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PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release through February 28, 2018

City, County seek input on the future of open space via online poll

Residents are invited to share their vision for the future of open space in the Missoula Valley through an online questionnaire hosted by Missoula Parks and Recreation and Missoula County Parks, Trails, and Open Lands.

The [Missoula Open Space public opinion questionnaire](#) will allow City and County residents to identify their priorities for the next decade of open space conservation in the Missoula Valley, and is part of a collaborative City-County planning effort to chart the next 10 years of parks and recreation service to residents. The questionnaire is a follow-up to a February 6 Open Space Open House hosted by the City and County, and will be available at www.missoulaparks.org through February 28.

The Missoula Urban Area Open Space Plan was written in 1995 and last updated in 2006. City and County planners agree that it's time to update the open space plan with today's growth, development and community priorities in mind, says Elizabeth Erickson, the City's Open Space Acquisitions Attorney. "The past 20+ years of open space conservation in Missoula has been highly successful, due to the commitment of Missoulians who deeply value their open spaces. Because of the support of landowners, partner organizations and City and County residents, we've made great strides toward realizing our community's initial goals for conserving open space in Missoula. We are now looking ahead to the next decade and want to hear from citizens about their priorities for the future of open space conservation in the greater Missoula area," Erickson said.

To launch the new planning project, the City and County are engaging in a multi-faceted public process that will provide residents a variety of opportunities to participate in the plan development. The new Parks, Recreation, Open Space and Trails plan (PROST) will replace the 2004 Master Parks and Recreation Plan for the Greater Missoula Area and the 2006 Missoula Urban Area Open Space Plan Update, although relevant components of those plans will carry forward, says city Parks and Recreation Director Donna Gaukler. "The earlier parks and open space plans have effectively guided the work and efforts of citizen boards, staff and elected officials and were developed through public input from focus groups, open houses, and surveys," Gaukler said. "Both previous documents contain essential planning strategies and benchmarks to be integrated into the new PROST plan, which will guide City and County parks and open space programs throughout the next decade."

The online survey and interactive map are available at www.missoulaparks.org. For more information about the PROST planning process, visit www.missoulaparks.org or www.missoulacounty.us/parks-trails, or phone 721-PARK (7275).

Media Note: Please see attached PROST project overview and planning area map.

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