



# Parks and Open Space

5201 St. Vrain Road • Longmont, Colorado 80503  
303.678.6200 • Fax: 303.678.6177 • [www.bouldercounty.org](http://www.bouldercounty.org)

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## MINUTES AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE PARKS AND OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE September 22, 2016

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 p.m. by John Nibarger in the Hearing Room of the Board of Commissioners, Third Floor, Boulder County Courthouse, Boulder, Colorado.

### **POSAC Members in Attendance**

Present: Jenn Archuleta, Sue Cass, Cathy Comstock, James Mapes, Scott Miller, John Nibarger, Jim Krug, and Gordon Pedrow

Excused: Eric Hozempa

### **Staff in Attendance**

Renata Frye, Conrad Lattes, Jeff Moline, Nathan McBride, Stefan Reinold, Ernst Strenge, Al Hardy, Therese Glowacki, Vivienne Jannatpour, and Eric Lane - Parks & Open Space  
Nicole Wobus – Land Use

### **Approval of the August 25, 2016 Meeting Minutes**

Action Taken: Jenn Archuleta moved to accept the August 25 minutes. Jim Krug seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

### **Public Participation - Items not on the Agenda**

None

### **South St. Vrain Creek Post-flood Restoration Project**

*Presenters: Ernst Strenge, POS Resource Planning Manager;  
Scott Schreiber, Matrix Design Group; Luke Swan, Otak; and Brandon Parson, THK Associates*

**Action Requested: Information Only**

Public Comments:

- Steve Readmond, Boulder County.

### **Defensible Space Project**

*Staff Presenters: Nathan McBride & Stefan Reinold, Forestry & Fire*

**Action Requested: Information Only**

Public Comments: none

## **Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan Update**

*Staff Presenters: Nicole Wobus, Land Use & Jeff Moline, POS*

*Action Requested: Recommendation to Planning Commission & BOCC*

### Public Comments:

- Amy Strombotne, 8502 Stirrup Ct., Boulder County.

### Action Taken:

Sue Cass moved to approve adjustments to the BVCP update as have been made, asking staff to report back to POSAC only if significant changes are made, and Jenn Archuleta seconded.

***Motion carried unanimously.***

### **Director's Update**

- Eric Lane is the new Boulder County Parks & Open Space Director
- Staff has almost finished their draft for the GMO policy. POSAC has requested a presentation at the October 27 meeting, with possible final recommendation at the November 17 meeting.
- Plans for the annual POSAC Retreat are being discussed
- The Walden Ponds flood recovery finished last month.
- Work on Pella Ponds flood recovery has begun.
- A large forestry project will begin on the Betasso property on Oct, 10, closing the property at times because a helicopter will be flying.
- The AHI 5-mile loop is still under construction.
- The Heil 2 trail improvements have started.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 9:01 p.m.

The full audio, available staff memos, and related materials for this meeting can be found on our website: [www.BoulderCountyOpenSpace.org/POSAC](http://www.BoulderCountyOpenSpace.org/POSAC)



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## PARKS AND OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

**DATE:** Thursday, September 22, 2016  
**TIME:** 6:30 pm  
**PLACE:** Commissioners' Hearing Room, 3rd Floor, Boulder County Courthouse,  
1325 Pearl Street, Boulder, CO

### AGENDA

#### *Suggested Timetable*

- 6:30 1. **Approval of the August 25, 2016 Meeting Minutes**
- 2. **Public Participation - Items not on the Agenda**
- 6:40 3. **South St. Vrain Creek Post-flood Restoration Project**  
*Presenters: Ernst Streng, POS Resource Planning Manager & Scott Schreiber, Matrix Design Group*  
**Action Requested: Information Only**
- 7:25 4. **Defensible Space Project**  
*Staff Presenters: Nathan McBride & Stefan Reinold, Forestry & Fire*  
**Action Requested: Information Only**
- 8:10 5. **Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan Update**  
*Staff Presenters: Nicole Wobus, Land Use & Jeff Moline, POS*  
**Action Requested: Recommendation to Planning Commission & BOCC**
- 8:45 6. **Director's Update**
- 8:50 7. **Adjourn**

Available staff memos & related materials for this meeting may be viewed on our website:  
[www.BoulderCountyOpenSpace.org/POSAC](http://www.BoulderCountyOpenSpace.org/POSAC)



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## PARKS AND OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

**TO:** Parks & Open Space Advisory Committee

**TIME/DATE:** 6:30 p.m., Thursday, September 22, 2016

**LOCATION:** Commissioners Hearing Room, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, Boulder County Courthouse, 1325 Pearl Street, Boulder, CO

**AGENDA ITEM TITLE:** South St. Vrain Creek Post-flood Restoration Project

**PRESENTER:** Ernst Strenge, Resource Planning Manager & Scott Schreiber, Matrix Design Group

**ACTION REQUESTED:** Information only

Boulder County Parks & Open Space (BCPOS) and the Matrix Design Group consulting team will provide a brief overview of the South St. Vrain Creek Post-flood Restoration Project. For more information about the project including details about public engagement and background documents and presentations, visit [www.BoulderCountyOpenSpace.org/ssv](http://www.BoulderCountyOpenSpace.org/ssv)

### Summary

BCPOS with assistance from the Matrix Design Group consulting team has been leading post-flood restoration planning of a 3.2 mile stretch of South St. Vrain Creek. The planning area extends along South St. Vrain Creek from the Custode open space property down to the eastern most Old St. Vrain Road Bridge upstream of the Town of Lyons. Within the planning area, Boulder County owns and manages the majority of land, including Custode, Hall Ranch 2, and Hall Ranch / Hall Meadows open spaces. The planning area also contains a few private properties, as well as land owned by the City of Longmont. (see [www.BoulderCountyOpenSpace.org/ssv](http://www.BoulderCountyOpenSpace.org/ssv) for a planning area map)

Current funding for the project is through a Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Relief (CDBG-DR) planning grant, which is managed by the Colorado Department of Local Affairs (DOLA). The CDBG-DR grant covers planning, engineering and ecological surveys and analysis, restoration alternatives analysis, 30% design, and public engagement for post-flood stream restoration projects throughout the 3.2-mile corridor.

The project goal for the 30% design has been to:

*Provide a conceptual design for the entire South Saint Vrain Creek project area that restores and improves the channel and surrounding floodplain areas to a safe, natural, resilient, functioning, and ecologically rich habitat. This project will use qualitative research, quantitative data, and community input to inform resilient design that shall utilize natural system principles and onsite materials to expedite recovery from the 2013 floods and set up for better performance in future flood events. Components to meet goals include incorporating natural channel diversity and character, re-establishing floodplain benches for lateral connectivity, reducing longitudinal connectivity constraints, improving flow conveyance and sediment transport to maintain environmental values, promote naturally functioning stream processes, protect public and private infrastructure, improve*

*public safety, repair unstable erosion scars in high-risk areas, and revegetate denuded areas.*

Proposed restoration components for the planning area include floodplain connectivity, channel complexity (i.e. riffle-pools, woody debris, and overflow channels), bank stabilization, revegetation, and infrastructure protection. The consulting team will complete the final 30% design and Basis of Design report shortly before the September 22 meeting and will provide a summary of the findings of their planning, evaluations, designs, and next steps at the September 22 POSAC meeting.

### **Next Steps**

As of September 9, we are in the process of working with DOLA to secure additional funding to complete the design on portions of the planning area that have been identified for Natural Resource Conservation Service's Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) implementation funds. Areas receiving EWP funds include the Hall Meadows area (SSV1) and a smaller area above the Old South St. Vrain Road Bridge (SSV2). The EWP program will provide financial assistance for implementation of approved creek restoration plans. The county plans to secure this funding once the final designs have been completed. To receive EWP funds, final designs need to be completed by January 1, 2017.

Funding for implementation of other portions of the planning area has not yet been secured, and all projects proposed in the 30% designs will be dependent on the county or other agencies receiving additional funds for final design and implementation.



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### PARKS AND OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

**TO:** Parks & Open Space Advisory Committee

**TIME/DATE:** 6:30 p.m., Thursday, September 22, 2016

**LOCATION:** Commissioners Hearing Room, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, Boulder County Courthouse, 1325 Pearl Street, Boulder, CO

**AGENDA ITEM TITLE:** Defensible Space Project

**PRESENTER:** Nathan McBride –Project Coordinator & Stefan Reinold –Senior Resource Specialist

**ACTION REQUESTED:** Information Only

We will be discussing the Defensible Space Historic Structures project. This project is part of a FEMA hazard mitigation grant and wildfire risk reduction grant. The purpose of the project is to create defensible space to 100 structures clustered on 17 separate sites on Open Space properties. Integral to Parks & Open Space's mission to preserve the cultural heritage of Boulder County, is the ability to defend these structures from wildfire.



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## PARKS AND OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

**TO:** Parks & Open Space Advisory Committee

**TIME/DATE:** 6:30 p.m., Thursday, September 22

**LOCATION:** Commissioners Hearing Room, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor Boulder County Courthouse, 1325 Pearl Street, Boulder, CO

**AGENDA ITEM TITLE:** Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan Update

**PRESENTER:** Nicole Wobus, Long Range Planning and Policy Manager, Boulder County Land Use; Jeff Moline, Interim Agricultural Resources Manager, Boulder County Parks and Open Space

**ACTION REQUESTED:** Recommendation to Planning Commission and BOCC

### **INTRODUCTION**

At the August 25 meeting, Land Use and Parks and Open Space staff reviewed the updated Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan (BVCP) policies with POSAC. Following a general discussion of the updates, POSAC elected to review the latest draft of the pertinent chapters via email prior to the next regular meeting in September. POSAC directed staff to provide a summary of staff and POSAC comments collected electronically for further discussion at the September meeting. Staff suggests that POSAC's input would be especially valuable for Chapters 2 (Built Environment), 3 (Natural Environment), 8 (Community Well-Being), and 9 (Agriculture). Following discussion at the meeting, staff anticipates that POSAC will make a recommendation to the Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioners regarding the BVCP Update with suggested edits, changes, and additions.

### **BACKGROUND**

The BVCP policy updates reflect input from city and county staff, including staff input from the following county departments: Parks and Open Space, Public Health, Resource Conservation, Community Services, Boulder County Housing Authority, Sustainability, Transportation and Land Use. Staff seeks to finish integrating any major conceptual changes related to the policy updates by the end of September. However, language in the draft policy sections will continue to undergo revisions based on input from city and county decision makers, as well as further staff refinements to reflect previous input that has not yet been incorporated. Temporary endnotes in the draft policy sections are intended to explain the origin of the proposed changes. All policies will be renumbered for final draft.

Schedule of Discussion Sessions and Decision Dates:

- Wednesday, Sept. 21 – Boulder County Planning Commission (PC) Discussion Item
- Thursday, Sept. 22 – Parks and Open Space Advisory Council (POSAC) Discussion Item
- Friday, Oct. 7 – Near Final Draft of sections 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9 expected

- Thursday, Oct. 20 – City of Boulder Planning Board is scheduled to decide on proposed policy updates for sections 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9.
- Tuesday, Nov. 1 - City Council is scheduled to decide on proposed policy updates for sections 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9.
- Decision dates for county bodies are yet to be determined.

As you proceed in your review, please keep the following in mind:

- Since there have been several rounds of edits by multiple contributors, you may find the language could benefit from additional editing to improve flow and general readability. Please focus on the concepts versus the wording to make sure the policies are in line with county goals. Additional editing will take place once all substantive changes are completed. That said, if there are particular policies where language issues stand in the way of effectively communicating the intent of the policy, please let Land Use staff know.
- The county decision bodies only have decision authority over policies that affect the county (not those focusing on the city only). However, for practical purposes policy sections will be put forward for county approval in their entirety (i.e., county bodies won't be asked to vote on policies one by one). When reading through the policies, please review the city and county roles. If you do not believe the county should be included in a policy or believe the county should be included, please let Land Use staff know.
- One section of relevance to POSAC, the Built Environment section (section 2), is on a different time track, and policies in this section have not yet undergone significant updates. Therefore, significant additional changes may be made to this section in the months to come that are not yet identified in the current draft.
- **Please provide your comments to Amy Oeth ([aoeth@bouldercounty.org](mailto:aoeth@bouldercounty.org)) in Land Use and copy Renata Frye ([rfrye@bouldercounty.org](mailto:rfrye@bouldercounty.org)) in Parks and Open Space by close of business Monday September 19.** Amy will assemble the feedback, coordinate with Renata and Jeff, and circulate the feedback prior to the September 22 meeting.

## **BVCP POLICY UPDATE SUMMARY**

### **Sections**

#### **Section 2: Built Environment**

##### *Summary*

This section defines city structure (natural setting, individual character areas, activity centers map, mobility grid, and the public realm), provides growth projections, and defines sustainable urban form.

