

To: City Council Members  
From: Retreat Committee: Suzanne Jones, Lisa Morzel, Jane Brautigam, Alisa Lewis  
Date: December 16, 2013  
**Re: Preparation and Background Reading for City Council Retreat in January**

Below please find our proposed plan for the Council's annual retreat. We hope to make our upcoming retreat as productive and useful as possible—keeping what has worked best in the past, and retooling other elements to provide an opportunity for fresh thinking.

The retreat will be two full days—Sunday & Monday, January 12 & 13<sup>th</sup>—from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. We will be starting late enough for people to have exercised beforehand if they choose, and have decided against any evening sessions when people tend to be at lower energy.

Our venue will be downtown at Rembrandt Yard (1301 Spruce St, across from Boulderado), which is a beautiful and evocative space that is easily accessible but as a new locale invites us to “retreat” from our normal perspective and look at things anew.

After interviewing several facilitators to explore new possibilities, we chose a facilitator we have used before—Heather Bergman—because of her outstanding ability to help us vision together strategically, and because she is “good at herding cats” (and we all know that we could use some herding!). We have asked Heather to be assertive in holding us each accountable to being clear, concise, civil, and to share the floor time equitably with each other. We also have asked Heather to keep us fully engaged with the topic being discussed with the group, avoiding any side bar conversations.

To help us “vision” both literally and figuratively, we also will have a graphic recorder join us during the retreat to help us visualize graphically the path forward that we are creating together.

The retreat is organized in four parts, of varying weights:

1. A brief time on the first morning will be dedicated to get to know each other a bit more deeply, based on the belief that having an understanding and appreciation of who each of us are and where we are each coming from, will lead to a more cohesive, respectful, and high-functioning Council. To that end, we ask you to come prepared to share a bit of “your story” with your colleagues by answering two questions below.
2. The majority and remainder of Day One will be used to pause and think about where we want Boulder to be in 10-15 years. Rather than just a simple continuation of where our current work plan is already headed, we want to make sure this long-term vision best prepares us on which to build the desired outcomes and priorities for the next two years.
3. The majority of Day Two will be dedicated to priority outcomes for the next two years, based on the collective vision that emerged from discussions on Day One. Staff

will then take this input to fashion a detailed 2014 work plan for our approval in February. While we may very likely adopt many of our current priorities again, this is our opportunity as a new Council with fresh blood to collectively and strategically plot a course together. So we will ask you to have done some deep thinking over the holidays about the questions outlined below.

4. At the end of Day Two, we will conclude the retreat by deciding on this Council's working agreements, as well as divvying up outside committee assignments. So please review the Council Working Agreements (attached) to see what else you would like to add, subtract or amend, and come with your prioritized committee assignment aspirations.

We are excited about the upcoming retreat and its potential to launch this new Council off on a strategic and well-thought out plan of work for the next two years. Thank you in advance for your preparation and enthusiasm!

### **RETREAT PREPARATION & REQUIRED READING**

Rather than assigning written homework which has often failed to produce the desired results, we are asking people to read a few relatively short documents—in particular the beginning of the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan, which is our guiding document, do some deep thinking beforehand, and come prepared to answer the questions outlined below. The quality of the retreat will be reflected in the quality of thinking that we each do beforehand. In early January, staff will also compile and send us input from Boards & Commissions and the public, as it is available, for us to reflect upon in advance.

#### **Read and reflect on the following documents:**

1. Sustainability Framework (2 pages)--ATTACHED
2. Section 1 of the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan (57 pages)—ATTACHED
3. Input from Boards & Commissions and the public as available—TO BE SENT IN EARLY JAN
4. Council Working Agreements—ATTACHED
5. Council Boards & Committee Assignments--ATTACHED

#### **Come prepared to answer the following questions:**

##### 1. Who You Are

- What are one or two of the greatest influences in your life and what is a key formative event in your life that has shaped who you are? (Be prepared to share for no more than 4 minutes total)

##### 2. Your Vision for the Future

- When you think ahead 10-15 years from now, what is your top priority(s) for one significant thing you hope will be different or better in Boulder? (You will be asked to share your top couple priorities, and then we will flesh out vision elements in more detail in breakout groups. On Day Two we will decide on priority outcomes for the next two years that emerges from this collective vision.)

**Boulder City Council Retreat**  
**January 12-13, 2014**  
**Rembrandt Yard – 1301 Spruce Street**

*"Vision without action is merely a dream. Action without vision just passes the time. Vision with action can change the world." - Joel A. Barker*

**Day One: January 12, 2014**

**9:00 am        Laying the Foundation**

*"The prejudices people feel about each other disappear when they get to know each other." – James T. Kirk*

- Each member of Council will share with the group **who the greatest influences in her/his life** have been and **what the most formative event of her/his life** was.
- Each member of Council will have 4 minutes to share this information.

**9:45 am        Visioning the Future of Boulder**

*"A vision is not just a picture of what could be; it is an appeal to our better selves, a call to become something more." - Rosabeth Moss Kanter*

- Each member of Council will share with the group the **highest priority element of her/his vision** for the City of Boulder. ***Vision elements*** will look 10 to 15 years ahead and answer the question, **"What is one thing you hope will be different or better in Boulder in the year 2025 or 2030?"**
- Vision elements will be brief and at the conceptual level. Council will discuss these concepts in greater detail after lunch. Each member will have 3 minutes to share her/his vision element.

**10:15 am        Break**

**10:30 am        Visioning the Future of Boulder, continued**

- Council members will share their second priority vision element with the group.
- Each member of Council will have 3 minutes.

**11:00 am        Discussion and Reconciliation of Any Incompatible or Critically Absent Vision Elements**

- Members of Council will identify and resolve any proposed vision elements that are inconsistent or incompatible with one another to ensure that the upcoming small group discussions have clear direction.
- Members of Council will also take a few moments to review the list of vision elements to ensure that no critical items are missing.

- Members of Council will identify any items on the vision list that are important but for which there is no Council role.

**11:30 am Other Council Priorities**

- Each member of Council will have 2 final minutes to identify another vision element, a priority item that is already on the two-year staff work plan, and/or a "wish list" item that s/he would like staff to pursue if there are opportunities in the next 5 years.
- Non-vision items will not be discussed again until the prioritization discussion on Day 2 of the retreat.

**12:00 pm Lunch – Change Seats upon Return from Lunch**

**12:30 pm Visioning – What Do We Mean When We Say...?**

*"I always wanted to be somebody, but now I realize I should have been more specific." -- Lily Tomlin*

- Working in assigned groups of 3, Council members will discuss their thoughts **on how to break down vision elements from the previous discussion into smaller vision components.**
- Each discussion group will discuss multiple vision elements. The number of vision elements assigned to each discussion group and the time allocated to each element will be determined during the retreat based on the number elements that emerge during the previous discussion.
- The work product of these discussions will be **3 to 5 bulleted vision components** for each vision element.

**2:00 pm Visioning Components – Reports from Discussion Groups**

- Each discussion group will have six minutes to share their short list of vision components for each vision element they discussed. Council members will have an opportunity to ask clarifying questions to ensure understanding of the vision components that emerge from each discussion group.

**2:45 pm Break**

**2:45 pm Creating a Shared Vision**

- Council members will discuss the vision components that emerged from the group discussions.
- Council members will be encouraged to think in terms of "yes, if" when considering their level of support for each vision element and its associated components. This will help move the group toward collaborative agreement.

- The goal of the discussion is to **find Council agreement on a shared vision for the future of Boulder**, knowing that some items in the vision may not be priorities for 2014 or even 2015

**5:00 pm      Adjourn**

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**Day Two: January 13, 2014**

*Note: Council members should choose different seats than those they enjoyed on Day One.*

**9:00 am      Brief Recap of Day One**

**9:15 am      What Can Be Achieved in the Next Two Years**

*“If you align expectations with reality, you will never be disappointed.” - Terrell Owens*

- Working in different assigned discussion groups than Day One, Council members will identify **what they think could be accomplished in 2014-2015** for each vision component. These discussions may require Council to request input from staff from time to time.
- Discussion groups will work to identify one or two specific **desired outcomes** that could be achieved for each vision component.
- Groups may also identify additional desired outcomes they envision in three or more years. These additional outcomes will be captured for ongoing future reference.
- Multiple groups may discuss the same vision component to get different perspectives on desired/possible outcomes.

**10:30 am      Break**

**10:45 am      What Can Be Achieved in the Next Two Years – Reports from Discussion Groups**

- Each discussion group will share the one or two specific desired outcomes they see for each vision component in 2014-2015. They may also briefly share any additional outcomes they identified for the longer term.
- Council members will have an opportunity to ask clarifying questions to ensure understanding of the desired outcomes that emerge from each discussion group.

**12:00 pm      Lunch – Change Seats upon Return from Lunch**

**12:30 pm      Agreeing on Desired Outcomes**

- Council members will discuss the desired outcomes for each vision component that emerged from the group discussions.
- The goal of the discussion is to **find Council agreement on desired outcomes for each vision component**, knowing that some items in the vision may not be priorities for 2014-2015.

**2:00 pm      Break**

- 2:15 pm**      **Prioritizing and Fine-Tuning to Create Our Shared Roadmap for 2014-2015**  
*“Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success.” – Henry Ford*
- Council members will identify which vision component outcome each thinks **the highest priority for Council and staff to pursue together** in 2014-2015.
  - Council members will include any items from the list of two-year non-vision elements from Day One that are priorities for them.
  - In identifying priorities, **Council members should take a step back from their own suggested vision elements** and give consideration to what is most important for the community as a whole, which actions may energize or transform the community, which actions build on or integrate well with existing efforts, etc. Members should also give some thought to the balance between new and existing work efforts and the overall workload for Council and for staff. **Not all great ideas can be priorities for 2014-2015.**
  - Each council member will have 3 minutes to share her/his priorities.
  - Council will then discuss and refine the identified priorities to find agreement about what the Council and staff priorities for 2014-2015 ought to be.
- 3:30 pm**      **Using the Vision as a Touchstone for the Future**
- Council members will review the vision elements that emerged from their discussion on Day One of the retreat and assess whether the prioritized outcomes and associated work are true to the vision.
  - Members of Council will also affirm the vision as a touchstone to inform their work into the future—in 2014-2015 and beyond.
- 4:00 pm**      **Continuing to Improve How Council Works Together**
- Members of Council will discuss what they think are the most important factors in successful Council interactions and determine if the current operating protocols support those factors.
  - The group will make any necessary changes to the operating protocols to ensure that they support the factors in successful Council interactions.
- 4:30 pm**      **Committee Assignments for Council Members**
- Members of Council will briefly review the opportunities to serve on committees within and external to the City.
  - Council members will volunteer for service on the available committees.
- 5:00 pm**      **Adjourn**

# SUSTAINABILITY FRAMEWORK

The city is continuously working to provide service excellence for an inspired future and moving towards the vision of One City, One Boulder. As part of this effort, the sustainability framework helps to provide a common language for community and City Council goals and priorities and ensure alignment across the city organization.

The framework uses seven broad categories as desired community outcomes necessary for Boulder's vision of a great community. When the city implements the strategies outlined in this framework, then Boulder will have a Safe, Healthy & Socially Thriving, Livable, Accessible & Connected, Environmentally Sustainable, and Economically Vital Community and provide Good Governance. Strategies to achieve those outcomes are developed and advanced in the annual budget as well as strategic and master plans.

## GETTING AWAY FROM "SILOS" TO WORK TOWARD MULTIPLE GOALS

Alignment across the organization with the wide range of community priorities, allows the city organization to evaluate whether or not expectations are being met and to more nimbly adjust, if necessary. Overall, the framework encourages holistic, systemic thinking and allows for more strategic decision-making as the city moves together in the same direction. There are key concepts like resiliency, equity and engagement that are embedded in each category because they are essential in all areas.

## USE THE FRAMEWORK IN PLANS, PROJECTS AND KEY INITIATIVES

Specific initiatives to achieve these Boulder outcomes and strategies are outlined in greater detail in master/strategic plans and the city's budget. Certain multiple-objective or cross-departmental projects will benefit from using the framework to guide strategies but it may not be effective or applicable for all projects. Efforts are ongoing to align the framework with budget process and key initiatives.



**SAFE COMMUNITY: When the City of Boulder...**enforces the law and protects residents and property from physical harm; and fosters a climate of safety and social inclusiveness...then it will be a **Safe Community**.



**HEALTHY & SOCIALLY THRIVING COMMUNITY: When the City of Boulder...** supports the physical and mental well-being of its community members; cultivates a wide-range of recreational, cultural, educational, and social opportunities; fosters inclusion, embraces diversity and respects human rights...then it will be a **Healthy and Socially Thriving Community**.



**LIVABLE COMMUNITY: When the City of Boulder...** sustains and enhances a compact development pattern with appropriate densities and mix of uses that provides convenient access to daily needs for people of all ages and abilities; supports a diversity of housing and employment options for vibrant and livable neighborhoods and business districts; and maintains abundant and accessible public gathering spaces... then it will be a **Livable Community**.



