

Open Space Board of Trustees

June 12, 2024

City Council Chambers inside Penfield Tate II Municipal Building

MEETING AGENDA

(Please note that times are approximate.)

- I. (6:00)** Call to Order and Roll Call
- II. (6:05)** Approval of the Minutes
- III. (6:10)** Public Comment for Items not Identified for Public Hearing
- IV. (6:20)** Matters from the Board
- A. Trustee questions on Written Information items
- V. (6:30)** * Public hearing and consideration of a staff recommendation to the Open Space Board of Trustees on assigning management area designations to specific Open Space and Mountain Parks properties that are without a designation
- VI. (7:00)** * Consideration of a request from Public Service Company of Colorado (dba Xcel Energy) for a permanent utility easement of approximately 0.1 acres to install and maintain a buried natural gas line within the City of Boulder's William Arnold Open Space property pursuant to the disposal procedures of Article XII, Section 177 of the City of Boulder Charter
- VII. (7:10)** * Public Hearing and Board consideration of a motion to support continued collaboration with Boulder County on design alternatives for the North Foothills (US 36) Bikeway
- VIII. (7:45)** Matters from the Department
- A. Bear Habitat Suitability and Seasonal On-Leash Trail Regulations Evaluation (35 min)
- B. Update on *Draft* 2025-2030 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) & 2025 Operating Budget (45 min)
- C. Director Update: Reminder of OSBT Field Trip to a few OSMP Agricultural properties on June 14, 9:00 – 11:30 a.m.
- IX. (9:05)** Adjourn

* Public Hearing

Written Information:

- A. Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP); Open Space and Mountain Parks Disaster Response Team
- B. Fort Chambers / Poor Farm Site Management Plan Update
- C. North Sky Trail Completion

Open Space Board of Trustees Members:

Harmon Zuckerman
(2023-2025)

Michelle Estrella
(2021-2026)

Jon Carroll
(2022-2027)

Brady Robinson
(2023-2028)

Sarah Glynn
(2024-2029)



Open Space Board of Trustees
***TENTATIVE Board Items Calendar**
 (Updated May 29, 2024)

June 14, 2024 OSBT Field Trip 9:00 – 11:30 a.m.	July 10, 2024	August 14, 2024	September 11, 2024
<p><i>Theme: OSMP Agricultural Program: Visit a few of OSMP's leased agricultural sites and operations</i></p> <p><i>Location: Meet at and Return to the OSMP HUB - 2520 55th Street</i></p>	<p>Matters from the Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trustee questions on Written Memo items or public comment (10 min) <p>Action Items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fort Chambers-Poor Farm Site Management Plan (50 mins) <p>Matters from the Department:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overview and Demonstration of OSMP's Interactive Map highlighting current and upcoming OSMP projects (30 min) 2025 OSMP Budget Update: 3rd touch with the OSBT (60 minutes) – No OSBT recommendation at this meeting as OSBT consideration is moved to August meeting. Director verbal Updates (5 min) 	<p>Matters from the Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trustee questions on Written Memo items or public comment (10 min) Appoint an OSBT Retreat preparation subcommittee (5 min) <p>Action Items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommendation on OSMP's 2025 budget (45 min) <p>Matters from the Department:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Junior and Youth Ranger Program update (35 min) Boulder to Eric Regional Trail (BERT) Update (40 min) Wildfire Resilient Landscapes: Community Wildfire Protection Plan Implementation Update (30 min) Director verbal Updates (5 min) 	<p>Matters from the Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trustee questions on Written Memo items or public comment (10 min) Update from the OSBT Retreat Subcommittee (20 min) <p>Action Items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assigning Management Area Designations (MADs) to specific OSMP properties that are without a designation: Group 4 (30 min) <p>Matters from the Department:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Opinion & Visitor Experience Survey (POVES) Results; and updated visitation data estimates (Part 1 - 90 min)

*All items are subject to change. A final version of the agenda is posted on the webpage the week of the OSBT meeting.

OPEN SPACE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Action Minutes

Meeting Date May 8, 2024

Record of this meeting can be found here: <https://bouldercolorado.gov/government/watch-board-meetings> (video start times are listed below next to each agenda item).

