

OPEN SPACE PROGRAM: BACKGROUND AND MIDTERM PROGRESS REPORT

ON

MEASURE O, THE OPEN SPACE PROTECTION SPECIAL TAX FUND



Field of poppies along the Putah Creek Parkway

Prepared by the City of Davis in partnership with the Open Space and Habitat Commission
Updated and Finalized 2017

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary	1
Measure O – What is it?	4
Purpose of Measure O.....	4
Taxation Authority and Rates	5
Parcel Taxes in Nationwide Context.....	5
Before Measure O	6
How Much Land was Acquired and How was it Funded?	6
Open Space Milestones – Before 2000	7
After Measure O	14
What was Measure O Spent on over the last 15 years?	14
Land Acquisition Costs.....	15
Maintenance Costs	24
Program Administration Costs.....	27
Consistency with Community Expectations	27
Open Space Milestones – After 2000	28
Appendices.....	33

- Appendix A: Tools in the Open Space Program Toolbox
- Appendix B: A Chronology of Milestones: Davis Open Space Protection
- Appendix C: Spreadsheet Showing Measure O Revenues and Expenses (2000-2015)
- Appendix D: References

TABLE OF FIGURES

Figure 1: South Fork Preserve Riparian Corridor	1
Figure 2: Pair of Burrowing Owls at Wildhorse Ag Buffer	2
Figure 3: Restored Oak Savannah at South Fork Preserve	3
Figure 4: Maximum Special Tax Rates (Measure O)	5
Figure 5: Beaver Dam at South Fork Preserve, West of Mace	6
Figure 6: Snowy Milkweed on Old Lincoln Highway	7
Figure 7: City of Davis Open Space Milestones (1986-2000)	8
Figure 8: Open Space Land Protected Before 2000	10
Figure 9: Protected Open Space within Davis Planning Area (as of 2000)	12
Figure 10: Priority Acquisition Areas (as of 2000)	13
Figure 11: View of Sierra Madre Mountain Range from City Limits	14
Figure 12: Measure O Fund Revenues and Expenditures (2000-2015)	15
Figure 13: Summary of Open Space Land Acquisitions (2000-2015)	16
Figure 14: Acquisition Expenditures after 2000	17
Figure 15: Farm Road Adjacent to South Fork Preserve, West of Mace Boulevard	18
Figure 16: Open Space Land Protected After 2000	19
Figure 17: Protected Open Space within Davis Planning Area (between 2000 and 2015)	21
Figure 18: Protected Open Space within Davis Planning Area (as of 2015)	22
Figure 19: Open Space Priority Acquisition Areas (as of 2015)	23
Figure 20: Open Space Areas Maintained by City of Davis	24
Figure 21: Open Space along Old Lincoln Highway	24
Figure 22: Riparian Corridor at South Fork Preserve	25
Figure 23: City Positions Partially Funded with Measure O Funds	26
Figure 24: Poppy at South Fork Preserve	27
Figure 25: Total Expenses as a Percent of Total Revenues in the Measure O Fund (2001-2015)	28
Figure 26: City of Davis Open Space Milestones (2000-2016)	29
Figure 27: Map of Davis Planning Area	30
Figure 28: Davis Ag Mitigation Location-Based Credits	31
Figure 29: March 2016 Open Space Public Workshop	32

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The citizens of Davis have long understood that the character of the community is directly connected to lands within which the community resides. The City of Davis has demonstrated a long-term commitment to the protection of natural resources, sensitive habitat, and agricultural lands in and surrounding the community for the past several decades. By 2000, the City had protected over 2,400 acres of open space, in both fee-title ownership and easements. However, these achievements relied on sporadic funding from grant funds and environmental mitigation.

To provide a stable source of funding for open space acquisition and maintenance, the City Council passed Ordinance 2033 in 2000, establishing a parcel tax to fund the Open Space Protection Special Tax Fund. This ordinance was approved by Davis voters as Measure O in November 2000 with a 30-year term. Since then, Measure O has enabled the City to make remarkable progress towards achieving its long-term vision for land conservation in the Davis Planning Area.

This Midterm Progress Report on Measure O provides information about the City's Open Space Program and the revenues and expenditures that have flowed in and out of the Open Space Protection Special Tax Fund (the "Measure O Fund") over the last 15 years, midway through the measure's term. Discussing what the parcel tax has been spent on during the first 15 years of its term is appropriate and necessary. Highlights of Midterm Progress Report include:



Figure 1: South Fork Preserve Riparian

- **Before Measure O, the City relied on sporadic and unreliable funding sources to acquire and preserve open space.** 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 grant funding and agricultural mitigation in-lieu fees paid by development projects. Despite the unreliability of these funding sources, the City was able to protect more than 2,400 acres of sensitive habitat and prime agricultural lands in perpetuity around Davis. The City actively maintains about 235 of these acres, most of which are publicly accessible. The balance is held in conservation easements over private properties or in land trusts.
- **Measure O works together with other tools in the City's open space tool box to protect open space around the City.** There are four primary tools in the toolbox the City and the community uses to implement the City's Open Space Program: (1) the

agriculture mitigation requirement, (2) the agricultural buffer requirement, (3) money (Measure O parcel tax dollars, agriculture mitigation fees, development impact fees, and grants), and (4) the Measure J/R vote. These primary tools all do different things but work together to implement the City's Open Space Program.

- **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. 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.
- **More than 2,800 acres of open space have been protected since 2000.** 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 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). These purchases have permanently protected 2,833 acres of farmland and habitat areas within the Davis Planning Area. These acres remain privately owned. The City, either by itself or in partnership with a local land trust, owns the conservation easements recorded on these acres. The



Figure 2: Pair of Burrowing Owls at Wildhorse Ag Buffer

conservation easements prevent the acres from ever being developed. These acres represent remarkable progress toward achieving the City's long-term vision for open space within the Davis Planning Area.

- **The City protected lands it considered priority acquisition areas.** 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 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.
- **Over the last 15 years, the General Fund and the Measure O Fund have shared in the cost of maintaining the City's open space lands.** The City's 235 acres of open space are primarily maintained by two City employees, a seasonal part-time worker, and property management contractors. 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 million of this cost has been paid for by the Measure O Fund. This amount equals about \$160,000 a year, on average, or about \$727 per acre per year or about \$61 per acre per month.

- **Due to the recent recession, the Measure O Fund paid for a greater share of open space maintenance costs over the last three fiscal years.** Open space maintenance costs remained under a third of the Measure O parcel tax revenue between July 2001 and June 2012. Between July 2012 and June 2015, that percentage jumped up to 52%. This jump was due to the recession, when the City’s General Fund paid for a smaller percentage of the open space maintenance expenses. In an effort to avoid further layoffs and keep the two open space maintenance positions, the City in fiscal year 2012-2013 increased Measure O’s share of the open space maintenance costs.
- **For the 2015-16 fiscal year and going forward, City staff reduced Measure O’s share of open space maintenance costs.** In 2015-16, when the City’s General Fund improved, the City was able to reduce Measure O’s share of the annual open space maintenance costs back to a stabilized level (about a third of the parcel tax revenue). Other cost-saving measures that were implemented included streamlining how open space maintenance is conducted at the City, and relying more heavily on temporary part-time workers and outside property management contractors.



Figure 3: Restored Oak Savannah at South Fork Preserve

MEASURE O – WHAT IS IT?

The City’s Open Space Protection Special Tax Fund (the “Measure O Fund”) is a relatively stable source of long-term local funding to protect and maintain open space lands in the City of Davis’s Planning Area. It is funded by a parcel tax established in 2000 by Ordinance 2033 of the City’s Municipal Code and approved as Measure O in November 2000 by 70% of Davis voters (Yolo County 2000). It is one of several tools the City and the community uses to implement the City’s Open Space Program. For a discussion of the other tools, see Appendix A.

PURPOSE OF MEASURE O

This parcel tax provides “revenue for the acquisition, operation, and maintenance of lands and easements for open space, habitat and agricultural uses and preservation in the areas surrounding the City” In the context of this special fund, open space is defined as “land in a predominantly natural state or altered for natural resources based uses (i.e. farming, parks), and may include, but is not limited to riparian areas, agricultural lands, watersheds, forests, floodplains, and habitat areas” (City of Davis 2000).

The tax became effective in July 1, 2001 and remains in effect only until June 30, 2031. The tax can be extended or re-authorized by Davis voters prior to that date (City of Davis 2000). The funds in the Measure O Fund may be used only for:

- Acquisition in fee or easement of open space lands within the Davis planning area;
- The improvement, operation, maintenance and/or monitoring of open space lands currently owned by the City in fee easement [or] acquired by the City in the future, including but not limited to the restoration, enhancement and preservation of habitat areas, maintenance of open space lands, and monitoring of habitat and agricultural conservation easements;
- The acquisition, improvement, and operation of only those bicycle trails designed to connect Davis to open space areas outside the city and with other regional bicycle facilities;
- The construction and maintenance of facilities necessary to preserve or enhance open space properties for open space purposes (i.e. the construction [or] maintenance of water wells and irrigation systems to serve the property and land uses, the creation and/or maintenance of access facilities where appropriate to promote public education and enjoyment of the open space, etc.); and

Measure O funding shall be used only for the following purposes:

- ✓ Open space land acquisition;
- ✓ Restoration, management, monitoring and enhancement of city open space land;
- ✓ Bicycle trail connectors acquisition, improvement and operation;
- ✓ Open space facility construction and maintenance; and
- ✓ Administrative incidental expenses.

- The incidental expenses incurred in the administration of this tax, including but not limited to the cost of elections, and the cost of collection. Revenues may be used to operate, maintain and monitor properties owned in fee or easement jointly by the City and other public agencies and/or land trusts whose mission includes the preservation of open space lands within the Davis planning area (City of Davis 2000).

TAXATION AUTHORITY AND RATES

Measure O is a special tax authorized under the California Constitution, Proposition 218, and California Government Code sections 37100.5 and 50075 -50077.¹ This tax is a parcel tax, not a property tax. Unlike property taxes that are based on the status of ownership or value of property, this parcel tax is based on the current use of a property.² Figure 4 shows the maximum tax rates authorized by this ordinance (City of Davis 2000). These are the maximum allowable tax rates permitted, unless modified by voters, and no cost-of-living adjustments are currently permitted.

PARCEL TAXES IN NATIONWIDE CONTEXT

Use of a parcel tax by local government for open space protection is somewhat unusual. A nationwide analysis of open space funding approaches between 1996 and 2012, covering over 2100 local funding measures submitted to voters, reveals that only 17 efforts used parcel taxes.

Most counties and cities have used local bonds, sales taxes, and property taxes, which have successfully been passed by voters 70-85% of the time (The Trust for Public Land 2012).

Figure 4: Maximum Special Tax Rates (Measure O)

Land Use	Annual Maximum Special Tax
Market Rate Residential	\$24 per single family unit \$24 per multifamily unit
Permanent Affordable Residential	\$12 per single family unit \$8 per multifamily unit
Group Living Residential	\$10 per resident
Commercial	\$20 per 1,000 square feet of improved building area up to a maximum of 10,000 square feet (maximum \$200)
Industrial	\$6.40 per employee up to a maximum of 320 employees (maximum \$192)
Day Care	\$7.15 per 1,000 square feet up to a maximum of 10,000 square feet (maximum \$71.50)
Vacant Land	\$24 per assessor's parcel

¹ More specifically, it is authorized under Article 13A, section 4 of the California Constitution and Proposition 218. Government Code section 37100.5 authorizes general-law cities to levy any tax that may be levied by charter cities, subject to voter approval. Government Code sections 50075 through 50077 authorize cities to impose special taxes (Ordinance 2033).

² More specifically, it is based “upon the use to which a property is put and the benefit that the use of property receives from the public facilities supported by this tax. This tax is based, among other things, on the benefit that different land uses of property receive from the protection of limited natural resources, sensitive habitat, and the general quality of life as it relates to the attraction and retention of high-quality businesses and the economic health of the community” (Ordinance 2033).

Use of parcel taxes for open space protection elsewhere has not been very successful in gaining voters' approvals. Before Davis's voters passed their open space parcel tax, six other cities had submitted parcel tax proposals to their voters, with a 50% success rate. Since 2000, six other local governments have attempted parcel taxes for open space protection, with less than a 30% success rate.³ Local governments have also very rarely tried using a variety of other funding mechanisms for open space protection. These include real estate transfer taxes, income taxes, benefit assessments, lotteries, lodging taxes, meals taxes and utility taxes, all of which were mostly approved by voters. Other funding sources, such as bedroom taxes, building materials use taxes, motor vehicle taxes, occupational privilege taxes, transient occupancy taxes, and vehicle license fees, were rarely successful.



Figure 5: Beaver Dam at South Fork Preserve, West of Mace

BEFORE MEASURE O

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 grant funding and agricultural mitigation in-lieu fees paid by development projects.

By 2000, the City had protected 2,467 acres of habitat and agricultural lands, relying heavily on sporadic state funding and mitigation fees for development.

HOW MUCH LAND WAS ACQUIRED AND HOW WAS IT FUNDED?

