

I-Appendix A: Planning and Policy Guidance Relevant to the North TSA Plan

Plans and Policies	Year Adopted	General Relevance to North TSA Plan	Relevant Management Objectives	Relevant Management Issues and Opportunities	Specific Guidance Relevant to North TSA Plan
<p>Open Space and Mountain Parks Visitor Master Plan (VMP)</p>	<p>2005</p>	<p>The VMP provides overall direction for the management of visitor activities and services and trail study areas. The VMP established goals, policies, strategies and management area designations for managing visitor access. The North TSA goal and subsequent outcomes should tier from VMP guidance. The VMP also includes recommended management actions for management areas or clusters of management areas, some of which are within the North TSA boundaries.</p>	<p>Enhance the experience Maintain or enhance the quality of the visitor experience when engaged in passive recreational activities such as hiking, climbing and bicycling.</p> <p>Improve access Provide and maintain highly functional and sustainable visitor facilities that support visitor access to appropriate destinations and add to the quality of their experience.</p> <p>Enjoy and protect Ensure that passive recreational activities and facilities are compatible with long-term protection of natural, agricultural and cultural resources.</p> <p>Partner with the community Partner with the community in passive recreation decision-making and stewardship efforts.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · High and growing levels of visitation · OSMP is highly attractive regionally, in part because it's the only land management agency that allows off-leash dog opportunities · Increased popularity of outdoor recreation (national trend) · New types of recreation, creating new recreational demands on lands and resources · Concentrated impacts from certain recreational activities, including trail crowding, trailhead parking congestion, trampled soils/vegetation, undesignated trails and dispersal of visitors into the backcountry which creates further congestion, loss of solitude and degradation of wildlife habitat · Constrained land supply versus growing demand for recreation <p>Public suggestions for improvement included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Access for mountain biking, hang gliding and equestrians · Transit linkages, internal/external trail connections and minimize/remove dangerous road crossings · Longer continuous trails and universal accessibility · User conflicts, including unwanted dog encounters and dog waste, bicyclists' speed, etc. · Lack of clarity around regulations, commercial use and special use permits · Physical un-sustainability of trails, including visual scarring from erosion, backlog of designated trail improvements and trail design problems · Undesignated trails · Trailhead parking congestion · Habitat/agricultural impacts, including trampling, dogs harrassing wildlife/range animals, spread of invasive species, visitors leaving gates open and increased nighttime activity · Vulnerable cultural resources sites and insufficient information/education · Need for more education/compliance for low-impact techniques and dog regulations · Need for more protection of highly sensitive areas · Fewer opportunities for solitude · Insufficient staff, expertise and funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Motivate the public to help ensure that educational and recreational activities are sustainable in the long term, using educational information and interpretive themes. · Continue to deliver consistent and on-going messages on low-impact visitor techniques. · Develop or continue outreach programs to community groups that influence visitor activity on OSMP lands. · Work with authors and publishers of maps and outdoor recreation guides to ensure OSMP opportunities are appropriately placed and described. · Voice and sight tag program/education, dog management monitoring and enforcement. · Improve the safety of "critical" road crossings. · Provide for safe interactions between livestock and visitors. · Enforce roadside parking prohibitions in cooperation with the County Sheriff's Office and the Colorado Department of Transportation. · Provide a consistent level of ranger patrol coverage, for enforcement and education. · As trail improvement projects are being planned, give consideration to the appropriateness of designating and constructing them to include bicycling. · Implement a permit system for off-trail use in Habitat Conservation Areas (HCAs). · Establish and advertise additional no-dog opportunities on some trails, using a collaborative process and suitability criteria. · Provide designated launch and landing area(s) for hang gliding and paragliding. · Increase services available to community members regardless of physical ability. · Implement a trail and facility routine maintenance program. · Collaborate to study and evaluate possible new trails and trail connections and their relationship to management area designations (TSA plans). · Address major trail reconstruction needs and construct sustainable trails to appropriate destinations and appropriate trail linkages in the overall trail system.