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Michelle Estrella, Chair
Harmon Zuckerman, Vice Chair
Jon Carroll
Brady Robinson
Sarah Glynn

OSMP STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT

Dan Burke Jeff Haley Jennelle Freeston Heather Swanson Lauren Kilcoyne
Leah Russell Sam McQueen Cole Moffatt Paul Dennison Lisa Goncalo
Ilene Flax

GUESTS

Alyson Duffey, Executive Director, Boulder Open Space Conservancy (BOSC)

AGENDA ITEM 1 – Call to Order and Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 6:02 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 2 – Approval of the Minutes (00:52)

Jon Carroll moved the Open Space Board of Trustees to adopt the minutes from April 10, 2024. Harmon Zuckerman seconded. This motion passed unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM 3 – Public Participation for Items not Identified for Public Hearing (2:42)

Kate Beezley spoke about the Boulder Climbing Community and climbing access on open space.

AGENDA ITEM 4 – Matters from the Board (9:10)

The Board asked questions on the Written Information items.

On the “2024 Visitor Infrastructure Projects Update” the board asked about new bike racks being added at trailheads, as well as the plan for all existing bike racks to be brought to the current standard.

The board asked about the “Preble’s meadow jumping mouse Site Conservation Team Update” and how conservation and restoration will be handled.

AGENDA ITEM 5 – Matters from the Department (26:29)

Paul Dennison, OSMP Wildland Fire Sr Program Manager, presented the “Wildfire Resilient Landscapes: Update on Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) Fuels Management efforts”.

The board asked clarifying questions and responded to staff proposed questions: “How can the program empower and inform neighbors to conduct their own wildfire mitigation actions?”; “Are there any potential challenges or obstacles to successful implementation that you foresee?”; and “Is there any more information that you need to be able to answer questions about this program from the community?”

Cole Moffatt, Senior Accountant, and Sam McQueen, Business Services Senior Manager, presented the

“Draft 2025-2030 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) & Operating Budget”. They were joined by Alyson Duffey, executive director from BOSC, and Lauren Kilcoyne, Central Services Deputy Director.

The board asked about donations to BOSC, and if donors can choose specific programs or projects for their money to go to. They additionally asked if we are making multimodal access a priority – including an emphasis on adding bike racks. They expressed their appreciation for the “take care of what you have” focus within the budget.

Ilene Flax, Sr. Landscape Architect, and Bill Wildenberg, Sr. Landscape Architect, presented on the “Sawhill Ponds Improvements”.

The board asked about bird blinds and the newly proposed design. Staff said the one that was shown in the presentation is more of a practice one for kids and an area for programming. The board also asked if there are any current plans for water quality improvement within this area.

Lisa Goncalo, Recreation Stewardship Sr. Program Manager, presented the “Climbing Access Trail Management Update”.

The board asked if the inventory is truly complete, and how the trail designation works after it is approved. Staff said climbers typically want a different experience than a general hiker; different trails fall into classification type based on user, and then maintained accordingly.

ADJOURNMENT – The meeting adjourned at 9:02 p.m.

These draft minutes were prepared by Leah Russell



**CITY OF BOULDER
OPEN SPACE BOARD OF TRUSTEES AGENDA ITEM**

MEETING DATE: June 12, 2024

AGENDA TITLE

Public hearing and consideration of a staff recommendation to the Open Space Board of Trustees on assigning management area designations to specific Open Space and Mountain Parks properties that are without a designation

PRESENTER/S

Dan Burke, Director, Open Space and Mountain Parks
Lauren Kilcoyne, Deputy Director of Central Services
Kacey French, Planning and Design Senior Manager
Juliet Bonnell, Planner

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2005, the Open Space and Mountain Parks (OSMP) Visitor Master Plan (VMP) established a landscape context for planning and identified four Management Area Designations (MADs): Habitat Conservation Areas (HCA), Natural Areas (NA), Agricultural Areas (AA), and Passive Recreation Areas (PRA). The VMP designated MADs for the acquired OSMP land at the time and the designations of MADs as of November 2023 are shown in **Attachment A**.

As described in a [written update](#) to the Open Space Board of Trustees (OSBT) in October 2023, mainly due to acquisitions after the 2005 VMP, there are currently approximately 40 OSMP properties that do not have MADs. These properties total approximately 1,450 acres or 4% of the total acreage of lands managed by OSMP. The purpose of this project is to fill in these management gaps on the OSMP system by designating MADs for these properties in a way that is consistent and compatible with the already designated MADs.

