, newspaper articles; all the usual ways. I am fairly well informed, but knew nothing about how Measure O monies were being used until people like Jean Jackman brought this to the public's attention. Getting input and education the public should be a regular function of the Open Space Commission.
- Educating the community about the specific ecological values of protecting the open space.
- Inform the public.
- Develop interactive maps for residents to use (online, as an app) and put up physical wayfinding maps for people to view when traversing the city on foot or by bike.
- Better signage throughout the city with all of the public trails and greenways.
- Creating access is key.
- Booths and information at the Davis Farmer's Market. Greater interaction with the University population.
- Permanent signage in places frequented by residents. The new signage on the north ditch is excellent, for example.
- Well, the link to this survey, for one, isn't exactly easy to find. Add a button to the website. Leverage social media, including Facebook and Instagram. Instagram would be most effective IMO b/c you could post visually some of the open space areas.
- Occasional article in the paper and on the city website showing where they are and how we can use them.
- Use the Davis Enterprise. Some people do read it and it is free to use.
- Signage on open space sites. More public programs and tours at open space sites.

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- Focus on open space that can be used by the public- walking, biking.
- Keep us updated with newspaper info, mark the land as protected by measure O unless it is farmland that might be invasive.
- March meeting a good idea. I think perception is that not enough money has been spent to preserve open space, especially near city borders.
- Add educational programs that make use of those spaces.
- Posters on telephone poles, windows and message boards in popular areas.
- Signage at the open space.
- Send flyers in city services billing envelopes, post notices in public buildings and on the City of Davis website.
- Provide more accurate information about how funds are spent and who determines that.
- Thank you so much for doing this survey I have long wondered why the open space tax didn't buy land that was accessible for passive recreation Thanks!!!
- Better publicize.
- Listen to the recommendation made by citizens.
- Public discussions.
- I like the communications via NextDoor.
- You make no effort at accountability. I won't vote to renew.
- Info & feedback booth at farmers market with info on city issues.
- Meet with citizens on the sites for a discussion. Advocate for Measure O values and for the atmosphere that produced those values. Follow the guidelines of Measure O. Don't be disingenuous.
- Encourage the Davis Enterprise to report more on the natural environment and land acquisition; less on sports.
- News articles in the Enterprise and occasional pamphlets by mail with maps, and accessibility information.
- Follow the plan provided by the citizens that led to Measure O.
- Maps, designated parking areas.
- Yearly update on how funds were spent, use of social media, the new City Website is better.
- Provide a formal summary of comments received at the public meeting. All residents to send in written comments.
- Use next-door Davis site, their own Facebook updates, and a newsletter in the mail (I think you are doing some of these things already though!).
- Clear communication of areas available to public and perhaps hold events there. Also communicate what is acquired and why (use/value to community).
- Emphasize that the primary value and purpose of the open space, be it ag or habitat, is for the continued use of that space for growing food or stewardship of ecosystems - not for human access or recreation.
- More maps available at local stores of green way areas.

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- Have a website devoted to it --and I would guess you already do.
- The "NextDoor" outreach through Stacy Winton seems to be good.
- More articles on specific amenities in the Enterprise; more outreach on NextDoor.
- Tabling at Farmer's Market and other events (many may just take open space for granted). I only really knew about the agricultural buffer and a few places like North and West Davis ponds (are they part of this program?)
- Email, Davis Enterprise, open discussions.
- I would love to see a volunteer docents who organize a wider appreciation such as monthly rotating open space location for watercolor groups, birding groups, photography, wildlife counts..... with shows/results of count held in the city building. We need our children to help with cleaning open spaces and educate them on the amazing wildlife we have here in Davis.
- Large signage around all sites where public dollars have been spent. Private lands can be duly noted to prevent trespassing. Also, at the existing public sites, large informational cases could be built describing the program including a place for a regularly updated map and public input.
- Quarterly placement on city council agenda for updates, once a year report not enough.
- Regular updates in The Enterprise and on the City's website.
- Annual flyer in utility bills about the program.
- There must be a balance between the objectives of Measure "O" and effective growth. We cannot forego our identity (i.e., unique neighborhoods) and we need to assess how everything fits together.
- Advertise the open space available to visit and use.
- HOA newsletters in addition to newspaper, social media, online newspaper editions.
- Highlight use of open space areas in paper.
- Use the Davis Enterprise newspaper as an encouragement to take the survey. Word of mouth to take the survey; ask people to announce the survey at all of the different meetings that we have in Davis, such as: Audubon Club, Sierra Club, arboretum members, master gardeners, Bike Club, walking clubs.
- Farmers market.
- Signage at the land acquisition site stating measure O funds are used here.
- Mailers, emails, newspaper articles.
- Newspapers, Daviswiki, direct mail.
- Good question. The City web site is not easy to navigate, and out of date in many cases. The Davis Enterprise is a smaller and smaller source of information. Perhaps meetings at some of the private properties now protected by the easements we're paying for would be interesting...
- Do we have a current "Vision Plan?" for the city? If we could come up with thematic priorities as a community, maybe we could reduce some of the knee jerk NIMBY squabbles that come up. If we can agree to thematic goals, the city can better explain how specific projects are supporting those goals.
- Signage at areas already acquired. Many residents haven't a clue Measure O exists. In general, I feel the City needs to be much more proactive in educating residents about City activities/programs.