**ACCESSIBLE & CONNECTED COMMUNITY: When the City of Boulder...** maintains and develops a balanced transportation system that supports all modes of travel; maintains a safe system and shifts trips away from single-occupant vehicles; and provides open access to information, encourages innovation,

enhances communication and promotes community engagement... then it will be an **Accessible and Connected Community**.



**ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY: When the City of Boulder...** promotes an ecologically balanced community; prevents and mitigates threats to the environment; and ensures the efficient use of energy resources...then it will be an **Environmentally Sustainable Community**.

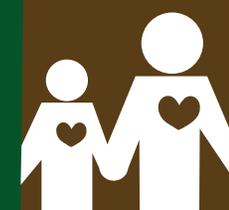


**ECONOMICALLY VITAL COMMUNITY: When the City of Boulder...** develops and maintains a healthy, resilient economy and maintains high levels of services and amenities...then it will be an **Economically Vital Community**.



**GOOD GOVERNANCE: When the City of Boulder...**models stewardship of the financial, human, information and physical assets of the community; supports strategic decision making with timely, reliable and accurate data and analysis; and enhances and facilitates transparency, accuracy, efficiency, effectiveness and quality customer service...then it will have provided **Good Governance**.

# Sustainability Framework



# SUSTAINABILITY FRAMEWORK

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Specific initiatives to achieve these Boulder outcomes and strategies are outlined in greater detail in master/strategic plans and the city's budget. Certain multiple-objective or cross-departmental projects will benefit from using the framework to guide strategies but it may not be effective or applicable for all projects. Efforts are ongoing to align the framework with budget process and key initiatives.



### SAFE COMMUNITY:

- Enforces the law, taking into account the needs of individuals and community values
- Plans for and provides timely and effective response to emergencies and natural disasters
- Fosters a climate of safety for individuals in homes, businesses, neighborhoods and public places
- Encourages shared responsibility, provides education on personal and community safety and fosters an environment that is welcoming and inclusive



### HEALTHY & SOCIALLY THRIVING COMMUNITY:

- Cultivates a wide-range of recreational, cultural, educational, and social opportunities
- Supports the physical and mental well-being of its community members and actively partners with others to improve the welfare of those in need
- Fosters inclusion, embraces diversity and respects human rights
- Enhances multi-generational community enrichment and community engagement



### LIVABLE COMMUNITY:

- Promotes and sustains a safe, clean and attractive place to live, work and play
- Facilitates housing options to accommodate a diverse community
- Provides safe and well-maintained public infrastructure, and provides adequate and appropriate regulation of public/ private development and resources
- Encourages sustainable development supported by reliable and affordable city services
- Supports and enhances neighborhood livability for all members of the community



### ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY:

- Supports and sustains natural resource and energy conservation
- Promotes and regulates an ecologically balanced community
- Mitigates and abates threats to the environment



### ACCESSIBLE & CONNECTED COMMUNITY:

- Offers and encourages a variety of safe, accessible and sustainable mobility options
- Plans, designs and maintains effective infrastructure networks
- Supports strong regional multimodal connections
- Provides open access to information, encourages innovation, enhances communication and promotes community engagement
- Supports a balanced transportation system that reflects effective land use and reduces congestion



### ECONOMICALLY VITAL COMMUNITY:

- Supports an environment for creativity and innovation
- Promotes a qualified and diversified work force that meets employers' needs and supports broad-based economic diversity
- Fosters regional and public / private collaboration with key institutions and organizations that contribute to economic sustainability
- Invests in infrastructure and amenities that attract, sustain and retain diverse businesses, entrepreneurs and the associated primary jobs



### GOOD GOVERNANCE:

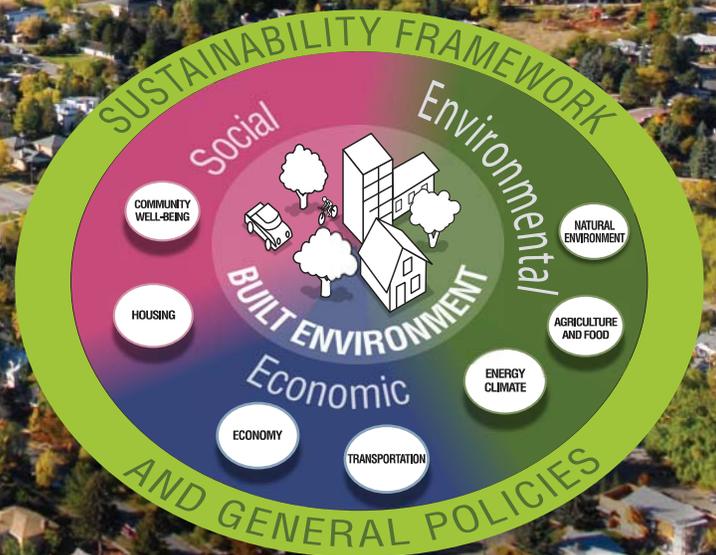
- Models stewardship and sustainability of the city's financial, human, information and physical assets
- Supports strategic decision-making with timely, reliable and accurate data and analysis
- Enhances and facilitates transparency, accuracy, efficiency, effectiveness and quality customer service in all city business
- Supports, develops and enhances relationships between the city and community/ regional partners
- Provides assurance of regulatory and policy compliance





# 2010

# The Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan



# 2010 Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan

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# Introduction

Since 1970, the City of Boulder and Boulder County have jointly adopted a comprehensive plan that guides land use decisions in the Boulder Valley. The Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan seeks to protect the natural environment of the Boulder Valley while fostering a livable, vibrant and sustainable community. The current plan was first adopted in 1977. Since then, six major updates have been completed: 1982, 1990, 1995, 2000, 2005 and 2010.

The Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan provides a general statement of the community's desires for future development and preservation of the Boulder Valley. The principle of sustainability drives the overall framework of the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan.

The core components of the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan are:

- The Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan **policies** guide decisions about growth, development, preservation, environmental protection, economic development, affordable housing, culture and the arts, urban design, neighborhood character and transportation. The policies also inform decisions about the manner in which services are provided, such as police, fire, emergency medical services, water utilities, flood control and human services.
- The Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan **Land Use and Area I, II, III Maps** define the desired land use pattern for the Boulder Valley regarding location, type and intensity of development.

The planning area encompasses the Boulder Valley, which is generally defined as those areas bounded by the mountain backdrop on the west, 95th Street on the east, Davidson Mesa and the Coal Creek drainage on the southeast, the south county line on the south, Mineral Road on the northeast and Neva Road and Niwot Road on the north, as delineated on the approved Area I, II, III Map.

## **Boulder Planning History**

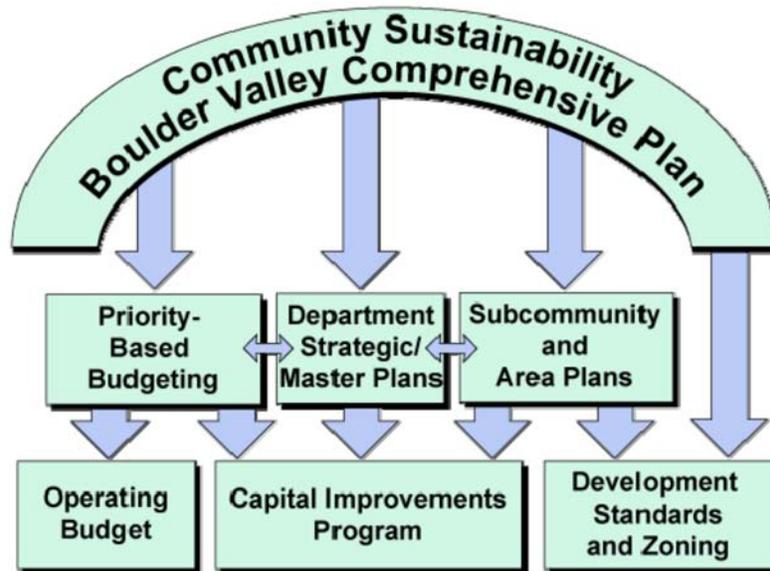
Boulder enjoys a long history of community planning. Some key planning milestones include:

- In 1910, Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. developed plans for parks and street improvements.
- In 1959, Boulder voters approved a 'blue line' charter amendment that limited water extensions above an elevation of 5,750 feet to preserve the mountain backdrop.
- In 1967, Boulder was the first city in the nation to institute a dedicated sales tax to purchase open space lands.
- In 1971, voters approved a 55-foot building height limit.

- In 1974, the city adopted the Historic Preservation Ordinance, which has been instrumental in preserving and encouraging rehabilitation of historic buildings and districts.
- In 1976, city voters instituted one of the nation’s more restrictive residential growth-management ordinances.
- In 1977, the city and county approved an intergovernmental agreement and the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan to concentrate urban development in the city and preserve the rural character of lands outside the city service area.
- In 1982, the city adopted the Solar Access Ordinance to ensure residential buildings have access to sunlight.
- In 1986, the Downtown Plan and Downtown Design Guidelines were adopted.
- In 1992, the Wetlands Protection Ordinance was adopted, regulating development within a buffer area of streams and wetlands in the city.
- In 1993, with the amount of vacant land in the city diminishing, a community visioning exercise called the Integrated Planning Project focused on “what’s best for what’s left” and resulted in a set of goals and action items that included reducing the non-residential development potential within the city.
- Also in 1993, after an analysis of the development potential of Area III, the Planning Area III-Rural Preservation Area and Area III-Planning Reserve designations were created.
- In 1995, the city adopted its first subcommunity plan, the North Boulder Subcommunity Plan.
- In 1997, the city reduced projected job growth through a combination of land purchases, rezoning, and floor area limitations in industrial zones.
- In 1999, an inclusionary zoning ordinance was adopted, requiring 20 percent of new residential development in the city to be permanently affordable for low- and moderate-income households.
- The 2000 major update to the Comprehensive Plan resulted in policy and land use changes to promote additional housing and mixed use development in appropriate locations. Also, the size of the Planning Reserve was reduced by 200 acres and some properties on the eastern edge of Boulder were moved from Area II to Area III-Rural Preservation Area.
- In 2004, implementation of the 2000 major update and the city’s Jobs: Housing Project included land use regulation changes to allow residential uses in industrial zones, a new high density residential zone district and rezonings in certain areas to higher residential densities and mixed use.
- In 2009, the Compatible Development Ordinance revised regulations on house form and mass to protect the character of established single-family home neighborhoods.

### **Plan Implementation**

Planning for the Boulder Valley does not end with the adoption of the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan. More detailed planning puts the vision into practice. The diagram below shows subsequent steps for implementing the Comprehensive Plan.



The following implementation tools translate the Comprehensive Plan into action:

### **Subcommunity and Area Plans**

Subcommunity plans and area plans provide direction for specific geographic areas. They provide a link between the broad policies of the Comprehensive Plan and more detailed zoning, development review and capital improvement programming decisions.

### **Master Plans**

City departmental master plans are developed to be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. They establish detailed policies, priorities, service standards, facility and system needs and capital budgeting for the delivery of specific services and facilities provided by each city department. The plans identify three levels of funding or investment strategies: fiscally constrained, action and vision.

### **Zoning District Regulations**

Whereas the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map provides a generalized picture of desired future uses in the Boulder Valley, the city zoning map assigns every parcel of land in the city a zoning district. This regulates allowable uses, density, setbacks, height, affordable housing requirements, solar access protection and more. The county's zoning code regulates parcels within the Boulder Valley not annexed to the city.

### **Programs and Services**

Many of the Comprehensive Plan policies are implemented through city programs and services. Funding for these is allocated annually through the city budget, using a model of priority-based budgeting, which reflects the core mission of the city and individual departments.

### **Capital Improvements**

Capital improvements carry out the Comprehensive Plan's policies of orderly and efficient provision of urban facilities and services. Funding for capital improvements are planned on a six-year timeframe through the Capital Improvements Program (CIP). Departmental master plans and subcommunity and area plans help guide prioritization of improvement projects.

### **Development Review**

All new development or redevelopment projects must conform to land use and zoning regulations, which are developed and amended to be consistent with the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan.

### **Action Plan**

The Comprehensive Plan Action Plan outlines the actions needed to implement Comprehensive Plan policies that are not currently addressed through other plans or programs. The action plan establishes the timing and priorities for new program initiatives, planning projects and regulatory changes; ongoing programs or projects are not included. The plan is developed to be flexible and responsive to city goals and resources.

The action plan is adopted by City Council and revisited at each annual update to the Comprehensive Plan. The county is sent a referral and invited to identify those actions, projects or other activities in the action plan in which they wish to participate. The county may also propose new or additional collaborative actions to the city for its consideration during the action plan review as part of the annual update.

The city and county have been remarkably successful in working together to implement the vision set forth in the 1977 Comprehensive Plan, most notably in channeling growth to the city's service area, preserving lands outside the urban growth boundary, keeping the community compact, intensifying the core area, providing for affordable housing, and improving alternative transportation modes.