Despite the unreliability of these funding sources, the City was able to protect nearly 2,500 acres of sensitive habitat and prime agricultural lands in perpetuity within the Davis Planning Area prior to 2000. These protected areas included:

Land protected at no cost to the City as part of housing development requirements (228 acres)

- *Conservation Easements*
 - 13 acres adjacent and north of North Davis Farms subdivision
 - 155 acres at Wildhorse golf course
 - 1.5 acres adjacent to El Macero Estates subdivision

³ Voters for the Marin County Open Space District approved the first use of a parcel tax for open space protection in the U.S. in 1997. In addition, prior to 2000, parcel taxes had passed in San Carlos and Monrovia, California and failed in Moreno Valley, Moorpark, and Santee, California. Since 2000, Marinwood Community Services District and Santa Monica succeeded; Duarte, Lompico, Seacliff and Valley Center Parks and Recreation District (twice) failed.

- *Fee Title Interest*
 - 19 acres along the North Fork of Putah Creek
 - 1.5 acres adjacent to El Macero Estates subdivision
 - 38 acres adjacent to the Wildhorse subdivision

Land protected as part of the City’s agricultural mitigation requirements (1,261 acres)

- *Conservation Easements*
 - 190 acres along Willow Slough at County Road 102
 - 75 acres west of City golf course on County Road 29
 - 216 acres along Willow Slough near County Road 102
 - 780 acres north of South Fork of Putah Creek, one mile east of Mace Boulevard

Land protected with Proposition 70 state grant funds (574 acres)

- *Conservation Easements*
 - 134 acres adjacent to the South Fork of Putah Creek, two miles east of Mace Boulevard
- *Fee Title Interest*
 - 185 acres adjacent to the South Fork of Putah Creek, just east of Mace Boulevard
 - 255 acres adjacent to the South Fork of Putah Creek, two miles east of Mace Boulevard

In addition, the City purchased 404 acres for a wetlands demonstration project along Willow Slough at County Road 30 with a loan from the State of California. That loan was repaid, and the City owns the fee title interest in the wetlands.

In total, these 2,467 acres were acquired at a cost of about \$4.3 million (42% from city funds). These lands are listed in Figure 8 and mapped, along with other protected lands as of 2000, in Figure 9.

Figure 6: Snowy Milkweed on Old Lincoln Highway



OPEN SPACE MILESTONES – BEFORE 2000

In addition to protecting acreage within the Davis Planning Area, the City and its citizens also established an innovative and groundbreaking planning and regulatory framework for protecting open space during the 1980s and 1990s. Some of the key milestones in developing this innovative and groundbreaking framework, in addition to the passage of Measure O, are summarized in Figure 7 below, and include:

- **1986 – The first local measure to protect open space was passed.** The first local measure to protect open space, Measure S, was passed by 58% of voters in 1986 to expand Central Park.

- **1987 – The City of Davis’s General Plan was updated to include open space vision.**

This updated version of the City’s General Plan directed the City to plan for the “completion of Davis as a city surrounded by agriculture and open space uses” in the form of a “Ring Greenway.”

- **1989 – The Davis Greenway Plan was published.**

The Davis Greenway Plan, published by U.C. Davis, provided site-specific recommendations for establishing fifty miles of bike paths, parks and natural areas into one continuous system of parks and open

spaces connecting all parts of the city with green infrastructure. These “greenways” were envisioned to eventually form “a coordinated system of open space that links existing natural and cultural facilities using city streets, railroad rights-of-way, utility easements and natural features such as stream corridors and drainage channels.”

- **1990 – The City of Davis Open Space Program was established.** The City established an Open Space Program in 1990 to implement long-standing policies that called for the protection of the farmlands and habitat areas that surround the city. The initial work of the program focused on setting priorities for open space acquisitions and identifying potential funding sources.

- **1993 – The City of Davis’s General Plan was updated to incorporate the open space vision included in the Davis Greenway Plan.** The 1993 update of the City of Davis’s General Plan referred to the Davis Greenway Plan as the Open Space Element of the General Plan. The General Plan included open space categories for all of the elements of the Davis Greenway Plan (i.e., Greenstreets, Green Ring, Connector Greenways, and Natural Habitat Areas), as well as Agricultural Reserves, Agricultural Open Space, Neighborhood Greenbelts, City and Neighborhood Parks, and Community Infrastructure.

- **1995 – The Right to Farm and Farmland Preservation Ordinance was enacted.** The City of Davis and its citizens were also interested in preserving the local agricultural landscape. In 1995, the City Council approved the Right to Farm and Farmland Preservation Ordinance (Ordinance 1823). This ordinance defined City policy to work cooperatively with Yolo and Solano counties to: (1) preserve and encourage agricultural

Figure 7: City of Davis Open Space Milestones (1986-2000)

1986	First local measure to protect open space Measure S (Save Open Space)
1987	General Plan updated - Open Space Ring Greenway
1988	Citywide recreation survey – 93% support greenway concept First open space area established (North Davis mitigation)
1989	Davis Greenway Plan published
1990	City Open Space Program established
1993	General Plan updated, includes Greenway Plan elements First open space purchase – South Fork Preserve
1995	Right to Farm and Farmland Preservation Ordinance
1996	City Open Space Commission established
2000	City Council approves Ordinance 2033, which was approved by voters as Measure

land use and operations within the Davis Planning Area, (2) reduce the occurrence of conflicts between agricultural and non-agricultural lands uses, (3) reduce the loss of agricultural resources by limiting the circumstances under which agricultural operations may be deemed a nuisance; and (4) require mitigation for the loss of agricultural land.

- **1995 – The City’s first agriculture mitigation requirement and agricultural buffer requirement were adopted.** To achieve the objectives in the Right to Farm and Farmland Preservation Ordinance, 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 are the agriculture mitigation requirement and the agricultural buffer requirement, two key implementing tools in the City’s Open Space Program:
 - *Agriculture mitigation requirement.* The term “agricultural mitigation” means that developers must “mitigate” for any agricultural land they develop into urban uses. They must pay to protect other land (i.e., they must buy land outright or buy conservation easements on land) as “mitigation” for the land that will be permanently removed from agriculture production. Beginning in 1995, developers were required to protect the same number of acres that were being developed (1:1, or 1-for-1) and/or pay an in-lieu fee. This requirement was strengthened by the City Council in 2007.
 - *Agricultural buffer requirement.* Beginning in 1995, developers were also required to 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.
- **1996 – The Open Space and Habitat Commission was established.** To assist the City’s developing Open Space Program, and to solicit public involvement, the City Council unanimously passed Resolution 7985 establishing a formal and permanent Open Space and Habitat Commission in 1996. At this time, it was becoming clearer that open space was more than just recreational parks and that it included agricultural, natural, and semi-natural lands within and surrounding the City.
- **2000 – Measure J was approved by voters.** 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 required 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 could choose to put a proposed land use change on the ballot for voter consideration. Measure J was renewed in 2010 as Measure R.

All of these milestones, along with other milestones up to the present day, are discussed in greater detail in Appendix B. A summary of all the open space that was protected in the Davis Planning Area as of 2000 is shown in Figure 8 and presented on a map in Figure 9. The City’s priority open space acquisition areas as of 2000 are shown on a map in Figure 10.

Figure 8: Open Space Land Protected Before 2000

Date	Description	Location	Primary Funding Source	City Funds ⁴	Other Funds ⁵	Easement or Title Holder
1988	13 acres; easement over the Whitcombe home property; no public access	Adjacent and north of North Davis Farms subdivision	Provided at no cost to city as part of housing project	\$0	\$0	City of Davis - easement
1993	185 acres; South Fork Preserve on Putah Creek; public access	Adjacent to Putah Creek just east of Mace Blvd	Proposition 70 grant - California Wildlife, Coastal, and Park Land Conservation Fund of 1988	\$0	\$1,114,000	City of Davis – fee title
1994 - present	19 acres; Putah Creek Parkway (South Davis ag buffer); public access	North Fork Putah Creek	Provided at no cost to city as part of various South Davis development projects	\$0	\$0	City of Davis – fee title
1995 and 1996	190 acres; combining 7 agricultural and habitat easements, no public access, 18 acres to be enhanced as habitat	Willow Slough Bypass and County Road 102	Agricultural Land Mitigation for Evergreen, North Davis Meadows II and Woodbridge developments	\$0	\$0	108 acres held by City, LAFCO and Yolo Land Trust, 4 ac held by Fish and Game, remaining 78 ac held by City and Yolo Land Trust
1996	75 acres; agricultural + habitat easement, no public access, mitigates for city golf course expansion	Directly west of city golf course on County Road 29	Agricultural Land Mitigation for North Davis Meadows	\$0	\$0	City of Davis and Yolo Land Trust– joint easement
1996	404 acres; Wetlands Demonstration Project; limited public access	County Road 30 and Willow Slough	State Revolving Loan Fund, repaid by City	\$1,300,000	\$0	City of Davis - fee title

Figure 8 Page 1 of 2

⁴ City funding before Measure O came from the City’s agricultural mitigation program and development impact fees.

⁵ Other resources were direct state grants

Date	Description	Location	Primary Funding Source	City Funds ⁴	Other Funds ⁵	Easement or Title Holder
1997	216 acres; agricultural easement no public access, protected riparian corridor	Along Willow Slough, near County Road 102	City Agricultural Mitigation Fund and California Farmland Conservancy Program	\$150,000	\$120,000	City of Davis and Yolo Land Trust – joint easement
1998	780 acres; agricultural easement, no public access	N. of Putah Creek levee, 1 mile east of Mace Blvd	City Agricultural Mitigation Fund and California Farmland Conservancy Program grant	\$380,000	\$400,000	City of Davis and Yolo Land Trust – joint easement
1998	155 acres; conservation easement over Wildhorse golf course; limited public access	Wildhorse subdivision, Pole Line and Covell Boulevard	Provided at no cost to city as part of housing project	\$0	\$0	City of Davis - easement
1998	389 acres; land on Putah Creek in fee title + conservation easements, no public access	Adjacent to Putah Creek, 2 miles east of Mace Boulevard	Proposition 70 grant - California Wildlife, Coastal, and Park Land Conservation Fund of 1988	\$0	\$854,000	255 acres City of Davis fee title and 134 acres easement held by city
1998	3 acres; El Macero Estates (SE Davis ag buffer); public access	Eastern edge of city limits, east of Cowell Blvd	Provided at no cost to city as part of housing project	\$0	\$0	City of Davis – fee title
1999	38 acres; Wildhorse Ag Buffer North Davis ag buffer); public access	North and eastern edge of Wildhorse development	Provided at no cost to city as part of housing project	\$0	\$0	City of Davis – fee title
Total	2,467 acres			\$1,830,000	\$2,488,000	

Figure 8 Page 2 of 2

Figure 9: Protected and Publicly Owned Open Space within Davis Planning Area (as of 2000)