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- See prior notes. Website info, flyers, letting the outdoor oriented stores and gyms know to disseminate the info.
- Total impact information has been sparse since Measure O, seems like I only hear about specific plots.
- Public workshops Farmers Market presence.
-
- QUESTION 17: What additional suggestions of any type do you have to improve the Open Space Program?
-
- See #15.
- Jean Jackman has some good ideas.
- I use and enjoy all of them - please add more!
- Increase the tax. The current amount does not provide adequate funding.
- It is not needed. Keep the current open spaces, but do not spend more money to try to re-purpose farm land. Residents can make use of Putah creek near UC Davis on the south side of town. We need to spend each dollar we get carefully - and with a vision to the future. Another small piece of "open space" right at the edge of town only serves a few people who border those areas. Please consider a recreational facility of high quality.
- Engage a cadre of volunteers willing to get involved in education.
- More hiking and biking trails through open space.
- Maintain open space, with partners only. Citizens on these properties open access will ruin the property.
- Eliminate it.
- We need city staff in charge of the program who are knowledgeable about ecosystem restoration in the context of farmlands, with some public interaction thrown in. That has been sorely lacking.
- My most pressing concern is stopping the kind of sprawl we see in Woodland along Poleline that is spreading toward Davis, and on 1-80. More and more farmland is being put up for sale. I am concerned about keeping as much farmland being farmed, or at least as open space, as possible.
- More citizen feedback!
- Improved signage at the areas.
- It astounds me that it is not a high priority to pull back on some of your big turf grass areas and re-wild them to more natural spaces. It's okay to tip the balance from green and soft to harder and wilder!
- I would like to see portions of our greenbelts made available for community gardens and for more edible plants to be managed there so it does not attract wildlife.
- We would love mire wild spaces even within city parks, they can be very valuable in making nature accessible to children. Please add/improve trails and accessibility to some of the fenced-off areas.
- Less grass, more "natural" areas that are not as manicured. For example, the nature path near north Davis pond.

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- All I can say - protect as much as possible in land, emphasize land protection. It does not have to be converted into a nature park for a lot of money - many areas around Davis are beautiful nature areas just by themselves even if left alone and used by people through taking walks and biking. So I guess bikable/walkable paths should be available but that should do it.
- Limit development around the boundaries - focus on densification of the urban core to improve growth.
- With all the agriculture, I think the most important thing we can do with our public open spaces is bringing them back to native habitat as much as possible for a healthy ecosystem and a beautiful natural space for residents to enjoy.
- More dirt running trails would be great!
- Work with technical experts (of which there are hundreds in the area) to improve maintenance, monitoring, and management. Plant actual native species (trees, shrubs, grasses, flowers) instead of continuing to plant highly invasive, nonnative plants (which currently happens, for example, in the planting of nonnative trees all over the City). Quit paying lip-service to "habitat restoration" if there's no budget to maintain the properties. Apply current Best Management Practices to grasslands and other habitat areas. Require quantitative monitoring to ensure objective ecological standards are being met, and if they are not being met, fix the problem(s). Actually protect wildlife species in and around the City, such as the burrowing owls in south Davis (currently a failure). Actually do the proper environmental permitting for new projects, and pressure CDFW and other agencies to do their job and not continue to rubber-stamp (or not even read) documents and applications.
- Set aside some areas for different uses so citizens of Davis have a place to walk and ride their bikes, but also set aside areas for our valued wildlife (Swainson's Hawk, Burrowing Owls, etc.) that are threatened by ongoing development.
- Keep doing what you are doing! This is a wonderful program!!!
- Consider habitat acquisition in the context of large scales. Buying a large patch that is isolated from other preserved areas is different from getting one contiguous with an already preserved area, which are both different from investing in more smaller patches (which themselves could be isolated or close together). I do not propose a solution to this dilemma, but merely highlight that these issues should be considered.
- None at this time.
- None.
- Offer areas for volunteers to assist.
- I have been so very sad to see the burrowing owl project dwindle and die; they are almost gone from Wildhorse. I believe citizens would give their time to this, if volunteer opportunities were created and directed.
- No real suggestions, but would like Measure O used as advertised when brought before the voters in 2000 when it was called "the moat tax" to purchase open space directly touching the current city limits.