### **Boulder Today and Tomorrow**

As of January 2010, the City of Boulder (Area I) had approximately 43,400 housing units, 97,500 residents and 97,000 jobs. The remainder of the Service Area (Area II) had approximately 6,000 housing units, 12,000 residents and 3,000 jobs. About 30,000 students attend the University of Colorado.

Over the next 25 years, Area I is projected to add about 6,000 housing units, 15,000 residents and 19,000 jobs. CU student enrollment could increase by 5,000 to 15,000 by 2030. Most of the growth that will occur in Area II will follow annexation to the city and therefore is included in the projection numbers for Area I. Since there is little vacant land left in the city's Service Area, most of this growth will occur through redevelopment.

## **The 2010 Major Update**

Some key trends point to changing conditions in the community and provide the context for the 2010 major update.

1. *Demographic challenges.* Boulder's population is aging, and the county population of age 60 and over is expected to more than double by 2020. The majority of Boulder households are now non-family households, and the poverty rate for local households is continuing to increase. These trends will likely result in a higher demand for human services and a wider range of housing types. Also, Boulder continues to lack adequate amounts of housing for low and moderate income households. Both affordable and market rate housing will increasingly occur in commercial and industrial areas, which will require new services and amenities to create livable neighborhoods.
2. *Ramped up climate action.* The urgency of the need to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions and dependence on fossil fuels has intensified, and so has the city's efforts to be both a leader and a partner in the community in reducing local energy demand, improving energy efficiency and moving toward more renewable energy. This calls for strengthening policy direction on climate action and related factors in transportation, land use, agriculture, urban forestry and waste reduction.
3. *Economic challenges.* The city's competitive position in retail development and job growth has changed as neighboring communities have developed retail and employment centers of their own. This combined with a recent national economic downturn has meant that city revenues have not kept pace with the rising costs of providing public services and facilities. The effect is that economic vitality efforts are more important than ever.

To respond to these trends and other concerns, two broad focus areas were identified for the 2010 major update: 1. Sustainability policies encompassing social equity, environmental health and economic vitality, and 2. Urban form and community design. Also identified for 2010 update was the need to simplify and clarify the process for considering service area expansion into the Area III-Planning Reserve.

# 1. Core Values, Sustainability Framework and General Policies

*The Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan is a joint plan between the City of Boulder and Boulder County to inform and guide their shared responsibility for planning and development in the Boulder Valley. This section of the plan sets forth the plan's core values and sustainability framework, and provides overall planning guidance for intergovernmental cooperation, growth management, annexation and provision of urban facilities and services.*

## Core Values

Many of the key policies in the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan stem from long-standing community values and represent a clear vision of our community and our commitment to:

- **Sustainability** as a unifying framework to meet environmental, economic and social goals
- A welcoming and **inclusive** community
- Culture of creativity and **innovation**
- Strong **city and county** cooperation
- Our unique community **identity and sense of place**
- **Compact, contiguous** development and infill that supports evolution to a more **sustainable urban form**
- **Open space** preservation
- Great **neighborhoods** and **public spaces**
- **Environmental** stewardship and **climate** action
- A vibrant **economy** based on Boulder's quality of life and economic strengths
- A diversity of **housing** types and price ranges
- An all-mode **transportation** system to make getting around without a car easy and accessible to everyone
- Physical health and well-being

Applying a sustainability framework to decision-making in Boulder means considering the issues of environment, economy and social equity together. An action or decision in any one of these areas will have consequences on the others. The policies in this plan outline the future vision of the community, focusing on the built environment and its relationship to environmental, economic and social well-being and overall community livability. At the intersection of all these areas is the community's ability to sustainably meet its needs now and in the future.

## Sustainability Framework

### 1.01 Sustainability Principles

The city and county recognize that:

- a) There are critical interrelationships among economic, social and environmental health;
- b) The way we produce, trade and consume impacts our ability to sustain natural resources;
- c) Social and cultural equity and diversity creates valuable human capital that contributes to economic and environmental sustainability;
- d) The built environment has an impact on social, economic and environmental conditions; and
- e) The quality of our environmental, economic and social health is built upon the full engagement and involvement of our community.

Therefore, the city and county seek to maintain and enhance the livability, health and vitality of the Boulder Valley and the natural systems of which it is a part, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs, anticipating and adapting to changes in community needs and external influences.

### **1.02 Principles of Environmental Sustainability**

The city and county will strive to preserve and protect the natural resource base and environmental quality on which life depends by:

- a) Maintaining and enhancing the biodiversity and productivity of ecological systems;
- b) Ensuring the efficient use of natural resources in a manner that does not deplete them over time; and
- c) Reducing and minimizing the use of non-renewable resources.

### **1.03 Principles of Economic Sustainability**

The city and county will strive to develop and maintain a healthy, adaptable economy that is vital to the community's quality of life and high level of services and amenities by:

- a) Promoting a diverse economy that supports the needs of all community members;
- b) Promoting a qualified and diversified work force that meets employers' needs and supports a range of jobs; and
- c) Providing for and investing in a quality of life, unique amenities, and infrastructure that attracts, sustains, and retains businesses and entrepreneurs.

### **1.04 Principles of Social Sustainability**

The city and county will strive to promote a healthy community and address social and cultural inequities by:

- a) Respecting and valuing cultural and social diversity;
- b) Ensuring the basic health and safety needs of all residents are met; and
- c) Providing infrastructure and services that will encourage culturally and socially diverse communities to both prosper within and connect to the larger community.

### **1.05 Community Engagement**

The city and county recognize that environmental, economic and social sustainability are built upon full involvement of the community. The city and county therefore support the right of all community members to play a role in governmental decisions, through continual efforts to maintain and improve public communication and the open conduct of business. The city and county will continue to support programs and provide opportunities for public participation and neighborhood involvement. Efforts will be made to use effective technologies and techniques for public outreach and input, remove barriers to participation and involve community members not usually engaged in civic life. Emphasis will be placed on notification and engagement of the public in decisions involving large development proposals or major land use decisions that may have significant impact on or benefits to the community.

### **1.06 Indicators of Sustainability**

The city and county will establish indicators of sustainability specific to the Boulder Valley to measure progress in the health and well-being of the community, environment and economy. The choice of indicators will be based on their ability to provide feedback that support and strengthen efforts taken to achieve the community's sustainability principles in a reasonable period of time. Efforts will be made to develop indicators to measure changes related to elements of sustainable urban form.

### **1.07 Leadership in Sustainability**

The city and county will act as leaders and role models for others in striving to create a sustainable community. Through their master plans, regulations, policies and programs, the city and county will strive to create a healthy, vibrant and sustainable community for future generations.

### **1.08 Consideration of Environmental, Economic and Social Impacts**

The city and the county will consider social, economic and environmental impacts in decision making for all city services, processes and facilities and in development review.

## **Plan Time Frame and Updates**

### **1.09 Planning Time Frame**

The time horizon for the plan is approximately 15 years. This has been determined to be a reasonable length of time for which to plan and was arrived at after weighing a combination of facts and policy considerations: land use and land use projections, Service Area projections, the capacity of the city to fund capital improvements, the growth rate, and the desires of the community in regard to accommodating growth. Each five-year review of the plan extends the planning period approximately five years.

The city and county recognize that some issues require consideration of impacts over a longer time period, and when appropriate, the plan may analyze trends and impacts over longer time periods.

### **1.10 Plan Update**

The Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan will be reviewed at least every five years for possible amendments to reflect changes in circumstances and community desires.

## **Intergovernmental Cooperation**

### **1.11 Regional and Statewide Cooperation**

Many of the problems and opportunities faced by Boulder and other jurisdictions, particularly providing affordable housing, addressing the jobs-housing imbalance, creating a healthy economy, improving regional transportation, protecting the environment, managing open space, delivering human services and managing growth can only be dealt with effectively through regional or statewide cooperation and solutions.

Therefore, the city and county will actively pursue cooperative planning opportunities, intergovernmental agreements, broader information exchange and communication, collaborative initiatives and closer cooperation with each other and with other entities in the region and state. This may include other cities, counties, unincorporated communities, the University of Colorado, the school districts, regional organizations and other policy-making bodies. These entities will be encouraged to identify and address issues of shared concern for which a multi-jurisdictional perspective can best achieve mutually beneficial solutions.

### **1.12 Policy Assessment**

The city and county will assess and be responsive to the external effects of their policies on other entities and jurisdictions. Consequences and tradeoffs will be considered before making decisions on them.

### **1.13 Collaboration in Service Delivery**

The city and county will support consolidation and collaboration among service providers to reduce duplication of efforts, maximize economic and resource efficiencies and provide the public with reliable and equitable levels of service.

### **1.14 Compliance with Land Use Regulations**

With regard to public facilities owned and operated in the other's jurisdiction, the city and county will respect and abide by existing land use regulations insofar as reasonably practicable.

## **Growth Management**

### **1.15 City's Role in Managing Growth and Development**

In order to achieve community goals and policies, the city will develop and implement urban design and growth management tools that control the scale, location, type, intensity and timing of new development and redevelopment. Where appropriate, the county will work with the city in developing and implementing growth management tools.

### **1.16 Adapting to Limits on Physical Expansion**

As the community expands to its planned physical boundaries, the city and county will increasingly emphasize preservation and enhancement of the physical, social and economic assets of the community. Cooperative efforts and resources will be focused on maintaining and improving the quality of life within defined physical boundaries, with only limited expansion of the city.

### **1.17 Growth Projections**

In order to ensure that past and projected growth impacts can be better mitigated or avoided, the city will develop projections for population and employment for twenty five years in the future. Projections will be used to evaluate long-term trends, analyze problems and opportunities that could occur during this period, project long-term infrastructure needs, and coordinate Boulder Valley growth projections with regional and county-wide projections.

### **1.18 Growth Requirements**

The overall effect of urban growth must add significant value to the community, improving quality of life. The city will require development and redevelopment as a whole to provide significant community benefits, achieve sustainability goals for urban form, and to maintain or improve environmental quality as a precondition for further housing and community growth.

### **1.19 Jobs:Housing Balance**

Boulder is a major employment center, with more jobs than housing for people who work here. This has resulted in both positive and negative impacts including economic prosperity, significant in-commuting, and high demand on existing housing. The city will continue to be a major employment center and will seek opportunities to improve the balance of jobs and housing while maintaining a healthy economy. This will be accomplished by encouraging new housing and mixed use neighborhoods in areas close to where people work, encouraging transit-oriented development in appropriate locations, preserving service commercial uses, converting industrial uses to residential uses in appropriate locations, improving regional transportation alternatives and mitigating the impacts of traffic congestion.

## **Framework for Annexation and Urban Service Provision**

### **1.20 Definition of Comprehensive Planning Areas I, II and III**

The Boulder Valley Planning Area is divided into three major areas.

**Area I** is that area within the City of Boulder, which has adequate urban facilities and services and is expected to continue to accommodate urban development.

**Area II** is the area now under county jurisdiction, where annexation to the city can be considered consistent with policies 1.16 Adapting to Limits on Physical Expansion, 1.18 Growth Requirements, & 1.24 Annexation. New urban development may only occur coincident with the availability of adequate facilities and services and not otherwise. Master plans project the provision of services to this area within the planning period.

**Area III** is the remaining area in the Boulder Valley, generally under county jurisdiction. Area III is divided into the Area III-Rural Preservation Area, where the city and county intend to preserve existing rural land uses and character and the Area III-Planning Reserve Area, where the city and county intend to maintain the option of future Service Area expansion. (See [Area I, II, III Map](#) and Policy 2.07 Delineation of Rural Lands.)

### **1.21 Preclusion of New Incorporated Places**

The city and county will oppose the establishment of new incorporated communities within the Boulder Valley.

### **1.22 Definition of New Urban Development**

It is intended that ‘new urban development,’ including development within the city, not occur until and unless adequate urban facilities and services are available to serve the development as set out in Section IV.D. Urban Service Criteria and Standards. ‘New urban development’ is defined to include:

- a) All new residential, commercial and industrial development and redevelopment within the city; or
- b) Any proposed development within Area II subject to a county discretionary review process before the Board of County Commissioners, provided the county determines that the proposed development is inconsistent with the land use projections, maps or policies of the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan in effect at that time.

### **1.23 Over-Intensive Rural Development**

The Area III-Rural Preservation Area is that portion of Area III where rural land uses and character are to be maintained and preserved. A variety of land use activities are permitted by county zoning pursuant to examination through one or more of the review processes enumerated in the Boulder County Land Use Code. A preliminary analysis may conclude that an otherwise permitted land use proposal would have an impact of urban intensity and thus be considered an over-intensive rural development.

Criteria to be examined in making an over-intensive determination may include, but are not limited to traffic, structure size, number of users, hours of operation, outside lighting, water needs and wastewater flows, impacts extending outside of the property boundaries, compatibility with surrounding land uses, and the availability or lack of other more appropriate sites for the proposed activity. Any application for a land use that triggers an over-intensive rural development analysis will be referred to the City of Boulder for comment.