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<p>Open Space and Mountain Parks Grassland Ecosystem Management Plan (Grassland Plan)</p>	<p>2010</p>	<p>The Grassland Ecosystem Management Plan provides resource information and conservation guidance for TSA plans and will be implemented in part by integrating recommended strategies and actions related to visitor access and activities into TSA plans.</p>	<p>The Grassland Plan includes six initiatives that encompass 13 conservation objectives and 35 conservation strategies to guide the conservation and restoration of OSMP grassland resources.</p> <p>Grassland conservation targets were created to categorize the grassland system and serve as the basis for assessing conditions, setting desired future conditions, identifying conservation issues, developing and applying strategies and measuring success. Conservation Targets include mixed prairie mosaic and xeric tallgrass prairie, agricultural operations, black-tailed prairie dog, wetlands, riparian areas and mesic bluestem prairie.</p> <p>Best opportunity areas (BOAs) for conservation and restoration across multiple targets were identified to help set priorities for where conservation actions are likely to have the greatest benefit.</p>	<p>Most significant conservation issues relevant to TSA Planning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · incompatible surrounding land uses · invasive non-native plant and animal species · incompatible recreational uses · incompatible dog management by guardians <p>The Grassland Plan includes an analysis of the OSMP land system to determine where the best opportunities exist to conserve each of the conservation targets identified in the plan. The analysis and associated maps include areas in the North TSA (See Chapter V of the Grassland Plan).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Minimize adverse effects of trail development in areas of special conservation value or sensitivity within the Grassland Planning Area, as part of TSA planning. · Identify high-value grassland bird nesting areas and consider seasonal protection measures through the TSA planning process and, when necessary, prior to TSA planning. · Create a large block of conserved grassland in the northern portion of the OSMP land system through acquisitions and management agreements. · Promote conservation of the Grassland Plan targets by increasing awareness of grassland values and conservation issues and considering actions for conservation in Best Opportunity Areas. · Consider closing, restoring and discouraging the (re)establishment of undesignated trails in areas of special conservation value or sensitivity as part of the TSA planning process. · Establish and support the survival of plains cottonwoods and diverse and abundant shrub communities in riparian areas. · Consider establishing on-leash requirements in areas of special conservation value or sensitivity as part of the TSA planning process. · Consider providing additional no-dog opportunities to protect areas of conservation value and sensitivity as part of TSA planning.