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- None at moment.
- Develop performance measures and priorities. Show progress towards acquisitions and/or public access improvements on an annual basis.
- Main thing is to get a buffer around the City.
- Keep accessibility of the general population foremost stop private interest and agendas make areas attractive to public.
- Easily accessible maps of areas around Davis showing parks, walking paths, and designated areas where farmland and habitat needs to be left alone. Another of Davis' conservation easements.
- Explain why habitat restoration is important. E.g. how do we get more real burrowing owl habitat?
- Most potential partnering organizations are interested in making such partnerships work for them, and have a list of requirements. The City should keep an active list of those requirements to better manage land acquisition to better. For example, UC Davis has many requirements that it does not actively disclose, such as an interest in partnerships that aid innovative entrepreneurship, so an open-space facility that supports such would be of value to UC Davis. One of the largest features that would support UC Davis tech transfers in ecology would be leasing of networked facilities, such as a networked agricultural development center with embedded sensors to monitor new crops and crop treatments as well as test out new sensors and sensor networks. The same networking features are also of interest for ecological restoration projects (to monitor success and justify increased funding, making it easier to secure grant funding) and recreational open spaces (to monitor personal usage and ecological health to demonstrate new park theories and create a tech-transfer opportunity for those theories). This functionally allows the City to own or manage.
- A property through a non-profit agency and increase funding revenue from such properties while still conserving open spaces.
- I tend to support the concept of more easements on farmland; then maintenance is provided by the landowner and the land stays as open space and in production.
- A vote to change this tax to include saving ag land and wildlife habitat.
- Acquire more wildlife habitat where dogs are not allowed, or people are not allowed because they always want to let their dog off leash.
- Get more.
- You need to partner more with UCD to help reign in their uncontrolled growth. The growth at UCD is overburdening the infrastructure of Davis and is lowering the quality of life in the community.
- Need more funding.
- The "logical" place to develop is first in-fill and then the city borders. How that edge is approached seems key.
- Preserve views.
- Maybe this is too specific, but shade trees along the Covell Ditch would expand that hours of the day that it's comfortable in the summer.
- Do not take the citizenry for granted. You need better leadership at the top -- too many fuzzy thinkers dominate the bureaucracy of this city.

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- As an example, Cache Creek Restoration area is closed most weekends, but I'd use it often if open more days/times. Don't always need docent. Honor system w/ donation box.
- Keep in touch with Davis Enterprise and school groups.
- Keep fighting the good fight.
- The program should be cancelled and the parcel tax rescinded.
- Determine whether there are areas that can be used as community gardens, including for the benefit of non-profit organizations and the school district.
- More partnership with private landowners adjacent to the City to develop opportunities to leverage funds and synergy to protect more farmland.
- More dog-friendly (off leash).
- Have a campaign where it aligns with the core of being a Davisite. We have lived here since 1989, and for better or worse Davis has always wanted to maintain a clear separate entity and not become an Elk Grove. The community still maintains that same outlook and needs to buy in to this program in order to maintain that core value of Davis being a unique stand-alone town.
- Do as much as possible to protect undeveloped land. Consider wildlife habitat a priority.
- Avoid the growth control focus. Support lands people can access and enjoy and have some intrinsic value and connection to the city. Fight for maintenance and upkeep uses.
- More oak restoration and shaded areas for walking.
- I totally support the goal of preserving open land around the city, but it would be great to see some effort towards alleviating the effect this has on housing prices in the city, which are increasingly unaffordable.
- Thank you!! Davis Open Spaces are awesome!
- None.
- Keep up the good work!
- Conservation lands and conservation easements must be held by a qualified Land Trust and not the City or other government agency.
- Use more of the money for its intended purposes, less on peripherals.
- Focus curtailing city growth.
- Walking paths like Wildhorse are great for residents & good for wildlife.
- Acquire more land in fee-title along Putah Creek.
- The program has been far too reactive in its approach to identifying acquisition opportunities. We need to be proactive in seeking out acquisition opportunities, and volunteers can be very useful extenders of Staff and the OSHC in being proactive in that respect. Further, the \$150,000 limit and 401(c)3 requirement for rehabilitation opportunities need to be explained better. Neither of them appear to be based in logic.
- Strategic fee title acquisitions for new parks at the periphery of the city in and near habitat areas for local nature exploration. More public access to riparian zones such as Willow Slough and Dry Slough.