##### *Topics Covered*

- Community identity / land use pattern
- Rural lands preservation
- Neighborhoods
- Mixed use and higher density development
- Activity centers

- Community conservation (and historic preservation)
- Design quality

#### *Major Changes Affecting the County*

The Built Environment section is on a different time track from other sections. Therefore, it is still not clear what major changes may be made to this section.

Initial ideas for improvements to the section that have been circulated include the following:

- Better convey through maps and diagrams the “elements that define Boulder’s city structure” such as “activity centers,” and now relationship of transit corridors from renewed vision for transit
- Illustrate and provide metrics and principles of sustainable urban form
- Clarify guidance on neighborhood protection strategies (such as transitions and mix of complementary land uses)
- Describe and illustrate principles of quality mixed use and higher density development
- Convey other principles of design quality (such as sensitive infill and redevelopment)
- Alignment between city and county building codes
- Policy text updates related to the county (staff has not updated these sections yet:
  - Community identity / land use pattern
    - 2.01 Unique Community Identity;
    - 2.02 Physical Separation of Communities;
    - 2.03 Compact Development Pattern;
    - 2.04 Open Space Preservation;
    - 2.05 Design of Community Edges and Entryways
  - Rural lands preservation
    - 2.06 Preservation of Rural Areas and Amenities;
    - 2.07 Delineation of Rural Lands;
    - 2.08 Rural Density Transfer

#### *Outstanding Issues for County Staff*

Staff welcomes initial conceptual ideas for improvements to the section. Staff will provide updates on proposed changes from other stakeholders, and will work to solidify county feedback on this section at a later date that is to be determined.

### **Section 3: Natural Environment (proposed: new title - Environmentally Sustainable Community and combine with sections 3, 4 & 9)**

#### *Summary*

This section focuses on policies related to the natural environment. This section may be combined with other policies around energy and climate in addition to agriculture and food policies. Many of the policies focus on management of land and practices. (Note: Text will be edited in this section to improve organization and reduce redundancies.)

#### *Topics Covered*

- Incorporation of ecological systems into planning
- Adaptive management approach

- Protection of natural lands
- Management of wildlife
- Water conservation
- Flood management
- Air quality

*Major Changes Affecting the County*

- New policies related to the county:
  - (no number) Climate Change Preparation and Adaption;
  - (no number) Soil Carbon Sequestration; and
  - (no number) Natural Environment Investments for Resilience.
- Policy text updates related to the county (besides those mentioned under outstanding issues):
  - 3.04 Ecosystem Connection and Buffers
  - 3.05 Maintain and Restore Natural Disturbance and Ecological Processes
  - 3.06 Wetland and Riparian Protection
  - 3.07 Invasive Species Management
  - 3.12 Water Conservation
  - 3.15 Mineral Deposits
  - 3.18 Wildfire Protection and Management
  - 3.20 Flood Management
  - 3.21 Non-Structural Approach
  - 3.26 Drinking Water
  - 3.30 Protection of Air Quality

*Outstanding Issues for County Staff*

- For *Policy 3.03 Natural Ecosystems*, county staff would like the city to consider adding features that were identified in the Boulder County Comprehensive Plan Environmental Resources Element.
- For *Policy 3.08 Public Access to Public Lands*, county staff would like to see proper reference and deference to some of the other levels of government that are applicable to invasive species such as State Noxious Weed laws and duties of the County Weed Manager.
- For *Policy 3.09 Management of Wildlife-Human Conflicts*, county staff suggests including the county in this policy.
- For *Policy 3.10 Urban Environmental Quality*, county staff suggests dropping references to agriculture
- For *Policy 3.13 Integrated Pest Management*, county staff would like feedback, as staff is not sure if the county will be able to agree to “discourage” the use of pesticides given the requirements to follow state weed law and the county agriculture program.
- For *Policy 3.24 Protection of Water Quality*, county staff would like the policy to focus on general watershed health and not just the Boulder Creek specific watershed.

**Section 8: Community Well-Being (proposed new title: Healthy and Socially-Thriving Community)**

*Summary*

The policies in this section focus on promoting the physical health and well-being of everyone in the community as well as promoting civil and human rights. Additionally, the city and county will strive to foster mental and social health and well-being and health equity through the cultivation of a wide range of recreational, cultural, educational and social opportunities. In providing human services, the city and county partner to comprehensively create and support a safety net of services and opportunities for individual and family economic mobility and self-sufficiency through coordinated regional planning, service delivery and integrated partnerships. (Note: Text will be edited in this section to improve organization and reduce redundancies. Additionally, it is proposed to move some of the policies to a new section called “Safe and Resilient Community.”)

#### *Topics Covered*

- Human Services
- Social Equity
- Safety Community Health
- Community Infrastructure and Facilities
- Culture

#### *Major Changes Affecting the County*

- New policies related to the county:
  - (no number) Youth Engagement
  - (no number) Resilience in Public Safety and Risk Prevention
  - (no number) Physical Safety
  - (no number) Community Connectivity and Preparedness
- Policy text updates related to the county:
  - 8.01 Providing a Broad Spectrum of Human Needs
  - 8.02 Regional Approach to Human Services
  - 8.03 Equitable Distribution of Resources
  - 8.04 Addressing Community Deficiencies
  - 8.05 Diversity
  - 8.06 Safety
  - 8.07 Health and Well-Being
  - 8.08 Planning for School Sites and Facilities
  - 8.09 Accessibility to Schools
  - 8.10 Support for Community Facilities
  - 8.11 Parks and Recreation
  - 8.13 Trails Network
  - 8.17 Arts and Cultural Facilities
  - 8.18 Arts and Community Culture
  - 8.19 Public Art

#### *Outstanding Issues for County Staff*

None – Boulder County staff suggestions were incorporated in the latest document revision.

**Section 9: Agriculture and Food (proposed: moving these policies to the sections Healthy and Socially-Thriving Community and Environmentally Sustainable Community which would be a combination of sections 3, 4, and 9)**

#### *Summary*

This section focuses on agriculture, food, sustainable practices, and access to food for the community. The city and county have made significant contributions to the preservation of lands for agricultural production and the water needed to use these areas for agriculture. Most agricultural production in the Boulder Valley occurs on city and county open space. (Note: Text will be edited in this section to improve organization and reduce redundancies.)

#### *Topics Covered*

- Support for Agriculture
- Sustainable Food Production Practices
- Regional Efforts to Enhance the Food System
- Urban Gardening and Food Production
- Access to Healthy Food

#### *Major Changes Affecting the County*

- Policy text updates related to the county (besides those mentioned under outstanding issues):
  - 9.01 Support for Agriculture
  - 9.04 Access to Healthy Food

#### *Outstanding Issues for County Staff*

- For *Policy 9.01 Support for Agriculture*, staff would like to ensure that the language supports agricultural uses in Area 3.
- Staff comment on *Policy 9.02 Local Food Production*: Boulder County will be phasing out GMO's and supports the reduction of pesticide use. County staff supports policies reflecting those changes while recognizing that conventional agricultural operations remain an important component of Parks and Open Space.
- Staff suggests a text change to *Policy 9.03 Sustainable Food Production Practices*: The topic header should be changed back to Agriculture and not just "Food Production" since much of our agricultural lands are not suitable for "food production." We need to recognize the importance of animal feed, range, and pasture systems too.

## 2. Built Environment

This chapter will evolve to become part of the proposed new section entitled: *“Livable Community and High Quality Built Environment”* and should accompany the Land Use Plan and newly revised Land Use Designation descriptions.

Initial changes proposed reflect policies approved since the 2010 Plan including from the: Community Cultural Plan (2015); Parks and Recreation Master Plan (2013); and Input from city Water Resources regarding ditches.

Additional proposed changes will result from the work being done as through land use scenarios and policy choices relating to jobs/housing balance, affordable and diverse housing, and design issues. The elements of this chapter that define city structure (i.e., natural setting, individual character areas, activity centers map, mobility grid, and the public realm, and sustainable urban form definition) will likely be revised as an outcome of that work. Additional edits to policies relating to community identity/land use, rural lands preservation, neighborhoods, mixed use and higher density development, activity centers, community conservation (and Historic Preservation), and design quality may also need to be addressed.

In general, it is proposed this chapter will be updated to:

1. better convey through maps and diagrams the “elements that define Boulder’s city structure” such as “activity centers,” and now relationship of transit corridors from renewed vision for transit,
2. illustrate principles of sustainable urban form,
3. clarify guidance on neighborhood protection strategies (such as transitions and mix of complementary land uses),
4. describe and illustrate principles of quality mixed use and higher density development,
5. convey other principles of design quality (such as sensitive infill and redevelopment), and
6. provide metrics where possible.

Boulder's compact, interconnected urban form helps ensure the community's environmental health, social equity and economic vitality. It also supports cost-effective infrastructure and facility investments, a high level of multimodal mobility, and easy access to employment, recreation, shopping and other amenities, as well as a strong image of Boulder as a distinct community. [The Built Environment policies help shape the form and quality of future growth in addition to protecting historic and environmental resources and preserving established neighborhood character.](#)<sup>1</sup> This chapter includes:

- [Elements that define Boulder's City Structure,](#)
- [Community identity,](#)
- [Rural lands preservation,](#)
- [Neighborhoods,](#)
- [Mixed use and higher density development,](#)
- [Activity centers](#)
- [Urban design linkages](#)
- [Community concertation \(and historic preservation\) and](#)
- [Design quality](#)

## Background

### Elements That Define Boulder's City Structure

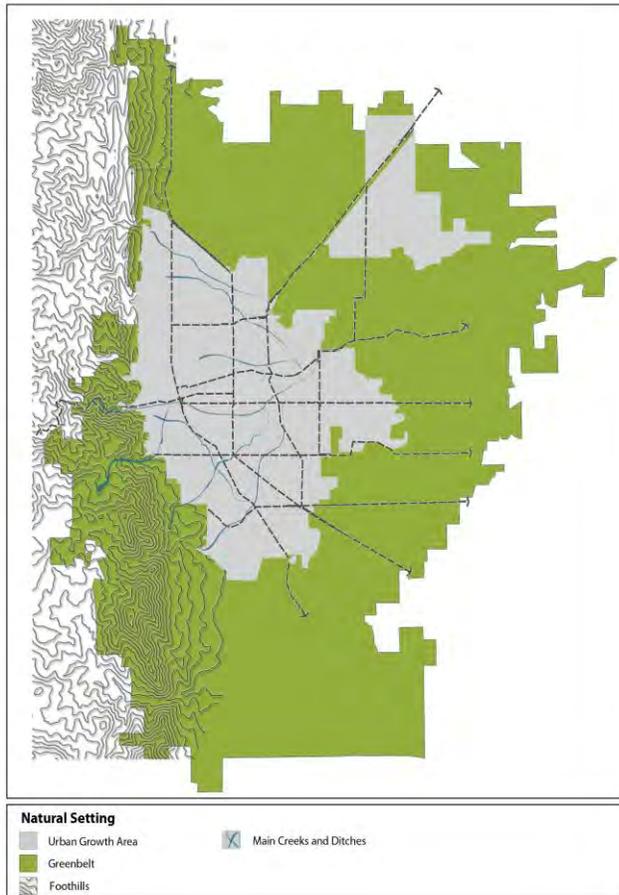
Boulder's distinctive 'sense of place' and compact size did not happen by accident. It has taken creative public policies and pragmatic planning decisions over many years to produce and preserve Boulder's unique character and physical beauty. Elements that define Boulder's city structure and support its continuing evolution to a more sustainable urban form are described below.