Staff divided the approximately 40 properties without MADs into four groups of properties based on geographic location as shown in **Attachment B**.

In [December 2023](#) staff brought recommendations for MADs for the first group of properties to the board. Staff is now seeking OSBT feedback on the recommended MADs for the second and third groups of properties as shown in **Attachments C and D**.

The main considerations for the recommended MADs are the landscape context (i.e., MADs of adjacent properties) and the criteria as defined in the VMP as shown in **Attachment E**. In addition to recommending MADs, staff also reviewed and made recommendations on the open/closed status of each property.

In summary, for this grouping, four properties, or portions of, are being recommended as HCAs which require board recommendations to City Council. Two properties, or portions of, are being recommended as Agricultural Areas, four properties are being recommended as Natural Areas, and five properties are being recommended as Passive Recreation Areas. The non-HCA recommendations do not require a board recommendation to City Council.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff requests that the Open Space Board of Trustees make a motion to:

- 1) recommend that the Boulder City Council approve inclusion of the 90 and 96 Arapahoe properties as part of the Western Mountain Parks Habitat Conservation Area
- 2) recommend that the Boulder City Council approve inclusion of the Weiser property and the portion of the Boulder Valley Farm property along the Boulder Creek corridor as shown in **Attachment F** as part of the Lower Boulder Creek Habitat Conservation Area.

Staff is also seeking feedback and guidance on assigning the Agricultural, Natural, and Passive Recreation (non-HCA) staff recommended MADs as listed below, as well as the open/closed status of properties.

- Agricultural Area to the Martinson property and portion of the Boulder Valley Farm property
- Natural Area to the Meyer-Boulder County, Boulder Falls, Woodley and Rosenblatt-Ryan properties, and
- Passive Recreation Area to the Snyder, Chambers- Boulder County, Public Service Company, Pospahala, and Buckingham Campground properties

COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENTS AND IMPACTS

- Economic – Designating MADs will support future management of these properties by providing overall context and guidance which will improve the open space land system which supports the city’s quality of life, attracts visitors, and helps businesses to recruit and retain quality employees.
- Environmental – This project will help to ensure compatibility of visitor use with natural, agricultural and cultural resources across the OSMP system and therefore help to ensure natural and cultural resource protection.
- Social – Designating MADs to these properties will support future geographic specific planning (i.e., Integrated Site Planning) where visitor access and recreation opportunities are designated. By providing guidance on the overall management emphasis of properties MADs ensure compatibility of visitor use with natural, agricultural and cultural resources across the OSMP system.

OTHER IMPACTS

- Fiscal – Implementation costs associated with any property improvements to support MAD designation or open/closed status changes are anticipated to be minor and expenses are anticipated in the operating budget.
- Staff time – Staff time spent on the development of recommendations and implementation of the MAD and property access recommendations are part of normally allocated staff time for OSMP staff.

PUBLIC COMMENT AND PROCESS

This item is being heard as part of this public meeting advertised in the Daily Camera on June 9, 2024.

ANALYSIS

The MAD recommendations proposed are shown on the maps in **Attachments F and G**. The main considerations for recommending MADs are the landscape context (i.e., the MADs of adjacent properties) and the criteria as defined in the VMP (**Attachment E**). While there is some variation in values and resources among properties within an area, overall, the values and resources are more similar than not. MADs are meant to provide broad brushstrokes for guidance on the overall management emphasis for areas. All of OSMP's charter purposes can occur across the MADs- e.g. recreation and agriculture can occur in all MADs. There are other more site-specific tools available to manage for the variation of values and resources within a landscape context such as thoughtful design in site planning, the application of visitor regulations, and other wildlife or natural resource closures. When considering the landscape context and the VMP criteria for the Group 2 and 3 properties staff found most properties were similar to the adjacent properties in terms of values and resources, although there were some exceptions in Group 3. This is due to the influence of historical agriculture on the landscape which has created more variability of resources from property to property or within properties. Due to interspersed agriculture, MADs in the eastern part of the OSMP land system in general have slightly more of a patchwork nature than the rest of the system.