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<p>Open Space and Mountain Parks Acquisition Update 2013-2019</p>	<p>2013</p>	<p>The acquisition program is based upon the City Charter purposes for open space and is well aligned with the Sustainability Framework. As a way to link the charter purposes with the Sustainability Framework, OSMP has developed strategies for each strategy area and specific actions for each strategy.</p>	<p><u>Natural Environment</u> Preserve and protect the ecological systems and land resources that provide habitat for native plants and animals, as well as natural areas with special geologic features and terrain.</p> <p><u>Safety and Community Well-Being</u> Coordinate open space land acquisition with other compatible community needs (e.g. floodplain protection, local food production, emergency access, trail crossings).</p> <p><u>Economic Vitality</u> Enhance and strengthen the aesthetic value of Open Space in shaping and supporting an urban form that attracts employers and residents.</p> <p><u>Good Governance</u> Demonstrate a “best value approach” for the acquisition of open space and the management of public funds.</p> <p><u>Energy</u> Use land preservation to support the city’s Climate Action Plan by replacing existing or potentially consumptive land uses with less impactful OSMP management, including the functions of native vegetation as carbon sinks.</p> <p><u>Community Character</u> Recognize the importance of balancing the protection of Open Space near the city with acquisitions farther away.</p> <p><u>Mobility</u> Acquire the lands or interests necessary to provide access to the OSMP trail system, build local trail connections, complete approved regional trail connections and provide alternatives to areas of high visitation that may relieve the effects of crowding upon resources and the quality of visitor experience in more crowded areas.</p>	<p><u>The Northern Tier or Table Mountain acquisition area is within the North TSA. It is centered upon and dominated by a 1,700 acre block of grasslands owned by the federal government. Approximately 2,300 acres remain identified in this area for protection, the majority of which is Table Mountain, but also include Lefthand Creek and its riparian area.</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Acquire management interest in riparian areas, wetlands and other areas of enhanced biological diversity. · Protect the few remaining large intact blocks of grassland habitat in the acquisition area. · Collaborate with other agencies in the preservation of floodplains. · Identify and acquire lands (and waters) suitable for local food production. · Acquire property interest necessary to provide emergency access and ensure safe trail crossings at roadways, railways, etc. · Identify and protect areas where development could adversely affect the city’s view shed or access to destinations (e.g., scenic gateways, mountain backdrop, and prairie vistas). Continue to provide a setting consistent with the culture of organizations and businesses associated with natural products, outdoor recreation, environmental conservation, scientific research and education. · Work in partnership with other agencies, identify the best opportunities to reduce the carbon footprint and establish land uses compatible with Open Space purposes and the city’s vision for climate action. · Integrate trail linkages compatible with Open Space and transportation planning objectives. · Consider the acquisition of properties farther from the city to address increasing demand for open space visitor services and when properties are especially well-suited for desired community services (e.g., local organic agriculture). · Preserve and protect buildings, sites and artifacts as determined by their archaeological, ethnographic, historic and architectural significance. · Partner with other agencies to develop acquisition priorities for passive recreational regional trail connections shown in the BVCP. · Investigate the acquisitions necessary to implement trail linkages identified in Trail Study Area (TSA) Plans. · Acquire passive recreational access to properties where such access would relieve the adverse effects of heavy visitation upon the quality of the visitor experience and the city’s open space resources.