#### 1. Natural Setting

##### **Boulder's natural setting defines its size and shape.**

The two most important factors that shape the City of Boulder are its mountain backdrop and surrounding greenbelt. These natural features form a clearly-defined edge that separates the urban area from the open countryside. Creeks and [manmade irrigation](#) ditches have also shaped the layout of the city. [Irrigation ditches are a unique and important link between natural features and Boulder's rural and agricultural areas.](#)

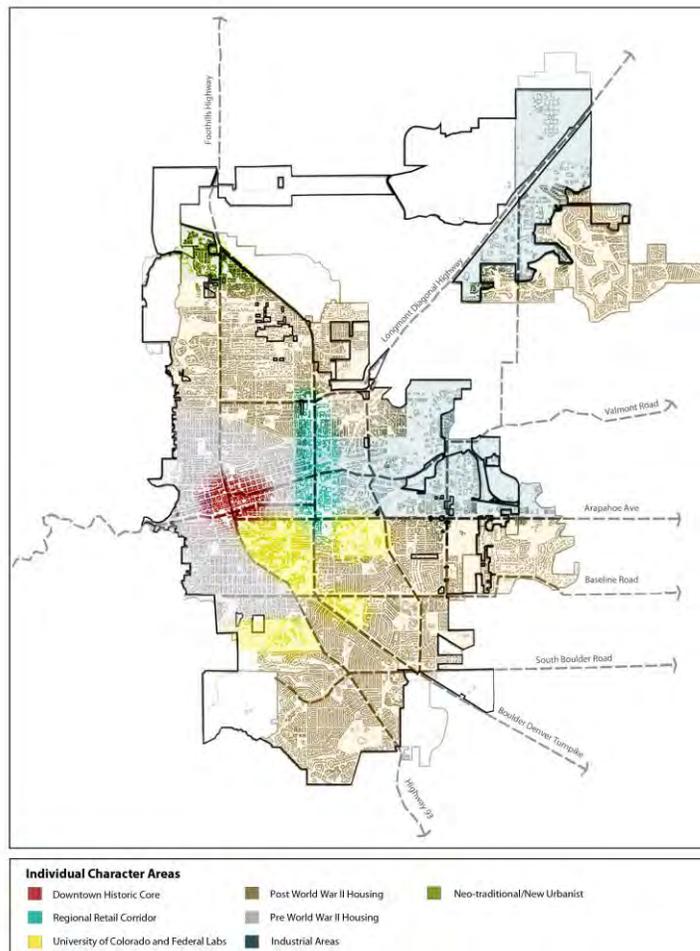
*Note: Requested by water utilities and..*



*Note: Proposing to replace above diagram with an updated diagram or to integrate greenbelt and other "natural setting" features into "Structure Plan."*

**2. Individual Character Areas**

**Different parts of Boulder are distinguished by their individual character.** Boulder’s city structure is also defined by the individual character and distinctive qualities of its different areas, drawing on each area’s unique history, development pattern, land uses, amenities and other factors. Some of the more distinctive character areas within the city are: the downtown historic core and surrounding pre-World War II residential neighborhoods, the 28<sup>th</sup>/30<sup>th</sup> Street regional retail corridor, the University and federal lab campuses, the industrial areas in East Boulder and Gunbarrel, the post-World War II residential neighborhoods and the North Boulder neo-traditional/New-Urbanist neighborhoods.



*Note: Proposing to integrate above Character Areas into the "Structure Plan" map.*

**3. Activity Centers**

**Activity centers concentrate activities into nodes at a variety of scales. Centers are places where a mix of land use and commercial activities are concentrated.**

Boulder’s commercial, entertainment, educational and civic regional and neighborhood centers are distributed throughout the community as shown on the Structure Plan map—focused in concentrated nodes of activities at a variety of scales distributed throughout the community.

Regional Centers

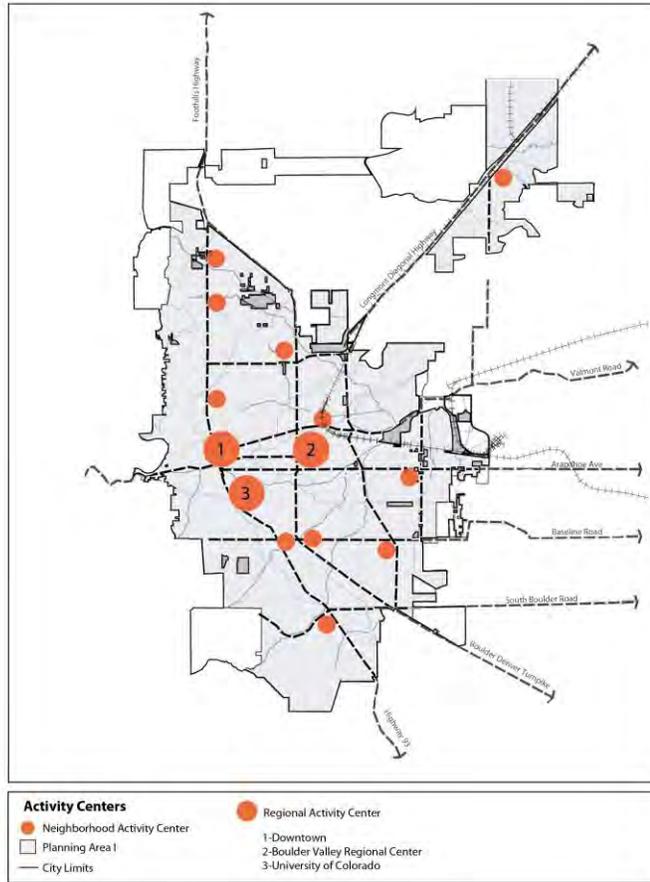
At the highest level of intensity are the city’s three regional centers. They form a triangle at Boulder’s geographic center: the Historic Downtown, the Boulder Valley Regional Center (BVRC), and the University of Colorado (CU) with the University Hill business district, which also serves as a neighborhood center for the surrounding area. Each regional center has a distinct function and character, provides a wide range of activities and draws from the entire city as well as the region.

*Note: Include a new policy to convey the intent of the regional center – their character (e.g.: regional centers...) and show illustrations.*

**Neighborhood Centers**

The next tier of intensity is neighborhood activity centers. In addition to serving as neighborhood gathering places, these centers also provide goods and services for the day-to-day needs of nearby residents, workers and students, and are easily accessible from surrounding areas by foot, bike and transit.

*Note: include a new policy or clarify language above to convey the intent of the neighborhood center, and their important role in neighborhoods, particularly in achieving “15-minute” goals. Also, how “new” centers might come to be designated. (criteria) Show illustrations.*



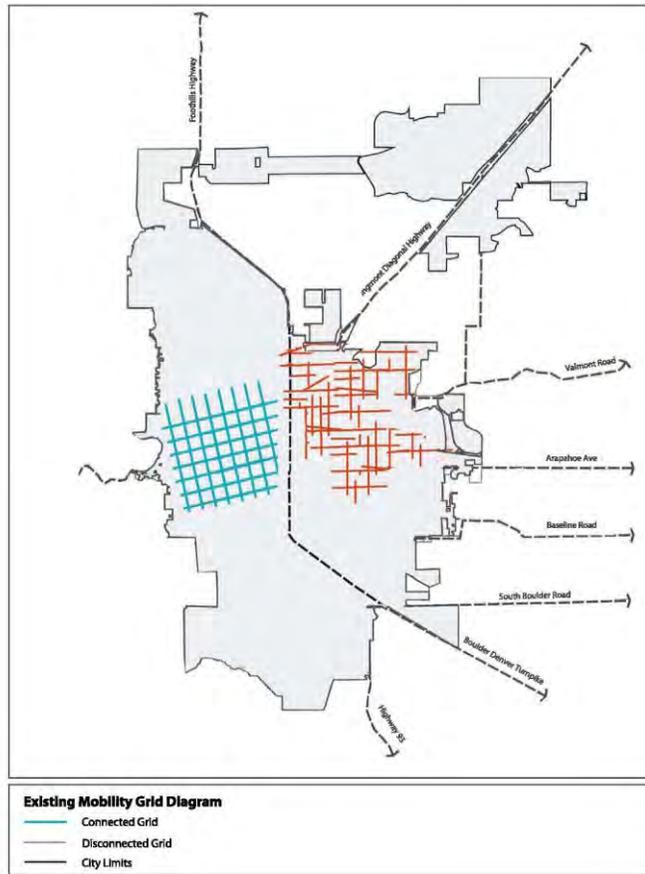
*Note: These “centers” will be integrated into the “Structure Plan” map and labeled.*

**4. Mobility Grid**

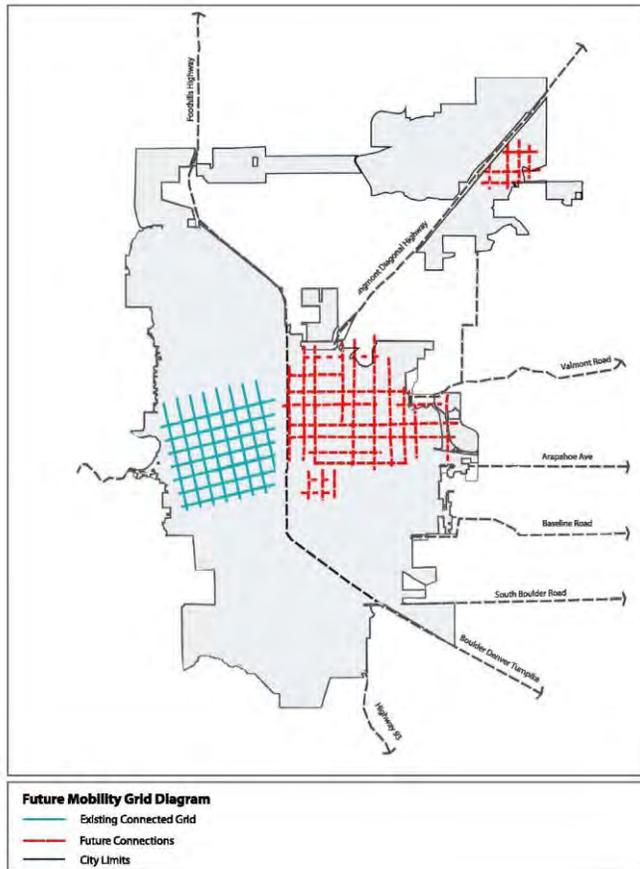
**Boulder’s ‘mobility grid’ interconnects the city.**

Boulder’s ‘mobility grid’—the system of streets, alleys, transit corridors, multi-use and greenway paths—interconnects the city and both serves and reflects the city’s land use pattern. Networks for vehicles, bicycles, pedestrians and transit—sometimes shared, sometimes separate—overlay the city and create a lacework of movement between and within regional centers, neighborhood centers, and residential and employment areas. In general, the western historic neighborhoods of the city have a fine-grained, walkable and bikeable street grid, whereas other parts of the city, for example, East Boulder, have larger, more car-oriented super-blocks. Over time, the city seeks to extend a more pedestrian and bike-friendly mobility grid to all parts of the community.

**Comment [EL1]:** Get input from transportation staff. Any edits.



*Note: Make these diagrams smaller to support the policy language and add a new map (or include in Structure Map" new "transit mobility diagram and streets maps from TMP")*

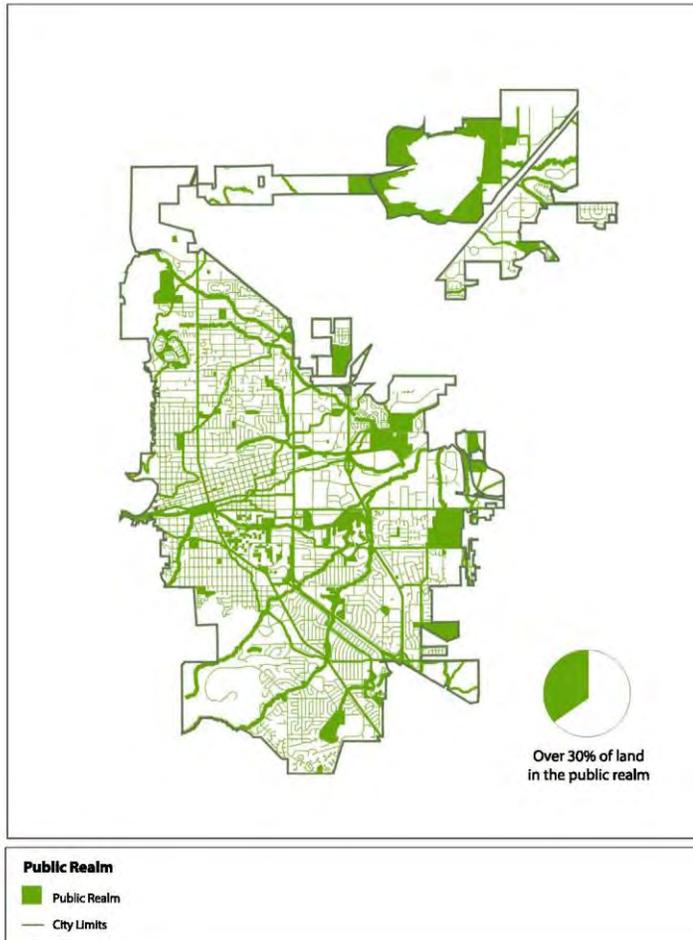


**5. The Public Realm**

The public realm provides key functions and strongly influences character and aesthetics.

The public realm includes the city’s streets, sidewalks and paths, [ditches](#), parks, plazas and other urban outdoor spaces. It comprises a large portion of Boulder’s land and represents a substantial public investment. The design of the public realm plays a major role in defining the character, identity and aesthetic quality of the city overall and individual neighborhoods. It also serves a variety of important functions: transportation, passive and active recreation, gathering places, opportunities to connect to nature, [opportunity to express culture, creativity and arts](#), enhancement of air and water quality, and mitigation of urban heat island effects.