## **1.24 Annexation**

The policies in regard to annexation to be pursued by the city are:

- a) Annexation will be required before adequate facilities and services are furnished.
- b) The city will actively pursue annexation of county enclaves, Area II properties along the western boundary, and other fully developed Area II properties. County enclave means an unincorporated area of land entirely contained within the outer boundary of the city. Terms of annexation will be based on the amount of development potential as described in (c), (d), and (e) of this policy. Applications made to the county for development of enclaves and Area II lands in lieu of annexation will be referred to the city for review and comment. The county will attach great weight to the city's response and may require that the landowner conform to one or more of the city's development standards so that any future annexation into the city will be consistent and compatible with the city's requirements.
- c) Annexation of existing substantially developed areas will be offered in a manner and on terms and conditions that respect existing lifestyles and densities. The city will expect these areas to be brought to city standards only where necessary to protect the health and safety of the residents of the subject area or of the city. The city, in developing annexation plans of reasonable cost, may phase new facilities and services. The county, which now has jurisdiction over these areas, will be a supportive partner with the city in annexation efforts to the extent the county supports the terms and conditions being proposed.
- d) In order to reduce the negative impacts of new development in the Boulder Valley, the city will annex Area II land with significant development or redevelopment potential only if the annexation provides a special opportunity or benefit to the city. For annexation considerations, emphasis will be given to the benefits achieved from the creation of permanently affordable housing. Provision of the following may also be considered a special opportunity or benefit: receiving sites for transferable development rights (TDRs), reduction of future employment projections, land and/or facilities for public purposes over and above that required by the city's land use regulations, environmental preservation, or other amenities determined by the city to be a special opportunity or benefit. Parcels that are proposed for annexation that are already developed and which are seeking no greater density or building size would not be required to assume and provide that same level of community benefit as vacant parcels unless and until such time as an application for greater development is submitted.
- e) Annexation of substantially developed properties that allows for some additional residential units or commercial square footage will be required to demonstrate community benefit commensurate with their impacts. Further, annexations that resolve an issue of public health without creating additional development impacts should be encouraged.
- f) There will be no annexation of areas outside the boundaries of the Boulder Valley Planning Area, with the possible exception of annexation of acquired open space.
- g) Publicly owned property located in Area III and intended to remain in Area III may be annexed to the city if the property requires less than a full range of urban services or requires inclusion under city jurisdiction for health, welfare and safety reasons.
- h) The Gunbarrel Subcommunity is unique because the majority of residents live in the unincorporated area and because of the shared jurisdiction for planning and service provision among the county, the city, the Gunbarrel Public Improvement District and other special districts. Although interest in voluntary annexation has been limited, the city and county continue to

support the eventual annexation of Gunbarrel. If resident interest in annexation does occur in the future, the city and county will negotiate new terms of annexation with the residents.

### **1.25 Assimilation of Special District Facilities and Services**

Where the provider(s) of the facilities and services is (are) other than the city, the county and the city will take all reasonable and legal steps to facilitate assimilation of facilities and services by the city upon annexation.

### **1.26 Provision of Urban Services in the Boulder Valley**

The city is an adequate provider of facilities and services. These facilities and services will continue to be supplied to Area I, and the city will make them available to Area II within the planning period pursuant to the city's annexation policies and Capital Improvements Program. The city and county intend that new urban development not occur until adequate urban facilities and services are available to serve the development. The county experience indicates that provision of the full range of urban facilities and services by a municipality is preferable to provision of urban facilities and services by special districts and private groups in part because municipalities have politically accountable leadership, general police power and the ability to coordinate provision of adequate urban facilities and services. Therefore, it is hereby presumed that adequate facilities and services can be provided only by the City of Boulder. The city will extend, furnish or provide such services at such time as it can provide them all as provided under paragraph 1.27(a) below and the Urban Service Criteria and Standards section of this plan. However, it is not the intent to preclude the development and use of alternative facilities and service systems for new urban development so long as they are adequate as provided under paragraph 1.27(b) and the Urban Service Criteria and Standards section of this plan.

### **1.27 Definition of Adequate Urban Facilities and Services**

a) The city provides adequate facilities and services for new urban residential, commercial and industrial development within the planning area. Adequate facilities and services for:

- (i) All development include: public water, public sewer, stormwater and flood management, urban fire protection and emergency medical care, urban police protection, urban transportation; and
- (ii) Residential development also includes developed urban parks and schools.

b) The availability and adequacy of urban facilities and services as set forth in subparagraph (a) above will be determined based upon the Urban Service Criteria and Standards section of this plan.

c) In order to make efficient use of existing infrastructure and investment, new development and redevelopment will be located in areas where adequate public services and facilities presently exist or are planned to be provided under the city's Capital Improvements Program.

d) Due to size, location and other unique requirements, some city facilities that do not require the full range of urban services will be located in Areas II and III. Extending a limited range of urban services to such city facilities is appropriate when extension is consistent with the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan or otherwise necessary for the city to provide another urban facility and service to Area I.

### **1.28 Phased Extension of Urban Services/Capital Improvements Program**

a) The city and county agree that extensions, furnishing, or provision of less than adequate facilities and services for new urban development would be injurious to the public health, safety

and welfare because it would seriously impair the county's efforts implementing the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan through reasonable land use and development regulations in the unincorporated areas of the county.

b) The county requests that the city accompany any extension of facilities and services to urban development outside the boundaries of the city with concurrent annexation to the city of the land served. The city agrees not to extend or furnish facilities and services to new urban development outside the boundaries of the city without annexing to the city the land to be served, except as indicated in Policy 1.36 Out-of-City Utility Service.

c) The city and county recognize that certain properties within the Boulder Valley have filed for subdivision approval with Boulder County prior to June 13, 1977, the date on which the county approved amendments to its subdivision regulations that require compatibility of applicants for subdivision approval with the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan and have previously been granted water and sewer by the city. The development of these particular properties may be permitted to occur without a full range of urban facilities and services provided that such development is otherwise in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan and existing Boulder County land use regulations at the time of submission of the application.

d) The city will use the Capital Improvements Program (CIP) process, within the framework of a responsible budget of balanced revenues and expenditures, to plan for the funding of an adequate range of urban services and facilities within Area I and Area II as annexation occurs during the planning period. . The CIP is a tool to direct the location and timing of growth by coordinating and targeting public capital expenditures.

### **1.29 Channeling Development to Areas with Adequate Infrastructure**

In order to protect and use past investments in capital improvements, new development and redevelopment will be located in areas where adequate public services and facilities presently exist or are planned to be provided under the city's Capital Improvements Program.

### **1.30 Growth to Pay Fair Share of New Facility Costs**

Since the public costs of annexation and developing several areas concurrently could prove excessive, the city will limit said costs to those, which can reasonably be accommodated within the Capital Improvements Program and are compatible with anticipated revenues. When permitting additional development or redevelopment, the city will consider whether public facilities and services are adequate to reasonably maintain current levels of service or service standards given the impacts of such additional development or committed funding sources for such adequate facilities are sufficient to ensure their provision in a timely fashion. Growth will be expected to pay its own way, with the requirement that new development pay the cost of providing needed facilities and an equitable share of services including affordable housing, and to mitigate negative impacts such as those to the transportation system.

### **1.31 Adjacency of Open Space/Utility Impacts**

The city and county will consider the impacts of open space management and utility installation on abutting property.

### **1.32 Multi-Purpose Use of Public Lands**

Multi-purpose use of public lands, facilities and personnel services will be emphasized. However, in consideration of potential use of parks and open space lands, only activities consistent with the original intent of acquisition will be considered.

## **Utilities**

### **1.33 Consistency of Utility Extensions with Comprehensive Plan**

The installation and extension of all utilities will be consistent with the provisions of the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan and with the responsibilities of the respective utility providers.

### **1.34 Efficient Extension of Utilities**

Nothing within the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan will prohibit the city from denying the provision of utility services to any property within the Boulder Valley for utility-related reasons.

### **1.35 Utility Provision to Implement Community Goals**

The city will consider the importance of the other objectives of the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan in the planning and operation of the water, wastewater, stormwater and flood management utilities. These other objectives include in-stream flow maintenance, enhancement of recreational opportunities, water quality management, preservation of natural ecosystems, open space and irrigated agricultural land, and implementation of desired timing and location of growth patterns.

### **1.36 Out-of-City Utility Service**

In furtherance of policies 2.01, 2.02, 2.03, 1.33, 1.34, 1.35, and notwithstanding Policy 1.28, the city and county agree that it is appropriate for the city to: a) Decline support for utility provision in Area III and Area II when its provision would defeat Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan goals.

b) Extend limited utility service in Area III and Area II in circumstances that further Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan goals. c) Evaluate opportunities for cooperation with other utility service providers, in concert with the county, to further Comprehensive Plan goals.

## 2. Built Environment

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.

### Background

#### **Elements That Define Boulder's City Structure**

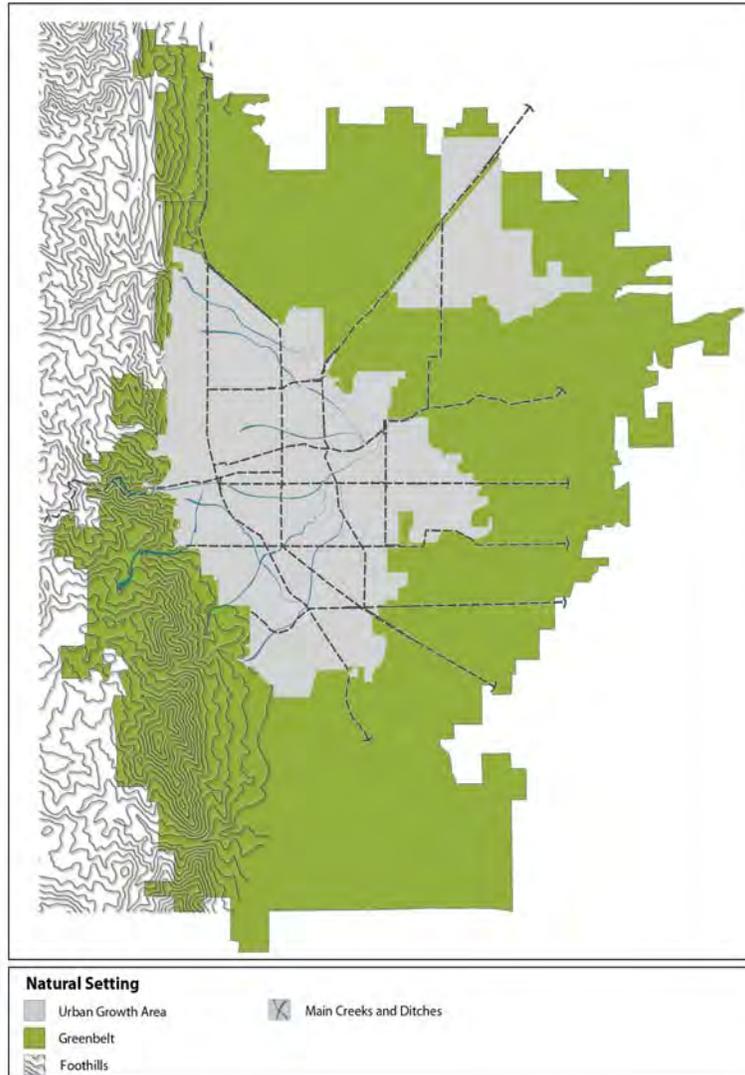
Boulder's distinctive 'sense of place' and compact size did not happen by accident. It has taken creative public policies and pragmatic planning decisions over many years to produce and preserve Boulder's unique character and physical beauty. Elements that define Boulder's city structure and support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