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<p>City of Boulder Open Space North Boulder Valley Area Management Plan (NBVAMP)</p>	<p>1997</p>	<p>While the scope of the NBVAMP is broader than the North Trail Study Area (TSA) Plan, the geographic study areas are similar. The NBVAMP also contains a good deal of relevant guidance and management recommendations that remains timely today, including potential trail alignments, general trail design and construction principles, guidance on interpretation, and recommendations for management area designations.</p> <p>Three principal management themes frame the North Boulder Valley Area Management Plan: (1) protecting the land and the place, (2) keeping agriculture in a changing rural setting, and (3) recreating experiences on a landscape of remnants. Protecting the land comes first. Without the land there is no community and no place.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Acquire lands consistent with the Open Space Charter (Appendix 1.1) and the Area Management Plan goals and ensure proper management of easements and Open Space properties; · Manage and preserve the natural and cultural resources of North Boulder Valley; · Restore and improve natural, cultural, passive recreational and agricultural resources where suitable; · Manage and preserve land for passive recreation use, for its aesthetic or passive recreational value, and for its contribution to the quality of life of the community; · Maintain sustainable agricultural operations by balancing economic and natural resource considerations; and · Use education and outreach to accomplish the management goals of the NBVAMP. 	<p>Trails</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Increased visitation and types of use, undesignated trails, access issues, trail maintenance-steep portions, drainage, dog management, user conflicts, litter, vandalism and illegal fossil collection. · Commercial use: hang gliding, horse concessions. · Safety: Beech groundwater contamination, rattlesnakes and mountain lions, proximity for shooting range, crossing for Foothills trail at Lee Hill Road <p>Geology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Protection of fragile paleontological resources and areas. · Illegal collection of fossils and erosion of sites. <p>Soils</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Agricultural land uses: Controlled by many soil characteristics other than nutrient status and irrigability. · Trails: Erodible soils present a significant erosion hazard if not specially engineered to take a path or road. Undesignated trails lack erosion control treatments. · Vegetation: Artificial disturbances should be minimized. Rare plants such as Bell's twinpod. · Wildlife: Invertebrate soil animals are fundamental. · Facilities: Erodible soils are unsuitable for heavy uses such as picnic areas unless specifically engineered. Shallow soils, areas with high seasonal water, slow permeability, or high shrink-swell potential are unsuitable for leach fields or septic systems. <p>Vegetation/Wetlands</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Species/communities of special concern: non-natives, recreational use and grazing in rare plant habitat or wetlands · Fire management: native plants need fire · Agricultural management: over-utilization contributes to non-native infestations, pesticides/fertilizers · Prairie dogs and IPM · Hydrology as it relates to trail construction, wells, native plants, wetlands and irrigation management. <p>Wildlife</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Maintaining animal diversity, critical habitat (connectivity and quality) <p>Cultural Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Conflicts with other management objectives · Appropriate uses of historical structures 	<p>· See sections 10 (passive recreation) and 11 (education and outreach) for highly pertinent guidance. In addition, other specifics are called out below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Evaluate potential trail alignment along northern boundary of Axelson property, future potential trail and access opportunities from the north to south through West Beech, and a trail corridor along the Boulder Feeder Canal (<i>Boulder County is lead agency for this project</i>) · Interpret suitable sites (lots of guidance on this, including interpretation themes such as: "Coordinate with the education and outreach staff to initiate an educational and interpretive program with agriculture as a central theme" · Discourage public access in areas susceptible to damage and vandalism. · Plan trails to minimize the risk of invasive plant species introduction and spread. Do not place trails in areas with severe existing invasive plant species infestations. Keep trails out of wet areas. Minimize ongoing erosion in steep areas. Avoid creating a trail corridor that stretches from an invasive plant species infested area into an area with relatively few or no noxious invasive plant species infestations. · Use invasive plant species-free materials in trail construction. · Encourage use of pelletized feed or invasive plant species-free forage for horses before and during visits to Open Space. · Plan recreational development to avoid or minimize direct, indirect, and cumulative negative effects on rare species, communities, and potential habitat. · Develop and use a project checklist to identify and evaluate potential impacts to sensitive resources. · Implement trail maintenance project where the Hogback Ridge Trail crosses wetland #601 (montane spring-fed drainage). · Re-direct travel around, rather than through, wetland #444 (west of Lefthand Valley Reservoir; see Passive Recreation section). · Where wetland crossings are unavoidable, use boardwalks (with low water crossing for equestrians) to minimize impacts to surface flow and vegetation. · Provide a boundary fence around the Hart-Jones property to protect the globally imperiled Great Plains Salt Meadow plant community. · Encourage the protection of large tracts of unfragmented land, undisturbed from the effects of recreational trails (i.e., West Beech, central Axelson and East Beech properties). · Place educational signs along trails and at trailheads that interpret significant wildlife resources of the North Boulder Valley; specifically prairie dogs, raptors, amphibians and reptiles (see Education and Outreach section). · Assess trail access and development issues related to existing Open Space properties and future acquisitions. · Work with Boulder County and other departments within the City to provide trail linkages that meet regional recreational needs. Assist negotiations with other agencies for trail connections. · Ensure all facilities are safe and maintained to an acceptable standard.

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<p>City of Boulder Open Space Long Range Management Policies</p>	<p>1995</p>	<p>Open space will be managed in a way that provides for aesthetic enjoyment, minimizes cumulative impacts to the natural ecosystems and conflicts between users, considers user safety, preserves responsible agricultural use, provides for a quality passive recreation experience and protects natural areas.</p>	<p>Managing competing purposes: "Some proposals regarding management of Open Space properties may include consideration of competing purposes. The Charter does not specify the relative priorities of the purposes. Weighing of potential benefits and impacts of proposed management actions will include consideration of long-term viability and health of natural ecosystems" (City of Boulder 1995).</p>	<p>n/a</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Natural areas will be managed to provide the greatest possible protection of site integrity. Activities and access to natural areas will be restricted to research, education and other activities that will not detract from the natural or research values of such areas. · Management actions will be taken to prevent illegal collecting [of paleontological resources] and may be taken to prevent damage from natural processes such as erosion. · VISITOR USE MANAGEMENT TOOLS: The open space department may utilize the full range of tools that are available to manage passive recreation impacts including: education, volunteer programs, site specific restrictions, signage, permit systems, reservation systems, public use limits, ordinances or special use regulations, trail relocation, temporary area closures, permanent area closures. · Trails will be designed and constructed to protect native ecosystems and to minimize impacts on the natural landscape and agricultural lands.

