

4.6 Open Space and Recreation Element

4.7.1 DCP Open Space and Recreation Objectives

- A. Assure that open space within the DCP is protected against adverse development, to provide attractive and usable recreational value for future generations.
- B. Continue to provide rural residential associated open space recreational opportunity, through roadside trails and bikeways, and preserve opportunity for the City to eventually acquire park sites or other features in fee or easement.
- C. Facilitate public acquisitions of recreational sites in accordance with the Open Space Legacy Program, as suitable willing sale properties become available and as public or private funding sources become available for both acquisition and site maintenance and management. Link new DCP open space trails, equestrian routes, and bikeways developed under this Specific Plan, to preexisting City of Clovis trails and recreational facilities. Coordinate the development of bikeways and pedestrian routes with appropriate agencies and task forces, to assure that ADA and all other standards are met in their development and that the new facilities function seamlessly with other Clovis and County facilities.
- D. Utilize the DCP open space and other capabilities to provide attractive, desirable and healthy living environment for the broad Clovis area.
- E. Promote long-term City financing for continued maintenance of public DCP recreation facilities, through bonds, use fees, endowments, grants or other opportunities.
- F. Major streets entering the DCP will have signing or monuments to identify the DCP and portray it as an open space preserve.
- G. Street signage within the DCP will be of unique design, to thematically define the area.
- H. Develop recreational and wildlife-interpretational opportunities along water features and channels within and around the DCP

4.7.2 Implementation Standards for Open Space Resource Protection and Utilization

For purposes of all planning and consideration of development, rezoning, subdivision maps, permits and other discretionary features, under this Plan, "Open space" shall be defined as any

rural-appearing land uses, such as agriculture, fallow lands, parks, ponds, waterways, or other open-appearing uses. Specifically excluded are intensive uses, such as sports complexes, arenas, parking facilities, or structures, except interpretive or public service structures (e.g., restrooms, picnic shade/shelters, kiosks, etc.)

- a) **To avoid user-landowner conflicts or public safety concerns, use of public recreational facilities, commercial facilities or industrial facilities shall be limited to daylight hours.**
- b) **Streets and vehicle rights-of-way are to be constructed without hardened edges (curbs, concrete sidewalks, street lights, block noise-walls, or raised center dividers, and streets will not be formally landscaped with a redundant, urban-appearing design.**
- c) **Lighting of all facilities other than individual residences shall be shrouded, such that direct light does not extend further than 75 feet from fixtures.**
- d) **Residential construction shall be of densities consistent with Section 4.2.**

4.7.2 Phasing and Development of Open Space Resources

At present, no DCP streets have marked bike or pedestrian lanes. Recreational users generally walk or cycle in the vehicle travel lanes, and move off the roadway, if needed to avoid oncoming traffic. This is acceptable at the current level of development, and should be considered as Phase I of DCP open space recreation development. However public safety and enjoyment would be greatly enabled and improved through (Phase II) the striping of streets to designate a bicycle lane, where street width now can accommodate that added width.

Formal development of bike and pedestrian or equestrian lanes (Phase III) will require construction activity, to widen pavement or add separate pavement rights of way and to grade the unimproved earthen traffic-bicycle separator strips. Widening of roads may also require easement or fee title acquisition, or at least movement of power poles, signs, and encroaching private facilities, such as mailboxes, fences or other features. Maintenance of the paved bike lanes and earthen strips will also be periodically required, to assure their safe use by the public. As such, the more formal developments will require funding which is not now available to the City of Clovis or to Fresno County. It may be possible to finance some of these improvements through external grants which are available for intermodal transportation and for establishing in Safe Paths to School.

Phase IV is the linking of new trails and bike paths to the existing Clovis system. This is most easily possible along road rights of way. Some path linkages will require right of way acquisition, construction of bridges, or other costly features. These will require the development of City funding through grants, bonds, or other options, and are not likely to be immediately available.

Phase V is the acquisition of individual DCP parcels, through purchase and willing sale, to establish open space recreation sites. This process is the Open Space Legacy Program (OSLP), which is described in detail in Appendix B. Its implementation will require many years, depending upon a strong Clovis community interest/advocacy, and require external funding and considerable volunteer involvement.

