



Boulder County Comprehensive Plan

GOALS

Introduction, Definition, Goals & Policies

The statements contained herein represent goals for future land uses within Boulder County. The challenge is to develop a Comprehensive Plan which encompasses 750 square miles of land with a diversity of geologic characteristics: alpine tundra, wooded mountain terrain and sweeping plains. A variety of uses further characterize the county with wildlife habitat, modern-day mountain settlements, urban developments, industry, farming, and natural and man-made historical features including remnants of mining camps. The county must strive toward maintaining a region of beauty and functional fitness that enhances the quality of life for all residents and visitors.

One primary concern must be fair resolution of conflicting individual interests while providing the maximum opportunities for individual self-development. All institutions - political, social, economic, and educational - must work together to further enhance the dignity of the citizen and permit the maximum opportunities for individual choice. The people within the county vary in their interests, values, desires, and accordingly, in their perception of what is “needed”. Public involvement is, therefore, essential in the development, interpretation and implementation of these goals.

These broad stated goals are the foundation on which land use policies and proposals have been constructed to help provide a means for satisfying some of these specific and widely-differing individual interests and for integrating them on a County-wide basis through the vehicle of the Comprehensive Plan.

These broad stated goals are the foundation on which land use policies have been constructed.

- **Design of the Region**

- A.1** Future urban development should be located within or adjacent to existing urban areas in order to eliminate sprawl and strip development, to assure the provision of adequate urban services, to preserve agriculture, forestry and open space land uses, and to maximize the utility of funds invested in public facilities and services.
- A.2** Existing communities should grow at whatever rate they consider desirable, within the limits of what is acceptable to the citizens of areas potentially affected by that growth, and to the citizens of the county, while preserving and improving the quality of life and the aesthetic and functional fitness of land uses within the county.



Environmental preservation is a dominant theme of the Plan.

A.3 Diverse, compatible, and functional land use patterns should be established and, when necessary, revised to prevent urban and rural decay.

A.4 Within Community Service Areas a suitable balance between employment opportunities and available housing, in light of the labor force and other demographic characteristics of the community, should be established and maintained.

● **Environmental Management**

B.1 Unique or distinctive natural features and ecosystems, and cultural features and sites should be conserved and preserved in recognition of the irreplaceable character of such resources and their importance to the quality of life in Boulder County. Natural resources should be managed in a manner which is consistent with sound conservation practices and ecological principles.

B.2 Air, water and noise pollution; inappropriate development in natural hazard areas; and overall environmental degradation should be reduced as much as possible or eliminated in order to prevent potential harm to life, health and property.

B.3 Critical wildlife habitats should be conserved and preserved in order to avoid the depletion of wildlife and to perpetuate and encourage a diversity of species in the county.

B.4 Significant natural communities, including significant riparian communities and rare plant sites, should be conserved and preserved to retain living examples of natural ecosystems, furnish a baseline of ecological processes and function, and enhance and maintain the biodiversity of the region.

B.5 Wetlands which are important to maintaining the overall balance of ecological systems should be conserved.

B.6 Unique or critical environmental resources identified pursuant to Goals B.1, B.3, B.4 and B.5 shall be conserved and preserved in a manner which assures their protection from adverse impacts, with the private sector, non-county agencies and other governmental jurisdictions being encouraged to participate.

B.7 Productive agricultural land is a limited resource of both environmental and economic value and should be conserved and preserved.

B.8 Environmental Conservation Areas (ECAs) should be conserved and preserved in order to perpetuate those species, biological communities, and ecological processes that function over large geographic areas and require a high degree of naturalness.

B.9 Riparian ecosystems, which are important plant communities, wildlife habitat and movement corridors, shall be protected.

● **Parks and Open Space**

- C.1 Provision should be made for open space to protect and enhance the quality of life and enjoyment of the environment.
- C.2 Parks, open space, and recreation facilities should be encouraged throughout the county and should be integrated whenever suitable with public facilities. The county will assume only those financial responsibilities for public development as provided under Open Space Policy OS 4.02.
- C.3 Open space shall be used as a means of preserving the rural character of the unincorporated county and as a means of protecting from development those areas which have significant environmental, scenic or cultural value.
- C.4 A county-wide trail system shall be promoted to serve transportation and recreation purposes.
- C.5 The private sector, non-county agencies, and other governmental jurisdictions should be encouraged to participate in open space preservation and trails development in Boulder County.