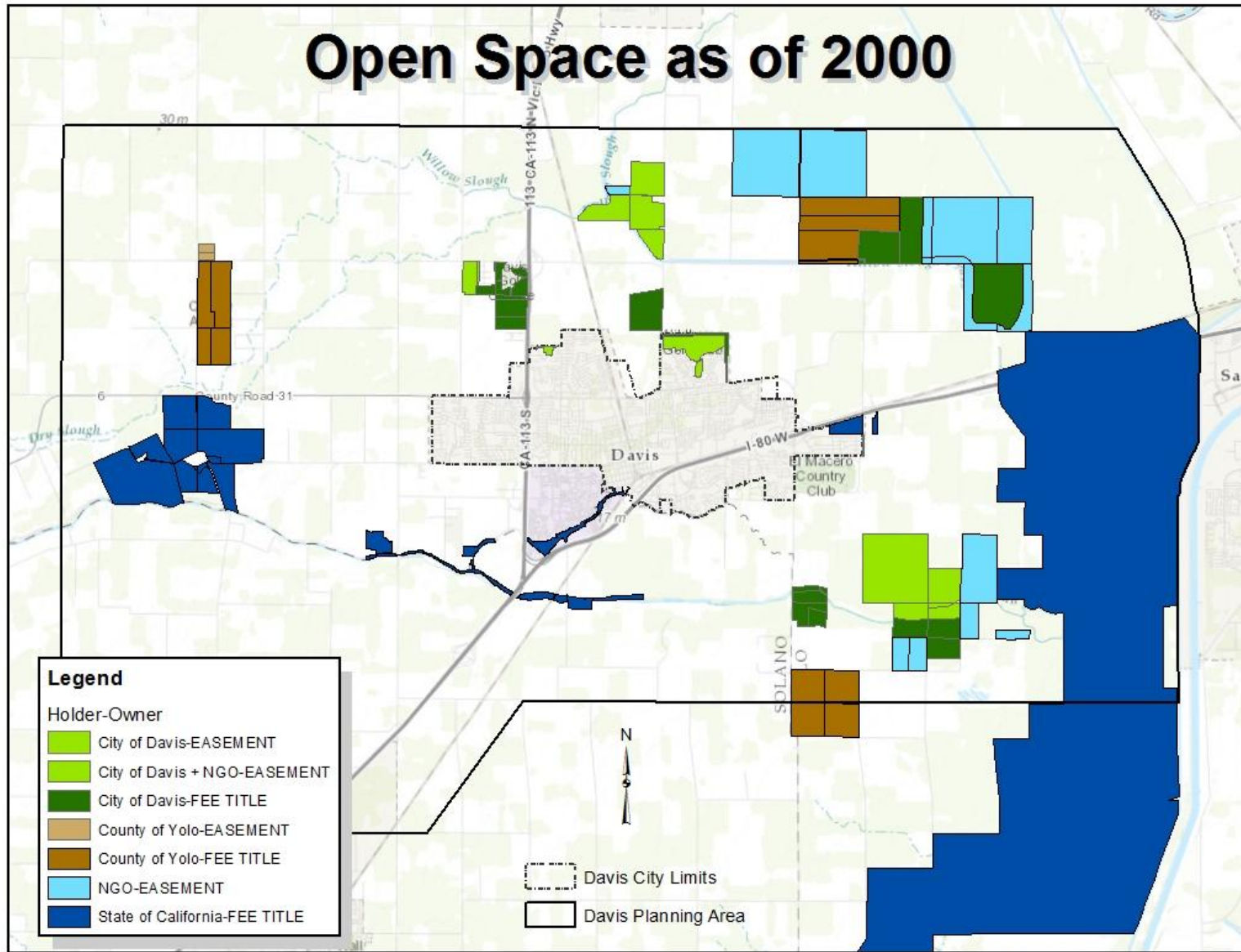
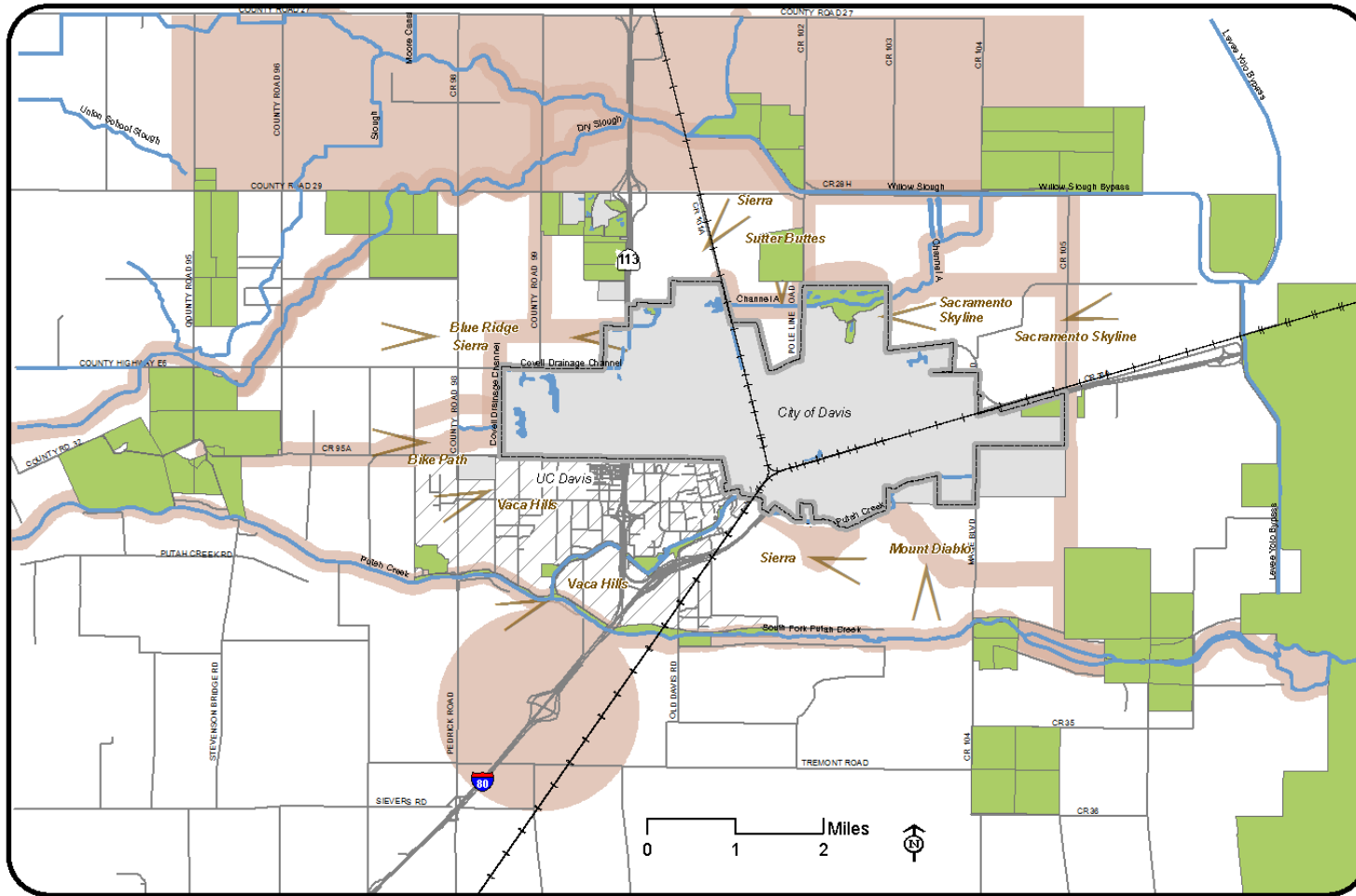


Figure 10: Priority Acquisition Areas (as of 2000)



**Open Space Priorities with Public Lands
as of 2000**

Priority Areas From:
Davis City Council Priority Areas, 2004
Davis Greenway Plan, 1989

Priority Areas
Public Lands and Easements

Open Space Priorities pre Measure O.mxd

AFTER MEASURE O

To provide a stable source of funding for open space protection, the City Council passed Ordinance 2033 in 2000, establishing a parcel tax to fund the Open Space Protection Special Tax Fund. This ordinance was approved by 70% of Davis voters as Measure O in November 2000. 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 through a flat tax per parcel. This annual amount has fluctuated by only one to two percent because the number of parcels and land use types changes only slightly year to year. The adopting ordinance does not allow for any adjustments to these tax rates, including any adjustments for inflation. The tax expires on June 30, 2031.



Figure 11: View of Sierra Madre Mountain Range from City Limits

The City's projected revenue from Measure O is well on target to meet initial fund-raising expectations. When Measure O was initially passed in 2000, City planners estimated it would raise \$17.5 million by 2030 for the acquisition of open space within the Davis planning area (Greenwald and Freeman 2000). Between 2000 and 2015, an average of approximately \$634,000 has been collected every year, resulting in about \$8.9 million collected as of the end of the 2014-15 fiscal year (See Appendix C). If that rate continues, by 2030 Measure O will have raised about \$19 million for open space acquisitions and maintenance.

Due to its stable and reliable nature, Measure O has tremendous leveraging power, bringing in more than \$14 million in state and federal matching funds for land acquisitions, more than one and a half times what the City has funded. More information about what Measure O funds have been spent on over the last 15 years is discussed in the following sections.

WHAT WAS MEASURE O SPENT ON OVER THE LAST 15 YEARS?

In response to requests from the Open Space and Habitat Commission and other community members, the City prepared a spreadsheet that details all the revenues and expenditures that have flowed in and out of the Measure O Fund (Fund 135) from July 2001 to June 2015 (See Appendix C). This spreadsheet is summarized in Figure 12 on the following page:

Figure 12: Measure O Fund Revenues and Expenditures (2000-2015)

Revenues (July 2001 - June 2015)					
Parcel Tax Revenue				\$8,871,309	
Interest/Investment Income				\$504,269	
Grant Revenue				\$2,222,834	
Sale of Leland Ranch (Easement Retained)				\$3,093,371	
Misc Reimbursements				\$70,960	
Total Revenues				\$14,762,743	
Expenses (July 2001-June 2015)				As a % of Revenues	
Personnel Expenses				\$1,951,774	13.2%
Non-Personnel Expenses					
	Contracted Property Management Services			\$42,404	0.3%
	Share of General Overhead			\$245,807	1.7%
	Capital Improvements			\$33,661	0.2%
Acquisitions/Transaction Costs				\$8,245,287	55.9%
Total Expenses				\$10,518,933	71.3%
Reserve Amount				\$4,243,810	28.7%

On the revenue side, during this time frame, the parcel tax generated about \$8.9 million in revenue, as shown in the table above. Other revenues include about \$2.2 million in grant funds that flowed through Fund 135 and about \$3.1 million in property sales proceeds from the sale of Leland Ranch, for a total of about \$14.8 million in revenue over the last 14 years.

On the expenditure side, during this time frame, about \$2.2 million (about 15%) has been spent on personnel expenses/general overhead, which includes open space maintenance staff and program administration staff. These personnel costs are discussed in greater detail later in this staff report. By far the biggest expenditure line is acquisitions, which accounts for 56% of total expenses (about \$8.2 million). Also worth noting is about 29% of the total revenues generated have not been spent and are saved in a reserve, which can be used for future acquisitions and restoration projects. More information about these expenses can be found in the sections below.

Land Acquisition Costs

As mentioned, Measure O dollars can be spent on the “acquisition in fee or easement of open space lands within the Davis planning area.” However, by itself, Measure O does not generate 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, as shown in Figure 13 below:

Figure 13: Summary of Open Space Land Acquisitions (2000-2015)

Summary of Acquisitions (2000 - 2015)					Measure O Fund		Other City Funds	Grants & Non-City Funds	Total
	Acres	Property Rights Purchased	Primary Priority Acquisition Area	Parcel Tax	Grants				
McConeghy Ranch	300	Easement	Community Separator	\$388,278	\$0	\$118,722	\$3,200,000	\$3,707,000	
Ebey/Laughtin Ranch	146	Easement	Community Separator	\$629,722	\$62,750	\$42,528	\$1,255,000	\$1,990,000	
Barger Ranch	80	Easement	Biological/Natural Resources	\$38,732	\$0	\$401,268	\$0	\$440,000	
Wasserman Farm	80	Easement	Biological/Natural Resources	\$83,150	\$0	\$296,850	\$0	\$380,000	
Staib Farm	300	Easement	Agriculture	\$26,646	\$0	\$273,354	\$1,825,000	\$2,125,000	
Miles/Kidwell Farm	488	Easement	Community Separator	\$0	\$0	\$515,000	\$4,600,000	\$5,115,000	
McIssac Farm	85	Easement	Biological/Natural Resources	\$0	\$0	\$440,000	\$0	\$440,000	
Stanley Farm	90	Easement	Agriculture	\$0	\$0	\$62,000	\$655,000	\$717,000	
Staib 72 Farm	72	Easement	Biological/Natural Resources	\$10,000	\$132,000	\$50,000	\$0	\$192,000	
Leland Ranch	390	Easement & Fee Title	Urban Fringe	\$3,000,494	\$807,084	\$0	\$0	\$3,807,578	
Kerr Farm	90	Easement	Biological/Natural Resources	\$0	\$0	\$340,000	\$178,000	\$518,000	
Eoff Farm (All Phases)	712	Easement	Biological/Natural Resources	\$1,387,455	\$1,221,000	\$0	\$0	\$2,608,455	
Total	2,833			\$5,564,477	\$2,222,834	\$2,539,722	\$11,713,000	\$22,040,033	
				25%	10%	12%	53%	100%	

These 2,833 acres represent remarkable progress toward achieving the City’s long-term vision for open space within the Davis Planning Area (See Figures 16 and 17 found on the following pages).⁶ As of 2016, the City has protected 5,300 acres of open space, an area that represents approximately 85% of the total urbanized footprint of the City of Davis, as shown in Figure 18, also found on the following pages. As shown in the table above, some highlights of the City’s track record over the last 15 years to leverage funds and acquire open space include:

⁶ The map shown in Figure 17 includes the Howat/Clayton Ranch properties the City owns along Interstate 80 east of Mace Boulevard. This property is about 780 acres. This property isn’t included in Figure 16 because it wasn’t purchased as part of the City’s Open Space Program. It was purchased with City stormwater fees primarily for stormwater detention purposes. Nevertheless, it is open space and is an additional 780 acres on top of the 2,833 listed in Figure 16.

- Using the tremendous leveraging power of Measure O, the City has been able to purchase about \$22 million worth of conservation easements, permanently protecting an additional 2,833 acres of farmland and habitat areas, using only about \$5.6 million in Measure O parcel tax dollars, as shown in Figures 13 and 14.
- Grants and non-City funds paid for 63% of the total acquisition price for the 2,833 acres. State and federal grant funds, cooperative partnerships and other creative funding arrangements have brought in an additional \$13.9 million in matching funds, a leveraging power of about 170%.
- The Measure O Fund, together with other City funds (i.e., agriculture mitigation fees and development impact fees), paid for the remaining 37% of the total acquisition price for the 2,833 acres, as shown in Figures 13 and 14.

All of these acquisitions have occurred within the Davis Planning Area within key priority acquisition areas, [established by the City Council in 2004](#). The priority acquisition areas include urban fringe properties, community separators, agricultural land, scenic resources, and biological/natural resources, as shown in Figures 13 and 19.

In comparing protection progress with pre-Measure O activity, the amounts of protected land acreage are roughly equal (2,467 acres vs. 2,833 acres). But with Measure O, and its leveraging power, the City’s purchasing ability has increased more than five-fold (\$4.3 million vs. \$22.0 million).