*Note: add resilience, greenbelts and co-benefits of designing for multiple purposes. Above language reflects input from water utilities and community cultural plan.*

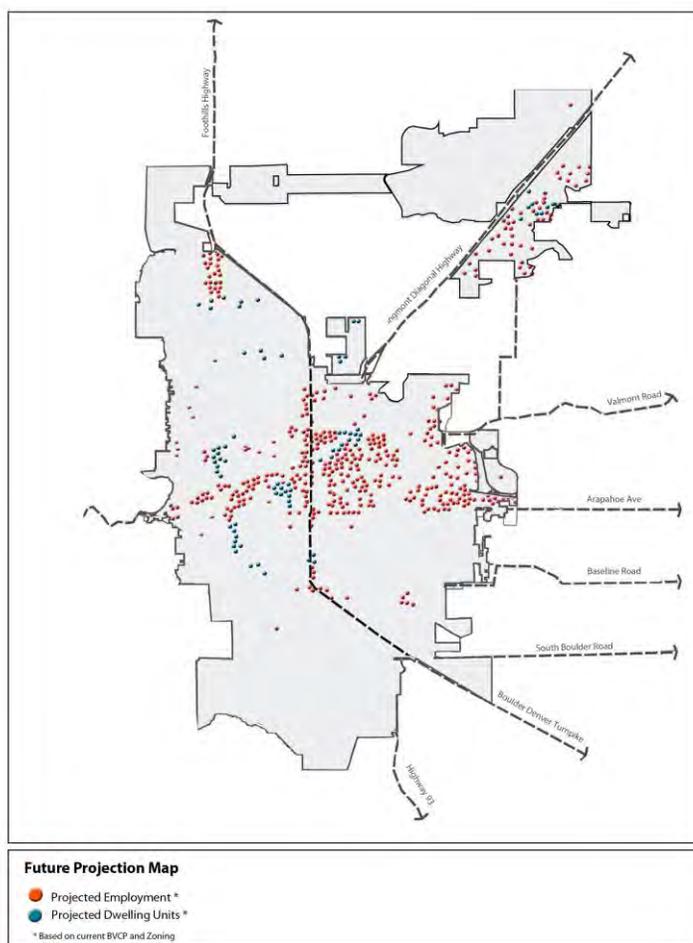


*Note: integrate above map into Structure Map.*

**Projected Growth**

This diagram illustrates where housing and jobs could be added within the city Service Area through development of vacant parcels and redevelopment of properties under current plans and regulations. *The Built Environment policies help shape the form and quality of future growth, in addition to protecting historic and environmental resources and preserving established neighborhood character.*

*Note: Above language is a mix of policies, not necessarily relating to projected growth. Need to update this diagram with 2015 projections and discuss whether it belongs in this chapter or elsewhere in the plan.*



### Sustainable Urban Form Definition

*Note: discuss whether and how this might be updated to become most useful. Should it be framed as a policy?*

The city's urban form is shaped by the location and design of streets, paths and open spaces; the mix of uses and activities that are allowed in each area of the city; and the design and intensity of development and public improvements. The city's goal is to evolve toward an urban form that supports sustainability. This "sustainable urban form" is defined by the following components:

#### **Compact:**

- A compact development pattern with density in appropriate locations to create and support viable, long term commercial opportunities and high frequency public transit.

*(Note: To reduce ambiguity, suggest replacing "density in appropriate locations" with "urban land uses and density in locations guided by the Structure Map and Land Use Map" to reduce ambiguity.)*

#### **Connected:**

- An integrated multimodal system with abundant, convenient and pleasant ways to get around on foot, by bike, and by local and regional transit service.
- Opportunities for people to connect to nature and natural systems.

#### **Complete:**

- Daily needs within easy ("15-minute") access from home, work or school without driving a car.
- A quality of life that attracts, sustains and retains diverse businesses, creative entrepreneurs and investment in the local economy.

#### **Green, Attractive and Distinct:**

- Comfortable, safe, and attractive places to live, work, learn and recreate that have a distinct, memorable character and high-quality design and that promote healthy, active living.
- A public realm that is beautiful, well-used and enriched with art, trees and landscaping.
- Buildings, streets, utilities and other infrastructure that protect natural systems, minimize energy use, urban heat island effects and air and water pollution, and support clean energy generation.
- Preservation of agriculturally significant lands, environmentally sensitive areas and historic resources.

#### **Inclusive:**

- A diversity of employment, housing types, sizes and prices, and other uses to meet the needs of a diverse community.
- Welcoming, accessible public gathering spaces for interaction among people of all ages, walks of life and levels of ability.

## **Community Identity/Land Use Pattern**

### **2.01 Unique Community Identity**

The unique community identity and sense of place that is enjoyed by residents of the Boulder Valley and characterized by the community's setting and history will be respected by policy decision makers.

### **2.02 Physical Separation of Communities**

The city and county will strive to maintain and enhance an open land buffer that separates development in the Boulder Valley from surrounding communities and contributes to distinct community identities.

### **2.03 Compact Development Pattern**

The city and county will, by implementing the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan, ensure that development will take place in an orderly fashion, take advantage of existing urban services, and avoid, insofar as possible, patterns of leapfrog, noncontiguous, scattered development within the Boulder Valley. The city prefers redevelopment and infill as compared to development in an expanded Service Area in order to prevent urban sprawl and create a compact community.

### **2.04 Open Space Preservation**

The city and county will permanently preserve lands with open space values by purchasing or accepting donations of fee simple interests, conservation easements or development rights and other measures as appropriate and financially feasible. Open space values include use of land for urban shaping and preservation of natural areas, environmental and cultural resources, critical ecosystems, water resources, agricultural land, scenic vistas and land for passive recreational use.

### **2.05 Design of Community Edges and Entryways**

Well-defined edges and entryways for the city are important because they support an understanding and appreciation of the city's image, emphasize and preserve its natural setting, and create a clear sense of arrival and departure. Natural features are most effective as edges, but public open land, major roadways or heavy tree planting can also function as community edges. As new areas are developed, the definition of a community edge will be a design priority. Major entryways into the Boulder Valley will be identified, protected and enhanced.

## **Rural Lands Preservation**

### **2.06 Preservation of Rural Areas and Amenities**

The city and county will attempt to preserve existing rural land use and character in and adjacent to the Boulder Valley where environmentally sensitive areas, hazard areas, agriculturally significant lands, vistas, significant historic resources, and established rural residential areas exist. A clear boundary between urban and rural areas at the periphery of the city will be maintained, where possible. Existing tools and programs for rural preservation will be strengthened and new tools and programs will be put in place.

## 2.07 Delineation of Rural Lands

Area III consists of the rural lands in the Boulder Valley, outside the Boulder Service Area. The Boulder Service Area includes urban lands in the city and lands planned for future annexation and urban service provision. Within Area III, land is placed within one of two classifications: the Area III-Rural Preservation Area or the Area III-Planning Reserve Area. The boundaries of these two areas are shown on the Area III-Rural Preservation Area and Area I, II, III Map. The more specific Area III land use designations on the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan map indicate the type of non-urban land use that is desired as well as recognize those county developments that have or can still develop at other than rural densities and uses. The Area III-Rural Preservation Area is intended to show the desired long-term rural land use; the Area III-Planning Reserve Area is an interim classification until it is decided whether or not this land should be placed in the Area III-Rural Preservation Area or in the Service Area.

### *a) Area III-Rural Preservation Area*

The Area III-Rural Preservation Area is that portion of Area III where rural land uses and character will be preserved through existing and new rural land use preservation techniques and no new urban development will be allowed during the planning period. Rural land uses to be preserved to the greatest possible extent include: rural town sites (Eldorado Springs, Marshall and Valmont); existing county rural residential subdivisions (primarily along Eldorado Springs Drive, on Davidson Mesa west of Louisville, adjacent to Gunbarrel, and in proximity to Boulder Reservoir); city and county acquired open space and parkland; sensitive environmental areas and hazard areas that are unsuitable for urban development; significant agricultural lands; and lands that are unsuitable for urban development because of a high cost of extending urban services or scattered locations, which are not conducive to maintaining a compact community.

### *b) Area III-Planning Reserve Area*

The Area III-Planning Reserve Area (PRA) is that portion of Area III with rural land uses where the city intends to maintain the option of limited Service Area expansion. The location and characteristics of this land make it potentially suitable for new urban development, based on the apparent lack of sensitive environmental areas, hazard areas, and significant agricultural lands, the feasibility of efficient urban service extension, and contiguity to the existing Service Area, which maintains a compact community.

## 2.08 Rural Density Transfer

The city and county will jointly determine criteria and areas for transfer of development rights (TDRs) within or in proximity to the Boulder Valley, in order to secure conservation easements on valuable rural lands from which density may be transferred and shift those rural residential densities to appropriate urban settings where the negative impacts of growth can be better mitigated or avoided.

## Neighborhoods

### 2.09 Neighborhoods as Building Blocks

The city and county will foster the role of neighborhoods to establish community character, provide services needed on a day-to-day basis, foster community interaction, and plan for urban design and amenities. All neighborhoods, whether residential areas, business districts, or mixed

land use areas, should offer unique physical elements of neighborhood character and identity, such as distinctive development patterns or architecture; historic or cultural resources; amenities such as views, open space, creeks, irrigation ditches, and varied topography; and distinctive community facilities and business areas.

### 2.10 Preservation and Support for Residential Neighborhoods

The city will work with neighborhoods to protect and enhance neighborhood character and livability and preserve the relative affordability of existing housing stock. The city will seek appropriate building scale and compatible character in new development or redevelopment, appropriately sized and sensitively designed streets and desired public facilities and mixed commercial uses. The city will also encourage neighborhood schools and safe routes to school.

*Note: Scenarios and prototypes may provide more specific concrete examples of transitions and “compatibility” that could be included in this policy or used to help illustrate its intent.*

### 2.11 Accessory Units

Consistent with existing neighborhood character, accessory units will be encouraged in order to increase rental housing options in single family residential neighborhoods. Regulations developed to implement this policy will address potential cumulative negative impacts on the neighborhood. Accessory units will be reviewed based on the characteristics of the lot, including size, configuration, parking availability, privacy and alley access.

*Note: Prototypes and “gentle infill” examples might help inform any potential changes to this policy.*

### 2.12 Preservation of Existing Residential Uses

The city will encourage the preservation or replacement in-kind of existing, legally established residential uses in non-residential zones. Non-residential conversions in residential zoning districts will be discouraged, except where there is a clear benefit or service to the neighborhood.

### 2.13 Protection of Residential Neighborhoods Adjacent to Non-residential Zones

The city and county will take appropriate actions to ensure that the character and livability of established residential neighborhoods will not be undermined by spill-over impacts from adjacent regional or community business zones or by incremental expansion of business activities into residential areas. The city and county will protect residential neighborhoods from intrusion of non-residential uses by protecting edges and regulating the impacts of these uses on neighborhoods.

*Note: Scenarios and prototypes may provide more specific concrete examples of transitions and “compatibility” that could be included in this policy or used to help illustrate its intent (and the intent of the next policies, 2.14 and 2.15).*

### 2.14 Mix of Complementary Land Uses

The city and county will strongly encourage, consistent with other land use policies, a variety of land uses in new developments. In existing neighborhoods, a mix of land use types, housing sizes and lot sizes may be possible if properly mitigated and respectful of neighborhood character. Wherever land uses are mixed, careful design will be required to ensure

compatibility, accessibility and appropriate transitions between land uses that vary in intensity and scale.

### 2.15 Compatibility of Adjacent Land Uses

To avoid or minimize noise and visual conflicts between adjacent land uses that vary widely in use, intensity or other characteristics, the city will use tools such as interface zones, transitional areas, site and building design and cascading gradients of density in the design of subareas and zoning districts. With redevelopment, the transitional area should be within the zone of more intense use.

## Mixed Use and Higher Density Development

### 2.16 Mixed Use and Higher Density Development

The city will encourage well-designed mixed use and higher density development that incorporates a substantial amount of affordable housing in appropriate locations, including in some commercial centers and industrial areas and in proximity to multimodal corridors and transit centers. The city will provide incentives and remove regulatory barriers to encourage mixed use development where and when appropriate. This could include public-private partnerships for planning, design or development; new zoning districts; and the review and revision of floor area ratio, open space and parking requirements.

## Activity Centers

### 2.17 Variety of Activity Centers

The city and county support a variety of regional, subcommunity and neighborhood activity centers where people congregate for a variety of activities such as working, shopping, going to school or day care, accessing human services and recreating. Activity centers should be located within walking distance of neighborhoods and business areas and designed to be compatible with surrounding land uses and intensity and the context and character of neighborhoods and business areas. Good multimodal connections to and from activity centers and accessibility for people of all ages and abilities will be encouraged.