Four properties: 90 and 96 Arapahoe, Weiser and a portion of the Boulder Valley Farm property along the Boulder Creek corridor, are being recommended to be designated as HCAs. Two properties: Martinson and the other portion of Boulder Valley Farm are being recommended to be designated as Agricultural Areas. Four properties: Meyer-Boulder County, Boulder Falls, Woodley and Rosenblatt-Ryan are being recommended to be designated as Natural Areas. Five properties: Snyder, Chambers- Boulder County, Public Service Company, Pospahala, and Buckingham Campground are being recommended to be designated as Passive Recreation Areas. Details about the properties and considerations for the recommendations are provided below.

Staff's recommendations on whether the properties should be open or closed are also listed below. All Group 2 properties are recommended to be open while two properties in Group 3 are recommended to remain closed as shown on the map in **Attachment H**. Upon acquisition, new properties are generally closed to public access and remain closed until the management area designation process. In some cases, properties have had a follow up assessment that has resulted in the property being opened to public access in cases where no resource sensitivities or safety hazards have been identified.

Currently, four properties from Group 2, Public Service Company, Pospahala, Buckingham Campground, and Boulder Falls are open to public access and all are recommended to remain open. Five are closed, Snyder, Chambers- Boulder County, 90 and 96 Arapahoe, and Meyer-Boulder County from Group 2 and all are recommended to be open. All five of the Group 3 properties are currently closed. Martinson, Woodley, and Rosenblatt-Ryan are recommended to be open while Weiser and Boulder Valley Farm are recommended to remain closed. Seasonal or area closures may be considered on some of the properties opened through this process to provide natural resource or other sensitive resource protection consistent with OSMP's systemwide management policies. Details about the properties and considerations for the recommendations are provided below.

Habitat Conservation Area Recommendations

90 and 96 Arapahoe

The approximately 2-acre 90 Arapahoe and approximately 1-acre 96 Arapahoe properties are recommended to be designated as HCA and added to the Western Mountain Parks HCA because they are adjacent to and share similar high natural resource values as this existing HCA. Being nearby the Boulder Creek riparian corridor and high functioning wetlands these properties are in alignment with VMP criteria for HCA as high biodiversity areas and important wildlife corridors. These properties are currently closed, but it is recommended they be opened because the surrounding OSMP HCA properties with similar resources are open.

Weiser

This approximately 243-acre property is recommended to be designated as an HCA and added to the Lower Boulder Creek HCA because it is adjacent to other OSMP properties designated as HCA and has similar high resource values. During acquisition, staff recommended the property to be designated as HCA, but the motion was unintentionally not completed. This property's combination of different habitats supports an exceptionally diverse suite of wildlife and plant communities including rare and protected species and is in alignment with VMP criteria for HCA. Bald eagles have nested on Weiser since 2002 and this property includes an unusual mix of tallgrass prairie and sand prairie plant species as well as floodplain wet meadows with wetland communities. The southern half of the property's extensive riparian/wetland/grassland complexes provide ideal habitat for northern leopard frogs, while songbirds use the base of the cliffs, riparian forests and wetland and grassland habitats for nesting. Approximately 100 acres of this property are part of the White Rocks State Natural Area. It includes geologically unique topography and the northern portion of the property has a high density of indigenous and early historical-age sites. This property, along with other adjacent and nearby properties that are part of the Lower Boulder Creek HCA, is currently closed. To allow for the continued protection of its riparian, wetland, grassland habitats and associated species as well as its cultural resources the Weiser property is recommended to remain closed. Public access via staff-led hikes outside of bald eagle nesting season is recommended to continue. The East Boulder-White Rocks Trail provides on-trail only access to a nearby portion of the Lower Boulder Creek HCA, though not directly to the Weiser property.

Boulder Valley Farm

Of the approximately 617-acres of the Boulder Valley Farm (BVF) property, approximately 285-acres along the Boulder Creek corridor and the ponds are recommended to be designated as HCA and added to the Lower Boulder Creek HCA because they are adjacent to and share similar high natural resource values as this existing HCA. The portion of BVF being recommended as HCA includes a 1½ mile stretch of the Boulder Creek riparian corridor which is in alignment with VMP criteria for HCA as a large habitat block, high biodiversity area, and important wildlife corridor used by many species of birds, such as bald eagles, ospreys, and great blue herons, as habitat for nesting and foraging. This portion of the property also includes eight ponds from historic gravel mining as well as a small segment of the Lower Boulder Ditch.