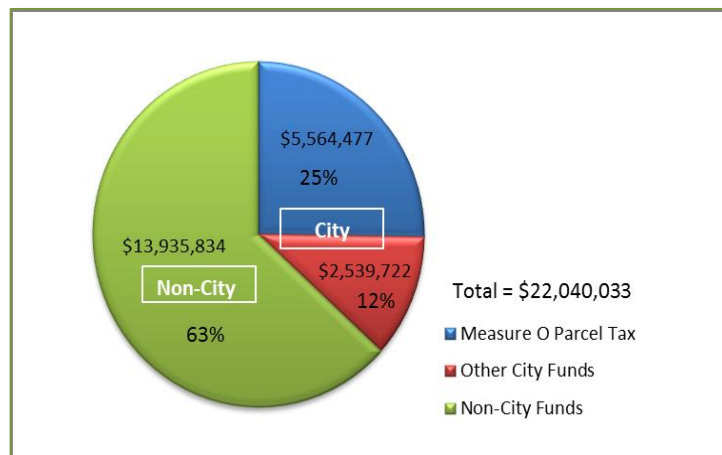


Figure 14: Acquisition Expenditures after 2000

A few key points to note about the City’s history of acquisitions in general:

- *Easements versus Acquisitions.* The City’s Open Space Program relies primarily on conservation easements. The City has favored purchasing conservation easements over fee title property rights because (1) conservation easements are less expensive, and (2) conservation easements do not require the City to spend money maintaining the properties in perpetuity.
- *Willing Sellers.* The City’s Open Space Program relies solely on willing sellers. These sellers are willing to (1) sell property rights to a public entity, (2) work with the City and land trust through the sometimes lengthy public acquisition process, (3) accept fair market value for their property, and (4) place restrictions on their property that limit its use and permanently protect the land’s agriculture and habitat value. Given these parameters, the pool of willing sellers is limited.

- *Fair Market Value.* The City’s Open Space Program relies solely on transactions at fair market value, based on a professional appraisal. The City cannot pay more than fair market value because money above and beyond the appraised fair market value would be considered a gift of public funds. In addition, state and federal grant funds can only be used for transactions at fair market value. Grants cannot be used in transactions that are being consummated at a price higher than fair market value (i.e., at a speculative value). Property owners at the City’s edge can be reluctant to consummate a transaction at fair market value because the allure of getting a speculative value is too intense.

In general, during the 2000-2015 time period, the City has sought to protect the greatest amount of high-quality open space and resources as possible within its funding constraints. *Though the community’s willingness to support open space protection through self-taxation is remarkable, it is clear that protection of all undeveloped lands and sensitive resources in the Davis Planning Area is not possible.* In order to maximize the effectiveness of available funding, the City has used the most cost-effective open space protection tools (i.e., conservation easements) and sought to acquire open space that serves to buffer other lands from the threat of conversion.



Figure 15: Farm Road Adjacent to South Fork Preserve, West of Mace

Figure 16: Open Space Land Protected After 2000

Date	Description	Location	Primary Funding Source	City Funds⁷	Other Funds⁸	Easement or Title Holder
2005	300 acres; McConeghy Ranch; no public access. Adjacent to Ebey/Laughtin Ranch	Kidwell Road at I-80	Measure O and City of Davis agricultural mitigation/development impact funds, City of Dixon, UC Davis, California Farmland Conservancy Program, USDA-NRCS Farm and Ranch Protection Program	\$507,000	\$3,200,000	City of Davis, City of Dixon, Solano Land Trust – joint easement
2006	146 acres; Ebey/Laughtin Ranch; no public access. Adjacent to McConeghy Ranch	Kidwell Road at I-80	Measure O and City of Davis agricultural mitigation/development impact funds, Solano Land Trust, City of Dixon, California Farmland Conservancy Program	\$672,250	\$1,317,750	City of Davis, City of Dixon, Solano Land Trust – joint easement
2008	80 acres; Barger Ranch; no public access, protected riparian corridor.	County Road 30 and Dry Slough	City of Davis agricultural mitigation/development impact funds and Measure O	\$440,000	\$0	City of Davis and Yolo Land Trust – joint easement
2008	80 acres; Wasserman Farm; no public access, protected riparian corridor.	County Road 99 and Willow Slough	City of Davis agricultural mitigation/development impact funds and Measure O	\$380,000	\$0	City of Davis and Yolo Land Trust – joint easement
2009	300 acres; Staib Farm; no public access, protected riparian corridor.	County Roads 98 and 99, south of County Road 29	City of Davis agricultural mitigation/development impact funds and Measure O , California Farmland Conservancy Program, USDA-NRCS Farm and Ranch Protection Program	\$300,000	\$1,825,000	City of Davis and Yolo Land Trust – joint easement
2009	488 acres; Miles/Kidwell Farm; no public access. Adjacent to McConeghy Ranch	Kidwell Road/Pedrick Road at I-80	City of Davis agricultural mitigation/development impact funds, City of Dixon, California Farmland Conservancy Program, USDA-NRCS Farm and Ranch Protection Program	\$515,000	\$4,600,000	City of Davis, City of Dixon, Solano Land Trust – joint easement

Figure 16 Page 1 of 2

⁷ City funding includes Measure O as well as funding from the City’s agricultural mitigation program and development impact fees.

⁸ Other resources include direct grants, contributions from other public agencies, and a donation.

Date	Description	Location	Primary Funding Source	City Funds ⁷	Other Funds ⁸	Easement or Title Holder
2009	85 acres; McIsaac Farm; no public access. Adjacent to Barger Ranch	County Road 30 and Dry Slough	City of Davis agricultural mitigation/development impact funds	\$440,000	\$0	City of Davis and Yolo Land Trust – joint easement
2010	90 acres; Stanley Farm; agricultural easement; no public access.	Mace Blvd/County Road 104; half mile south of City	City of Davis agricultural mitigation/development impact funds, donation to Yolo Land Trust and City	\$62,000	\$655,000 ⁹	City of Davis and Yolo Land Trust – joint easement
2010	72 acres; Staib 72 Farm; fee title sold to conservation buyer.	County Roads 29 and 98	City of Davis agricultural mitigation/development impact funds and Measure O , USDA-NRCS Farm and Ranch Protection Program	\$60,000	\$132,000	City of Davis and Yolo Land Trust – joint easement
2011	390 acres; Mace Curve; fee title and conservation easement; public access pathway easement.	Mace Blvd/County Road 105	Measure O , USDA-NRCS Farm and Ranch Protection Program	\$3,000,494	\$807,084	25 acres City of Davis fee title and 365 acres City of Davis and Yolo Land Trust – joint easement
2011	90 acres; Kerr Farm; Swainson's hawk easement; protected riparian corridor; no public access.	County Roads 29 and 98	City of Davis agricultural mitigation/development impact funds, Yolo Natural Heritage Program	\$340,000	\$178,000	City of Davis and Yolo Land Trust – joint easement
2012 & 2013	712 acres; Eoff Farm (All Phases); no public access. Adjacent to Staib easements	County Roads 29, 98 and 20	Measure O , USDA-NRCS Farm and Ranch Protection Program	\$1,387,455	\$1,221,000	City of Davis and Yolo Land Trust – joint easement
Total	2,833 acres			\$8,104,199	\$13,935,834	

Figure 16 Page 2 of 2

⁹ Donation

Figure 17: Protected and Publicly Owned Open Space within Davis Planning Area (between 2000 and 2015)

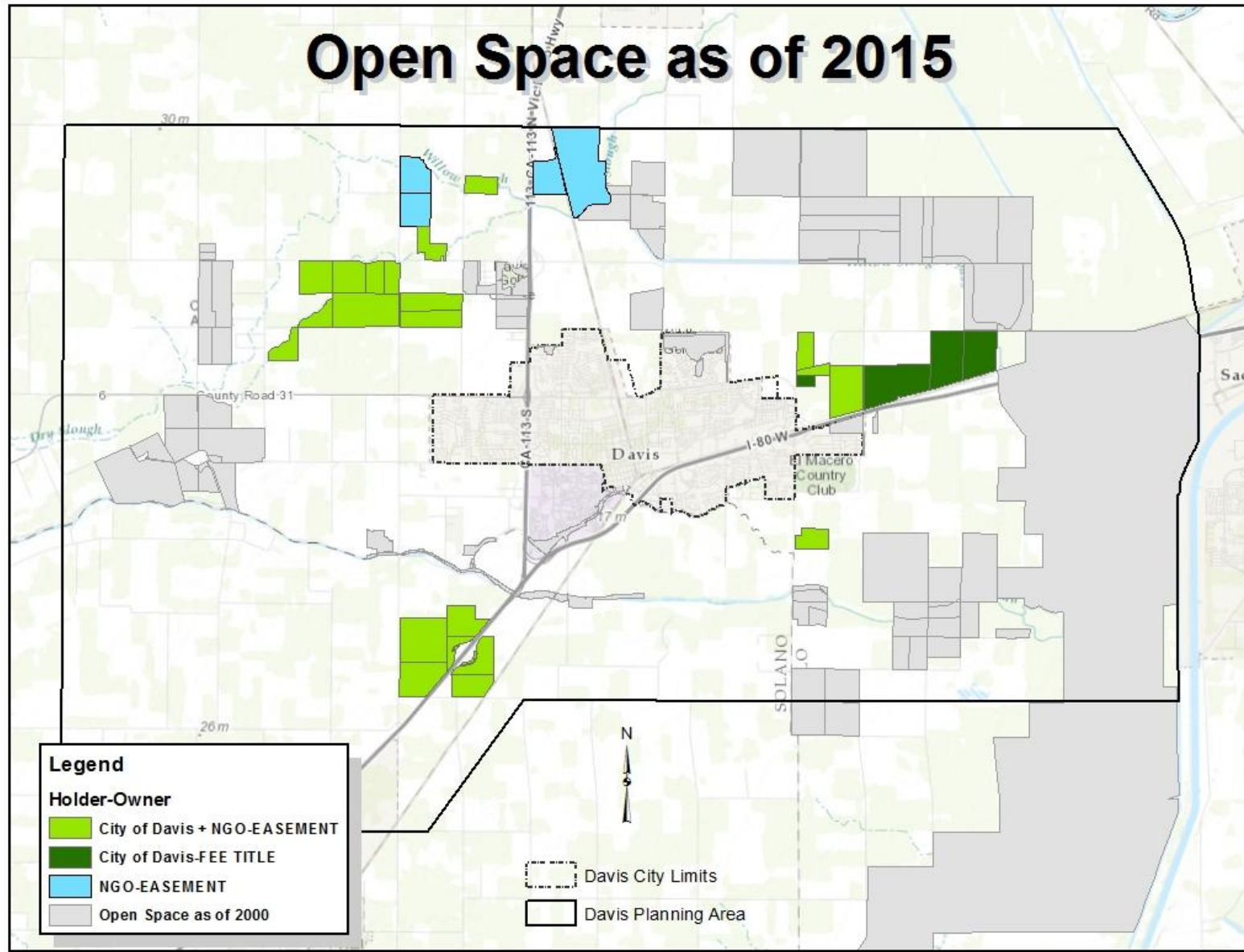


Figure 18: Protected and Publicly Owned Open Space within Davis Planning Area (as of 2015)