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- You must start managing for wildlife, boxes for bluebirds, shrub cover for birds, cat control (animal control need the money- license cats and keep them indoors).
- Use scientific knowledge to help Yolo County's rarest species through habitat protection and enhancement.
- Transparency for accounting. Open space commission totally informed on accounting. At the public forum, simplify the report. Everyone should have a copy of what was sent to voters. And a one page listing/map of the amount of land bought, monies leveraged and all those good things. People don't have time to sort through the many pages. Put the important figures out there. But we can't evaluate how we have done unless we look at what we thought we were voted for back then which most of us have a hard time remembering though we knew it at the time.
- Consider actively partnering with local farmers to be good neighbors and to support the local agricultural community.
- Try to encourage less staff costs wrapped in the Measure O funds.
- Better integration with the overall parks system, and better communication of the concept of the City having a spectrum of parks/open spaces to meet a range of community needs, from intense public use (think Central Park) to preserving community identity (think urban separator easements). Create a simple high-medium-low ranking for each open space area in multiple categories such as providing public access, preserving agriculture, restoring habitat, etc. to help people easily understand what the purpose of a particular area is.
- Bathroom facilities, water fountains near parking lots. Links to bike trails such as Davis Bike Loop.
- Clarify and adopt multi-use programs in conjunction with qualified private stakeholders.
- Keep transparency about acquisitions as much as feasible given disclosure laws on transactions.
- Public art installations, public information and activities.
- Have information and advertising near other open space areas so that those who enjoy them and interact with them can learn about ways to help in creating and protecting more of them.
- I would like to see celebratory events led by volunteers for things like salmon spawning, Pipevine Swallowtail hatching. It isn't just the ducks!
- With all the suggestion of building, we need to try to restore/create/keep a large percentage of green space.
- Embrace the local farmers, get them and the Farm Bureau to partner with you on this program, tell the story, your project budgets do not really include money for publicity and public education.
- None.
- Space for dogs to run such as the field south of the school on Mace in east Davis. If the field was kept mowed it would be a good place for dogs to run. Currently it is thick with weeds and an occasional coyote.
- My first priority is to prevent any further development projects such as those pervasive in Woodland and places like Vacaville from taking place in Davis.
- Such a great program, seriously lacking in other communities. This helps greatly in making Davis what it is today.

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- Spend the money on acquisition and maintenance of ag land and habitat near and surrounding the city of Davis, as was originally promised.
- Reduce the spending on administration and spend more on restoration, maintenance, and accessibility infrastructure (paths, greenbelts, and signage). Take a cue from the University's Arboretum improvements.
- Buy land on city border for citizens to access.
- Please use this money to benefit citizens' access (both physical and visual) to rural settings. While I am glad there are now easements between Davis and Dixon, this isn't land that anyone sees or can use. How about the area north of Covell or along Pedrick Road?
- Make the most you can access to these spaces by the public.
- Make sure that trails connect with signed access points. Have some trails that are off-leash.
- Draw on expertise from UC Davis to create an interdisciplinary think tank for open space management. I think you would find that graduate students have a wealth of locally-applicable knowledge and a stake in the management of this community.
- Keep a firm grip on the amount of attach time charged to the fund. If staff time eats up too much, public support for the program will wane.
- I would like to see the program concentrate on areas that can be used by the citizens for dog walking hiking bird watching hunting etc. This is where I feel that we can improve the program to get Citizens more onboard if they see a direct benefit.
- I wish Davis would buy that plot south of Grande in North Davis, rather than more infill. It is already full of wildlife. What about a small strip with a community garden area (there isn't one in North Davis), and the rest a restoration planting with oaks? I understand the infill priorities, but we've got the enormous cannery already going in right now.
- Multi use trails - maybe through some of the ag land being leased. Parking areas and trash cans too.
- Please we need open space where dogs can hike and run.
- Maintenance of habitat areas is critical to ensure their quality.
- Make sure to communicate the benefits to people (physical/mental health benefits of having/experiencing open space, benefits of open space in regards to reduction in pollution, overcrowded housing, property values.
- Link to existing walking and biking path. Ensure it's all open to the public.
- Tell us how to get to this open space and how we can use it.
- Be more open in Enterprise and neighborhood sites about what has been acquired and how money has been spent.
- Keep up the good works. It's one of the things that makes Davis special and a great town to live in.
- Spend more, acquire more.
- Keep it up. Allow access to everyone (bikes, joggers, etc.).
- There have been proposals to cut the two permanent open space maintenance positions and replace with part-time labor. I consider this abhorrent. We need skilled individuals who have

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experience in and an understanding of how to maintain open space land -- and who are committed to the well-being of these spaces and our community. Turning the positions into a bunch of contracted out part time jobs undermines the quality of work and results in damage to fragile lands. Additionally, it devalues people by taking away good jobs with living wages and replacing those with positions that do not pay a living wage and do not provide important benefits.