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<p>Boulder County Comprehensive Plan (BCCP)</p>	<p>1999 + updates to Environmental Resources section in 2014 and forthcoming update to Open Space element</p>	<p>Boulder County values and strives to preserve, conserve and restore the unique and distinctive natural features, ecosystems and landscapes of the county using sound resource management principles and practices at both a site-specific level and on a broader, landscape scale. Species of Special Concern are an integral component of this management approach. The list of Species of Special Concern includes locally threatened or endangered flora and fauna that the county seeks to protect. Habitat for these Species of Special Concern is particularly vital, since it often presents our best chance to protect native species.</p> <p>In addition to identifying Species of Special Concern, the Environmental Resources Element of the BCCP designates areas of important habitat at two scales: the “site-specific scale” and the broader, “landscape-scale.” At the site-specific scale, important environmental resources typically consist of an easily definable area such as an individual parcel of land or a distinct geographical location where specific resources exist. Designations at the site-specific scale include Critical Wildlife Habitats, Rare Plant Areas, Wetlands, Riparian Areas, and Significant Natural Communities (formerly referred to as Critical Plant Associations). Environmental resources designated at the landscape-scale are much larger and holistic in approach. At this scale, the designations of High Biodiversity Areas and Environmental Conservation Areas seek to preserve broader ecological processes and functions. These areas often encompass multiple resources also designated at the site-specific scale. Natural Areas and Natural Landmarks designations are intended to encompass and protect unique and distinctive natural features and landscapes in the county. The fundamental and essential sustaining resources of air, soil and water are also considered and addressed.</p>	<p>See Boulder County Comprehensive Plan Environmental Resources Element</p>	<p><u>The following BCCP maps were updated in 2014 and identify resources or areas of concern that fall within the North TSA:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · environmental conservation areas · high biodiversity areas · natural landmarks and natural areas · wetlands and riparian areas · rare plant areas and significant natural communities · critical wildlife habitats and migration corridors · habitat conservation areas for Preble’s meadow jumping mouse <p><u>In addition, other maps are relevant for the North TSA, including:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · archaeologically sensitive areas and travel routes · agricultural lands of statewide and local significance · geologic hazard and constraint areas · mineral resources <p><u>In addition, the open space element for the BCCP is undergoing an update concurrent with the North TSA process.</u></p>	<p>Proposals should generally comply with BCCP goals associated with relevant Maps Approved by Planning Commission 12/18/2013</p>

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Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan (BVCP)	2010	<p>Outlines core values and guidance to achieve sustainability, intergovernmental cooperation, organized urban development, protection of open space and other policies.</p> <p>Boulder Valley Natural Ecosystems: are places that support natural ecosystems or native plants and animals that possess important ecological, biological or geological values. Most of the North Boulder Valley Area is designated as “natural ecosystems” on the Boulder Valley Natural Ecosystems Map.</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>	n/a	<p>· Proposed trail alignments</p> <p>Policies: 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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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 recreational activities. 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 (visitor-created) trails and visitor caused 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.</p> <p>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.</p>

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<p>City of Boulder Sustainability Framework</p>		<p>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. Specific initiatives to achieve these 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 the budget process and key initiatives.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Safe community · Healthy and socially thriving community · Livable community · Accessible and connected community · Environmentally sustainable community · Economically vital community · Good governance 	<p>n/a</p>	<p>n/a</p>