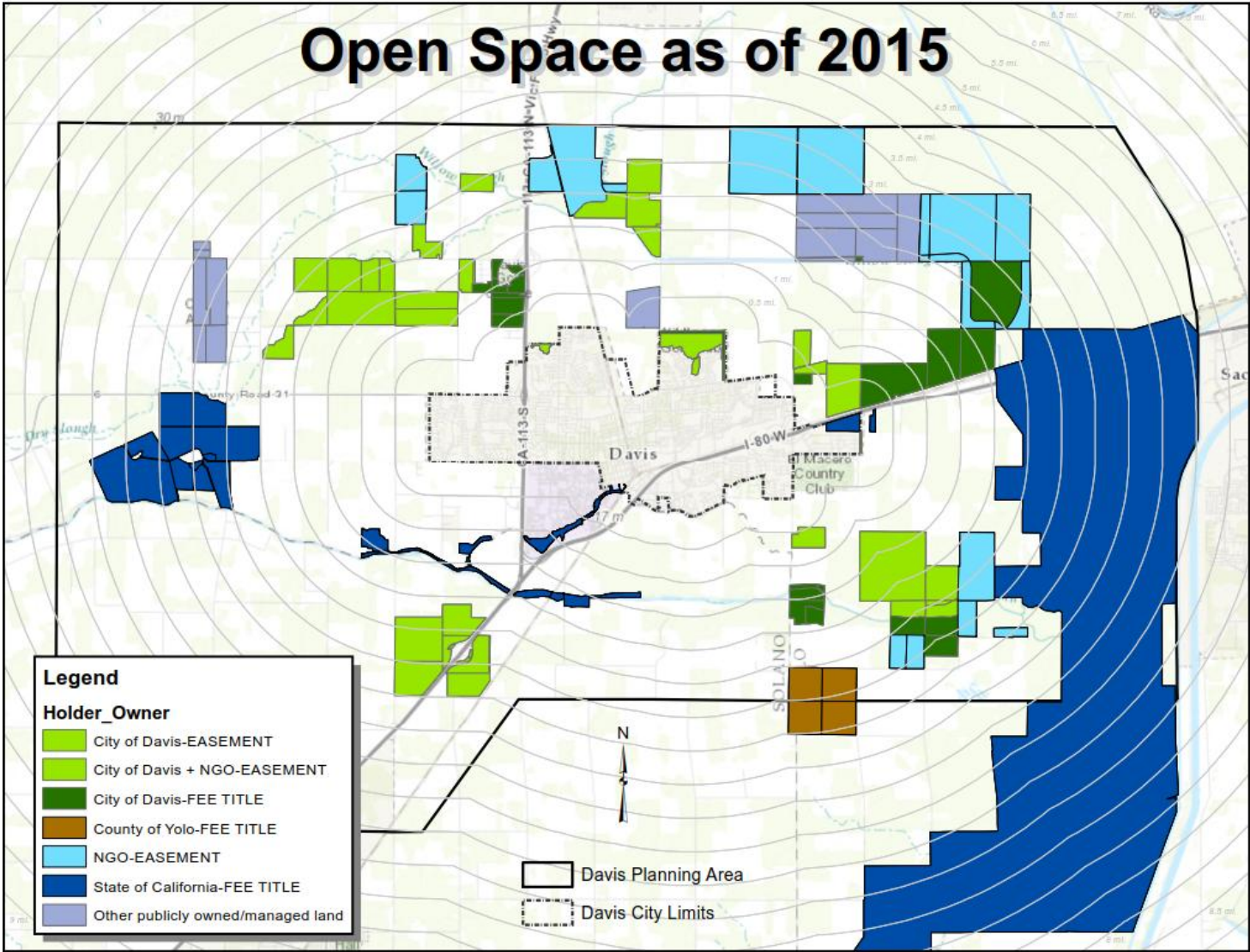
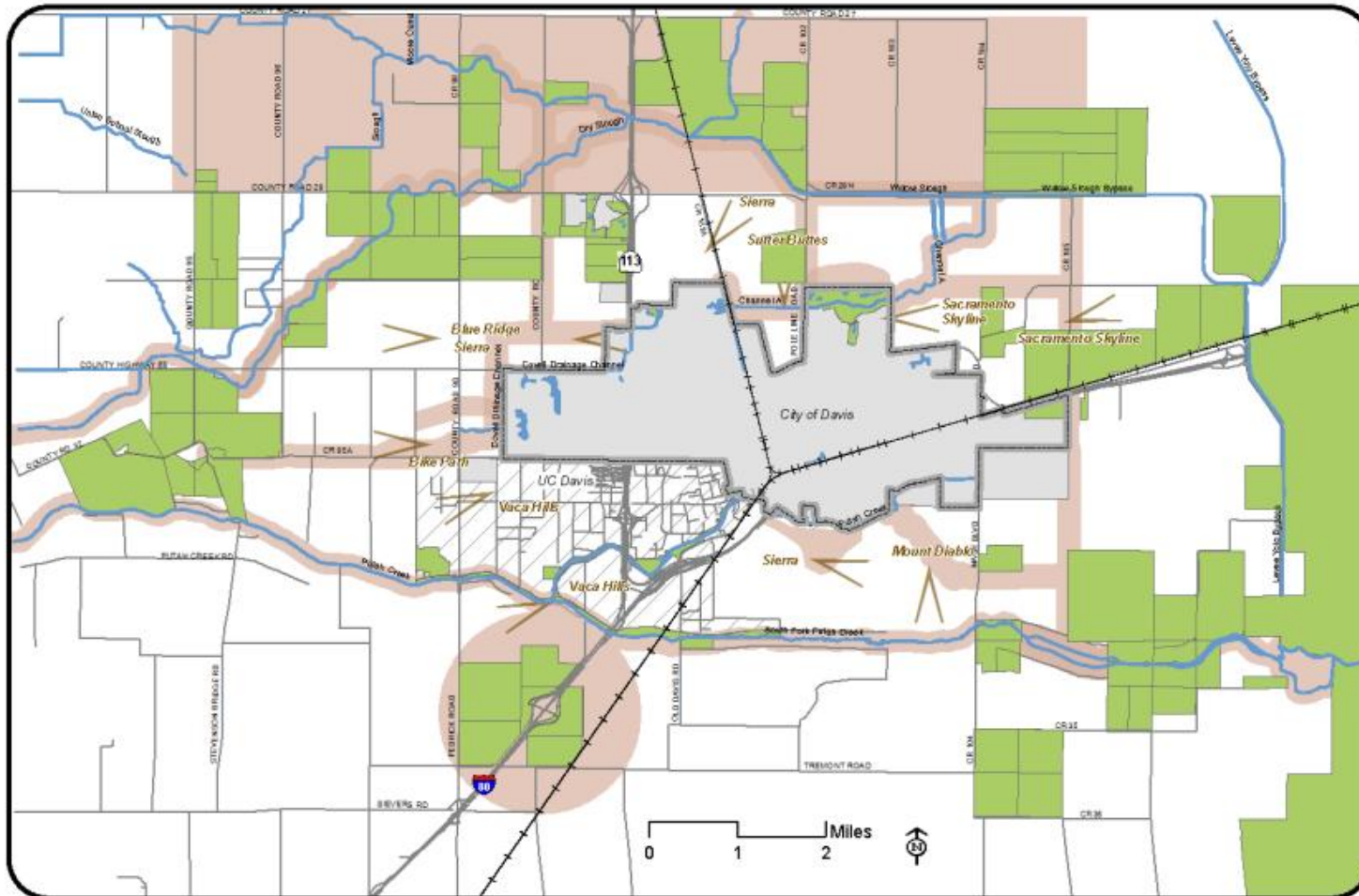


Figure 19: Open Space Priority Acquisition Areas (as of 2015)



Open Space Priorities with Public Lands
as of 2013

Priority Areas From:
Davis City Council Priority Areas, 2004
Davis Greenway Plan, 1989

Priority Areas
Public Lands and Easements

Maintenance Costs

As mentioned above, Measure O dollars can be used “for the improvement, operation, maintenance and/or monitoring of open space lands” that were owned by the City in fee or easement as of 2000 or that may be acquired by the City during the 30-year life of the parcel tax.

The table below (Figure 20) shows the open space areas (which total about 235 acres) that are currently maintained by the City with Measure O dollars:

Figure 20: Open Space Areas Maintained by City of Davis

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
	Total	235.35

Of the 235 open space acres the City maintains, about 90% of those acres are publicly accessible. Those areas include Wildhorse agricultural buffer, the Putah Creek Parkway, and South Fork Preserve. Improving the public accessibility of South Fork Preserve is a top priority, and staff is investigating grant funds that could help pay for public access improvements to this property. In addition, several of the City’s conservation easements on private property include limited public access (i.e., docent-led tours) along the riparian corridors that are part of these conservation easements.

The 184 publicly accessible acres do not include publicly accessible stormwater detention basins (i.e., North Davis Pond, West Davis Pond, Toad Hollow, North Davis Riparian Corridor) because those areas primarily serve as stormwater



Figure 21: Open Space along Old Lincoln Highway

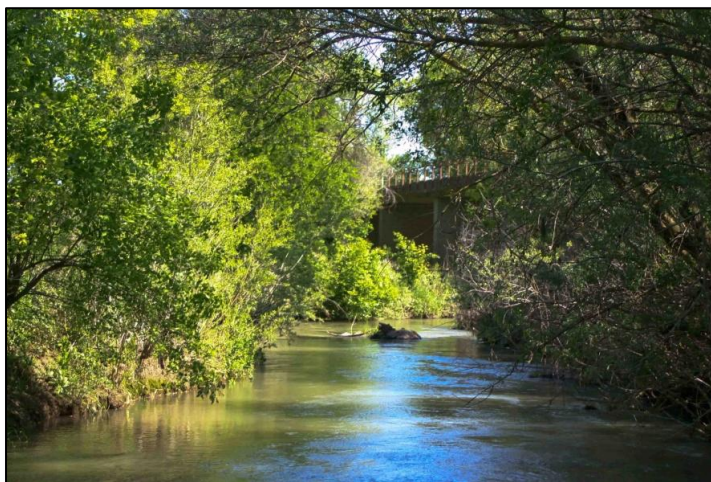
detention basins and, as such, are maintained by the City's Public Works staff using non-Measure O dollars. The table above also does not include the City's vast network of urban greenbelts and parks, which are maintained by the City's Parks and Community Services Department using non-Measure O dollars

The City's 235 acres of open space (listed in the table above) are primarily maintained by one City employee, a seasonal part-time worker, and property management contractors. Over the last 15 years, the General Fund and the Measure O Fund have shared in the cost of maintaining the City's open space lands. Since 2000, about \$2.2 million of this cost has been paid for by the Measure O Fund, as shown on Appendix C. This amount equals about \$160,000 a year, on average, or about \$727 per acre per year or about \$61 per acre per month.

Due to the recent recession, the Measure O Fund paid for a greater share of open space maintenance costs over the last three fiscal years, as shown on Appendix C. In sum:

- In aggregate, open space maintenance costs remained under a third (or a stabilized percentage of 33%) of the Measure O parcel tax revenue between July 2001 and June 2012.
- Between July 2012 and June 2015, that percentage increased to 52%. This increase was due to the recession, when the City's General Fund paid a lower share of the open space maintenance expenses. In an effort to avoid further layoffs and keep the two open space maintenance positions, the City in fiscal year 2012-2013 increased Measure O's share of the open space maintenance costs.

Figure 22: Riparian Corridor at South Fork Preserve



During fiscal year 2015-16, when the health of the City's General Fund improved, the City investigated ways to reduce Measure O's share of the annual open space maintenance costs back to a stabilized level in the future (i.e., 33%, or a third of the parcel tax revenue). The cost-saving measures that were implemented include:

- Consolidated two open space maintenance positions into one maintenance/managerial position (i.e., a new Open Space Lands Manager);
- Streamlined reporting relationships and concentrated the management of the Measure O Fund under the Community Development and Sustainability Department, where the Open Space Program is administered;

- Increased the program’s reliance on seasonal, temporary part-time maintenance workers and property management contractors; and
- Lowered Measure O’s share of personnel costs for certain open space maintenance positions.

These cost-saving measures, which required backfilling from the City’s General Fund, were designed to reduce open space maintenance/management costs to 33% or less of the Measure O parcel tax revenue (i.e., at or less than the stabilized level) going forward into the future.

As of the 2016-2017 fiscal year, Measure O funds the following percentages of the open space maintenance/management positions listed in Figure 23 below:

Figure 23: City Positions Partially Funded with Measure O Funds

	City Dept	% of Position Funded With Measure O Funds	
		Before 2015-2016	After 2015-2016
Open Space Program Manager	CD&S	10%	10%
Sustainability Programs Coordinator	CD&S	5%	0%
Open Space Lands Manager	CD&S	0%	50%
Park Maintenance Worker I (Seasonal Temp Part-time)	CD&S	0%	50%
Environmental Resources Supervisor	Parks	85%	0%
Environmental Resource Specialist	Parks	85%	0%
Community Services Superintendent	Parks	1%	0%
Office Assistant II	Parks	5%	0%
Senior Parks Supervisor	Parks	5%	0%
Park Maintenance Worker I (Seasonal Temp Part-time)	Parks	67%	0%
Integrated Pest Management Specialist	Parks	25%	0%
Parks Superintendent	Parks	0%	5%

The following is a brief summary of the work the City’s Open Space Lands Manager does, along with temporary part-time seasonal workers and contract laborers:

Coordination of Staff and Contracts

- Coordinate contract with sheep grazer (South Fork Oak Savannah and Riparian Corridor)
- Coordinate contract with GP Landscaping (Lincoln Highway)
- Coordinate contract with Coast Maintenance (Passive Open Space at Mace Ranch Park)

- Coordinate contract with County Probation Crew (Miscellaneous Properties)
- Coordinate Temporary Part-Time Worker, who primarily helps with mowing
- Coordinate with U.C. Davis researchers (South Fork Preserve)
- Coordinate contract with Armstrong Mowing
- Coordinate with City Integrated Pest Management Staff
- Coordinate with City Wildlife Management Staff

Physical Labor

- Mowing properties as needed for fire prevention
- Planting of native trees, bushes and grasses (operates grain drill)
- Install three-year drip irrigation systems; monitor, check for leaks, etc.
- Spot herbicide spraying to eliminate invasives
- Shrub and tree maintenance
- Spread mulching/wood chips
- Hand weeding; weed control work
- Wildlife habitat improvement
- Grazing management; provide water for sheep at South Fork from well south of levee
- Some hand-watering of natives (operates mobile water tank)
- Keep bike path (Lincoln Highway) free of debris and overgrown shrubbery
- Weekly monitoring for vandalism, dumping, homeless encampments, other problems
- Construct fencing as needed
- Trail monitoring and maintenance

Program Administration Costs

Program administration costs are associated with the cost to run the Open Space Program, and the cost to administer the Measure O Fund. Again, the Measure O Fund and the City’s General Fund share in this cost. Currently, Measure O funds only a small percentage of the program administration costs, as shown in the table above. Measure O’s share of the program administration costs is not broken out separately in the attached spreadsheet (Appendix C), but is estimated to be minimal (i.e., under \$30,000 a year).

CONSISTENCY WITH COMMUNITY EXPECTATIONS

In 2015, some community members expressed concern about the transparency of the Measure O budget, historic personnel expenses, and what Measure O funds have been spent on since the election of 2000. This background report was compiled in an effort to address some of these concerns.



Figure 24: Poppy at South Fork Preserve

During 2015, the Open Space and Habitat Commission had extensive discussions to confirm that the City has spent Measure O dollars in the way it promised the community in 2000, based on a flyer that was produced by the City in 2000. The flyer predicted about half of the Measure O money would be spent on acquisitions and half of the money would be spent on maintenance.