- Be more upfront.
- Maintain and repair the wild horse ag buffer pass. Some of the gravel has washed away in the past 16 years and black asphalt dangerously peaks through creating tripping hazards. Most notably between the bridge Rockwell and Caravaggio.
- Save funds for closer in projects instead of far out lands like Putah Creek down Mace by old Campbell's Soup Research Station.
- Sponsor educational events at some of the areas.
- Purchase or obtain easements that we can walk on. Convince Jean Jackman that your management of this program is acceptable.
- More paths/buffers like wild horse path. My favorite city resource.
- Off leash dog space. Access to levees for off leash dog walks.
- At some of these locations, place signs showing that the area is protected by the OSP.
- Follow the guidelines. Don't turn it into a P.R. extravaganza. Be honest and proactive.
- Spend less on administrative and management actives, more on acquisition.
- More advertising. I have lived here a long time and am pretty ignorant about this program. Also allot some money for school field trips.
- Follow the plan provided by the citizens that led to Measure O.
- Open up the wetlands that already exist within the city boundary (e.g. West Davis pond) and put in a boardwalk path so people can get closer to the wildlife rather than fencing it off. Cats get in already, and it's a floodway so trash builds up so it's not as though it is pristine habitat. We don't fence off national wetlands and people access them on designated boardwalks. We should do the same in town to make the wetland more relevant to people.
- People don't value places they cannot use. Figure out how to allow and properly manage access whenever possible.
- When a resident suggests an idea that is not feasible, explain why.
- Listen to the residents more than the developers. Don't favor those who have money to throw at the problem.
- Have walking trails for public use allowing dogs on leash.
- More events around open space to make it know to people. More maintenance of it and public involvement.
- I would like to see more natural areas and less play fields. Some planting of shrubs and access to seasonal creeks would make the open areas more interesting.
- Make certain that public use of open space has few restrictions on use. For example, I know this isn't a great analogy, but when Playfields Park opened, I was upset to learn that the fields weren't

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available to use when NOT being used by teams or groups who had reserved them. Totally against that. Don't want to see something similar happen elsewhere (if applicable).

- I'd like to see some acquisition of open space north of city boundaries. There is a good bird rookery just west of the Landfill, and a slough between Woodland and Davis.
- Repair the bike paths. Install grey water irrigation. Do not convert ag land that are outside the city limits to play fields.
- None at this time except that Administration and management are always red flags to me as far as sucking up money that can be used directly for acquiring making open spaces accessible I think of management as being 80% desk work and 20% hands on work of maintain and sprucing up the open spaces. These percentages should be reversed.
- I would like to see areas that are actual returned to "WILDLAND" everything we have is very planned and we need areas that are restored to wild.
- Regular OpEd to Enterprise and other media to celebrate the "victories" when land is protected. Interview some of the family farmers who are secure on their land with ag easements funded by Measure O... they have powerful stories to tell.
- Have map on city website showing the areas Measure O have funded with our tax dollars. Tell citizens who is deciding future acquisitions, is it a staff person? Outside agency?
- Additional steps to retain burrowing owl population.
- Make a flagship open space park that is almost like a regional park. This brings a visible value to citizens of the overall program and its benefits. The flagship park should have interpretive signs, ample bike and car access to the park, and trails in it.
- Thanks!
- Public meetings are much appreciated.
- I'm glad you are having the March meeting. Send this email out every week so that it reaches everyone in different neighborhoods. The more often people see it, the better.
- More information on what is going on.
- Preserve open space adjacent to the city of Davis. Do not get into the false economy of buying cheap land far from Davis that is NOT under threat of development and urbanization.
- Better management of existing lands.
- I think this approach of continuously asking for public feedback is perfect. Keep it up!
- Acquiring land that won't be maintained is pointless.
- Acquisitions should focus on city edge.
- Open the books. List the locations of those 2800 acres that have easements, the cost of operating the Program, employees, etc. Basically, where the money has already been spent, and how it should be spent the next 15 years.
- Publish infographics about costs to maintain, and the value that the open space is providing to the City (i.e., value of carbon sequestration, adjacent property values, etc.). Open space is fantastic, but not all open space is equally valuable (socially or ecologically), and a dollar value, though sometimes crude, can be helpful in prioritizing city investments.