#### 1. Natural Setting

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

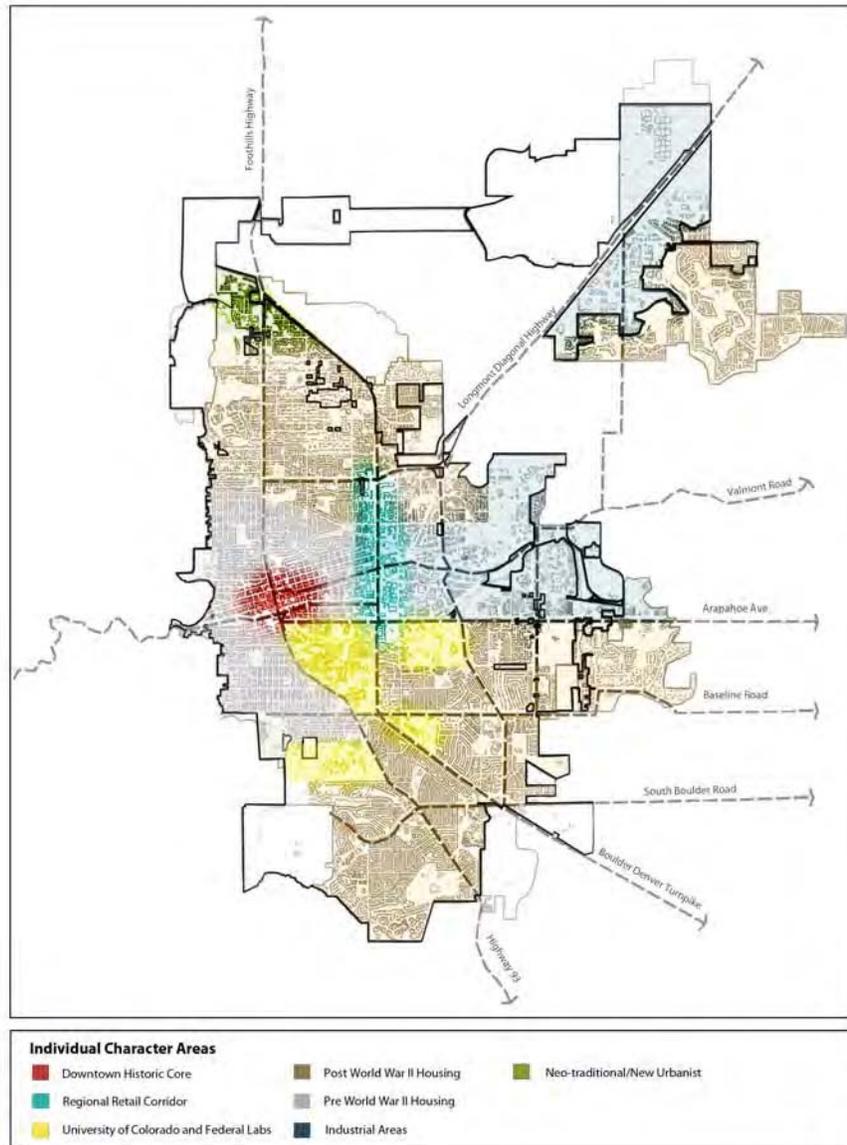
The two most important factors that shape the City of Boulder are its mountain backdrop and surrounding greenbelt. These natural features form a clearly-defined edge that separates the urban

area from the open countryside. Creeks and ditches have also shaped the layout of the city.



## 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.



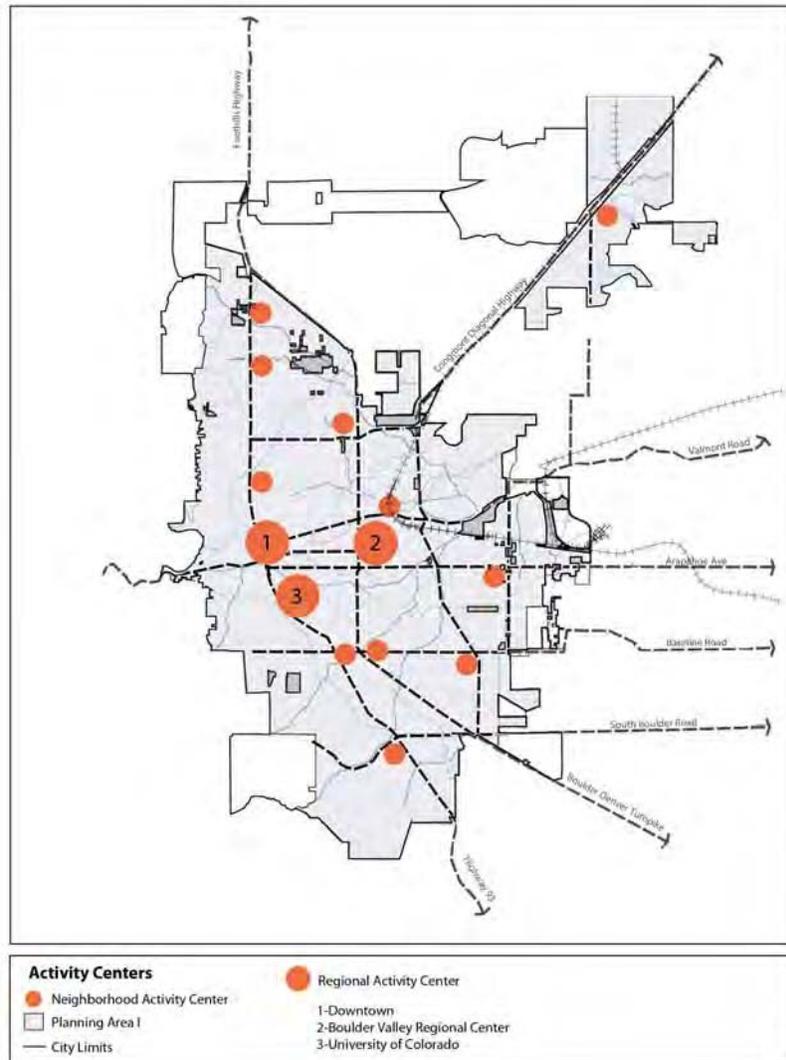
### 3. Activity Centers

#### **Activity centers concentrate activities into nodes at a variety of scales.**

Boulder's commercial, entertainment, educational and civic centers are focused in concentrated nodes of activities at a variety of scales distributed throughout the community.

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.

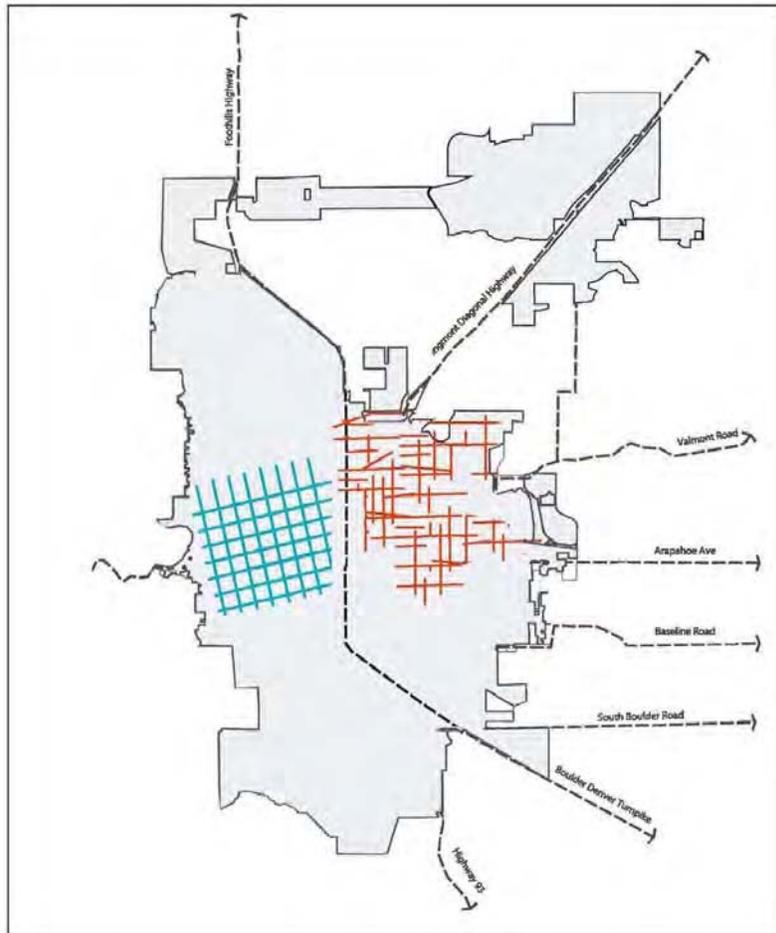
The next tier of intensity is neighborhood activity centers. In addition to serving as neighborhood gathering places, these centers also provide goods and services for the day-to-day needs of nearby residents, workers and students, and are easily accessible from surrounding areas by foot, bike and transit.



#### 4. Mobility Grid

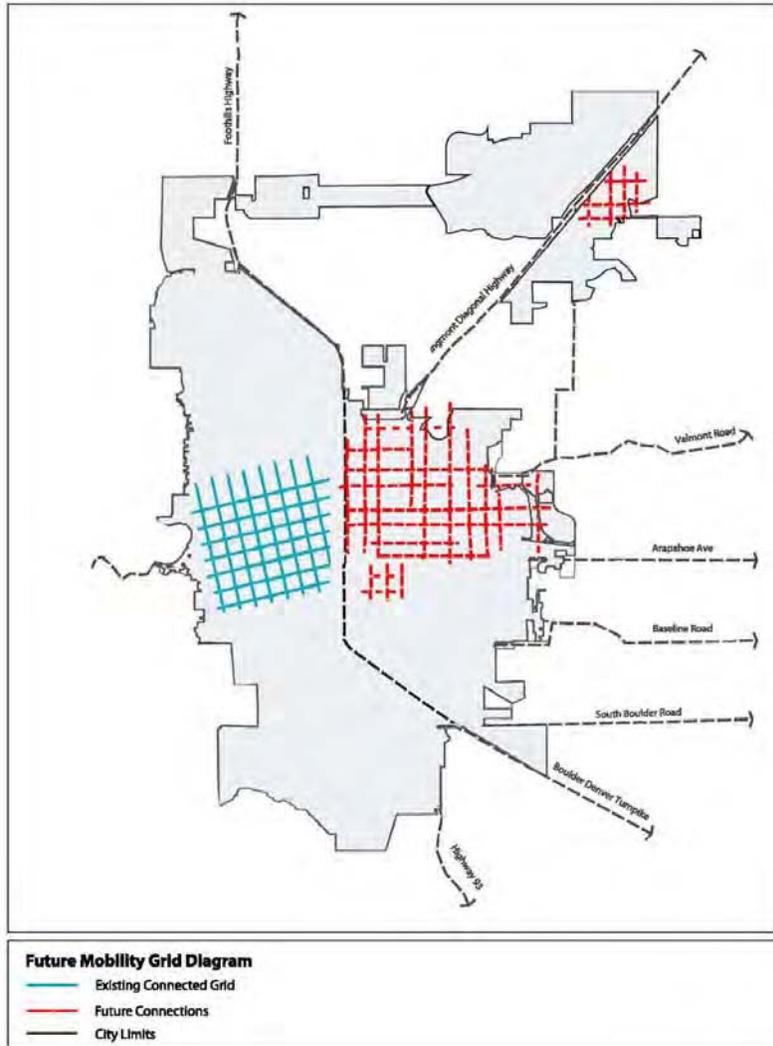
##### **Boulder’s ‘mobility grid’ interconnects the city.**

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.



**Existing Mobility Grid Diagram**

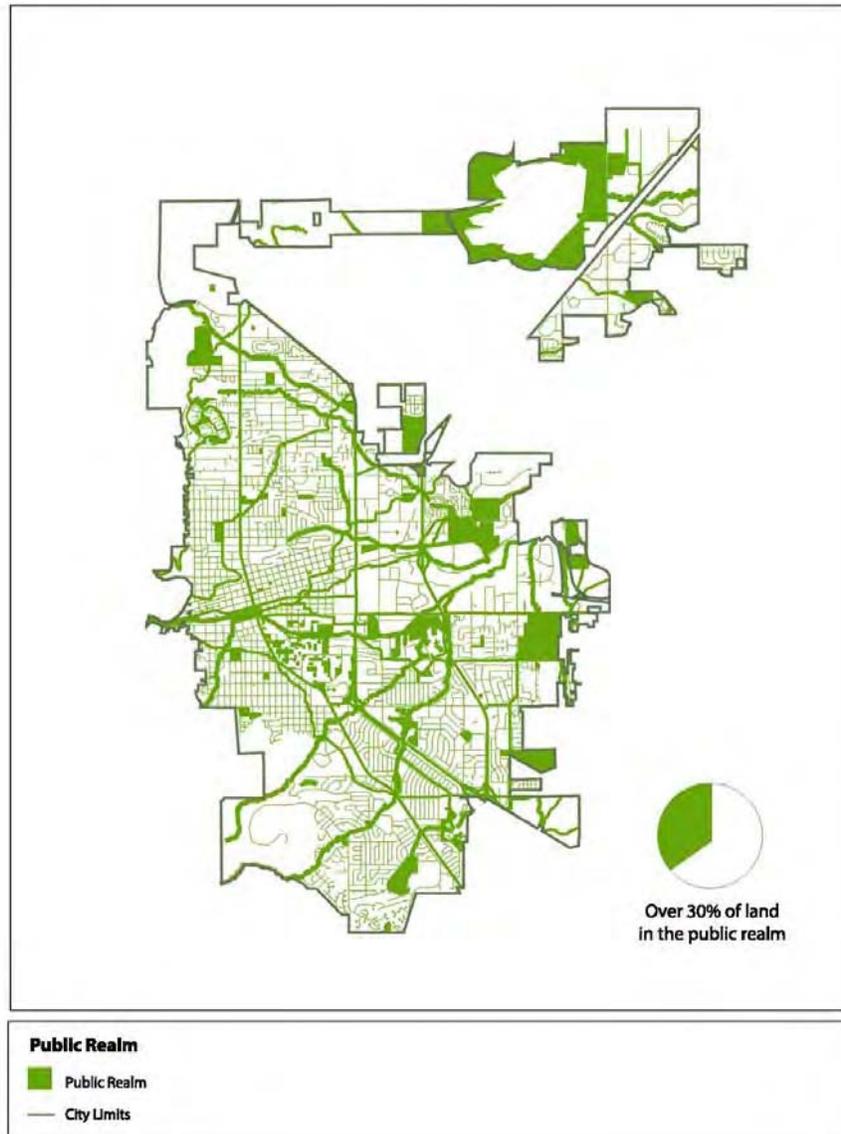
- Connected Grid
- Disconnected Grid
- City Limits