In reality, the City on average over the last 15 years spent about 56% of the money on acquisitions and only about 15% on maintenance, with almost 29% unspent in fund balance and available for additional acquisitions, as shown in Figure 25 below:

Figure 25: Total Expenses as a Percent of Total Revenues in the Measure O Fund (2001-2015)

Total Expenses (July 2001 -- June 2015) as a Percent of Total Revenues in the Measure O Fund					
			2000 City Flyer		
			Estimate	Actual (%)	Actual (\$)
Acquisitions			51%	55.9%	\$8,245,287
Administrative Costs*			1%	0.0%	--
Maintenance					
Long-term Maintenance			32%	15.2%	\$2,239,985
Restoration/Land Improvements**			10%	--	--
Asset Replacement			6%	0.2%	\$33,661
Fund Balance			0%	28.7%	\$4,243,810
			100%	100%	\$14,762,743
Notes:					
* Actual costs for "Administrative Costs" are estimated to be minimal (\$28,000/year) and are included in the Long-Term Maintenance figure.					
** Actual costs for "Restoration/Land Improvements" are included in the Long-Term Maintenance figure.					

The table above includes all revenues in the Measure O Fund (Fund 135) and not just the parcel tax revenue. It also shows an average over the last 15 years, and does not account for the year-to-year fluctuations in open space maintenance costs. Even though maintenance costs on average have been low (i.e., only 15% of total revenues), the City implemented ways to reduce Measure O's share of the annual open space maintenance costs back to a third of just the parcel tax revenue, as discussed in the previous section.

OPEN SPACE MILESTONES – AFTER 2000

In addition to protecting acreage within the Davis Planning Area, the City and its citizens also built upon its innovative and groundbreaking planning and regulatory framework for protecting open space after Measure O was passed by voters in 2000.

Some of the key milestones in refining this innovative and groundbreaking framework are summarized in this section and in Figure 26 below. All of these milestones, along with other

milestones dating back to the 1980s, are discussed in greater detail in Appendix B. The key milestones include:

- 2001 – The City of Davis’s General Plan was updated to include an urban agricultural transition area around the City.** The 2001 General Plan Update placed a strong emphasis on protecting open space and agricultural resources. It laid out a long-term land-use vision of maintaining Davis as a “cohesive, compact, university-oriented community surrounded by and containing farmland, greenbelts, natural habitats, and natural resources.” The vision provides for use of linkages, corridors and other connectors to provide a network of parks, open space, greenbelts and bike paths throughout the city. Although the concepts of linkages and corridors were not new, the 2001 Update also formally adopted a new Urban Agricultural Transition Area around Davis.

2001	General Plan updated – Urban Agricultural Transition Area around City
2002	Acquisition and Management Plan adopted
2004	Acquisition Priorities Map adopted
2007	Davis Greenway Plan reaffirmed
	City’s ag mitigation policy strengthened
2010	Measure R approved by voters
2016	Public workshop held and update to 2002 Acquisition and Management Plan completed

Figure 26: City of Davis Open Space Milestones (2000-2016)

- 2002 – The City adopted an acquisition and management plan for open space.** As part of the debate that led up to the passage of Measure O, the City Council decided that a more formal approach to open space acquisition and management planning was needed. After a lengthy public process to establish open space acquisition priorities and management goals, the City Council adopted the Acquisition and Management Plan in January 2002 (the “2002 A&M Plan”). In brief, the 2002 A&M Plan set general goals and policies to direct the City’s effort to protect and effectively manage open space lands and resources; provided the basis for informed open space land and resource acquisition decisions; provided direction for land and resource management decisions; provided organizational guidelines for the City’s Open Space Program’s budget; established a framework for a consistent, objective, and open decision-making process, and; provided a basis for evaluating the City’s progress toward reaching the open space protection goals established in the 2001 General Plan.

The 2002 A&M Plan also identified the following different types of open space categories for spending Measure O funds:

- *Urban Fringe:* Open space lands that help define the urban limits of Davis and provide an adequate buffer between urban and rural land uses.
 - *Urban (or Community) Separator:* Open space lands that separate Davis from neighboring cities to preserve the unique character of each community.
 - *Agriculture:* Prime agricultural lands that maintain the long-term viability of agriculture in the Davis Planning Area (See Figure 27).

- *Biological and Natural Resources*: Important wildlife habitat and lands for sensitive species and other significant natural resources.
- *Scenic Resources*: Lands that provide views of significant local and regional landmarks and community gateways.

Unlike the 1998 Open Space Implementation Plan, the 2002 A&M Plan did not identify specific projects to be undertaken, nor did it estimate the costs for individual projects.

- **2004 – An open space acquisition priorities map was adopted.** Following the City Council’s adoption of the 2002 A&M Plan, the City Council also adopted an acquisition priorities map in January 2004. This map was the result of nearly a year of analysis and deliberation by the Open Space and Habitat Commission and City Council. It geographically represents the acquisition priorities described in the City’s General Plan and the 2002 A&M Plan.
- **2007 – The Davis Greenway Plan is reaffirmed as a guiding open space planning document.** Unfortunately, the 2002 A&M Plan inadvertently overlooked elements of the important 1989 Davis Greenway Plan, which had been referenced in several prior City documents. As a result, in 2007, the City Council requested that the Open Space and Habitat Commission review the Davis Greenway Plan in light of long-term open space planning. The Commission unanimously recommended that the City Council recognize the Davis Greenway Plan as a complementary framework to the 2002 A&M Plan, and to use it to guide future City planning decisions, revisions to the General Plan, and decisions regarding acquisition of land and easements for open space purposes. The City Council then unanimously approved a resolution reaffirming the use of the Davis Greenway Plan as a tool to guide future open space and land use decisions, and in particular to make the plan’s vision of an interconnected, coordinated system of open space and greenways in and around the City a priority.

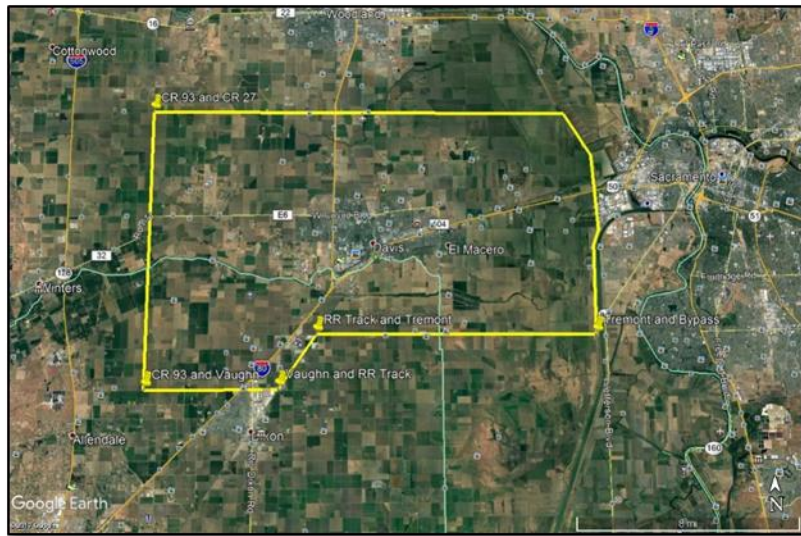


Figure 27: Map of Davis Planning Area

- **2007 – The City’s agricultural mitigation requirement was strengthened.** The City first established an agriculture mitigation requirement in 1995. In 2007, that requirement was strengthened. Beginning in 2007, developers were required to permanently protect at least two acres of agricultural land somewhere within the Davis Planning Area (See

Figure 27) 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:

- *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 27). 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 (See Figure 19). These priority acquisition areas 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.

These incentives, or location-based “credits,” are summarized in Figure 28 below:

Figure 28: Davis Ag Mitigation Location-Based Credits

If 1 acre of mitigation land is located:	Then developer gets "credit" for protecting:
Adjacent to city limits and within ¼ mile of the city limits	2 acres (2:1)
Adjacent to the required adjacent mitigation land	1 acre (1:1)
Within city designated priority open space acquisition areas	1 acre (1:1)
Elsewhere in the Davis Planning Area	1/5 of an acre (0.2:1)

As shown in the table above, if the developer protects one acre either adjacent to the required Adjacent Mitigation Land or within priority acquisition areas, then the developer would be able to “count” one acre toward the 2:1 agricultural land mitigation requirement. If the developer protects one acre adjacent to the city limits or within ¼ of the city limits, then the developer would be able to “count” two acres toward the 2:1 agricultural land mitigation requirement.

If the developer protects one acre anywhere else within the Davis Planning Area, then the developer would be able to “count” only 1/5 of that acre toward the 2:1 agricultural land mitigation requirement. So, five acres protected anywhere else within the Davis Planning Area equal only one acre toward the 2:1 agricultural land mitigation requirement.

Due to the location-based factors or “credits,” the actual acreage protected can be significantly more than twice the acres being developed.

Finally, it is important to note that the developer may satisfy up to 50% of the agricultural land mitigation requirement by paying an in-lieu fee based on the appraised value of agricultural land near the city limits.

- **2010 – Measure R (previously Measure J) was approved by voters.** Measure R (the Citizens’ Right to Vote on Future Use of Open Space and Agricultural Lands Ordinance), known as Measure J in 2000, was included on the City of Davis’ June 2010 ballot and was approved for renewal. The sunset date was extended 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.
- **2016 – Public workshop and update to 2002 A&M Plan occur.** The City, in partnership with the Open Space and Habitat Commission, undertook a public outreach effort in 2016 to solicit feedback about the City’s Open Space Program. That feedback included a public workshop (about 40 attendees), an on-line survey (400 responses), and focus groups (16 attendees). The primary goal of this outreach effort was to solicit input from the community about how it would like open space dollars spent over the next 15 years, including identifying acquisition priorities, possible restoration efforts, and public accessibility improvements. The City’s consultant hired to help facilitate this effort (the UC Davis Extension Collaboration Center) completed its report in the summer of 2016 summarizing the results from the City’s outreach effort. To read the consultant’s summary report, click [here](#). In general, the results show that there is very high support for the City’s Open Space Program. But the community in general would like the City to focus more on protecting land closer to the City limits, restoring habitats and ecosystems, especially riparian corridors, and increasing the public accessibility of the City’s open spaces. The community also would like to see (i) more transparency in the budgeting process and in the way the City manages its open spaces, and (ii) greater public outreach and



Figure 29: March 2016 Open Space Public Workshop

information about the City's open spaces. The City has incorporated this feedback into the 2030 Strategic Plan (which built upon and replaced the 2002 Acquisition and Management Plan).

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Tools in the Open Space Program Toolbox

Appendix B: A Chronology of Milestones: Davis Open Space Protection

Appendix C: Spreadsheet Showing Measure O Revenues and Expenses (2000 – 2015)

Appendix D: References

Appendix A Tools in the Open Space Program Toolbox

The City works with willing sellers to protect land in a number of ways, including conservation easements and land purchases. All of these tools are discussed briefly below:

- ***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 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 Fund 135 (the Measure O Special Tax Fund), Fund 190 (Agriculture Mitigation Fees) and Fund 475 (Development Impact Fees for Open Space).
- ***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. The City pays for these land acquisitions using grant funds, leveraged with matching funds from Fund 135 (the Measure O Special Tax Fund), Fund 190 (Agriculture Mitigation Fees) and Fund 475 (Development Impact Fees for Open Space).
- ***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 land and conservation easements. Measure O now provides about \$650,000 every year for open space acquisition and management. By itself, Measure O does not generate 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.
- ***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, (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.

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.

- *The agriculture mitigation requirement.* Under the City's agricultural land mitigation requirement, developers must permanently protect at least two acres of agricultural

Appendix A Tools in the Open Space Program Toolbox

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:

- **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 Attachment 2). 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. These priority acquisition areas 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.
- *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.
- ***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.

Appendix A

Tools in the Open Space Program Toolbox

- ***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.

- ***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.

These tools all do different things, but work together to implement the City's Open Space Program. 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.

Appendix B

A Chronology of Milestones: Davis Open Space Protection

The City and the citizens of Davis have been active in the protection of natural resources, sensitive habitat, and agricultural lands in, and surrounding, the community for the past several decades. In addition to protecting acreage within the Davis Planning Area, the City and its citizens also established an innovative and groundbreaking planning and regulatory framework for protecting open space. Some of the key milestones in developing this innovative and groundbreaking framework, in addition to the passage of Measure O, include:

- **1986 – The first local measure to protect open space was passed.** The first local measure to protect open space, Measure S, was passed by 58% of voters in 1986 to expand Central Park. This measure was sponsored by a local citizen’s action group called Save Open Space, and former City mayor Maynard Skinner was one of the members (Francis and others 1988).
- **1987 – The City of Davis’s General Plan was updated to include open space vision.** In 1987, the City approved an updated General Plan to replace the 1973 General Plan. This updated version directed the City to plan for the “completion of Davis as a city surrounded by agriculture and open space uses” in the form of a “Ring Greenway” (Francis and others 1988).
- **1988 – The first open space area was acquired.** In 1988, the City acquired its first open space area, a 13-acre easement with no public access near the North Davis Farms subdivision. It was provided at no cost to the City as part of a housing project (Francis and others 1988).
- **1988 – A citywide survey reveals strong support for an open space tax.** Also in 1988, Stan Jones, a landscape architecture graduate student at U.C. Davis, was in the process of developing his senior thesis on Davis open space and greenways. From his recreation survey among Davis citizens, he concluded that, although the City had “a well-developed park and recreation system that provides open space for citizens,” many of the parks were unused or under-used because of problems with accessibility. He also found that 93% of those surveyed would support a greenway in some way. Of those, 61% would approve a small greenway tax and 53% were in favor of a bond issue to raise revenue for the greenway (Francis and others 1988).
- **1989 – The Davis Greenway Plan was published.** In 1989, Jones, along with co-authors Mark Francis (director of U.C. Davis’s Center for Design Research) and Kerry Dawson (Director of the U.C. Davis Arboretum), published *Davis Greenway Plan: A Collaborative Planning Project Between the City of Davis and the University of California –Davis*. This report was a proposal to “create a multi-layered system of open space and habitat in and around the community... [W]ith the downtown areas serving as a hub, this ring of open space would link [all areas of town]... [enabling] residents to travel on bike or foot, all day long, experiencing a wide variety of recreational opportunities that are not currently taken advantage of” (Francis and others 1988).