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- Stop purchasing land adjacent to the city. That is where development should happen. Focus on providing a boundary between Davis and other cities.
- Acquire more adjacent parcels.
- If looking for examples, East Bay Parks is amazing and I believe maintenance and marketing are generally low key, yet public uses their spaces like crazy and supports them.
- Smile.

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- **Open Space workshop: Marc Hoshovsky recommendations, March 10, 2016**
- ❖ **Acquire public access and/or management control**, develop site management plans
 - Putah Creek – North Fork - Complete channel continuity along Putah Creek Parkway between downtown and Mace Blvd, by acquiring public access easement or fee-title at:
 - West end (old Hamel property), south of I-80 bike tunnel
 - Middle gap, east of Drummond Lane
 - East end from Eucalyptus Street to Mace Blvd. The north side of the channel is fenced off at both ends, with gates saying “Private Property”? If it is still private, acquire public access. If it is public, remove fence and make it publicly accessible.
 - Channel A between F Street and Poleline Road, north of the Cannery
 - Putah Creek –South Fork
 - Provide legal public access to Putah Creek on the west side of Mace Blvd bridge
 - Create a safe public access trail to the Creek from the road at Stevenson’s Bridge
 - Provide legal public access along South Fork Putah Creek levees between Old Davis Road and Yolo Bypass
 - Davis – Yolo Bypass Bike Trail
 - Provide public access (and paved bike trail) along drainage channel that extends directly east from East Chiles Road (near El Cemonte Ave), south of the CDF lands and the soccer fields, to the Yolo Bypass. Use this to make a safe commuter bike route from Davis to the Yolo Causeway, allowing bicyclists to avoid the high-speed frontage roads along I-80
 - Willow Slough Bypass Trail
 - Provide legal public access along Willow Slough Bypass between Willow Slough (natural channel) and Yolo Bypass, connecting to both City Wetlands and I-80 bicycle path. Once secured, develop site management plan and revegetate area with native species to both stabilize and protect levees and provide valuable habitat. Plant shade trees along public access for summertime cooling. It could be an amazing public access resource for Davis.
- ❖ **Restore or enhance habitat**
 - City lands - Restore the following city-owned lands with site-appropriate native plants. And develop long-term habitat management plans, which involve local volunteer groups.

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- Stonegate Basin - This is a vacant flood control basin on the NW side of town, near Covell Blvd and Lake Blvd. It's not clear who owns the land (APN - 036 430 46). Assuming it is public land, open the locked gates outside of flood season and remove the "private property" sign to allow public access. As part of this restoration project, include the zone parallel to Covell (at the north) that still has a sign saying "Insectary Hedgerow – Established and Maintained by the City of Davis in cooperation with Yolo RCD". This can easily be another great example of flood, recreation, and habitat like West Area Pond.
- The Arroyo arroyo. This is my artificial name for the drainage channel south of Arroyo Ave and north of 1st Street industrial district. The fence is unnecessary and it should be removed.
- South Davis Putah Creek Parkway West End– South Davis between I-80 and Drummond Lane.
- Wildhorse Urban Ag Transition Area
- County Park land - Collaborate with County to develop collaborative site management plans, restore native vegetation, and manage public access at Grasslands Park and Old USAF Transmitter site
- UCD lands - Collaborate with UCD to:
 - Develop, or publicize, site management plans for UCD Natural Reserve lands and Russell Ranch
 - Restore native vegetation and improve public access on UCD Natural Reserve lands, particularly:
 - along old North Fork Channel, near Hydraulic Lab
 - downstream of the Raptor Center, on the south side of Putah Creek
- Putah Creek Floodplain - Restore natural hydrological and floodplain function of Putah Creek channel, particularly between Stevenson's Bridge and Old Davis Road. The area south of the airport was dredged and the floodplain needs to be restored
- ❖ **Plan Land Management** (in addition to other sites above)
 - Develop long-term habitat management plans on city-owned lands, which involve local volunteer groups, for the following areas:
 - West Area Pond – check to see if existing plan needs updating
 - South Fork Preserve
 - Wildhorse Urban Ag Transition Area
 - Northstar Pond
 - North Davis Ditch