*Note: Would suggest defining the role of each type a bit more (e.g., regional, commercial, and neighborhood centers). Some may be within walking distance, whereas regional centers serve a larger role and are probably less walkable.*

### 2.18 Role of the Central Area

The central Boulder's Central area will continue as the regional service center of the Boulder Valley for office, retail, financial, governmental, medical, cultural and university activities. As such, it will remain the primary activity center and focal point of the Boulder Valley. The central area includes distinct, interrelated activity centers such as the Downtown Business District, University of Colorado University Hill, Canyon Boulevard Cultural Corridor, and Boulder Valley Regional Center. It also includes the University of Colorado main campus is adjacent, and Canyon Boulevard Cultural Corridor is a part of it. A variety of land uses surrounds these activity

centers, and [complete streets and multi-modal](#) transportation alternatives provide direct connections between them.

*Note: Clarify – is this the “Central” Subcommunity? Reference a map*

## **Public Realm, Urban Design and Linkages**

### **2.19 Urban Open Lands**

Open lands within the fabric of the city [are an important part of](#) ~~constitute~~ Boulder’s public realm and provide recreational opportunities, transportation linkages, gathering places and density relief from the confines of the city, as well as protection of the environmental quality of the urban environment. The city will promote and maintain an urban open lands system to serve the following functions: active and passive recreation, environmental protection, flood management, multimodal transportation, enhancement of community character and aesthetics.

### **2.20 Boulder Creek, Tributaries and Ditches as Important Urban Design Features**

Boulder Creek, its tributaries and irrigation ditches will serve as unifying urban design features for the community [with multiple co-benefits for a resilient community](#). The city and county will support the preservation or reclamation of the creek corridors for natural ecosystems, wildlife habitat and cultural resources; for recreation and bicycle and pedestrian transportation; to provide flood management; to improve air and water quality; and to provide a [relief from contrast to](#) urban development. Path [and trail design and development in these greenways](#) will be sensitive to the ecology, terrain and privacy of adjacent residents and surroundings. [The city and county will support agriculture by recognizing and accommodating irrigation ditch maintenance practices and operations.](#)

### **2.21 Commitment to a Walkable and Accessible City**

The city and county will promote the development of a walkable and accessible city by designing neighborhoods and [mixed use](#) business areas to provide easy and safe access by foot to places such as neighborhood centers, community facilities, transit stops or centers, and shared public spaces and amenities. The city will consider additional neighborhood-serving commercial areas where appropriate and supported by the neighbors they would serve.

*Note: add any other relevant 15-minute neighborhood principles here.*

### **2.22 Improve Mobility Grid and Connections**

The walkability, bikeability and transit access should be improved in parts of the city that need better connectivity and mobility, for example, in East Boulder. This should be achieved by coordinating and integrating land use and transportation planning and will occur through both public investment and private development.

### **2.23 Trail Corridors/Linkages**

In the process of considering development proposals, the city and county will encourage the development of paths and trails where appropriate for recreation and transportation, such as walking, hiking, bicycling or horseback riding. Implementation will be achieved through the coordinated efforts of the private and public sectors.

**Comment [EL2]:** Transportation team should review and provide input.

## Community Conservation and Preservation

### 2.24 Preservation of Historic and Cultural Resources

The city and county will identify, evaluate and protect buildings, structures, objects, districts, sites and natural features of historic, architectural, archaeological, or cultural significance with input from the community. The city and county will seek protection of significant resources through local designation when a proposal by the private sector is subject to discretionary development review.

### 2.25 Leadership in Preservation: City- and County-Owned Resources

The city and county will evaluate their publicly owned properties to determine their historical, architectural, archaeological or cultural significance. Eligible resources will be protected through local designation. Secondary structures that are part of and convey the cultural significance of a site, such as a farm complex and alley structure, should be retained and preserved as well.

### 2.26 Historic and Cultural Preservation Plan

The city and county will develop a Boulder Valley-wide preservation plan in order to: integrate historic preservation issues into the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan; ensure coordination between preservation goals and zoning, land use, growth management, transportation and housing goals; and ensure consistency among governmental policies that affect the community’s historic, archeological and cultural resources. Preservation plans will be developed with public and landowner participation. Add: The city will continue to implement its Historic Preservation Plan.

### 2.27 Eligible Historic Districts and Landmarks

The city has identified areas that may have the potential to be designated as historic districts. The Designated and Eligible Historic Districts map shows areas with designation potential, as well as areas that are already designated as historic districts. There are also many individual buildings of landmark quality both within and outside of these eligible areas. Additional historic district and landmark designation will be encouraged.

### 2.28 Historic Preservation/Conservation Tools

As guided by the Historic Preservation Plan, the city will develop a variety of tools that address preservation and conservation objectives within the community. Specific tools that address historic preservation and conservation objectives will be matched to the unique needs of specific areas. Preservation tools may include incentives programs, designation of landmark buildings and districts, design review, and public improvements. Conservation districts, easements and other tools may be applied in areas that do not qualify as local historic districts but contain features that contribute to the quality of the neighborhood or community. These could include historic resources that have lost integrity, neighborhoods with significant character but that are not historically significant, and scattered sites that share a common historic or architectural theme.

**Comment [EL3]:** Is this all necessary, or is there new language from the plan that could replace it (more simply)? Sent to Marcy and James for comments.

### 2.29 Preservation of Archaeological Sites and Cultural Landscapes

The city will develop a plan and processes for identification, designation and protection of archaeological and cultural landscape resources, such as open ditches, street and alleyscapes, railroad rights-of-way, and designed landscapes.

*Note: add cultural tourism per PB's comments.*

## Design Quality

### 2.30 Sensitive Infill and Redevelopment

With little vacant land remaining in the city, most new development will occur through redevelopment. The city will gear subcommunity and area planning and other efforts toward defining the acceptable amount of infill and redevelopment and standards and performance measures for design quality to avoid or adequately mitigate negative impacts and enhance the benefits of infill and redevelopment to the community and individual neighborhoods. The city will also develop tools, such as neighborhood design guidelines, to promote sensitive infill and redevelopment.

*Key Policy Choice: Community Benefit policy could be spelled out a bit more here. (it's implementation would be through the Land Use Code and site review.)*

### 2.31 Design of Newly-Developing Areas

The city will encourage a neighborhood concept for new development that includes a variety of residential densities, housing types, sizes and prices, opportunities for shopping, nearby support services and conveniently sited public facilities, including roads and pedestrian connections, parks, libraries and schools.

*Note: this policy as currently worded as limited applicability. Should it also apply to redeveloping areas?*

### 2.32 Physical Design for People

The city and county will take all reasonable steps to ensure that public and private development and redevelopment be designed in a manner that is sensitive to social, health and psychological needs. Broadly defined, this will include factors such as accessibility to those with limited mobility; provision of coordinated facilities for pedestrians, bicyclists and bus-riders; provision of functional landscaping and open space; and the appropriate scale and massing of buildings related to neighborhood context.

### 2.33 Environmentally Sensitive Urban Design

For capital improvements and private development, the city and county will strive to ensure that buildings, streets, utilities and other infrastructure are located and designed to protect natural systems, minimize energy use, reduce urban heat island effects and air and water pollution, and support clean energy generation.

### 2.34 Importance of Street Trees and Streetscapes

The city and county will develop regulations and programs to encourage the planting and maintenance of attractive, healthy street trees and streetscapes, which act as the primary connection between the private and public realm and provide aesthetics, comfort, cleaner air, and other environmental benefits for the public realm.

### 2.35 Outdoor Lighting/Light Pollution

The city and county will encourage the efficient use of outdoor lighting to reduce light pollution and conserves energy while providing for public safety. The city will seek to provide a nighttime environment that includes the ability to view the stars against a dark sky so that people can see the Milky Way Galaxy from residential and other appropriate viewing areas. Measures such as using more energy-efficient lights, ensuring that the level of outdoor lighting is appropriate to the application, minimizing glare, and using shielding techniques to direct light downward will be required.

### 2.36 Design Excellence for Public Projects

Public projects bear a special responsibility to exhibit design excellence. The city and county will work to ensure that new capital projects and transportation facilities are visually attractive and contribute positively to the desired community character.

### 2.37 Enhanced Design for Private Sector Projects

Through its policies and programs, the city will encourage or require quality architecture and urban design in private sector development that encourages alternative modes of transportation, provides a livable environment and addresses the elements listed below.

*Note: Address the following topics through community benefit policy, and eliminate any language that is redundant with previous policies (or x-reference instead.)*

**a) The context.** Projects should become a coherent part of the neighborhood in which they are placed. They should be preserved and enhanced where the surroundings have a distinctive character. Where there is a desire to improve the character of the surroundings, a new character and positive identity as established through area planning or a community involvement process should be created for the area. Special attention will be given to protecting and enhancing the quality of established residential areas that are adjacent to business areas.

*(note: seems to repeat some previous sections. Suggest cross referencing or streamlining)*

**b) Relationship to the public realm.** Projects should relate positively to public streets, plazas, sidewalks, paths, ~~ditches~~ and natural features. Buildings and landscaped areas—not parking lots—should present a well-designed face to the public realm, should not block access to sunlight, and should be sensitive to important public view corridors. Future strip commercial development will be discouraged. Project sponsors should collaborate with irrigation ditch companies on design and construction. Where possible, projects elements should educate and inform about the connection between irrigation ditches and agricultural lands.

*Note: request by water utilities.*

**c) Transportation connections.** Projects should provide a complete network of vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian connections both internal to the project and connecting to adjacent properties, streets and paths, including dedication of public rights-of-way and easements where required.

**d) Human scale and public spaces.** Projects should provide pedestrian interest along streets, paths and thoughtfully designed public spaces that support a mix of events and destinations, and art.

Add New Language: Encourage individuals, businesses, organizations, and developers to invest in improvements to public spaces through the addition of meaningful, innovative, and quality works of art. Model investment in public art at city.

Note: from Community Cultural Plan

**e) Permeability.** Projects should provide multiple opportunities to walk from the street into projects, thus presenting a street face that is permeable. Where appropriate, they should provide opportunities for visual permeability into a site to create pedestrian interest.

**f) On-site open spaces.** Projects should incorporate well-designed functional open spaces with quality landscaping, access to sunlight and places to sit comfortably. Where public parks or open spaces are not within close proximity, shared open spaces for a variety of activities should also be provided within developments.

**g) Buildings.** Buildings should be designed with a cohesive design that is comfortable to the pedestrian, with inviting entries that are visible from public rights of way. Design innovation and the use of high quality building materials are encouraged.

<sup>i</sup> This is language pulled from later in the chapter which seems to belong at the beginning.

<sup>ii</sup> Water utilities has requested that ditches get removed from “public” realm, since they are not truly public. They are part of natural features as noted in previous section.

### 3. Natural Environment<sup>i</sup>

*Proposed new section title: Environmentally Sustainable Community.*

*Note: This may be combined with other policies around energy and climate in addition to agriculture and food policies relating to land and environment. Also please note that a further round of editing will occur to improve organization, reduce verbosity and redundancies, and renumber policies as necessary.*

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The natural environment that characterizes the Boulder Valley is a critical asset that must be preserved and protected. Within the Boulder Valley’s complex ecological system, there are inextricable links among the natural environment, plants and animals, the built environment, the economy and community livability. These natural and human systems are connected to the region and world, and changes to the ecosystems within the Boulder Valley can have a profound effect on their viability.

Over many decades, the city and county have actively protected and managed open space around the urban area, and city and county open space plans and policies apply to those public lands acquired and managed as natural areas or used for other purposes, such as agriculture.<sup>ii</sup>

The climate of the Boulder Valley has warmed and dried over the past three decades, and the potential for further changes and intensified weather events because of climate change heighten the need for the city and county to proactively strengthen intervention and investment in natural resources (e.g. urban forestry, wetland and groundwater protection, and natural hazard mitigation) to reduce risk and protect resources. The more the community can assess risks of changes due to climate change and be prepared to preserve and protect environmental resources, the better prepared the community can be for mitigating the causes and impacts of those changes to the natural environment.

~~The natural environment that characterizes the Boulder Valley is a critical asset that must be preserved and protected. It is the framework within which growth and development take place. The city and county recognize that the Boulder Valley is a complex ecological system and that there are inextricable links among our natural environment, the economy, the built environment and community livability. The Boulder Valley is an open system in that our natural and human systems are connected to the region as well as to the entire world. The city and county acknowledge that regional and global changes can have a profound effect on the local environment and that the local economy and built environment can have adverse impacts on natural systems beyond the Boulder Valley.~~

Boulder has been at the forefront of environmental protection and preservation for many years. The ~~predominant~~<sup>vast</sup> amount of natural land protected by the city and county contributes to the high quality of life for residents and critical habitat for native plants and animals. The community’s historic and on-going emphasis on clean air and water has resulted in significant progress toward a sustainable, resilient and healthy urban environment.