Appendix B

A Chronology of Milestones: Davis Open Space Protection

The Davis Greenway Plan provided site-specific recommendations for establishing fifty miles of bike paths, parks and natural areas into one continuous system of parks and open spaces connecting all parts of the city with green infrastructure. These “greenways” were envisioned to eventually form “a coordinated system of open space that links existing natural and cultural facilities using city streets, railroad rights-of-way, utility easements and natural features such as stream corridors and drainage channels.”

The Greenway Plan identified four main categories of greenways:

- *Greenstreets*: tree-canopied streets that are aesthetically pleasing, with bike lanes and signs to direct people to other parts of the Greenway system.
 - *Natural Habitat Areas*: lands in relatively natural condition that provide wildlife habitat, including Putah Creek, Willow Slough, and smaller areas such as drainage channels and ponds.
 - *Green Ring*: a buffer zone around the city, separating it from other adjacent cities with a variety of open space types, including agricultural lands, biking and hiking trails, and wildlife habitat. This is made up of many different elements, including the University Arboretum, Putah Creek, Willow Slough (and Bypass) and other lands.
 - *Connector Greenways*: an extension of the Greenstreets concept, these are more naturalized linkages located further from the core of the city. These Connectors provide recreation and wildlife linkages between the city, Natural Habitat Areas, and the Green Ring. Examples include undeveloped roadsides and drainage swales.
-
- **1990 – The City of Davis Open Space Program was established.** The City established an Open Space Program in 1990 to implement long-standing policies that called for the protection of the farmlands and habitat areas that surround the city. The initial work of the program focused on setting priorities for open space acquisitions and identifying potential funding sources. 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.

 - **1993 – The City of Davis’s General Plan was updated to incorporate the open space vision included in the Davis Greenway Plan.** The 1993 update of the City of Davis’s General Plan referred to the Greenway Plan as the Open Space Element of the General Plan. The General Plan included open space categories for all of the elements of the Greenway Plan (i.e., Greenstreets, Green Ring, Connector Greenways, and Natural Habitat Areas), as well as Agricultural Reserves, Agricultural Open Space, Neighborhood Greenbelts, City and Neighborhood Parks, and Community Infrastructure (for example, wetlands at the wastewater treatment plant).

 - **1993 – The City funded its first open space acquisition.** In 1993, the City sought and received a \$1.114 million state grant (using Proposition 70 bond funds) to fund its first acquisition of open space land: the South Fork Preserve, a 185-acre nature preserve adjacent to the South Fork of Putah Creek (City of Davis 2002a).

Appendix B

A Chronology of Milestones: Davis Open Space Protection

- **1995 – The Right to Farm and Farmland Preservation Ordinance was enacted.** The City of Davis and its citizens were also interested in preserving the local agricultural landscape around Davis. In 1995, the City Council approved the Right to Farm and Farmland Preservation Ordinance (Ordinance 1823). This ordinance defined City policy to work cooperatively with Yolo and Solano counties to: (1) preserve and encourage agricultural land use and operations within the Davis Planning Area, (2) reduce the occurrence of conflicts between agricultural and non-agricultural lands uses, (3) reduce the loss of agricultural resources by limiting the circumstances under which agricultural operations may be deemed a nuisance; and (4) require mitigation for the loss of agricultural land (City of Davis 1995).

- **1995 – The City’s first agriculture mitigation requirement and agricultural buffer requirement were adopted.** To achieve the objectives in the Right to Farm and Farmland Preservation Ordinance, 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 are the agriculture mitigation requirement and the agricultural buffer requirement, two key implementing tools in the City’s Open Space Program:
 - *Agriculture mitigation requirement.* The term “agricultural mitigation” means that developers must “mitigate” for any agricultural land they develop into urban uses. They must pay to protect other land (i.e., they must buy land outright or buy conservation easements on land) as “mitigation” for the land that will be permanently removed from agriculture production. Beginning in 1995, developers were required to protect the same number of acres that were being developed (1:1, or 1-for-1) and/or pay an in-lieu fee. This requirement was strengthened by the City Council in 2007.

 - *Agricultural buffer requirement.* Beginning in 1995, developers were also required to 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.

- **1996 – The Open Space and Habitat Commission was established.** To assist the City’s developing Open Space Program, and to solicit public involvement, the City’s temporary Open Space Committee (convened for the City of Davis’s General Plan planning process) recommended that the City establish a more permanent open space committee. It was becoming clearer that open space was more than just recreational parks and that it included agricultural, natural, and semi-natural lands within and around the city (City of Davis 1996).

In 1996, the City Council unanimously passed Resolution 7985 establishing a formal Open Space and Habitat Commission. The new Commission was directed to:

- advise the City Council and staff on all open space issues, program, and projects;

Appendix B

A Chronology of Milestones: Davis Open Space Protection

- monitor and facilitate the implementation of the City's open space objectives and identify solutions to implementation problems;
- serve as a focal point for the community and City government for open space projects and issues;
- identify implementation opportunities;
- generate public support through education and promotion;
- monitor implementation for consistency with the Open Space Element;
- facilitate volunteer activities and cooperative ventures; and
- monitor problems and identify solutions. (City of Davis 1996).

The City's Open Space and Habitat Commission consists of seven regular members appointed for either two or four year terms by the City Council, advises the City Council on all matters relating to open space and habitat issues in the Davis Planning Area. These issues include topics related to natural areas, wildlife and wildlife habitat, agricultural land conservation, land acquisition, regional parks, trail systems, environmental education and interpretation, project site design and project operations and maintenance.

The Open Space and Habitat Commission serves as the focal point for the community and City government for open space projects and issues. It provides a forum for public input on open space issues, monitors the implementation of the City's open space objectives, and identifies solutions to implementation problems. It works cooperatively with the Planning Commission, the Recreation and Parks Commission, and other City and community groups on issues of mutual interest.

- **1998 – The first open space implementation and financing plan was developed.** The City hired Economic Planning Systems, Inc. (“EPS”) from Berkeley to assist in developing an open space implementation and financing plan. In late 1997, the City provided EPS with a list of priority projects identified by the Open Space and Habitat Commission, and in 1998, EPS completed its final report on the Davis Open Space Implementation Plan (Economic Planning Systems, Inc. 1998). The projects evaluated in this study were intended as examples to illustrate the magnitude of open space needs (land area and costs). The report identified a total of 2,351 acres of open space protection needs at a cost of \$10,665,051 (in 1998 dollars) for acquisition and improvement and \$1,493,921 (in 1998 dollars) in operation and maintenance. It also identified existing funding sources for those projects, and described additional financing mechanisms that could be used to meet the difference between estimated costs and existing funding sources.
- **2000 – Measure J was approved by voters.** 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 required 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 could choose to put a proposed land use change on the ballot for voter consideration. Measure J was renewed in 2010 as Measure R.

Appendix B

A Chronology of Milestones: Davis Open Space Protection

- **2000—Measure O, the parcel tax to fund open space acquisition and maintenance, was passed.** Although substantial progress had been made prior to 2000 in protecting open space, the City and local citizens were already recognizing that this work depended on transitory and speculative funding sources. The reliance on impact-fee based funding meant that open-space funding required urban development, which was responsible for converting open space. The City needed funding that was not growth dependent (Greenwald and Freeman 2000). Reliance on grant funding was keeping the City in competition with many other local governments and nonprofit organizations. At the time, City planners foresaw a trend toward less development-related funding and greater competition for grant funding (City of Davis 2000). It was clear that a stable funding source was needed for the City to reach its long-term open space protection and management goals.

Based in part on the 1998 Davis Open Space Implementation Plan, the Open Space and Habitat Commission recommended that the City acquire lands and easements for riparian corridors with high biological value and farmlands near the City. In 1999, the City Council approved the Commission's priorities, and directed the Commission to develop a strategy for a stable funding source to acquire and maintain these priority open space areas. By December 1999, the Commission recommended placing both a bond and a sales tax increase on the November 2000 ballot to provide this funding. The City Council revised this proposal to be a special tax for open space funding, and by May 2000, the City Council agreed to place it on the November ballot. The specific language for the tax was provided in Ordinance 2033, which added the tax to Article 15.17 of Chapter 15 of the Davis City Code. In July 2000, the City Council unanimously passed this Ordinance 2033, subject to the approval of the voters.

City officials, the Open Space and Habitat Commission, and others actively promoted support for Measure O, including both of the City's Yolo County Supervisors, Lois Wolk and Dave Rosenberg, State Assemblywoman Helen Thomson, and many former mayors and City Council members. A wide array of organizations, including the Yolano and Mother Lode chapters of the Sierra Club, the Putah Creek Council, the Trust for Public Land, Tree Davis, the Davis Democratic Club Executive Board, the Yolo County Green Party, the Davis Professional Firefighters Association, and the Davis Police Officers Association also added their support (Greenwald and Freeman 2000).

Measure O was approved by voters in the November 2000 election with over 70% of the vote, more than the super majority needed to pass.

- **2001 – The City of Davis's General Plan was updated to include an urban agricultural transition area around the City.** The 2001 General Plan Update placed a strong emphasis on protecting open space and agricultural resources. It laid out a long-term land-use vision of maintaining Davis as a “cohesive, compact, university-oriented community surrounded by and containing farmland, greenbelts, natural habitats, and natural resources.” The vision provides for use of linkages, corridors and other connectors to provide a network of parks, open space, greenbelts and bike paths

Appendix B

A Chronology of Milestones: Davis Open Space Protection

throughout the city. This vision was further articulated by 45 open space and agricultural protection goals and policies in the 2001 Update (City of Davis 2001).

Although the concepts of linkages and corridors were not new, the 2001 Update also formally adopted a new Urban Agricultural Transition Area around Davis. Allowable uses in the Urban Agricultural Transition Area include trails and bikeways, wildlife habitat, drainage ways, community gardens, and agriculture. The related, but distinct, agricultural buffer requirement found in the City's Right to Farm and Farmland Preservation Ordinance includes a minimum 150-foot wide buffer between agricultural areas and residential uses (Francis and others 1988).

- **2002 – The City adopted an acquisition and management plan for open space.** As part of the debate that led up to the passage of Measure O, the City Council decided that a more formal approach to open space acquisition and management planning was needed. It adopted a resolution outlining a planning process to establish open space acquisition priorities and management goals ¹⁰(City of Davis 2002b). The City Council directed the Open Space and Habitat Commission and staff to refine City open space priorities and establish a framework plan to guide future acquisition and management decisions. A year-long planning process followed which included several phases: input and information gathering, drafting of the plan, and consideration of the final draft by the City Council. The target completion date for the plan was set to coincide with the receipt of the first tax Measure revenues in late 2001 and early 2002 (City of Davis 2002b).

In February 2001, the Commission held a public workshop to gather input on open space planning priorities. Landowners, resource conservation groups, farmers, and interested citizens were invited to this workshop. Over 120 comments were received from the more than 35 attendees. Working from these comments, General Plan policies, and open space resource data, staff and the Commission began drafting the acquisition and management plan. During its monthly spring meetings, the Commission analyzed public comments, resource data, and samples of other open space plans to identify the goals that would serve as the foundation for the plan. The Commission's summer meetings involved refinement of the plan goals and examination of how Measure O revenue should be spent.

In late summer and early fall 2001, City staff drafted a public-review version of the plan. By the winter of 2001, staff had incorporated public comments into a robust plan that provided direction for Open Space Program activities. The Council adopted the Acquisition and Management Plan in January 2002 (the "2002 A&M Plan") (City of Davis 2002b). In brief, the 2002 A&M Plan:

- Set general goals and policies to direct the City's effort to protect and effectively manage open space lands and resources.
- Provided the basis for informed open space land and resource acquisition decisions.
- Provided direction for land and resource management decisions.
- Provided organizational guidelines for the City's Open Space Program's budget.

¹⁰ General Plan policy POS 1.7.d, pg 237 also calls for the development of an acquisition and management plan.

Appendix B

A Chronology of Milestones: Davis Open Space Protection

- Established a framework for a consistent, objective, and open decision-making process.
- Provided a basis for evaluating the City's progress toward reaching the open space protection goals established in the 2001 General Plan (City of Davis 2002a).

The 2002 A&M Plan also identified the following different types of open space categories for spending Measure O funds:

- *Urban Fringe*: Open space lands that help define the urban limits of Davis and provide an adequate buffer between urban and rural land uses.
- *Urban (or Community) Separator*: Open space lands that separate Davis from neighboring cities to preserve the unique character of each community.
- *Agriculture*: Prime agricultural lands that maintain the long-term viability of agriculture in the Davis Planning Area.
- *Biological and Natural Resources*: Important wildlife habitat and lands for sensitive species and other significant natural resources.
- *Scenic Resources*: Lands that provide views of significant local and regional landmarks and community gateways.