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- North F Street riparian corridor (between Covell and Anderson)
 - Old North Fork Putah Creek Parkway, from I-80 to Mace Blvd
 - Sutter Hospital flood basin/wetland – this is located between the city water storage tank and Hwy 113, north of Sutter Davis hospital
 - Evergreen Pond – this is located on the southwest corner of the intersection of Covell Blvd and Hwy 113.
 - Toad Hollow/Core Area Pond - Located by the frontage road and Poleline Road freeway overcrossing. It probably should be evaluated to see what type of habitat improvement is needed, if any.
 - Mace Ranch Passive Recreation Area
 - Clarify City long-term management goals for the following areas. If for open-space, then develop long-term management plans.
 - City holdings around and south of Municipal Golf Course
 - Lowest Putah Creek Davis City Fee title lands – These are lands north of I-80 and East of the City's South Fork Preserve
 - Howatt/Clayton properties
 - Provide simplified descriptions of easement terms for each of the city-owned easements – identify which rights were purchased and what constraints exist on properties
 - Coordinate with land trusts and Audubon for scheduled public access events where allowed
 - Collaborate with NGOs to develop collaborative site management plans on easement properties
 - Giant Garter Snake Easement north of City Wetlands
 - Swainson's Hawk easement north of landfill
 - Merritt Ranch easements, north of Willow Slough
- ❖ **Improve regional bicycle connectivity**
- Provide an all-weather bike trail along the north levee road between Camp Putah (City Picnic Grounds) and Old-Davis Road
 - Develop a safe bicycle connector along Old Davis Road, between I-80 and Putah Creek
 - See recommendations above about Davis-Yolo Bypass Bike Trail and Willow Slough Bypass trail

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- ❖ **Develop community farm sites** on the following undeveloped lands, in collaboration with landowners. These can be temporary agreements until landowner chooses to develop property further
 - Sutter Hospital north side – develop temporary community farm agreement until hospital expands
 - Harper JHS – land on south side of developed school property, between school and houses
 - CDF Nursery – develop temporary community farm agreement with CDF for their undeveloped lands
 - DMG-Mori's frontage lots – This is land in front of the DMG-Mori facility along the frontage Road near the Pelz Bike overcrossing. Seems like a potential partnership with the company to have a small community farm or garden, even extending to the area underneath the bike overcrossing.

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Comments from UC Davis Emeritus Professor Mark Francis following the workshop:

I am visiting Davis for a few weeks from Norway where I am now retired. Several people suggested I forward information on our Davis Greenway Plan (1989) for the Davis Open Space Study currently underway. You are probably familiar with this plan as it is now embedded in the Davis General Plan, Open Space Element and Platinum Bicycle Plan approved by several City Councils.

A summary of what has been accomplished and still remains is below. Perhaps most helpful for your current Measure O study is the attached "Missing Links" plan I prepared in 2007. Some have been accomplished since then (such as the Mace Ranch/Wildhorse Covell Grad Separation), but others important ones remain (most notably the Putah Creek/old Hamel property kink from the I80 under crossing to the Putah Creek Parkway and the link from Northstar and Wildhorse connecting into the North Davis Ponds Park allowing for a Northern expansion of the Davis Bike Loop from 12 to 15 miles). I think these deserve consideration for high priority allocation of future Measure O Funds. I have discussed these links in the past with Mitch Sear and Bob Wolcott and was told that the City is working on making them happen. I am copying Lucas Griffith, UCD Campus Planner, for consideration for their current LRDP process. I would be happy to provide more information if you think this may be helpful. I wish you success with your project.

2016 Update on the Davis Greenway Plan

The Davis Greenway (see <http://lda.ucdavis.edu/people/websites/francis/designwork/greenway.html>) calls for an interconnected open space system in Davis linking all neighborhoods, parks, schools and natural areas with a seamless system of paths and open spaces. I often characterize it as a bicycle wheel overlaid over the city with the spokes as greenbelt paths and green streets and a rim that allows people to bike and walk around the City without crossing any streets or highways. It was adopted as part of the Davis General Plan in the early 1990s and has been slowly but faithfully implemented by the City. I would say it is about 75% complete today but much still remains to be done. What has been accomplished thus far:

- New parks, greenbelts, drainage canals and natural areas completed (as new developments as Mace Ranch, Wildhorse, West Village, etc. have been built out)
- Bike and pedestrian link under I80 from Arboretum to South Davis/Putah Creek
- The Davis Bike Loop completed (https://localwiki.org/davis/Davis_Bike_Loop)