The city places strong emphasis on being a leader and role model to other communities for its exemplary environmental protection practices and accomplishments. The city will continue to ~~develop and implement state-of-the-art~~ environmental policies both community wide and within the city government organization to further ~~its~~ environmental sustainability goals.

The policies in this section support the following city and county goals related to the conservation and preservation of land, water, air resources and pollution prevention and resilience:

- ~~Native Ecosystems and Biodiversity and Native Ecosystems~~
- Urban Environmental Quality
- Geologic Resources and Natural Hazards
- Water and Air Quality

### 3.01 Incorporating Ecological Systems into Planning

The city and county will approach planning and policy decisions in the Boulder Valley through an ecosystem framework in which natural regions like airsheds and watersheds are considered and incorporated into planning.

### 3.02 Adaptive Management Approach

The city will employ an adaptive management approach to resource protection and enhancement. An adaptive management approach involves ongoing monitoring of resource conditions, assessment of the effectiveness of management actions, revision of management actions based on new information from research, and learning from experience what works and what does not.

### Native Ecosystems and Biodiversity and Native Ecosystems

### 3.03 Natural Ecosystems

The city and county will protect and restore significant native ecosystems on public and private lands through land use planning, development review, conservation easements, acquisition and public land management practices. The protection and enhancement of biological diversity and habitat for state and federal endangered and threatened species and state, as well as county-critical wildlife habitats/migration corridors, environmental conservation areas, high biodiversity areas, rare plant areas, and significant natural communities and local species of concern will be emphasized.<sup>iii</sup> Degraded habitat may be restored and selected extirpated species may be reintroduced as a means of enhancing native flora and fauna in the Boulder Valley.

**Comment [GS1]:** Would the City agree to consider any significant Environmental Resources Element features identified in the Boulder County Comprehensive Plan as well? Something like “and County-identified ERE BCCP resources including...”

### 3.04 Ecosystem Connections and Buffers

The city and county recognize the importance of preserving large areas of unfragmented habitat in supporting the biodiversity of its natural lands and viable habitat for native species. The city and county will work together to preserve, enhance, restore and maintain undeveloped lands identified as critical and having significant ecological value for providing ecosystem connections and buffers to support movement of native organisms between for joining significant ecosystems.

*(Note: Suggest adding new policy language to “Built Environment chapter” to address conservation and design of open space connections and buffers in urban areas, recognizing that urban lands can also be important for supporting biodiversity and maintaining wildlife habitat.)*

### 3.05 Maintain and Restore **Natural Disturbance and Ecological Processes**

Recognizing that ecological processes, such as wildfire and flooding, are integral to the productivity and health of natural ecosystems, the city and county will work to ensure that, when appropriate precautions have been taken for human safety and welfare, ecological processes will be maintained or mimicked in the management of natural lands.

### 3.06 Wetland and Riparian Protection

Natural and human-made wetlands and riparian areas are valuable for their ecological and, where appropriate, recreational functions, including their ability to enhance water and air quality and reduce the impacts of flooding. Wetlands and riparian areas also function as important wildlife habitat, especially for rare, threatened and endangered plants, fish and wildlife. The city and county will continue to develop programs to protect and enhance wetlands and riparian areas in the Boulder Valley. The city will strive for no net loss of wetlands and riparian areas by discouraging their destruction or requiring the creation and restoration of wetland and riparian areas in the rare cases when development is permitted and the filling of wetlands or destruction of riparian areas cannot be avoided.

### 3.07 Invasive Species Management

The city and county will promote efforts, both public and private, to prevent the introduction or growth culture of invasive and non-native plant and animal species and seek to prevent control their spread. High priority will be given to managing invasive species that have, or potentially could have, a substantial impact on city and county resources. Management of both non-native and non-local native species will be based on weighing impacts vs. benefits that includes documented threats to species of concern specific to each site, acknowledging that some non-native species may have become naturalized. Management decisions should also take into account changing species composition due to climate change and other human impacts, as well as the role in the ecosystem provided by each organism based on the best available science.<sup>iv</sup>

### 3.08 Public Access to Public Lands

Certain city and county-owned or managed lands provide a means for educating users on the importance of the natural environment. Public lands may include areas for recreation, preservation of agricultural use, unique natural features, and wildlife and plant habitat. Public access to natural lands will be provided for, except where closure is necessary to protect areas from unacceptable degradation or impacts to agriculture, habitat or wildlife, for public safety, or limits on access necessary to preserve the quality of the visitor experience.

### **New Policy: Climate Change Preparation and Adaptation**

The city and county are both working on climate mitigation and recognize that adaptation plans will be necessary as well. To prepare open space lands and natural areas for climate change, the city and county will consider allowing or facilitating ecosystems’ transition to new states in some sites (e.g., newly adapting plants and wildlife) and increasing the stability and resiliency of the

**Comment [GS2]:** The plan should give proper reference and deference to some of the other levels of government that are applicable to invasive species like State Noxious Weed law and the duties of the County Weed manager.

natural environment elsewhere. Biological indicators can help to identify high risk species for monitoring and/or relocations and may conduct restoration projects using arid-adapted ecotypes or species. Open space master plans guide other topics related to climate change, such as visitor experiences to open space.<sup>v</sup>

**Urban Environmental Quality**

**3.09 Management of Wildlife-Human Conflicts**

The city and county recognizes the intrinsic value of wildlife in both the urban and rural setting. The city and county will promote wildlife and land use management practices to minimize conflicts with residents and urban land uses while identifying, preserving and restoring appropriate habitat for wildlife species in the urban area. When a wildlife species is determined to be a nuisance or a public health hazard, a full range of alternative wildlife and land use management techniques will be considered by the city and county in order to mitigate the problem in a manner that is humane, effective, economical and ecologically responsible.<sup>vi</sup>

**Comment [GS3]:** The County should be added where applicable.

**3.10 Urban Environmental Quality**

To the extent possible, the city and county will seek to protect the environmental quality of areas under significant human influence such as agricultural and urban lands and will balance human needs and public safety with environmental protection. The city will develop community-wide programs and standards for new development and redevelopment so that negative environmental impacts will be mitigated and overall environmental quality of the urban environment will not worsen and may improve.

**Comment [GS4]:** The reference to agriculture should be dropped if the purpose of this policy is to deal with urban issues.

**3.11 Urban Forests**

The city will support, promote and, in some cases, regulate the protection of healthy existing trees and the long-term health and vitality of the urban forest in the planning and design of public improvements and private development. Urban canopy plays an important role in ameliorating the role of climate change; therefore, the city will guide short- and long-term urban forest management.<sup>vii</sup> that encourages overall species diversity and, native and low water demand tree species where appropriate.

**3.12 Water Conservation**

The city and county will promote the conservation of water resources through water quality protection, public education, monitoring and policies that promote appropriate water usage. The city will endeavor to minimize water waste and reduce water use during peak demand periods. New development and redevelopment designed to conserve water will be encouraged.

**3.13 Integrated Pest Management**

The city and county will discourage encourage efforts to reduce the use of pesticides and synthetic, inorganic fertilizers.<sup>viii</sup> In its own practices, the city and county will carefully consider when pest management actions are necessary and focus on creating healthy and thriving ecosystems to lower pest pressure by natural processes. When pest management is necessary, the city commits to the use of ecologically-based integrated pest management principles, which emphasizes the selection of the most environmentally sound approach to pest management and the overall goal of reducing or eliminating the dependence on chemical pest-control strategies. When public or environmental health risks are identified, the city will balance the impacts and risks to the residents and the environment when choosing managementcontrol measures.<sup>ix</sup>

**Comment [GS5]:** Not sure if the County will be able to agree to “discourage” the use of pesticides given the requirements to follow state weed law and our Ag program.

### **New Policy: Soil Carbon Sequestration**

The city recognizes that soil sequestration has a range of potential benefits, including water retention, soil health and stabilization. The city and county will consider soil sequestration strategies, including land management practices that may be used to sequester carbon out of the atmosphere, and explore opportunities to incentivize carbon sequestration.<sup>x</sup>

*(Note: This policy will continue to be refined.)*

## **Geologic Resources and Natural Hazards**

### **3.14 Unique Geological Features**

Due to its location at the interface of the Great Plains and the Rocky Mountains, the Boulder Valley has a number of significant or unique geological and paleontological features. The city and county will attempt to protect these features from alteration or destruction through a variety of means, such as public acquisition, public land management, land use planning and regulation, and density transfer within a particular site.

### **3.15 Mineral Deposits**

Deposits of sand, gravel, coal and similar finite resource areas will be delineated and managed according to state and federal laws. ~~Mineral deposits and other non-renewable resources will be used with the greatest practical efficiency and the least possible disturbance to existing natural and cultural resources.~~ The use of mineral deposits and other non-renewable resources will be evaluated considering the need for these resources and other community values and priorities such as natural and cultural resource protection, community and environmental health and carbon emission reduction. The city and county will work together to acquire mineral rights as appropriate.<sup>xi</sup>

### **3.16 Hazardous Areas**

Hazardous areas that present danger to life and property from flood, forest fire, steep slopes, erosion, unstable soil, subsidence or similar geological development constraints will be delineated, and development in such areas will be carefully controlled or prohibited.

### **3.17 Hillside Protection**

Hillside and ridge-line development will be carried out in a manner that, to the extent possible, avoids both negative environmental consequences to the immediate and surrounding area and the degradation of views and vistas from and of public areas. Due to the risk of earth movement and/or mud slides under adverse weather conditions, special attention needs to be paid to soil types and underlying geological strata before and during planning, design and construction of any development on or at the base of hillsides.<sup>xii</sup>

### **3.18 Wildfire Protection and Management**

The city and county will require on-site and off-site measures to guard against the danger of fire in developments adjacent to natural lands and consistent with forest and grassland ecosystem management principles and practices. Recognizing that fire is a widely accepted means of managing ecosystems, the city and county will integrate ecosystem management principles with wildfire hazard mitigation planning and urban design.

### **3.19 Preservation of Floodplains**

Undeveloped floodplains will be preserved or restored where possible through public land acquisition of high hazard properties, private land dedication and multiple program coordination. Comprehensive planning and management of floodplain lands will promote the preservation of natural and beneficial functions of floodplains whenever possible.

### 3.20 Flood Management <sup>xiii</sup>

The city and county will protect the public and property from the impacts of flooding in a timely and cost-effective manner while balancing community interests with public safety needs. The city and county will manage the potential for floods by implementing the following guiding principles: a) Preserve floodplains; b) Be prepared for floods; c) Help people protect themselves from flood hazards; d) Prevent unwise uses and adverse impacts in the floodplain; and e) Seek to accommodate floods, not control them. The city seeks to manage flood recovery by protecting critical facilities in the 500-year floodplain and implementing multi-hazard mitigation and flood response and recovery plans.

### 3.21 Non-Structural Approach

The city and county will seek to preserve the natural and beneficial functions of floodplains by emphasizing and balancing the use of non-structural measures with structural mitigation. Where drainageway improvements are proposed, a non-structural approach should be applied wherever possible to preserve the natural values of local waterways while balancing private property interests and associated cost to the city.

### 3.22 Protection of High Hazard Areas

The city will prevent redevelopment of significantly flood-damaged properties in high hazard areas. The city will prepare a plan for property acquisition and other forms of mitigation for flood-damaged and undeveloped land in high-hazard flood areas. Undeveloped high hazard flood areas will be retained in their natural state whenever possible. In urban areas, compatible uses of riparian corridors, such as natural ecosystems, wildlife habitat and wetlands will be encouraged wherever appropriate. Trails or other open recreational facilities may be feasible in certain areas.<sup>xiv</sup>

### 3.23 Larger Flooding Events

The city recognizes that floods larger than the 100-year event will occur resulting in greater risks and flood damage that will affect even improvements constructed with standard flood protection measures. The city will seek to better understand the impact of larger flood events and consider necessary floodplain management strategies, including the protection of critical facilities.

## Water and Air Quality

### 3.24 Protection of Water Quality

Water quality is a critical health, economic and aesthetic concern. The city and county will protect, maintain and improve water quality within the Boulder Creek watershed as a necessary component of existing ecosystems and as a critical resource for the human community. The city and county will seek to reduce point and nonpoint sources of pollutants, protect and restore natural water system, and conserve water resources. Special emphasis will be placed on regional efforts, such as watershed planning, and priority will be placed on pollution prevention over treatment.