Unlike the 1998 Open Space Implementation Plan, the 2002 A&M Plan did not identify specific projects to be undertaken, nor did it estimate the costs for individual projects (City of Davis 2007).

- **2004 – An open space acquisition priorities map was adopted.** Following the City Council's adoption of the 2002 A&M Plan, the City Council also adopted an acquisition priorities map in January 2004. This map was the result of nearly a year of analysis and deliberation by the Open Space and Habitat Commission and City Council. It geographically represents the acquisition priorities described in the City's General Plan and the 2002 A&M Plan.
- **2007 – The Davis Greenway Plan is reaffirmed as a guiding open space planning document.** Unfortunately, the 2002 A&M Plan inadvertently overlooked elements of the important 1989 Davis Greenway Plan, which had been referenced in several prior City documents (i.e., the 1993 General Plan, the 1998 Open Space Implementation Plan, and the 2001 General Plan Update). As a result, in 2007, the City Council requested that the Open Space and Habitat Commission review the Davis Greenway Plan in light of long-term open space planning. The Commission unanimously recommended that the City Council recognize the Davis Greenway Plan as a complementary framework to the 2002 A&M Plan, and to use it to guide future City planning decisions, revisions to the General Plan, and decisions regarding acquisition of land and easements for open space purposes. The City Council then unanimously approved a resolution reaffirming the use of the Davis Greenway Plan as a tool to guide future open space and land use decisions, and in particular to make the plan's vision of an interconnected, coordinated system of open space and greenways in and around the City a priority (City of Davis 2007).

Thus, the long-term vision of the City's Open Space Program is the vision from the 2001 General Plan Update refined by both the 2002 A&M Plan and the Davis Greenway Plan.

Appendix B
A Chronology of Milestones: Davis Open Space Protection

With the 2007 reaffirmation of the Davis Greenway Plan by the City Council, City staff updated the acquisition priorities map to include priority areas identified in the Davis Greenway Plan (City of Davis 2007). The resulting map is shown in Figure 19.

- **2007 – The City’s ag mitigation requirement was strengthened.** The City first established an agriculture mitigation requirement in 1995. In 2007, that requirement was strengthened. Beginning in 2007, developers were required to 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:
 - *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 Attachment 2). 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 (See Figure 19). These priority acquisition areas 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.

These incentives, or location-based “credits,” are summarized in the table below:

If 1 acre of mitigation land is located:	Then developer gets "credit" for protecting:
Adjacent to city limits and within ¼ mile of the city limits	2 acres (2:1)
Adjacent to the required adjacent mitigation land	1 acre (1:1)
Within city designated priority open space acquisition areas	1 acre (1:1)
Elsewhere in the Davis Planning Area	1/5 of an acre (0.2:1)

Appendix B
A Chronology of Milestones: Davis Open Space Protection

As shown in the table above, if the developer protects one acre either adjacent to the required Adjacent Mitigation Land or within priority acquisition areas, then the developer would be able to “count” one acre toward the 2:1 agricultural land mitigation requirement. If the developer protects one acre adjacent to the city limits or within ¼ of the city limits, then the developer would be able to “count” two acres toward the 2:1 agricultural land mitigation requirement.

If the developer protects one acre anywhere else within the Davis Planning Area, then the developer would be able to “count” only 1/5 of that acre toward the 2:1 agricultural land mitigation requirement. So, five acres protected anywhere else within the Davis Planning Area equal only one acre toward the 2:1 agricultural land mitigation requirement.

An example of how the City’s agricultural land mitigation requirement might work in the real world is shown in the table below:

Example: If a development project converts 250 acres of ag land to urban uses				
Acres of ag land converted to urban uses:				250
Acres needed to satisfy the 2:1 ag mitigation requirement:				500
		Applicable Ratio	Actual Acres Protected	Acres Needed To Satisfy Ag Mit Requirement
Adjacent Mitigation Land				
Acres adjacent to project; along non-urbanized perimeter of project		1:1	50	50
Remainder Mitigation Land				
Acres adjacent to city limits and within ¼ mile of the city limits		2:1	125	250
Acres adjacent to the required minimum adjacent mitigation land		1:1	0	0
Acres within city designated priority open space acquisition areas		1:1	0	0
Acres elsewhere in the Davis planning area		0.2:1	1,000	200
		Total	1,175	500

In this example, a developer plans to develop 250 acres of agricultural land into urban uses. The City’s agricultural land mitigation requirement requires the developer to permanently protect 500 acres of agricultural land (2:1, or twice the acres being developed). In this example, the developer is able to protect 50 acres adjacent to his project as his Adjacent Mitigation Land requirement. So, his Remainder Mitigation Land requirement is 450 acres. In this example, he gets those 450 acres by permanently protecting: (1) 125 acres within ¼ mile of the city limits (250 credited acres), and (2) 1,000 acres far from the city limits but within the Davis Planning Area (200 credited acres). Those 1,000 acres only “count” as 200 acres toward the City’s agricultural land mitigation requirement because the 1,000 acres protected far from the city limits count less than the acres the developer protected close to the city limits.

As shown in this example, due to the location-based factors or “credits,” the actual acreage protected can be significantly more than twice the acres being developed.

Appendix B

A Chronology of Milestones: Davis Open Space Protection

Finally, it is important to note that the developer may satisfy up to 50% of the agricultural land mitigation requirement by paying an in-lieu fee based on the appraised value of agricultural land near the city limits.

- **2010 – Measure R (previously Measure J) was approved by voters.** Measure R (the Citizens’ Right to Vote on Future Use of Open Space and Agricultural Lands Ordinance), known as Measure J in 2000, was included on the City of Davis’ June 2010 ballot and was approved for renewal. The sunset date was extended 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.

- **2016 – Public workshop and update to 2002 A&M Plan occurs.** The City, in partnership with the Open Space and Habitat Commission, undertook a public outreach effort in 2016 to solicit feedback about the City’s Open Space Program. That feedback included a public workshop (about 40 attendees), an on-line survey (400 responses), and focus groups (16 attendees). The primary goal of this outreach effort was to solicit input from the community about how it would like open space dollars spent over the next 15 years, including identifying acquisition priorities, possible restoration efforts, and public accessibility improvements. The City’s consultant hired to help facilitate this effort (the UC Davis Extension Collaboration Center) completed its report in the summer of 2016 summarizing the results from the City’s outreach effort. To read the consultant’s summary report, click [here](#). In general, the results show that there is very high support for the City’s Open Space Program. But the community in general would like the City to focus more on protecting land closer to the City limits, restoring habitats and ecosystems, especially riparian corridors, and increasing the public accessibility of the City’s open spaces. The community also would like to see (i) more transparency in the budgeting process and in the way the City manages its open spaces, and (ii) greater public outreach and information about the City’s open spaces. The City has incorporated this feedback into the 2030 Strategic Plan (which built upon and replaced the 2002 Acquisition and Management Plan).

Appendix C Spreadsheet Showing Measure O Revenues and Expenses (2000-2015)

FUND 135 (MEASURE O FUND)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	Total
	FY01/02	FY02/03	FY03/04	FY04/05	FY05/06	FY06/07	FY07/08	FY08/09	FY09/10	FY10/11	FY11/12	FY12/13	FY13/14	FY14/15		
Revenues																
Parcel Tax Revenue	\$626,860	\$630,112	\$615,617	\$625,694	\$627,096	\$627,345	\$637,786	\$640,287	\$641,221	\$634,857	\$637,161	\$636,293	\$640,980	\$650,000	\$8,871,309	
Interest/Investment Income	\$10,822	\$22,991	\$8,261	\$44,886	\$44,583	\$102,537	\$123,808	\$82,265	\$33,384	\$11,485	\$4,586	\$5,429	\$5,507	\$3,728	\$504,269	
Grant Revenue	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$62,750	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,353,000	\$807,084	\$0	\$2,222,834	
Sale of Leland Ranch (Easement Retained)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$3,093,371	\$0	\$3,093,371	
Misc Reimbursements	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$3,285	\$29,595	\$5,100	\$8,695	\$12	\$0	\$0	\$9,483	\$388	\$14,402	\$70,960	
Total Revenues	\$637,682	\$653,103	\$623,877	\$670,579	\$674,963	\$822,227	\$766,694	\$731,247	\$674,616	\$646,342	\$641,747	\$2,004,205	\$4,547,330	\$668,130	\$14,762,743	
Expenses																
Personnel Expenses	\$5,276	\$54,955	\$97,750	\$81,886	\$118,245	\$117,016	\$106,029	\$122,770	\$161,435	\$167,640	\$166,418	\$187,853	\$281,255	\$283,247	\$1,951,774	
Non-Personnel Expenses																
Contracted Property Management Services	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$2,064	\$1,701	\$2,875	\$11,680	\$0	\$0	\$2,914	\$1,950	\$7,771	\$3,352	\$8,097	\$42,404	
Share of General Overhead	\$232	\$0	\$1,500	\$0	\$211	\$2,089	\$2,522	\$18,413	\$36,776	\$17,776	\$30,300	\$49,696	\$40,608	\$45,686	\$245,807	
Capital Improvements	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$20,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$971	\$12,408	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$283	\$33,661	
Acquisitions/Transaction Costs																
McConeghy Ranch (300 acres)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$388,278	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$388,278	
Ebey/Laughtin Ranch (146 acres)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$692,472	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$692,472	
Barger Ranch (80 acres)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$38,732	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$38,732	
Wasserman Farm (80 acres)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$83,150	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$83,150	
Staib Farm (300 acres)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$26,646	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$26,646	
Miles/Kidwell Farm (488 acres)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
McIssac Farm (85 acres)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
Stanley Farm (90 acres)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
Staib 72 Farm (72 acres)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$10,000	\$0	\$132,000	\$0	\$0	\$142,000	
Mace Curve (390 acres)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$150,000	\$3,657,578	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$3,807,578	
Kerr Farm (90 acres)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
Eoff Farm (All Phases) (712 acres)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$2,608,455	\$0	\$0	\$2,608,455	
Transaction Costs	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$35,941	\$0	\$8,033	\$61,366	\$45,730	\$38,030	\$79,221	\$35,107	\$79,464	\$72,323	\$2,761	\$457,976	
Total Expenses	\$5,508	\$54,955	\$99,250	\$139,891	\$1,200,907	\$130,012	\$220,328	\$296,710	\$237,212	\$439,958	\$3,891,352	\$3,065,240	\$397,537	\$340,073	\$10,518,933	
Balance	\$632,174	\$598,147	\$524,628	\$530,689	(\$525,944)	\$692,215	\$546,366	\$434,537	\$437,404	\$206,384	(\$3,249,605)	(\$1,061,034)	\$4,149,793	\$328,057	\$4,243,810	
	FY01/02	FY02/03	FY03/04	FY04/05	FY05/06	FY06/07	FY07/08	FY08/09	FY09/10	FY10/11	FY11/12	FY12/13	FY13/14	FY14/15		
Personnel Expenses as a % of Parcel Tax	1%	9%	16%	13%	19%	19%	19%	22%	31%	30%	31%	39%	51%	52%		

Appendix D References

California Farmland Conservancy Program 2013. *Completed Easements and Planning Projects* Web. June 2013.

City of Davis 1995. *Municipal Code - Chapter 40A Right To Farm and Farmland Preservation. (Ordinance 1823)* Web. 30 Nov. 2012.

City of Davis 1996. *City Council Resolution 7985. Establishing a Formal Open Space Commission.*

City of Davis 2000. *Municipal Code - Article 15.17 Open Space Protection Tax.* Web. 30 Nov. 2012.

City of Davis 2001. *City of Davis General Plan Update*, May 2001. Section III, General Plan Visions, Assistance in compilation by Design, Community & Environment, Berkeley, CA.

City of Davis 2002a. *Davis Open Space Acquisition and Management Plan.* Adopted January 9, 2002.

City of Davis 2002b. *Parks & General Services. City of Davis Open Space Acquisition and Management Plan Overview.* Web. 30 Nov. 2012.

City of Davis 2007. *City Council Resolution 07-199. Reaffirming The Use Of The Davis Greenway Plan By The City Of Davis As A Tool To Guide Future Open Space And Land Use Decisions.* 12 Dec. 2007. Web. 29 Nov. 2012.

City of Davis 2008. *Parks and Community Services. Parks and Facilities Master Plan phone survey results.* 31 Jan, 2008.

Economic Planning Systems, Inc. 1998. *Final Report on the Davis Open Space Implementation Plan.* April 2, 1998. Prepared for the City of Davis

Francis, Mark, Stan Jones and Kerry Dawson. 1988. *The Davis Greenway Plan.* UC Davis: Center for Design Research.

Greenwald, Sue, and Sheryl Freeman 2000. *Open Space: A Legacy For Future Generations.* Editorial. Davis Enterprise. 28 Oct. 2000: Sue Greenwald Davis City Council: Open Space and Measure O. Web. 30 Nov. 2012.

Trust for Public Land 2012. *LandVote Database.* 2012. Web. 29 Nov. 2012.

Yolo County 2000. Elections Office. *Yolo Elections Office: Davis Open Space Protection Tax.* 7 Nov. 2000. Web. 30 Nov. 2012.