## 5. The Public Realm

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

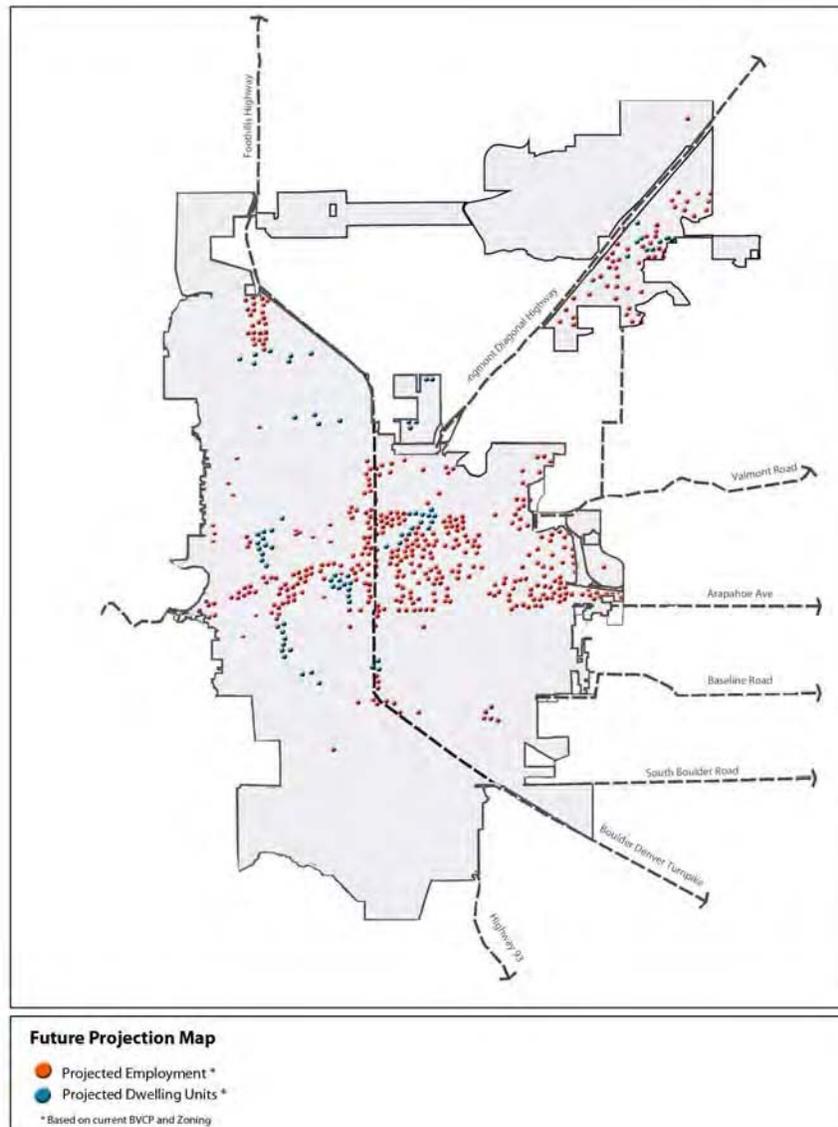
The public realm includes the city's streets, sidewalks and paths, ditches, parks, plazas and other urban outdoor spaces. It comprises a large portion of Boulder's land and represents a substantial public investment. The design of the public realm plays a major role in defining the character, identity 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, enhancement of air and water quality, and mitigation of urban heat island effects.



## 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.



## Sustainable Urban Form Definition

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.

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 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.

### **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.

### **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.

### **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.

### **2.18 Role of the Central Area**

The 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, Canyon Boulevard Cultural Corridor, and Boulder Valley Regional Center. A variety of land uses surrounds these activity centers, and transportation alternatives provide direct connections between them.

## **Urban Design Linkages**

### **2.19 Urban Open Lands**

Open lands within the fabric of the city 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. 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 contrast to urban development. Path development will be sensitive to the ecology, terrain and privacy of adjacent residents and surroundings.

### **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 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.

### **2.22 Improve Mobility Grid**

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.

## **Community Conservation**

### **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.

### **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**

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.

### **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.

## **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.

### **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.

### **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, 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 and 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.

- 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.
- 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.
- 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. Projects should provide pedestrian interest along streets, paths and public spaces.
- 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.

# 3. 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 vast amount of natural land protected by the city and county contributes to the high quality of life for residents. The community’s historic and on-going emphasis on clean air and water has resulted in significant progress toward a sustainable 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:

- 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.

## 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 federal endangered and threatened species and state, county and local species of concern will be emphasized. 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.

### **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 critical for providing ecosystem connections and buffers for joining significant ecosystems.

### **3.05 Maintain and Restore 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 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. 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 culture of invasive plant and animal species and seek to 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.

### **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.

## **Urban Environmental Quality**

### **3.09 Management of Wildlife-Human Conflicts**

The city recognizes the intrinsic value of wildlife in both the urban and rural setting. The city 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.

### **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.

### **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. The city will encourage overall species diversity, 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 encourage efforts to reduce the use of pesticides and synthetic, inorganic fertilizers. In its own practices, the city and county commits to the use of 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 control measures.

## **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, 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, 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.

### **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 degrading of views and vistas from and of public areas.

### **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**

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 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. 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.

### **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.

### **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 surface and ground water conservation. The city will continue to obtain additional municipal water supplies to insure 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.

### **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.

# 4. Energy and Climate

Boulder’s efforts to promote energy efficiency and renewable energy are essential to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and helping reduce the severity of future climate change, as are our efforts to promote alternative transportation options and a compact city form. The objective is to help address energy and climate goals and integrate them with other planning activities, such as decisions regarding development patterns, infrastructure, transportation, economic development, building and site design, and natural resources.

Changes in the dynamics of energy markets as well as the threat of climate change may profoundly affect our community both economically and physically. A number of factors are increasing uncertainty about future energy issues, but rapidly evolving technology and the economic benefits of energy efficiency and renewable energy are providing Boulder and Boulder County with new opportunities to take charge of our energy future and make greater use of local and regional energy resources.

The policies in this section support the city and county’s goals of meeting energy needs, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and adapting to climate changes:

- Climate Action and Greenhouse Gases
- Energy Conservation and Renewable Energy
- Land Use and Building Design
- Waste and Recycling
- Sustainable Purchasing

## **Climate Action and Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

### **4.01 Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

The city and county will identify and implement innovative as well as cost-effective actions to dramatically reduce the community’s contribution to total global greenhouse gas emissions.

### **4.02 New Policy: Climate Adaptation Planning**

The city and county will cooperatively develop and implement a climate change adaptation plan to identify current vulnerabilities and determine strategies to protect the community against the potential negative impacts associated with climate change. These challenges include droughts, flash flooding, communicable diseases, heat waves, fire mitigation and fire protection and increased road maintenance, among others. The city and county seek to improve the community’s ability to effectively and quickly respond to and recover from adversity and disruptions.

## **Energy Conservation and Renewable Energy**

### **4.03 Energy Conservation and Renewable Energy**

The city and county will implement innovative programs and opportunities for individuals, businesses and organizations to reduce energy consumption and develop local energy generation. The city will support private decisions to use renewable energy, develop local renewable energy resources and preserve options for developing renewable energy in the future. The city will

review and consider revisions to regulations to support on-site energy generation, including solar and wind.

The city and county will pursue an energy path that not only reduces carbon emissions, but also promotes innovation, competition and economic vitality, and will set goals to ensure that the community has access to reliable, competitively priced and increasingly clean energy.

## **Land Use and Building Design**

### **4.04 Energy-Efficient Land Use**

The city and county will encourage energy conservation through land use policies and regulations governing placement, orientation and clustering of development.

### **4.05 Energy-Efficient Building Design**

The city and county will pursue efforts to improve the energy and resource efficiency of new and existing buildings. The city and county will improve regulations ensuring energy and resource efficiency in new construction, remodels and renovation projects and will establish energy efficiency requirements for existing buildings. Energy conservation programs will be sensitive to the unique situations that involve historic preservation and low-income homeowners and renters and will ensure that programs assisting these groups are continued.

## **Waste and Recycling**

### **4.06 New Policy: Construction Waste Minimization**

The city and county will encourage renovation of existing buildings over demolition and will develop policies and programs that promote the reuse of materials salvaged after deconstruction.

### **4.07 Waste Minimization and Recycling**

The city and county will pursue and support programs and activities that reduce the amount of waste that must be landfilled and pursue Zero Waste as a long term goal. Policies, programs and regulations will emphasize waste prevention, reuse, composting, recycling and the use of materials with recycled content.

## **Sustainable Purchasing**

### **4.08 Environmental Purchasing Policy**

The city will maintain a robust Environmental Purchasing Policy for the city organization that promotes the purchase of recycled and compostable products and encourages consideration of materials, length of use, re-use and disposal options, as well as cost when procuring materials and products.

Relevant Links:

CAP and Community Guide

Waste Reduction MP

Built Environment Policies – energy efficient land use

Economy: sustainable business practices

# 5. Economy

Boulder is recognized and respected throughout the world as a city where companies thrive and people are constantly creating innovative businesses and products. Boulder is fortunate to have a talented, highly educated workforce, world class institutions and a quality of life that allows companies to attract capable employees. Home to a wide variety of small and mid-sized businesses and several significant large employers, Boulder has a clear niche for environmentally sustainable, technological, entrepreneurial, scientific and outdoor-oriented businesses. Economic policies and programs are aimed at supporting and enhancing our community's unique, entrepreneurial assets while achieving essential goals and livability.

Boulder recognizes the need to revitalize its older commercial and industrial areas, renovate “tired buildings” and support renovation and business growth in these areas. As a mature, compact city with little remaining vacant land, the city must engage in strategic planning for redevelopment areas and ensure that economic benefit is a primary outcome. The city also recognizes that economic growth can bring many benefits to the community, including greater tax revenues, local job opportunities, increased diversity, a variety of services and business types and physical improvements. The city will collaborate with the business community to facilitate growth, development, and infrastructure improvements that benefit residents and businesses alike.

The policies in this section support the following goals related to maintaining a sustainable economy:

- Strategic Redevelopment and Sustainable Employment
- Diverse Economic Base
- Quality of Life
- Sustainable Business Practices
- Job Opportunities, Education and Training

## Strategic Redevelopment Opportunities and Sustainable Employment

### 5.01 Revitalizing Commercial and Industrial Areas

The city will develop specific strategies to optimize redevelopment opportunities, partner with the private sector and proactively support redevelopment of commercial and industrial areas.

Examples of areas for revitalization that have been identified are Diagonal Plaza, University Hill Commercial district and the East Boulder Industrial area.

The city will use a variety of tools to create public/private partnerships that lead to successful redevelopment. These tools may include, but are not limited to, area planning, infrastructure improvements, changes to zoning or development standards and incentives including financial incentives, increased development potential or urban renewal authority.

### 5.02 Regional Job Center

The city is one of several job centers in the region, and significant additional employment growth is projected in the future. The city will adopt policies and strategies that support the city's role as a regional job center in the future consistent with sustainability goals. The city will support the growth and success of existing businesses, including primary and secondary employers.

## **Diverse Economic Base**

### **5.03 Diverse Mix of Uses and Business Types**

The city and county will support a diversified employment base within the Boulder Valley, reflecting labor force capabilities and recognizing the community's strengths in scientific, professional, technological and related industries. The city will identify areas that should be protected for industrial, service and office uses and will evaluate areas with non-residential zoning to ensure that the existing and future needs of a rapidly changing and technologically-oriented global economy and employment base are adequately accommodated. Where appropriate, mixed use development will be encouraged incorporating residential uses and support services for the employment base.

As an integral part of redevelopment and area planning efforts, the city acknowledges that displacement and loss of service and affordable retail uses will be considered in the context of redevelopment and planning goals.

### **5.04 Vital and Productive Retail Base**

The city will develop and implement a retail strategy that will address the market opportunities and shopping needs of the community, ensure an appropriate mix of retail and identify strategies to improve the retail base and the city's sales tax revenues including affordable retail.

### **5.05 Support for Local Business and Business Retention**

The city and county recognize the significant contribution of existing businesses in the local economy and will work to nurture and support established businesses and maintain a positive climate to retain businesses. Business retention and expansion is a primary focus for the city. The existing jobs that are in Boulder are the city's most important jobs.

