

**CITY OF EL PASO, TEXAS**  
**AGENDA ITEM DEPARTMENT HEAD'S SUMMARY FORM**

**DEPARTMENT:** Development Services, Long-Range Planning

**AGENDA DATE:** February 27, 2006

**CONTACT PERSON/PHONE:** Chuck Kooshian 541-4632

**DISTRICT(S) AFFECTED:** All

**SUBJECT:**

Ordinance adopting Towards a Bright Future: Mountains to River: A Green Infrastructure Plan for El Paso, the open-space master plan

---

**BACKGROUND / DISCUSSION:**

City contracted with Halff Associates to develop an open-space master plan.. A series of advisory group meetings, and public meetings were scheduled to receive public input on protecting open space. The resulting plan identifies open space for preservation, along with strategies to secure it.

**PRIOR COUNCIL ACTION:**

**Has the Council previously considered this item or a closely related one?**

Council directed that this plan be developed by Halff Associates, consultants for the Parks & Rec master plan.

**AMOUNT AND SOURCE OF FUNDING:**

**How will this item be funded? Has the item been budgeted? If so, identify funding source by account numbers and description of account. Does it require a budget transfer?**

If every recommendation in the plan is implemented, additional budget items will be required.

**BOARD / COMMISSION ACTION:**

**Enter appropriate comments or N/A**

December 21, 2006-The City Plan Commission recommended APPROVAL of plan.

\*\*\*\*\*REQUIRED AUTHORIZATION\*\*\*\*\*

**LEGAL:** (if required) \_\_\_\_\_ **FINANCE:** (if required) \_\_\_\_\_

**DEPARTMENT HEAD:** \_\_\_\_\_

(Example: if RCA is initiated by Purchasing, client department should sign also)  
*Information copy to appropriate Deputy City Manager*

**APPROVED FOR AGENDA:** \_\_\_\_\_

**CITY MANAGER:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

ORDINANCE NO. \_\_\_\_\_

**AN ORDINANCE INCORPORATING THE OPEN SPACE MASTER PLAN INTO THE CITY'S COMPREHENSIVE PLAN, THE PLAN FOR EL PASO, AND WHICH PLAN SHALL AMEND THE PLAN FOR EL PASO.**

**WHEREAS**, a City's green infrastructure is the interconnected network that functions as an ecological whole of open spaces and natural areas, such as greenways, parks, trails, preserves and native-plant vegetation, that naturally manages stormwater, reduces flooding risk and improves water quality, supports native species, maintains natural ecological processes, sustains air and water resources, provides scenic beauty, and contributes to the health and quality-of-life for our community and people; and,

**WHEREAS**, the preservation of open space has become important to our community, as it has nationwide; and,

**WHEREAS**, there remains very little undeveloped open space within the urban area of El Paso; and,

**WHEREAS**, open space and natural drainage are vitally needed in El Paso and close proximity to preserved open space has been shown to enhance property values; and,

**WHEREAS**, public participation meetings were held at which residents consistently supported protecting and preserving open space in El Paso; and,

**WHEREAS**, the El Paso City Plan Commission on December 2006, unanimously recommended adoption of the Open Space Master Plan to the El Paso City Council; and,

**WHEREAS**, a plan for open space preservation protects the health, safety and general welfare of the residents of the City of El Paso.

CITY CLERK DEPT.  
07 FEB 20 AM 9:09

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF EL PASO:**

That the City of El Paso adopts *the Open Space Master Plan, also known as "Towards a Bright Future: Mountains to River – A Green Infrastructure Plan for El Paso"* and it is now a Chapter of the Plan for El Paso. (See Exhibit A).

**PASSED AND APPROVED THIS \_\_\_\_\_ DAY OF \_\_\_\_\_, 2007**

**THE CITY OF EL PASO:**

**ATTEST:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
John F. Cook, Mayor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Richarda Duffy Momsen, City Clerk

**APPROVED AS TO FORM:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Lupe Cuellar  
Assistant City Attorney

**APPROVED AS TO CONTENT:**

*Patricia D. Adauto*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Patricia D. Adauto, Deputy City Manager  
Development & Infrastructure Services

JOHN COOK  
MAYOR

JOYCE WILSON  
CITY MANAGER

R. ALAN SHUBERT, PE, CBO  
DIRECTOR, DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

KELLY CARPENTER, AICP  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR, PLANNING



CITY COUNCIL  
ANN MORGAN LILLY, DISTRICT 1  
SUSANNAH M. BYRD, DISTRICT 2  
J. ALEXANDRO LOZANO, DISTRICT 3  
MELINA CASTRO, DISTRICT 4  
PRESI ORTEGA, JR., DISTRICT 5  
EDDIE HOLGUIN, JR., DISTRICT 6  
STEVE ORTEGA, DISTRICT 7  
BETO O'ROURKE, DISTRICT 8

## DEVELOPMENT SERVICES PLANNING DIVISION

February 14, 2007

**TO:** Honorable Mayor and City Council  
Joyce Wilson, City Manager

**FROM:** Chuck Kooshian, Lead Planner

**SUBJECT:** Open Space Master Plan

---

On December 21, 2006, the City Plan Commission (CPC) voted 5-0 to **APPROVE** the draft open-space master plan, *Towards the Future: Mountains to River – A Green Infrastructure Plan for El Paso*, with the suggestion the open space plan be referred to a subcommittee so that those items over which the City Plan Commission have purview could be pulled out and immediately acted on.

# STAFF REPORT

## OPEN SPACE MASTER PLAN

### BACKGROUND

Natural open space in and around El Paso is disappearing with continued development. Historically, parkland development has been spotty, leaving many residents without ready access to developed and undeveloped open space. The master plan for open space, *Towards a Bright Future: Mountains to River – A Green Infrastructure Plan for El Paso* identifies remaining open space in the El Paso area, and offers strategies for conservation.

### SUMMARY OF ACTIONS

Halff Associates had just delivered a master plan for the El Paso Parks & Recreation Department. The City of El Paso contracted with Halff Associates to develop an open-space master plan. Long-Range Planning worked with the consultants to develop the plan.

An Open Space Advisory Group was constituted with members from various sectors, including developers, environmental-service professionals, neighborhood activists, environmentalists, tourism professionals, representatives from local and state government agencies. Group members met five times over a period of several weeks. Group members tackled important issues, such as what would be acceptable open space, where open space should be preserved and what should be preserved, and where future development should and should not occur.

Following receipt of recommendations from the advisory group, Halff Associates put together a series of maps of the various areas of El Paso and its surroundings. These maps identified currently preserved open space (developed and undeveloped), hike-and-bike trails, potential linkages, and proposed open space for preservation. These maps were used in a series of public hearings.

Public hearings were held in different locations throughout the community. Two meetings were held at City Hall and were videostreamed over the web. The public had the opportunity to review the maps, and help set priorities for what open space should be preserved and in what order of importance.

Halff Associates took the information gathered at the public meetings and in consultation with the advisory group. The master plan identifies open spaces important for preservation. Implementation strategies for securing preservation of open spaces are detailed in their report.

### GOVERNMENT ACTIONS

The City Plan Commission discussed the master plan at their December 21, 2006 meeting. They unanimously passed a motion, approving the draft open-space master plan. A suggestion was included in the motion, referring the plan to a subcommittee for immediate action over those issues the CPC has purview.