This property is currently closed to public access as are other adjacent and surrounding OSMP properties and staff is proposing the entirety of the property remain closed and that further evaluation of potential access take place during a future site planning process.

Access is also being considered and evaluated as part of the Boulder to Erie Regional Trail (BERT). A portion of the RTD ROW is between the northern portion of the property being recommended as HCA and the southern portion of the property being recommended as AA.

Agricultural Area Recommendations

Boulder Valley Farm

The other portion of BVF, approximately 332-acres, is recommended to be designated as Agricultural Area because it is adjacent to and shares similar high agricultural resource values as surrounding properties. These acres of BVF include agricultural fields that are designated as farmland of national importance and include currently leased irrigated hay and grass pasture, irrigated alfalfa and dryland pasture, values that are in alignment with VMP criteria for Agricultural Area. BVF includes a 16-acre ranch headquarters compound and infrastructure including equipment barns, horse stalls and cattle chutes, corrals and sheds. Historic and cultural surveys performed by Boulder County found the property eligible for local landmark and National Register of Historic Places designation with numerous historically and architecturally significant buildings and structures. As stated above, the entire property is recommended to remain closed and access is being considered and evaluated as part of BERT and a future site planning process.

Martinson

This approximately 84-acre property has similar agricultural resources and is adjacent to other OSMP properties that are designated as Agricultural Areas. Martinson currently has an agricultural lease and is irrigated and used for grazing and hay which is consistent with VMP's criteria for Agricultural Area. It was purchased with the intent to manage it for agricultural purposes due to its water rights and high-quality soils. This property is currently closed, but many of the surrounding OSMP properties are open, therefore, it is recommended that this property be opened.

Natural Area Recommendations

Meyer-Boulder County

This less than 1-acre property has similar natural resource values and includes similar slope challenges as the adjacent OSMP properties that are Natural Areas. This property was acquired via a transfer from Boulder County because the county felt that OSMP would be more suitable to manage this flashflood-prone property which is adjacent to OSMP land. The habitat continuity that this property provides to the surrounding open space properties is consistent with the VMP criteria for Natural Area, so staff is recommending a Natural Area designation. This property is currently closed, but it is recommended to be opened to public access because surrounding OSMP properties with similar resources are open and do not have evidence of disturbance.

Boulder Falls

The approximately 6-acre Boulder Falls property is not adjacent to other OSMP properties. It is in a remote location up Boulder Canyon. This property's interspersed relatively high natural and recreational values are in alignment with the VMP's criteria for Natural Area. It is part of a large habitat block and is a high biodiversity area with North Boulder Creek draining into Boulder Falls. There is currently one designated trail for hiking to view the falls and one climbing access trail, while the remainder of the property remains closed due to safety concerns and for resource protection. Given this property's mix of natural and recreational values, staff is recommending it be designated as a Natural Area. This property is currently open to the public with on-trail access only. Staff is recommending this existing access status continue.

Woodley

This approximately 6-acre property is adjacent to other OSMP properties that are Agricultural Areas, but it is also nearby a patchwork of OSMP properties that are Natural Areas. The intent when purchasing this property was to help preserve the portion of the Dry Creek riparian corridor and its associated wetlands on Woodley. The Dry Creek Davidson Ditch also runs across this

property and is used by wildlife and two ponds exist west of the ditch. This property includes pastures in good condition and native vegetation such as needle and thread grass, blue grama, buffalo grass, side oats grama, golden aster, yucca and more. Given its relatively high natural resource values, staff is recommending Woodley be designated as a Natural Area. This property is currently closed, but adjacent OSMP properties are open, therefore, it is recommended that this property be opened.