### **5.06 Industry Clusters**

The city will adopt an industry cluster approach to business development and consider special financial and technical assistance programs and other tools to retain, expand and attract businesses in those clusters. Cluster efforts focus on supporting multiple businesses in an industry. Boulder's primary clusters include: the technological and scientific sectors, natural and organic products, biosciences, active living / outdoor recreation, clean technology and creative arts. Boulder acknowledges that these clusters will evolve and change over time.

## **Quality of Life**

### **5.07 Funding City Services and Urban Infrastructure**

The city will encourage a strong sustainable economy to generate revenues to fund quality city services for the public that are consistent with community goals and character.

The city recognizes that urban infrastructure and amenities are important to the quality of life of residents, employees and visitors to the community. A strong and complete transportation system is essential to a thriving economy, helps attract and retain key businesses and employers and provides regional access to global markets. The city will continue to plan for and invest in urban amenities such as bike paths, parks, public spaces, quality gathering places as well as community services.

### **5.08 Role of Tourism in the Economy**

Recognizing the unique qualities of Boulder, the city supports ongoing tourism efforts with various partners including the Boulder Convention and Visitors Bureau, study the existing and future role of tourism in the community, track the impact of tourism on the economy and invest in ways to enhance the sector.

### **5.09 Role of Arts and Cultural Programs**

The city and county will support and encourage further development of arts and cultural programs that can serve as attractors for new business investment and visitors to the city. The city values the arts within the public realm and will work to enhance the capacity of arts and culture to act as an economic generator.

### **5.10 New Policy: Communications**

The city will support and facilitate the development of technologically-advanced communications infrastructure and other improvements that will provide support to the community, help businesses thrive and grow as well as facilitate the growth of emerging telecommunications industries.

## **Sustainable Business Practices**

### **5.11 New Policy: Sustainable Business Practices**

The city will promote and encourage sustainable and energy efficient business practices. The city will continue to establish and maintain programs to assist businesses and individuals in reducing energy costs, employing sustainable practices, making building renovations to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and reducing transportation impacts.

### **5.12 New Policy: Home Occupations**

The city will evaluate regulations for home based occupations to balance potential impacts to residential neighborhoods and reflect the goal of allowing more flexibility to have home based businesses, neighborhood services, and employment opportunities. The city supports the entrepreneurial activity of residents who are in the very early stages of creating start up companies or providing neighborhood services, supports people's efforts to reduce number and length of trips and will revise its regulations to be responsive to new uses and types of businesses, and neighborhood services that may be compatible with residential areas.

### **5.13 New Policy: Responsive to Changes in the Marketplace**

The city recognizes that development regulations and processes have an impact on the ability of business to respond to changes in the marketplace. The city will work with the local business community to make sure regulations and development review processes provide a level of flexibility to allow for creative solutions while meeting broader community goals. This could involve modifying regulations to make them more responsive to emerging technologies, and evolving industry sectors.

## **Job Opportunities, Education and Training**

### **5.14 Employment Opportunities**

The city and county will encourage local employers to provide employment opportunities for all persons including the local unemployed and underemployed work force, and to implement equal opportunity and workplace diversity programs in cooperation with various agencies providing employment assistance programs.

### **5.15 Business Partnerships**

The efforts of the city and the private sector to enhance the economic prosperity of the community are directly and indirectly supported by many organizations and entities. These include the University of Colorado, Downtown Boulder Inc., Boulder Chamber, Boulder Economic Council, Boulder Convention and Visitors Bureau, Boulder Innovation Center, the Boulder Valley School District, the Boulder Independent Business Association and other groups. Though each has an independent focus, their work contributes to the overall quality of life enjoyed within the community.

### **5.16 Support for the University of Colorado and Federal Labs**

The city and county understand the central role that the federal labs and the University of Colorado play in our economy. The city will take an active role in efforts to preserve the state and federal funding for these entities to ensure they remain in Boulder and will pursue mutually beneficial partnerships. The city recognizes the importance of having strong institutions for higher education, continuing education and workforce training thriving in the community. Also, the seminal role of the University of Colorado, a world class research university, and the federal labs in technology transfers, tech start ups and entrepreneurial business creation needs to be fully understood, evaluated and enhanced. The city will work with CU to further the community's goals for sustainable urban form as university owned land is developed or redeveloped.

### **5.17 New Policy: Diverse Workforce, Education and Training**

The city and county will encourage and support the Boulder Valley School District as well as the variety of post-secondary educational institutions to offer quality continuing education and vocational training. The city will support efforts to add focused workforce vocational training facilities, including those that provide training for “green” jobs.

#### Related Topics:

- See the Built Environment Section for policies related to infill/redevelopment priorities, enhancing activity centers, mixed-use development, and historic preservation.
- See Community Well-Being Section for policies on community infrastructure and ability of people to meet their basic needs.
- See Transportation Section for policies on improving the transportation system.
- See Energy and Climate Action for policies on support for sustainable practices and buildings.
- See Local Food and Agriculture for policies on access to markets for food and agricultural products.

# 6. Transportation

The Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan and the city’s Transportation Master Plan (TMP) have the fundamental premise that the transportation system be developed and managed in conjunction with land use, social and environmental goals. A mature community like Boulder has little opportunity or desire to add road capacity as widening streets and building new roads would have significant negative environmental, community character and financial impacts. Consequently, the strategies of the TMP center on maintaining and developing a balanced transportation system that supports all modes of travel, on making the system more efficient in carrying travelers, maintaining a safe system and on shifting trips away from the single-occupant vehicle.

Boulder’s challenge is to manage and improve the existing system to accommodate increasing demands for travel, both local and regional, through greater efficiency, better access, and by providing a broader range of travel choices. Important issues and trends include:

- Limited funding for both new infrastructure and maintenance of existing resources at all levels of government;
- Increasing importance of frequent and affordable regional transit; and
- Increasing energy costs with corresponding increases in the cost of travel.

The policies in this section support the following city and county goals related to providing a balanced, multimodal transportation system:

- Complete Transportation System
- Integration of Land Use and Transportation
- Air Quality
- Boulder Municipal Airport

## Complete Transportation System

### 6.01 All-Mode Transportation System

The Boulder Valley will be served by an integrated all-mode transportation system, developed cooperatively by the city and county. This transportation system will include completed networks for each mode, make safe and convenient connections between modes, and provide seamless connections between the city and county systems. Improvements to the travel corridors network will be made in a manner that preserves or improves the capacity or efficiency of all modes and recognizes pedestrian travel as a component of all trips.

### 6.02 Reduction of Single Occupancy Auto Trips

The city and county will support greater use of alternatives to single occupancy automobile travel. It is the city’s specific objective to continue progress toward ‘no long-term growth in traffic’ from 1994 levels through the year 2025 within the Boulder Valley. Both the city and county are committed to reductions in green house gas emissions. These efforts will include other communities and entities and will include developing and implementing integrated travel demand management programs and new services. Within the city, new developments will be required to include travel demand management to reduce the vehicle miles traveled produced by the development.

### 6.03 Congestion

The city and county will strive to limit the extent and duration of congestion, defined as Level of Service (LOS) F, to 20 percent of the roadway system within the Boulder Valley while providing for increased mobility.

#### **6.04 Regional Cooperation**

The city and county will work to develop regional consensus for multimodal improvements to regional corridors, and work with the Colorado Department of Transportation and the Regional Transportation District (RTD) to develop high quality, high frequency transit service between the communities of the region and between centers of employment and housing.

#### **6.05 Accessibility**

The city and county will develop a complete all-mode transportation system that accommodates all users, including people with mobility impairments, as well as youth, older adults and low-income persons. Efforts should focus on giving people options to live well without a car and may include prioritizing affordable public transportation and transit passes.

#### **6.06 Mobility Services**

The city and county will increase their support for mobility services for older adults and people with disabilities to reflect the expected increases in these populations.

#### **6.07 Investment Priorities**

To protect previous investments and ensure efficient use of existing travel corridors, the city and county will prioritize their investment first to maintenance and safety improvements of the existing systems. Second priority is given to capacity additions for the non-automotive modes and efficiency improvements for existing road facilities that increase levels of service without adding general purpose lanes.

#### **6.08 Transportation Impact**

Traffic impacts from a proposed development that cause unacceptable community or environmental impacts or unacceptable reduction in level of service will be mitigated. All development will be designed and built to be multimodal, pedestrian-oriented and include strategies to reduce the vehicle miles traveled generated by the development. New development will provide continuous pedestrian, bike and transit systems through the development and connect these systems to those surrounding the development. The city and county will provide tools and resources to help businesses manage employee access and mobility and support public-private partnerships, such as transportation management organizations, to facilitate these efforts.

### **Land Use Integration**

#### **6.09 Integration with Land Use**

Three intermodal centers will be developed or maintained in the downtown, Boulder Junction and on the university's main campus as anchors to regional transit connections and as hubs for connecting pedestrian, bicycle and local transit to regional services. The land along multimodal corridors will be designated as multimodal transportation zones when transit service is provided on that corridor. In these multimodal transportation zones, the city will develop a highly connected and continuous transportation system for all modes, identify locations for mixed use and higher density development integrated with transportation functions through appropriate design, and develop parking maximums and encourage parking reductions. The city will complete missing links in the transportation grid through the use of area transportation plans and at the time of parcel redevelopment.

#### **6.10 Managing Parking Supply**

Providing for vehicular parking will be considered as a component of a total access system of all modes of transportation - bicycle, pedestrian, transit and vehicular - and will be consistent with

the desire to reduce single occupant vehicle travel, limit congestion, balance the use of public spaces and consider the needs of residential and commercial areas. Parking demand will be accommodated in the most efficient way possible with the minimal necessary number of new spaces. The city will promote parking reductions through parking maximums, shared parking, unbundled parking, parking districts and transportation demand management programs.

#### **6.11 Transportation Facilities in Neighborhoods**

The city and county will strive to protect and improve the quality of life within neighborhoods while developing a balanced transportation system. Improving access and safety within neighborhoods by controlling vehicle speeds or providing multi-modal connections will be given priority over vehicle mobility. The city and county will design and construct new transportation facilities to minimize noise levels. Neighborhood needs and goals will be balanced against the community benefit of a transportation improvement.

#### **6.12 Neighborhood Streets Connectivity**

Neighborhood streets and alleys will be developed in a well connected and fine grained pattern to facilitate public access, to effectively disperse and distribute vehicle traffic and promote bike and pedestrian travel.

### **Air Quality**

#### **6.13 Improving Air Quality**

The city and county will design the transportation system to minimize air pollution by promoting the use of non-automotive transportation modes, reducing auto traffic, encouraging the use of fuel efficient and alternatively fueled vehicles that demonstrate air pollution reductions and maintaining acceptable traffic flow.

### **Boulder Municipal Airport**

#### **6.14 Municipal Airport**

The Boulder Municipal Airport will continue as a small-scale general aviation airport. The city will seek to mitigate noise, safety and other impacts of airport operation while assuring that new development in proximity will be compatible with existing and planned use of the airport.

# 7. Housing

The range of available housing opportunities helps to define a community. The social, economic and environmental well-being of the community is enhanced when individuals and families are retained, workforce housing is available, and existing residents with changing or special housing needs are served. The Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan, which identifies desired locations, densities and types of housing planned for Boulder, is an integral link in the community's housing strategy. Through a variety of policies, programs and regulations, the type, number, and affordability of new and existing housing units can be influenced, and programs and assistance made available to those who have limited resources or special needs.

The high cost of local housing results in many households paying a disproportionate amount of their income for housing or moving farther from their work in order to find housing that they can afford. Households who are burdened by housing costs or by the combined costs of housing and transportation have less money available for other necessities and may find it difficult to actively participate in the community, which can lead to additional demands on supportive human services and to an exclusion of key members of our society from the civic infrastructure.

Emerging trends facing the community include:

- Growth in the senior population;
- The addition of over 5,000 university students by 2030;
- The growing difficulty of providing affordable housing attractive to families with children in a land-constrained community; and
- The need to evaluate regulations to creatively accommodate an expanding variety of household types, including multi-generational households.

The policies in this section support the following city and county goals related to housing:

- Local Support for Community Housing Needs
- Preserve Housing Choices
- Advance and Sustain Diversity
- Integrate Growth and Community Housing Goals

## Local Support for Community Housing Needs

### **7.01 Local Solutions to Affordable Housing**

The city and county will employ local regulations, policies, and programs to meet the housing needs of their low and moderate income households and workforce. Appropriate federal, state and local programs and resources will be used locally and in collaboration with other jurisdictions. The city recognizes that affordable housing provides a significant community benefit and will continually monitor and evaluate its policies, programs and regulations to further the city's affordable housing goals.

### **7.02 Permanently Affordable Housing**

The city will increase the proportion of permanently affordable housing units to an overall goal of at least ten percent of the total existing housing stock through regulations, financial subsidies and other means. City resources will also be directed toward maintaining existing permanently affordable housing units and securing replacements for lost low and very low income units.

