

Open Space Working Group Charter

Purpose

The Open Space Working Group (OSWG) was established by the Parks and Recreation Board (the Board) in its 2024 Work Plan. The stated purpose of OSWG is to gather public input and advise the Board on policy issues relating to Los Alamos County resources and facilities.

In particular, OSWG is concerned with:

- trails used by hikers, bikers, equestrians and runners,
- County open space, including viewsheds, corridors for wildlife movement, wildfire fuel management, and ecosystem processes,
- protection of cultural and natural resources, and
- other facilities related to outdoor activities in open space.

Scope of Work

The duties and responsibilities of OSWG are to:

1. Provide a forum for discussion of open space issues and serve as an advisory body to the Board and a resource to staff.
2. Review current open space programs and facility uses throughout the County to determine additional needs and submit recommendations pertaining to open space programs, guidelines, and policies to the Board.
3. Develop and prioritize a list of capital improvements for consideration by the Board.
4. Review and comment on the County Trails Management Plan
 - a. Make recommendations for additions, deletions and realignments to the County Trail Network.
 - b. Review and comment on adherence to the County Trails Management Plan
 - c. Review proposed developments to ensure preservation of access to the County Trails Network.
 - d. Recommend and document criteria for prioritization of trail projects and conduct an annual assessment of a list of prioritized projects.
5. Review and comment on the Open Space Management Plan
 - a. Make recommendations for additions, deletions and realignments to the Open Space Management Plan.

- b. Review and comment on adherence to the Open Space Management Plan.
 - c. Make recommendations and document in a work plan for the upcoming fiscal year on an annual basis.
6. Ensure that all findings, recommendations, or action items identified by OSWG are submitted for Board for consideration and/or approval.

Attachment A lists specific tasks on which OSWG will focus on for FY25.

Membership

OSWG will be composed of volunteers and will be open to all County residents. The ideal representation will include residents from a diversity of user groups and areas of expertise or interest.

- OSWG vacancies shall be advertised as determined by the Board.
- OSWG will consist of up to ten official voting members, nine being appointed by the Board, and the tenth being a current member of the Board.
- An OSWG Chairperson shall be elected annually by the voting members of the subcommittee.
- OSWG members will be individually appointed by the Board after having submitted letters of interest. There is no term limit for any member.
- A quorum of OSWG is defined as a simple majority of the appointed OSWG members. OSWG actions may be taken and considered valid only if approved by a quorum, which may include via email correspondence.

Attachment B lists current OSWG members.

Meetings

- OSWG will meet at least monthly.
- OSWG will maintain meeting minutes.
- OSWG meeting minutes and reports may be shared with the public.
- OSWG are not subject to, nor required to comply with, the New Mexico Open Meetings Act.
- OSWG will use the County's Orientation Manual for the Members of Boards and Commissions as guidance for roles, responsibilities, and procedural rules.

Reporting

- Reports of findings, recommendations, or action items identified by OSWG will be submitted to the Board for Board consideration and/or approval.
- The Board may decide whether to forward any reports or recommendations to the Community Services Department.
- Reports shall be approved by a simple majority of OSWG members before submittal to the Board.

Interactions with CSD Staff

- CSD staff will not be asked to provide any direct support for meetings.
- CSD staff will be encouraged (but not required) to provide timely responses to requests for information to support the purpose of OSWG.
- The presence of specific CSD staff at a working group meeting may be requested based upon identified needs or specific topics of discussion.
- Reports, observations, and data will be shared with the Open Space Specialist if appropriate, as determined by the Board liaison.

Guiding Documents

OSWG shall consult the following guidance documents to the extent that they are relevant to conducting a specific task. This list of guiding documents shall be updated as needed.

- PRB Work Plan [most recent version]
- County Council Strategic Leadership Plan [most recent version]
- 2023 Community Services Department Integrated Master Plan
- 2023 Restoration Feasibility Assessment for Los Alamos County Open Space
- 2023 Integrated Pest Management Plan
- 2022 Trails Management Planning Documents
- 2022 Los Alamos Resiliency, Energy, and Sustainability (LARES) Task Force Final Report [Recommendations for Natural Spaces, Soils, Land Use, Forests, and Carbon Sinks]
- 2022 Los Alamos County Trailhead Assessment
- 2022 Community-Wide Wildfire Protection Plan
- 2019 Economic Vitality Plan [coordination with national parks, Pajarito Mountain owners, PEEC]

- 2018 Los Alamos Tourism Strategic Plan [references to trails and open space]
- 2017 Bicycle Transportation Plan
- 2016 Los Alamos County Comprehensive Plan
- 2015 Trail Network Signage Plan
- 2015 Open Space Management Plan
- 2013 Los Alamos County Community Trail Plan
- 2011 Canyon Rim Trail Master Plan
- 2005 Plan for Control of Invasive Species on Los Alamos County Open Space
- 1998 Pedestrian Transportation Plan
- Municipal Code, Chapter 8, Article VII, Parks and Recreation Board

Sunsetting

- OSWG should not be sunsetted without due process.
- The Board will review the OSWG charter on an annual basis. The Board could vote to sunset OSWG should they determine the purpose is not being accomplished.
- Such a vote should be well publicized by sending emails to current serving OSWG members at least one month before the vote.

Attachment A. Open Space Working Group Tasks Proposed for FY25

- Recruit new OSWG members to ensure that the group represents a wide range of perspectives on open space and trails issues
- Seek public input for the Trails and Open Space Management Plan update
- Monitor conditions of the County's open space and trails
- Identify any user conflicts or conflicts with other County facilities, activities, or projects
- Monitor open-space zoning issues
- Inventory locations of invasive species on County land
- Submit recommendations for open space and trail maintenance projects to the Open Space Specialist if appropriate
- Identify open space and trail projects suitable for volunteers
- Actively encourage public participation in open space and trails volunteer projects
- Interface with other working groups and community organizations for the achievement of common goals
- Keep the public informed on open space and trails issues to ease public concerns, to gather public input for open space and trails issues, including specific CSD projects, and to otherwise serve as a conduit of communication between the public and the Board
- Participate in other tasks as requested by the Board

Attachment B. Open Space Working Group Membership

Name	Date of Appointment	Email address
Janet Griego	3/09/2023	scooternina99@gmail.com
June Fabryka-Martin	3/09/2023	fabryka129@gmail.com
Celeste Raffin	4/13/2023	celeste_raffin@yahoo.com
Lise Brackbill	4/13/2023	menagerie@hevanet.com
Board liaison	Brian Watkins	