● **Residential Goals**

- D.1 A diversity of housing types and densities should be encouraged in order to assure decent housing for all persons.
- D.2 Quality residential areas, which function as integral neighborhood units with schools, parks and other similar facilities as centers, should be encouraged.

D.3 Rehabilitation of existing residential facilities should be promoted where feasible.

● **Community Facilities**

- E.1 Preservation and utilization of water for agricultural purposes within the county shall be encouraged.
- E.2 A functional balance between community facilities and potential land capacities (population) should be maintained.
- E.3 Development should not place undue burdens on any existing community.
- E.4 Cooperation or consolidation of urban services among municipalities, special districts and companies should be encouraged, when appropriate, to avoid duplication and overlapping costs and to establish a satisfactory level of quality, quantity and dependability of those services. The proliferation of special purpose districts should be discouraged.
- E.5 Adequate facilities and services which provide diverse educational, cultural, and social opportunities should be encouraged.
- E.6 Adequate facilities and services to assure the health, safety and welfare of all citizens should be promoted.

● **Economic Conditions**

- F.1 A balanced, diversified economy should be encouraged in order to maintain and enhance the quality of life of Boulder County citizens by assuring desirable local employment opportunities and strengthening and stabilizing the tax base.

Boulder County's unincorporated areas should remain rural in character.

Goal I.1 supports the concept of regional cooperation between governmental agencies.

- F.2** Adequate regional, community and neighborhood commercial facilities should be encouraged while avoiding conflicting land uses and unnecessary duplication of new commercial areas.
- F.3** New major commercial and industrial facilities should be located within incorporated areas.
- F.4** Commercial and industrial development should provide an attractive safe and healthy environment which does not have an adverse impact upon the surrounding areas.
- F.5** Rehabilitation of existing commercial and industrial facilities should be promoted where feasible.
- F.6** A climate for industry which is consistent with community growth desires and the ability of the community to absorb growth should be encouraged.

- **Transportation**

- G.1** Ensure Effective and Efficient Management of the Existing Transportation System. Manage and maintain existing transportation infrastructure and services in a cost-effective manner.
- G.2** Minimize Environmental Impacts. Minimize the negative environmental impacts of the transportation system such as air pollution, green house gas (GHG) emissions, noise pollution, water pollution, land and wildlife habitat fragmentation, land disturbance, and resource consumption.

- G.3** Ensure Safety for All Modes. Provide for transportation system development and operations that result in safe and secure travel by all modes and that enable prompt and effective emergency response.
- G.4** Support a Healthy and Sustainable Economy. Develop a transportation system that supports a robust economy and increases resiliency to economic fluctuations.
- G.5** Ensure Equitable Access to the Transportation System. Ensure that adequate transportation exists for all users regardless of age, income, or ability.
- G.6** Enhance County Identity and Community Character. Promote a transportation system that preserves, highlights, and enhances the County's diverse rural character and the history and culture of its unique communities.

- **Public Involvement**

- H.1** The county shall encourage public participation in the making of decisions by public and quasi-public bodies which significantly affect citizens.

- **Government Relations**

- I.1** The county should encourage and promote coordination and cooperation between Federal, State, and Local Government entities charged with making decisions which significantly affect land use in Boulder County.

- **Solid Waste Management**

- J.1** The county shall develop and maintain a county-wide solid waste management plan that is an integral part of the County Comprehensive Plan, subject to the other goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan.
- J.2** The county shall promote conversion of the county's solid waste from an environmental and social liability to a public asset by considering solid waste as a viable resource.

- **Cultural Resources**

- K.1** Every effort shall be made to identify and protect historic sites which meet national, state, or local criteria for historic designation from destruction or harmful alteration.
- K.2** Whenever possible, the county shall further the goals of cultural resource preservation using education and incentives in lieu of stringent regulatory controls.

- **Natural Hazards**

- L.1** Inappropriate development in natural hazard areas should be reduced as much as possible or eliminated in order to minimize potential harm to life, health, and property.
- L.2** Efforts to mitigate existing areas at risk to the impacts of natural hazards and disasters should be made to minimize the potential for harm to life, health, and property.

- **Agricultural Resources**

- M.1** Agricultural enterprises and activities are an important sector of the Boulder County economy and the county shall foster and promote a diverse and sustainable agricultural economy as an integral part of its activities to conserve and preserve agricultural lands in the county.