**Comment [GS6]:** We'd like to see a policy that focuses more on general watershed health (the current policies focus on the Boulder Creek Watershed specifically). Focusing on different influences of watershed health such as, fires, mining, development, etc). Add in language to suggest that this health should be known and monitored, and acknowledge that activities upstream affect downstream conditions.

### 3.25 Water Resource Planning and Acquisition

Water resource planning efforts will be regional in nature and incorporate the goals of water quality protection, and as well as surface and ground water conservation. The city will continue to obtain additional municipal water supplies to ensure adequate drinking water, maintain instream flows and preserve agricultural uses. The city will seek to minimize or mitigate the environmental, agricultural and economic impacts to other jurisdictions in its acquisition of additional municipal water supply to further the goals of maintaining instream flows and preventing the permanent removal of land from agricultural production elsewhere in the state.

### 3.26 Drinking Water

The city and county will continually seek to improve the quality of drinking water and work with other water and land use interests as needed to assure the integrity and quality of its drinking water supplies. The city and county will employ a system-wide approach to protect drinking water quality from sources waters to the water treatment plant and throughout the water distribution system.

### 3.27 Minimum Flow Program

The city will pursue expansion of the existing in-stream flow program consistent with applicable law and manage stream flows to protect riparian and aquatic ecosystems within the Boulder Creek watershed.

### 3.28 Surface and Ground Water

Surface and groundwater resources will be managed to prevent their degradation and to protect and enhance aquatic, wetland and riparian ecosystems. Land use and development planning and public land management practices will consider the interdependency of surface and groundwater and potential impacts to these resources from pollutant sources, changes in hydrology, and dewatering activities.

*(Note: Additional policies and regulatory standards will be analyzed to strengthen this language about groundwater to -identify risks and potential impacts.)<sup>xv</sup>*

### 3.29 Wastewater

The city will pursue sustainable wastewater treatment processes to achieve water quality improvements with greater energy efficiency and minimal chemical use. Pollution prevention and proactive maintenance strategies will be incorporated in wastewater collection system management. The county will discourage the installation of private on-site wastewater systems where municipal collection systems are available or where a potential pollution or health hazard would be created.

### 3.30 Protection of Air Quality

Air quality is a critical health, economic and aesthetic concern. The city and county will seek to reduce stationary and mobile source emissions of pollutants. Special emphasis will be placed on local and regional efforts to reduce pollutants, which cause adverse health effects and impair visibility.

*(Note: Suggest adding language in “Built Environment” chapter about the important role of street trees and vegetative plantings in mitigating air quality and reducing exposure to pollutants at the street level.)<sup>xvi</sup>*

**Potential New Policy: Natural Environment Investments for Resilience**

The city and county recognize natural environment investments contribute toward resilience by reducing risk and promoting stability. Additionally, urban forestry, tree planting, natural hazard mitigation, improvement of air quality, added recreational activities and storm water mitigation activities have co-benefits.<sup>xvii</sup>

*(Note: Policy directions about coordinated approach, vulnerable populations and resident involvement are suggested in HR&A Report and will need further review over coming weeks.)*

**ENDNOTES**

<sup>i</sup> The changes to this chapter reflect work since the 2010 Plan including:

- The city currently is working on updates to its Integrated Pest Management policy, an Urban Forest Strategic Plan, the Resilience Strategy, and draft Climate Commitment.
- The city adopted the Bee Safe Resolution (2015) banning the use of neonicotinoids on city property and a Bear Protection Ordinance to secure waste from bears (2014). The county adopted a resolution to reduce and eliminate pesticide use to protect both people and pollinators (2015).
- Boulder County adopted the Environmental Resources Element of the Boulder County Comprehensive Plan (2015) and is currently working on policy related to Genetically Modified Organisms in the county.
- The city will be developing an Open Space Master Plan (2017).
- Boulder County is analyzing on how to address local oil and gas regulations, and looking at potential policy updates to better align the Fourmile Canyon Creek Watershed Master Plan (2015), Boulder Creek Watershed Master Plan (Urban Drainage and Flood Control District, 2015), and Consortium of Cities Water Stewardship Task Force Final Report (2013).
- HR&A's Recommendations for Resilience Integration (2016)

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<sup>ii</sup> OSBT in particular asked for clarification about how this section of policies apply – to the urban vs. wildlands area, and to OSMP lands vs. more generally. This added language aims at providing that clarification. Additionally, the board asked that the section be edited to sound a bit less human-centric.

<sup>iii</sup> North Trail Study process clarification and better integration with Boulder County Comprehensive Plan.

<sup>iv</sup> Clarification of how city and county are programmatically operating – learning from best practices about an ecosystems management approach. OSBT also suggested some language for this policy, reflected here.

<sup>v</sup> From city's Climate Commitment document.

<sup>vi</sup> OSBT asked for clarification of this policy regarding “nuisance species”. This language is consistent with the Urban Wildlife Management plan which has not been updated recently, so it may need some minor adjustments over coming months to clarify.

<sup>vii</sup> City is in process of developing an Urban Canopy Master Plan.

<sup>viii</sup> Stronger language suggested by Planning Board (including applying for private lands, which the city cannot regulate according to state law). Also consistent with city programs.

<sup>ix</sup> Change reflects decades of learning and best practices to integrate Integrated Pest Management into an ecological approach to land management.

<sup>x</sup> City and county are exploring soil carbon sequestration. Also requested by public.

<sup>xi</sup> Attempting to clarify that intent of the policy is to balance relevant community values with the use of mineral deposit.

<sup>xii</sup> Recommended after 2013 flood experience. OSBT suggested to add “before”... and during development.

<sup>xiii</sup> This is an existing policy that hasn't been changed. It has generally not been applied to open space lands – its intent more focused around lands with development potential.

<sup>xiv</sup> Clarification suggested by OSBT.

<sup>xv</sup> Planning Board suggested such language.

<sup>xvi</sup> OSBT suggested some language about mitigating against pollutants at street level with plantings, etc.

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<sup>xvii</sup> From HR&A Resilience Report.

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## 8. Community Well-Being<sup>i</sup>

*Proposed new section title: **Healthy and Socially-Thriving Community***

*Note: Some of the following policies relating to safety will move to a new “Safe and Resilient Community” section. Also please note that a further round of editing will occur to improve organization, reduce verbosity and redundancies, and renumber policies as necessary.*

The Boulder Valley, like all communities, is much more than its physical form. It is composed of people as well as the places where they live and work; it is as much a social environment as it is a physical environment. The Boulder Valley is a center of active living, attracting residents, businesses and visitors who value community and individual health. The city and county are committed to continuing to be a national leader in promoting the physical health and welfare well-being of everyone in the community as well as promoting civil and human rights. Additionally, the city and county will strive to foster mental and social health and well-being and health equity through the cultivation of a wide range of recreational, cultural, educational and social opportunities.

Boulder is a fluid and growing community, with changing demographics. The city and county proactively anticipate and plan for emerging demographic trends and social issues, and consider challenges faced by different demographic groups including:

- ~~Needs of a growing older adult population and their family caregivers; Supporting the ability of a growing older population to age well in our community;~~
- ~~Ensuring healthy starts for children and youth development and opportunities to be contributing members of the community;~~
- ~~Supporting and inclusion of immigrants and other culturally diverse people into the community;~~
- ~~Addressing the impacts of a large university population on housing and other infrastructure; and~~
- ~~Addressing the full range of impacts from the community’s lack of affordable housing and the increasing cost of affordable living.~~
- ~~Need for ongoing support of services and facilities for basic needs such as food, health care, shelter, child care, elder care, and education and training;~~
- ~~Support for community non-profits; and~~
- ~~Accessibility and affordability of basic health and human services.~~

In providing human services, the city and county partner vision for Boulder is to comprehensively create and support a comprehensive safety net of services and opportunities for individual and family economic mobility and self-sufficiency for residents, through coordinated regional planning, service delivery, and integrated partnerships. Generally, Boulder County provides many of the critical state- and federally-supported mandated programs, entitlement programs and countywide services. The city complements and augments these services and those provides services identified as important to the Boulder community, including a range of services from safety net services to and early intervention and prevention services, to meet critical human service needs.

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The policies in this section support the city's and county's goals related to:

- Human Services
- Social Equity
- Community Health
- Community Infrastructure and Facilities

## ***Human Services***

### **8.01 Providing for a Broad Spectrum of Human Needs**

The city and county will develop and maintain human service programs that provide for the broad spectrum of human needs. ~~An emphasis will be placed on supporting best practices and evidence-based programs that build upon community resilience through increased self-reliance and self-sufficiency. Using a resilience framework will help individuals avoid crisis and recover more quickly in emergency situations, which will in turn reduce the community's long term costs of providing services, from safety-net services to early intervention and prevention programs which mitigate more costly, long-term interventions and forestall worsening social conditions.~~ Services will balance meeting ~~emergency and short-term~~ immediate needs with long-term solutions ~~and supports for~~ critical social issues.

### **8.02 Regional Approach to Human Services<sup>ii</sup>**

The city ~~and county~~ will continue ~~their~~ collaborative roles in human services planning and funding through partnerships with other agencies and local government ~~as well as shared data and reporting that offers easy access for community residents and facilitates data-driven decision-making.~~ The city and county will ~~use a~~ coordinate a regional approach ~~to policy and program development such as that articulated in the Ten-Year Plan to Address Homelessness and the Human Services Strategic Plan.~~ The city ~~and county~~ will seek to ~~build partnerships with surrounding communities and the region, which will help~~ address the ~~often~~ disproportionate service burden placed on Boulder as a key regional ~~service~~ center.

## ***Social Equity***

### **8.03 Equitable Distribution of Resources**

The city ~~and county~~ will work to ensure that ~~basic-human~~ services are accessible and affordable to those most in need. The city and county will consider the impacts of policies and planning efforts on low- and moderate- income and special needs populations and ensure impacts and costs of sustainable decision making do not unfairly burden any one geographic or socio-economic group in the city. The city and county will consider ways to reduce the transportation burden for low income, ~~older adult~~, and disabled populations, enabling equal access to community infrastructure.

### **8.04 Addressing Community Deficiencies**

The city ~~and county~~ will ~~use community feedback in conjunction with robust data resources to identify barriers to development and provision of important basic human services and will work closely with community partners to find solutions to critical deficiencies.~~ ~~and work to find solutions to critical social issues such as lack of housing options for very low income and special~~

~~needs populations, access to and affordability of basic services, and limited availability of affordable retail products.~~

### 8.05 Diversity

The community values diversity as a source of strength and opportunity. The city and county will support the integration of diverse cultures and socio-economic groups in ~~the~~ physical, social, cultural and economic environments and promote opportunities for community engagement ~~of diverse community members;~~ and ~~promote~~ formal and informal representation of diverse community members in civic affairs.

#### **New Policy: Youth Engagement<sup>iii</sup>**

The city and county support youth engagement and partner with organizations in the community to offer opportunities to youth for civic engagement and education and fostering innovative thinking and leadership.

### **Safety and Community Health**

#### 8.06 Safety

The city ~~and county will~~ promote safety by fostering good neighborhood and community relations, building a sense of community pride and involvement, and promoting safe and attractive neighborhoods. The city and county will provide police, fire protection and emergency management services and preparedness education to ensure a safe community. The city and county will adjust public safety service delivery to respond to changing community needs including demographic changes and redeveloping and urbanizing areas to support safe, livable neighborhoods and vibrant business districts.

#### 8.07 ~~Physical Health and Well-Being~~

The city and county strive to ensure that ~~the~~ is community continues to be a leader in promoting physical, mental and social well-being ~~health and welfare~~ of community members and will support recreational, cultural, educational and social opportunities. The city and county recognizes that healthy diet and physical activity ~~are~~ is essential to individual and health and community well-being. ~~The city will support opportunities for people to exercise.~~ Neighborhood and community design will encourage physical activity and healthy eating by establishing easy access to parks and trails, healthy food retailers, and locating activity centers close to where people live, work and attend school. ~~The city will support community health programs such as: obesity prevention, outdoor education, safe routes to school, and healthy eating.~~

#### **New Policy: Resilience in Public Safety and Risk Prevention**

The city and county will provide focused efforts around public safety risk prevention and early intervention. Working with the community, the city and county will strive to prepare all segments of the community for uncertainty and disruptions by encouraging community and individual preparedness and creating a culture of risk awareness.

#### **New Policy: Physical Safety**

The city and county strive to ensure community members are safe from physical violence.<sup>iv</sup>

Note: This is a new suggested policy in its early stages. Further development to follow.

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**New Policy: Community Connectivity and Preparedness<sup>y</sup>**

The city and county will support fostering social and community connectivity and communications which promote well-being, deepen a sense of community and encourage civic participation and empowerment. The city and county recognize that supporting connections in the community furthermore enhances preparedness and improves the ability to respond and recover when emergencies happen.