4.7.3 Open Space Legacy Program

The Open Space Legacy Program is a DCP landowner sponsored, very long-term program, intended to enable Clovis to gradually acquire and provide for its citizens a major near-urban open space recreational area. The Program will operate over very long time periods, pursuing willing-sale opportunities for the City of Clovis to purchase a patchwork of lands for public recreation sites, as supplemental funding can be made available. It is more fully described in Appendix C.



Fig. 34. Grassland areas along Dry Creek are just one of the many open space elements of the DCP

Concept: DCP Open Space Legacy Program (OSLP)

Landowners see a unique opportunity, in which the RR lands can continue to be held and managed by the existing private owners in ways that are compatible with the public open space values. Recreationists can continue to enjoy the open space attributes through use of roadside bikeways and trails across the area. Over time, as parcels gradually are offered for willing sale, the Open Space Legacy Program would financially equip the City to acquire and manage desired lands in a gradually connecting mosaic of public recreation trails, recreation sites, and interpretive (historical) sites. Because the Dry Creek Preserve is already bordered on two sides by public trail systems, this recreational opportunity is both manageable and valuable.

The City has already planned for extended development of the Northwest Village area. When that area is annexed and densely built out, as intended, the capacity would more than satisfy State and Federal Housing requirements; nearly doubling the existing Clovis urban population. The value of the Open Space Legacy area would increase dramatically, as that development occurs; the Preserve taking on huge value similar to that experienced at other major urban open space parks, such as San Francisco's Golden Gate Park or New York's Central Park. Careful planning and dialogue at this stage can reserve this unique opportunity for Clovis' future

at little or no City cost. When the City desires to make acquisitions (and these would come gradually, as lands are offered for willing sales), the purchases can be financed as follows.

OSLP Program Financing:

Other land conservancies have developed many methods to acquire funding for public land acquisitions, and many of these have application to the Open Space Legacy concept. Residents envision City financing capability being available over very long periods, using: 1) outside grants, at times when they become available through State bond issues or other outside means; 2) new developer open space mitigation fees, imposed wherever development occupies open space with the Clovis Sphere of Influence, with acquisitions being focused within the Dry Creek Preserve Legacy area (this would require City Council policy action); 3) Corporate and individual sponsorships, 4) gifts and bequeathals, which can be very substantial, 5) open space recreation bond issues or benefit-fee assessments voted by City residents who derive the open space recreational benefits, and 6) participation by other state-wide and nation-wide public and recreational land trusts. All of these instruments will require careful development. We believe the Legacy's very long developmental period (20 to 50 years) will enable several of these funding sources to materialize, once the community is aware and interested in the potential. (While grant and other fund sources may be less available today, it is expected that their availability will fluctuate over the long intended OSLP timetables.)

Available new funding can also be greatly extended through use of "rolling purchases," in which lands are opportunistically purchased, and later re-conveyed to new owners with attendant easements in favor of the City's recreational uses. The funds are thus utilized more than once. Other financial management methods can also be employed, such as extended purchases, in which sellers would receive moneys over time.

OSLP Administration and Structure:

Residents envision the Dry Creek Preserve's Open Space Legacy Program being administered by the City Parks Department, or by an appropriate District which has authority to seek grants or other funding measures. They recognize the need for this Specific Plan to identify and protect the open space values, and prescribe zoning ordinances for the area which serve to retain the 2-acre parcel limitation and discourage intrusive development from precluding the Legacy purposes.

One alternative would be to establish a City-wide Open Space Management District, financed by a voter approved benefit-fee assessment. The purposes of the new District would be to prioritize DCP-focused land acquisitions from available offered willing sales, negotiate financial transactions with selling owners, address private-public interface issues within the Legacy area, gradually develop desired recreational features, manage acquired lands (or farm or otherwise lease them to avert and/or offset City costs), and work with City recreation planners to develop a Master Plan for the Open Space Legacy area.

The Dry Creek Preserve landowners are interested and willing to explore and develop this Legacy concept, working cooperatively with the City of Clovis. The property owners believe this Program represents a major and very desirable recreational opportunity for future City residents. The Legacy would materially enhance the future quality of Clovis life, keep the historical Clovis traditions and heritage alive, and make the City much more attractive as a residential and therefore as a business–corporate atmosphere.

Add: Facility design standards – restrooms, parks, paths, furniture, poinds, bicycle features, power, water, sewer, lighting, etc.

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Recreational facilities map (blank)