Rosenblatt-Ryan

The approximately 49-acre Rosenblatt-Ryan property is adjacent to other OSMP properties that are Agricultural Areas, but it is also nearby OSMP properties that are Natural Areas. Its interspersed relatively high natural and agricultural resource values as well as potential recreational value are in alignment with the VMP's criteria for Natural Area. Its natural resource values include two spring fed ponds and riparian areas along and including Dry Creek and the Dry Creek Davidson Ditch that support a diverse suite of habitats and species. This property has habitat suitable for the federally threatened Preble's meadow jumping mouse, the state-threatened northern leopard frog, and state-threatened and native fishes such as the plains topminnow. Agricultural values identified on this property are its suitability for irrigated and dryland crops as well as pasture and it currently has an agricultural lease for grazing and hay production. The property's irrigated hayfields may also support nesting populations of bobolinks. Rosenblatt-Ryan, along with nearby OSMP properties, also has the potential to provide a critical link for a conceptual east-west trail alignment connecting the city's Bobolink Trailhead with the city's Teller Farm South Open Space property as included on the BVCP Trails Map. This property is currently closed, but it is recommended to be opened because surrounding OSMP properties with similar values are open.

Passive Recreation Area Recommendations

Snyder

The approximately 5-acre Snyder property's interspersed high recreational values and high quality habitat are in alignment with the VMP's criteria for Passive Recreation Area and are also similar to the recreational and natural resource values on adjacent OSMP properties that are Passive Recreation Areas, therefore, staff is recommending a Passive Recreation Area designation. The property abuts OSMP's Eagle Trail and is nearby the Boulder Valley Ranch Trailhead and trail system. It includes patches of high quality habitat including rare plant habitat and shale barrens. This property is currently closed, but it is recommended it be opened to public access to support implementation of North Trail Study Area (TSA) Plan guidance. North TSA guidance called for provision of a sustainable connection with the Boulder Valley Ranch Trailhead by replacing undesignated trails through shale barrens and rare plant habitat with one new designated trail north of Mesa Reservoir. This property has been identified as the best location to provide this sustainable trail connection in a way that minimizes impacts to resources.

Chambers – Boulder County

This approximately 1-acre property was acquired via a transfer from Boulder County because the county felt that OSMP would be more suitable to manage this property which is adjacent to OSMP land. It is bisected by Fourmile Canyon Creek and a majority of it is within the floodway and 100-year floodplain. Topography and steep slopes in this area somewhat separate this property from adjacent OSMP properties designated as Passive Recreation Areas. While this property does not include recreational values that are in alignment with the VMP criteria for Passive Recreation Area, it is still recommended to be designated as Passive Recreation Area due to its landscape context. Since this property is within the floodplain, this is not an area where any additional recreational infrastructure would be considered. The Chambers – Boulder County property is currently closed to public access, but it is recommended to be opened.

Public Service Company

This less than 1-acre property has similar high recreation values as adjacent OSMP properties that are Passive Recreation Areas. A portion of the Sanitas Spur Trail goes through the west side of this property connecting with the Mount Sanitas Trail and Sanitas Valley Trails. Given these high recreational values that are in alignment with the VMP criteria for Passive Recreation Area and the surrounding landscape context, this property is recommended to be designated as a Passive Recreation Area. Public Service Company is currently open and is recommended to remain open.

Pospahala

The less than 1-acre Pospahala property has similar high recreation values as adjacent properties that are owned and managed by the Parks and Recreation Department and is consistent with VMP criteria for Passive Recreation Area. The property contains part of the Boulder Creek stream bed, the north bank of Boulder Creek which is a heavily wooded steep slope, and a small portion of Eben G. Fine Park. The park includes infrastructure such as restrooms, picnic tables, playground equipment, as well as a portion of the Boulder Creek path which is a paved trail and bikeway. It has been noted that disposal of this property could be considered if the Parks and Recreation department were interested in taking over its ownership and management since it is adjacent to property managed by Parks and Recreation and is already being managed similarly. This property is currently open and is recommended to remain open.

Buckingham Campground

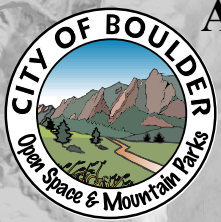
This approximately 26-acre property is not adjacent to other OSMP properties. It is in a remote location adjacent to the Arapaho Glacier USFS Trailhead. The Buckingham Campground property includes OSMP's Fourth of July Trailhead, picnic areas and campsites. Its recreational values are consistent with the VMP criteria for Passive Recreation Area, so staff is recommending a Passive Recreation Area designation. This property is currently open and is recommended to remain open.