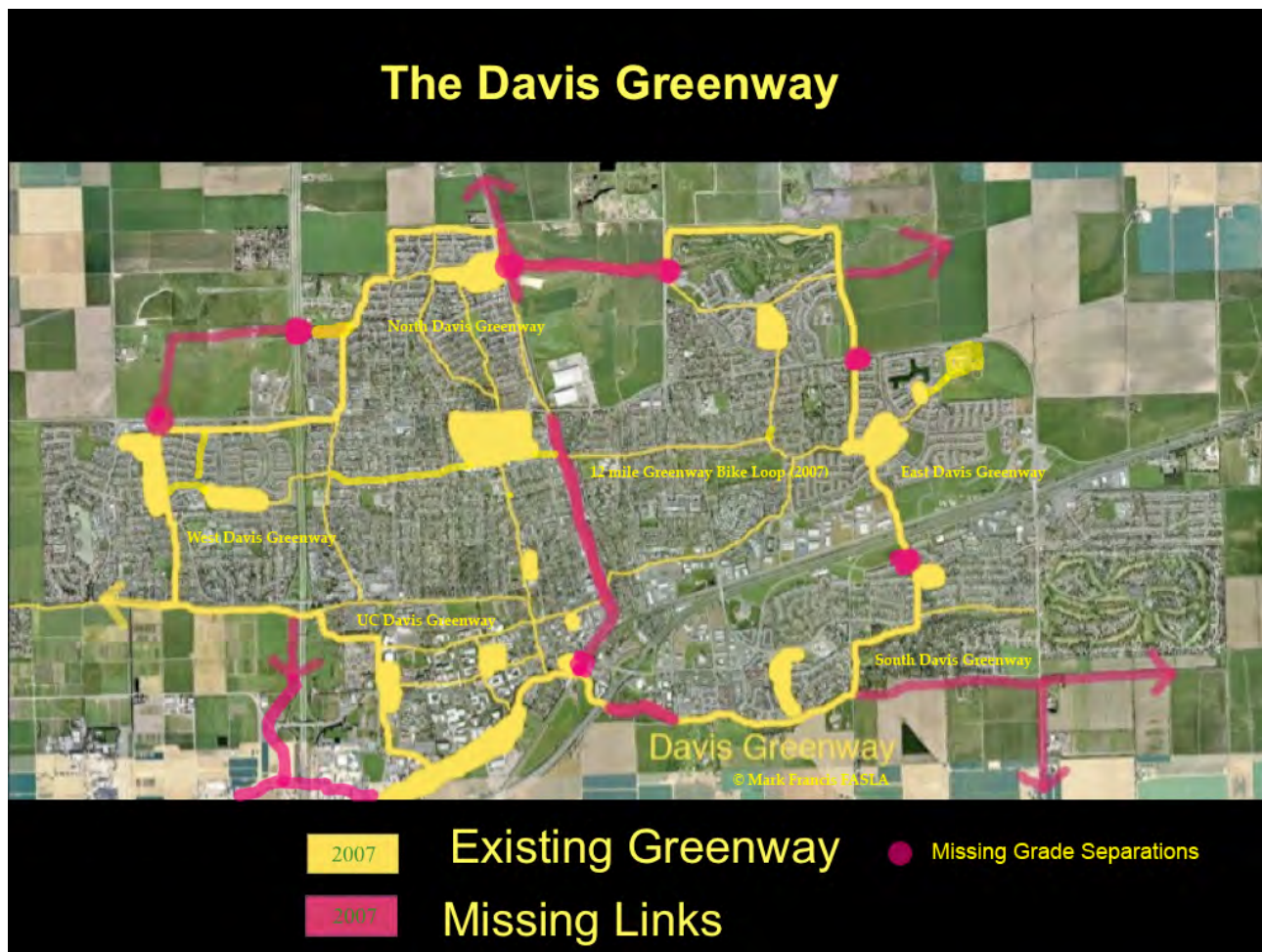
What still needs to be done: Complete major and minor missing links including from Northstar to Wildhorse, along H Street from the Davis Train Station to the Cannery Project, along Putah Creek in South Davis, etc. (see map below)

- Build critical grade separations (see map below)
- Complete missing UCD links including from West end of Arboretum into/along Putah Creek and West Village (as part of current LRDP)
- Complete Connector greenways to Woodland, Winters, etc. (including a Rail to Trails bikeway running from the Davis Train Station to Woodland along the F Street Railroad)

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Tracks). Our original Davis Greenway Plan is on the City of Davis website at <http://cityofdavis.org/home/showdocument?id=2732>

I should point out that the Greenway has been a major source of economic development for the City and has made many several new developments possible (such as UCD's West Village and the Nishi property).



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