***Community Infrastructure and Facilities*****Elementary and Secondary Schools****8.08 Planning for School Sites and Facilities**

The city and county will assist the Boulder Valley School District in its planning efforts to assure that the number, size and location of school lands and facilities is adequate to serve the population for the foreseeable future. The city and county will consider current and projected school enrollment and available school capacities when approving the type, scale and timing of residential development. The city and county will work with the school district to consider transportation impacts when planning for school sites and facilities.

**8.09 Accessibility to Schools**

The city and county will work with the Boulder Valley School District to develop safe and convenient pedestrian, bicycle and transit access for students to existing and new schools. New school facilities will be located so that school-age children have the opportunity to arrive safely on their own.

**Community Facility Needs****8.10 Support for Community Facilities**

The city and county recognize the importance of educational, health, cultural and non-profit community agencies that provide vital services to the residents of the Boulder Valley and will work collaboratively with these agencies to reasonably accommodate their facility needs and consider location based on transportation accessibility or other needs.

**Parks and Trails****8.11 Parks and Recreation**

The city and county recognize park and recreation facilities provide one of the most effective ways to build people's sense of community and quality of life throughout the city, especially in redeveloping areas and in the revitalization of neighborhoods. Parks and Recreation programs and facilities will continue to provide for a well-balanced and healthy community by providing a range of activities that support mental and physical health through high-quality programs and services that meet the needs of the community. Such facilities and services will be designed in a manner that responds to the needs of the intended users.

~~Park and recreation facilities and services of the city or other service entities will provide an adequate range of exercise and recreational opportunities for residents. Such facilities and services will be designed in a manner that responds to the needs of the intended users. City park~~

~~and recreation facilities will provide a variety of landscape types as amenities and recreational resources for urban dwellers, including irrigated green spaces, low water need plantings and natural vegetation areas.~~

### **New Policy: Parks as Gathering Spaces**

The city will strive to ensure Boulder’s public green spaces among residential areas are gathering places for neighbors and community members to build relationships and social ties that encourage safety and support within neighborhoods. These spaces will be planned and managed to remain clean, open, safe and accessible to neighbors and build strong social capital which is the backbone of a resilient and engaged community.

## **8.12 Trail Functions and Locations**

Trails serve a variety of functions such as exercise, recreation, transportation, education and/or environmental protection. Trails should be designed and managed to minimize conflicts among trail users. Trailheads should be located so they are convenient and safe for those arriving by alternate modes of transportation as well as automobiles. In order to provide environmental protection, informal trails and ~~the user~~-widening of trails by users should be discouraged by ensuring that formal trails are well-designed, monitored and adequately maintained. Trail and trailhead locations and alignments should avoid environmentally sensitive areas and minimize environmental impacts.

## **8.13 Trails Network**

The city and county will coordinate with other trail providers and private landowners in trail system planning, construction, management and maintenance. Where compatible with environmental protection goals and conservation easement agreements, trail connections will be developed to enhance the overall functioning of the trails network.

## ***Culture***

### **8.14 Libraries**

Library facilities and services of the Boulder Valley will be responsive to the needs of all populations, providing an adequate range of informational, educational and intellectual opportunities for all residents.

### **8.15. Information Resource/Community Center**

The city will provide access to information through a variety of formats providing materials, technology and services to enhance the personal development of the community’s residents. In its role as the community’s public and civic information center, the library will provide venues for community group meetings and resources and services to meet the needs of the community’s multicultural and special populations. Other community gathering spaces and information sources include the city and county websites, municipal buildings, and recreation and senior centers.

### **8.16 Education Resource**

The city will seek to provide educational, cultural and literacy resources and ~~opportunities~~services for the community. The city will develop and maintain resources to assist learners and students of all ages, including support for formal education programs, and provide public workspaces and independent learning resources. The city will develop collaborative

relationships with community educational institutions and function as a research center for residents.

**8.17 Performing and Visual Arts and Cultural Facilities**

~~The city and county recognize the ability of cultural facilities and activity to positively contribute to community members’ well-being and sense of community. The city and county, recognizing the need to enhance the personal development of the public and to build a sense of community by providing for cultural needs, will encourage the provision of venues and facilities for a wide range of the performing and visual arts and cultural expression that are available and affordable to everyone. and the provision of art in public buildings and spaces.~~

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**8.18 The Arts and Community Culture (reverse order of 8.17 and 8.18)**

~~The city and county recognize and support the arts and community members’ easy access to cultural experiences. Arts and culture advance civic dialogue, awareness and participation, contribute to people’ authentic expression of diversity, and promote community inclusion. They are central to the cultural life for children, youth and adults of the Boulder community and a clean industry that contributes significantly to the Boulder economy. They present significant quality of life advantages to the Boulder community through education, entertainment and the aesthetic environment and The city and county will encourage a rich mix of cultural offerings by supporting cultural organizations, artists and creative professionals, the expression of culture and creativity in the public realm and Boulder’s cultural destinations, provide a vehicle to bring together people of all walks of life and diverse ages, genders, religions, abilities, opinions, races, ethnicities, classes, and economic means for better communication and mutual understanding.~~

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**8.19 Public Art**

~~The city and county recognize the importance of public art and the environmental vibrancy it instills. The city and county will build a high-performing public art program to encourage the installation of art in public buildings and spaces.~~

~~The city and county will incorporate artistic elements in public projects whenever possible.~~

**8.20 Canyon Boulevard Cultural Corridor**

~~The city will encourage public and private projects within the Canyon Boulevard Cultural Corridor to have an arts focus and to incorporate public art.~~

**ENDNOTES**

<sup>i</sup> The changes to this chapter reflect work since the 2010 Plan including:

- ~~Human Services Strategy (in progress)~~
- ~~Homelessness Strategy (in progress)~~
- ~~HR&A’s Recommendations for Resilience Integration (2016)~~
- ~~Community Cultural Plan (2015)~~
- ~~Parks and Recreation Master Plan (2013)~~
- ~~Fire-Rescue Master Plan (2011)~~
- ~~Police Master Plan (2013)~~

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- ii Revisions based on Boulder County’s Building a Community of Support (2016 Report) and Human Service Safety Net (2014 Report) and the City of Boulder’s Human Services Strategy.
- iii New suggested policy by Planning Board. Could incorporate language from the inclusion report that regards public safety practices.
- iv Revisions based on Human Services Strategy guiding principles for human services delivery
  - v On-going emphasis around youth engagement through YOAB, GUB, and recommendations in Community Cultural Plan Strategies.

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## 9. Agriculture and Food<sup>1</sup>

*Note: The proposed new section “Healthy and Socially Thriving Community” will include agricultural and food policies relating to a healthy, socially thriving community. The proposed new section “Environmentally Sustainable Community” will include agriculture and food policies relating to land and environment. Also please note that a further round of editing will occur to improve organization, reduce verbosity and redundancies, and renumber policies as necessary.*

A strong local food system can positively impact the resiliency, health, economy and environment of the Boulder Valley and surrounding region. Food choices and their method of production represent one of the most significant impacts that humans have on the quality of our lives world around us. A strong local food system can positively impact the resiliency, health, economy and environment of the Boulder Valley and its surrounding areas. Sustainable rural and urban agricultural practices and efficient short distances to transport of food can help reduce energy used to feed the community. Access to healthysafe food, including locally grown food for all Boulder residents, is a top priority for our community. It is important that suchhealthy food be available to individuals and families in all neighborhoods, regardless of economic situation and location.

Roots in progressive food movements run deep in Boulder County and have contributed to the dynamic and thriving natural foods industry. Many local restaurants specialize in providing local ingredients in their food, garden to table processes have been developed in local schools, and the desire for a year round farmers market are all indications of people’s growing interest and demand for locally produced food.

The city and county have made significant contributions to the preservation of lands suitable for agricultural production, and the water needed to use these areas for agriculture. Most agricultural production in the Boulder Valley occurs on city and county open space.

The following policies on agriculturalale and ~~access to local~~ food systems guide public policy and decision-making in to move our community, ~~toward a more robust agricultural economy and ensuring everyone has access to food.~~

- ~~Support for Agriculture~~
- ~~Local Food Production~~
- Sustainable Food ProductionAgricultural Practices
- Regional Efforts to Enhance the Food System
- Urban Gardening and Food Production
- Access to ~~Locally Produced Healthy~~ Food

### 9.01 Support for Agriculture

The city and county will encourage the preservation of working agricultural lands, and sustainable production of food on them use of agricultural lands as a current and renewable source of food and feed and for their contribution to the degree they provide cultural, environmental, and economic diversityand resilient benefits to the community. These usesareas

are important for preserving the rural character of Area III. The success of agriculture on these lands is vitally dependent on their water supplies. The city and county will demonstrate and encourage the protection of significant agricultural areas and related water supplies and facilities, including the historic and existing ditch systems, through a variety of means, which may include public acquisition, land use planning, and sale or lease of water for agricultural use. The city and county will support farmers and ranchers in this area as they negotiate the challenges of operating in a semi-arid environment that is often near residential areas.

**Comment [GS1]:** We need to have some kind of language in this section that supports ag uses in Area 3.

**9.025 Urban Gardening and Food Production**

The city will encourage community and private gardens to be integrated in the city. City incentives include ~~This may include allowing flexibility and/or helping to remove restrictions for food production and sales on private lands and, in shared open spaces and public areas, and encouraging rooftop gardens and composting and planting edible fruit and vegetable plants where appropriate.~~

**9.02 Local Food Production**

The city and county will encourage and support local food production to improve the availability and accessibility of healthy foods and to provide other educational, economic and social benefits. The city and county support increased growth, sales, distribution and consumption of foods that are healthy, sustainably produced and locally grown for all Boulder Valley residents with an emphasis on affordable access to food for everyone and long term availability of food.

**Comment [GS2]:** Boulder County is strongly moving away from GMO's and pesticides (neonicotinoids). County staff would like to see policies related to county open space tenants moving away from these practices. Recognize that conventional agricultural operations account a large share of revenue funding for Parks and Open space, so this shift would take a very long time to complete.

**9.03 Sustainable Food Production Agriculture Practices**

The city and county will promote sustainable agricultural food production practices on publicly-owned lands and will encourage them on private lands. Sustainable practices include food production methods that are healthy, have low environmental impact, integrate ecological conservation objectives, responsibly use water and protect its quality, provide for pollinator and beneficial insect habitat, are respectful to workers, are humane to animals, provide fair wages to farmers, integrate whole farm planning and support farming communities. These can include a range of production types that take into account land suitability, water availability, invasive species, energy use and labor and capital needs. The city and county will also promote sustainable agriculture by recognizing the critical importance of delivering irrigation ditch water to agricultural lands.

**Comment [GS3]:** The topic should be changed back to Agriculture and not just "Food Production since much of our ag lands are not suitable for "food production". We need to recognize the important of animal feed, range, and pasture systems too.

**9.04 Access to Healthy Food**

The city and county will support cooperative efforts to establish community markets throughout the community and region. Such efforts include working to identify a location or develop facilities to allow one or more year-round farmers' markets, supporting sales of produce from small community gardens and working with local partners on food programs. The city and county support increased growth, sales, distribution and consumption of foods that are healthy, sustainably produced and locally grown for all Boulder Valley residents with an emphasis on affordable access to food and long term availability of food.

**9.054 Regional Efforts to Enhance the Food System**

The city and county will participate in regional agricultural efforts and implement recommendations at a local level to the extent appropriate and possible.

**9.05 Urban Gardening and Food Production**

~~The city will encourage community and private gardens to be integrated in the city. This may include allowing flexibility and/or helping to remove restrictions for food production in shared open spaces and public areas, encouraging rooftop gardens and composting and planting edible fruit and vegetable plants where appropriate.~~

**9.06 Access to Locally Produced Food**

~~The city will support cooperative efforts to establish community markets throughout the community and region. Such efforts include working to identify a location or develop facilities to allow a year round farmers market and support sales of produce from small community gardens.~~

**ENDNOTES**

<sup>i</sup> The changes to this chapter reflect work since the 2010 Plan including:

- [Agriculture Resources Management Plan \(in progress\)](#)
- [City of Boulder Water Efficiency Plan \(2016\)](#)
- [HR&A's Recommendations for Resilience Integration \(2016\)](#)
- [2015 State of Colorado Water Plan \(2015\)](#)
- [Boulder County Environmental Element \(2014\)](#)
- [Parks and Recreation Master Plan \(2012\)](#)
- [City of Boulder Source Water Master Plan \(2009\)](#)
- [Ordinances and policy changes to promote local food sales](#)
- [Boulder County Cropland Policy \(2011\)](#)