### **7.03 Populations with Special Needs**

The city and county will encourage development of housing for populations with special needs including residences for people with disabilities, populations requiring group homes or other specialized facilities, and other vulnerable populations where appropriate. The location of such housing should be in proximity to shopping, medical services, schools, entertainment and public transportation. Every effort will be made to avoid concentration of these homes in one area.

### **7.04 Strengthening Community Housing Partnerships**

The city will create and preserve partnerships dedicated to the community's housing needs by supporting private and nonprofit agencies that create and maintain permanently affordable housing in the community, and fostering nonprofit and private sector partnerships. The city recognizes the role of the university in the housing market and will encourage the University of Colorado and other post-secondary institutions in their efforts to increase the amount of on-campus housing.

### **7.05 Strengthening Regional Housing Cooperation**

The city and the county will work to enhance regional cooperation on housing issues to address regional housing needs and encourage the creation of housing proximate to regional transit routes. Such efforts include the Regional HOME Consortium and the Ten Year Plan to Address Homelessness.

## **Housing Choices**

### **7.06 Mixture of Housing Types**

The city and county, through their land use regulations and housing policies will encourage the private sector to provide and maintain a mixture of housing types with varied prices, sizes and densities, to meet the housing needs of the full range of the Boulder Valley population.

### **7.07 Preserve Existing Housing Stock**

The city and county, recognizing the value of their existing housing stock, will encourage its preservation and rehabilitation through its land use policies and regulations. Special efforts will be made to preserve and rehabilitate existing housing serving low and moderate income individuals and households.

### **7.08 Preservation and Development of Manufactured Housing**

Recognizing the importance of manufactured housing as an option for many households, the city and county will encourage the preservation of existing mobile home parks and the development of new manufactured home parks, including increasing opportunities for resident-owned parks. Whenever an existing mobile home park is found in a hazardous area, every reasonable effort will be made to reduce or eliminate the hazard, when feasible, or to help mitigate for the loss of housing through relocation of affected households.

## **Diversity**

### **7.09 Housing for a Full Range of Households**

The city and county will encourage preservation and development of housing attractive to current and future households, persons at all stages of life and to a variety of

household configurations. This includes singles, couples, families with children and other dependents, extended families, non-traditional households and seniors.

#### **7.10 Balancing Housing Supply with Employment Base**

Expansion of the Boulder Valley housing supply should reflect to the extent possible current employer locations, projected industrial/commercial development sites, variety of salary ranges, and the demand such developments bring for housing employees. Key considerations include housing type, mix, and affordability. The city will explore policies and programs to increase housing for Boulder workers by fostering mixed-use and multi-family development proximate to transit, employment or services and by considering the conversion of commercial and industrial zoned or designated land to residential use.

### **Growth and Community Housing Goals**

#### **7.11 Incorporate Mix of Housing in Future Service Area**

In considering future expansion of the Service Area, the city will identify possible sites for housing that serves low and moderate income households. Designation of land uses in new growth areas will provide for a mixture of housing types and densities in order to meet the diversity of housing needs.

#### **7.12 Conversion of Residential Uses in the Community**

The city will evaluate and revise its regulations to reduce the opportunities for the conversion of residential uses to non-residential uses or to require mitigation for residential units lost through the redevelopment of existing housing or the conversion of a residential use to non-residential uses.

#### **7.13 Integration of Permanently Affordable Housing**

Permanently affordable housing, whether publicly, privately or jointly financed will be designed as to be compatible, dispersed, and integrated with housing throughout the community.

#### **7.14 Minimizing Displacement**

The city will evaluate its policies and regulations in order to minimize the negative effects of displacement on low income persons when housing sites are redeveloped by the private sector. Available relocation assistance options in the community will continue to be offered to displaced low-income persons.

# 8. Community Well-Being

Boulder, 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. Boulder is a center of active living, attracting residents, businesses and visitors who value community and individual health. The city is committed to continuing to be a national leader in promoting the physical health and welfare of the community as well as promoting civil and human rights.

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

- Needs of a growing **older adult population** and their family caregivers;
- Healthy child and youth development and opportunities to be contributing members of the community;
- Support and inclusion of **immigrants** into the community;
- Impacts of a large **university population** on housing and other infrastructure;
- 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 vision for Boulder is to create and support a comprehensive safety net of services for residents, through coordinated regional planning, service delivery, and integrated partnerships. Generally, Boulder County provides state and federally mandated programs, entitlement programs and countywide services. The city provides services identified as important to the Boulder community including safety net services and early intervention and prevention services to meet critical human service needs.

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, from safety net services to early intervention and prevention programs which mitigate more costly, long-term interventions and forestall worsening social conditions. Services balance meeting immediate needs with long-term solutions to critical social issues.

### 8.02 Regional Approach to Human Services

The city will continue its collaborative role in human services planning and funding through partnerships with other agencies and local governments. The city and county will coordinate a regional approach such as that articulated in the Ten-Year Plan to Address Homelessness and the Human Services Strategic Plan. The city will seek to address the disproportionate burden placed on Boulder as a key regional service center.

## **Social Equity**

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

The city will work to ensure that basic 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 and disabled populations, enabling equal access to community infrastructure.

### **8.04 Addressing Community Deficiencies**

The city will identify barriers to provision of important basic human services 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; promote opportunities for community engagement of diverse community members; and promote formal and informal representation of diverse community members in civic affairs.

## **Community Health**

### **8.06 Safety**

The city will promote safety by fostering good neighborhood 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.

### **8.07 Physical Health**

The city and county strive to ensure that this community continues to be a leader in promoting physical health and welfare of community members. The city recognizes that physical activity is essential to health and well-being. The city will support opportunities for people to exercise. Neighborhood and community design will encourage physical activity by establishing easy access to parks and trails, 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.

## **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 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.

## Parks and Trails

### **8.11 Parks and Recreation**

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.

### **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 user widening of trails 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 and literacy resources and 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**

The city, 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 facilities for the performing and visual arts and the provision of art in public buildings and spaces.

#### **8.18 The Arts**

The city and county recognize and support the arts. 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 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.

#### **8.19 Public Art**

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.

# 9. Agriculture and Food

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 world around us. Sustainable agricultural practices and short distances to transport food can help reduce energy used to feed the community. Access to safe food, including locally grown food for all Boulder residents is a top priority for our community. It is important that healthy 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 agriculture and access to local food guide public policy and decision-making to move our community toward a more robust agricultural economy and ensuring everyone has access to food.

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

## 9.01 Support for Agriculture

The city and county will encourage the preservation and sustainable use of agricultural lands as a current and renewable source of food and feed and for their contribution to cultural, environmental and economic diversity. These areas are important for preserving the rural character of Area III. 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.

## 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.

## 9.03 Sustainable Agriculture Practices

The city and county will promote sustainable agricultural practices on publicly owned lands and will encourage them on private lands. Sustainable practices include food production methods that

## 2013 City Council Committee Assignments

### INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Beyond the Fences Coalition	Morzel, Plass
Boulder County Consortium of Cities	Karakehian
Colorado Municipal League (CML) – Policy Committee	Jones, Appelbaum (Castillo – staff alternate)
Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG)	Jones
Housing Authority (Boulder Housing Partners)	
Metro Mayors Caucus	Appelbaum
National League of Cities (NLC)	Appelbaum
Resource Conservation Advisory Board	Plass, Morzel (at large seat)
Rocky Flats Stewardship	Morzel, Plass (1 <sup>st</sup> alternate), Castillo (2 <sup>nd</sup> alternate)
University of Colorado (CU) / City Oversight	Jones, Karakehian
US36 Mayors and Commission Coalition	Appelbaum,
US36 Commuting Solutions	Karakehian
Urban Drainage and Flood Control District	Morzel

### LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS

Boulder Museum of Contemporary Art (BMoCA)	Cowles
Boulder Convention and Visitors Bureau	Plass
Dairy Center for the Arts	Karakehian
Downtown Business Improvement District Board	Plass, Jones

### INTERNAL CITY COMMITTEES

Audit Committee	Morzel, Cowles
Boards and Commissions Committee	Plass
Boulder Urban Renewal Authority (BURA) Mayoral Appointment	
Charter Committee	Morzel, Cowles, Karakehian
Civic Use Pad/ 9 <sup>th</sup> and Canyon	Morzel, Jones
Council Budget Action Plan Committee	Plass
Evaluation Committee	Karakehian, Morzel
Legislative Committee	Karakehian, Jones

### SISTER CITY REPRESENTATIVES

Jalapa, Nicaragua	Jones
Kisumu, Kenya	Morzel
Llasa, Tibet	
Dushanbe, Tajikistan	Karakehian
Yamagata, Japan	
Mante, Mexico	Plass
Yateras, Cuba	Cowles
Sister City Sub-Committee	Morzel, Cowles

## 2013 City Council Committee Assignments

### INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Beyond the Fences Coalition	Morzel, Plass
Boulder County Consortium of Cities	Karakehian, Wilson (alt)
Colorado Municipal League (CML) – Policy Committee	Jones, Appelbaum (Castillo – staff alternate)
Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG)	Becker, Jones (Alternate)
Housing Authority (Boulder Housing Partners)	Ageton
Metro Mayors Caucus	Appelbaum
National League of Cities (NLC)	Appelbaum
Resource Conservation Advisory Board	Plass, Morzel (at large seat)
Rocky Flats Stewardship	Morzel, Plass (1 <sup>st</sup> alternate), Castillo (2 <sup>nd</sup> alternate)
University of Colorado (CU) / City Oversight	Wilson, Jones, Karakehian
US36 Mayors and Commission Coalition	Appelbaum, Ageton (alternate)
US36 Commuting Solutions	Ageton, Karakehian (alternate)
Urban Drainage and Flood Control District	Morzel

### LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS

Boulder Museum of Contemporary Art (BMoCA)	Cowles, Becker (alternate)
Boulder Convention and Visitors Bureau	Becker, Plass (alternate)
Dairy Center for the Arts	Karakehian
Downtown Business Improvement District Board	Plass, Jones

### INTERNAL CITY COMMITTEES

Audit Committee	Morzel, Becker, Cowles
Boards and Commissions Committee	Ageton, Plass
Boulder Urban Renewal Authority (BURA) Mayoral Appointment	Becker (appointed through 2015)
Charter Committee	Morzel, Cowles, Ageton, Karakehian
Civic Use Pad/ 9 <sup>th</sup> and Canyon	Morzel, Jones, Becker
Council Budget Action Plan Committee	Ageton, Becker, Plass
Evaluation Committee	Karakehian, Morzel
Legislative Committee	Ageton, Karakehian, Wilson, Jones

### SISTER CITY REPRESENTATIVES

Jalapa, Nicaragua	Jones
Kisumu, Kenya	Morzel
Llasa, Tibet	Ageton
Dushanbe, Tajikistan	Karakehian
Yamagata, Japan	Wilson
Mante, Mexico	Plass
Yateras, Cuba	Cowles
Sister City Sub-Committee	Morzel, Cowles

## **Council Working Agreements**

### **Council Process:**

- The Council will work on general discipline in being prepared to ask questions and make comments.
- The Council asks the Mayor to intervene if discussion on agenda items extends beyond a reasonable time frame.
- The council will engage in the practice of colloquy to fully explore the different sides of a specific point.
- The Mayor will ask the city clerk to set the timer lights for council members if discussions begin to exceed efficient debate. Members should respect the lights as a time reminder, but will not be bound by them as absolute limits.
- Rather than restating a point, council members should simply say "I agree."
- The council agenda committee may, with advance notice, adjust each public speaker's time to two rather than three minutes during public hearings for items on which many speakers want to address the council.
- Council members will grant each other permission to mentor and support each other on how each person contributes to the goal of being accountable for demonstrating community leadership.
- In order to hear each other respectfully and honor the public, council will avoid body language that could convey disrespect, side conversations, talking to staff, whispering to neighboring council members, passing notes, and leaving the council chambers.
- Regarding not revisiting past discussions, the council should check-in with fellow members periodically to ensure that this is not an issue.

### **Council Communication:**

- Council members agree to keep quasi-judicial roles scrupulously clean between members of boards and members of council, like expressing ideas to board members on things coming before the Board, and carefully disclose or recuse themselves when they're involved with board members on a topic.
- Council agrees to e-mail the city manager about issues that they run into that staff or boards may be working on so that the manager can be actively involved in managing issues and keeping the full council informed well in advance of items coming before council for action.
- Members will keep the full council informed on issues from committees, public groups or other agencies that they are following, the a hot line e-mails, brief verbal reports at the end of council meetings or other means.
- The Council will find ways to support majority council decisions and adequately inform the public, through response letters that explain how divergent points of view were heard and honored in decisions, via standard e-mail responses for hot issues, by occasional council Letters to the Editor to clarify the facts, or by seeking out reporters after meetings to explain controversial decisions.

### **Council Committees**

- Council goal committee meetings will be scheduled to accommodate the council members on the committee.
- Notice of the times and places for each goal committee meeting will be noticed once per month in the Daily Camera.
- The council agenda will include time for reports from committees under Matters from Members of Council, noting that written communications from the committees are appropriate as well.