NEXT STEPS

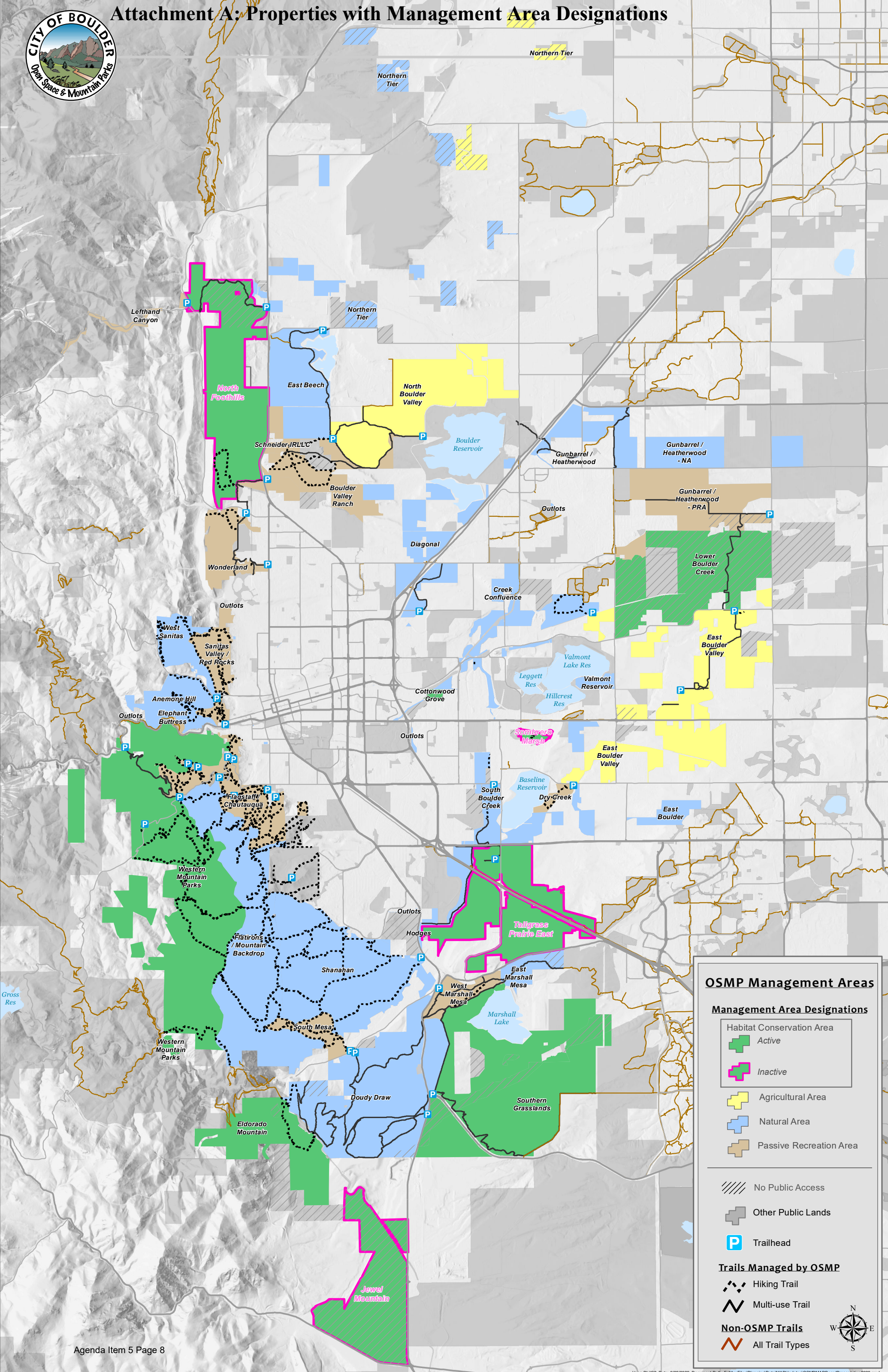
Staff will return to the OSBT with recommendations for the fourth and final group of properties later this year. Upon completion of bringing the recommendations to the OSBT staff will then bring the board recommended HCA designations to City Council.

ATTACHMENTS:

- **Attachment A:** Properties with MADs
- **Attachment B:** Properties without MADs
- **Attachment C:** Group 2 Properties without MADs
- **Attachment D:** Group 3 Properties without MADs
- **Attachment E:** VMP MAD characteristics, goals, and criteria
- **Attachment F:** Group 3 MAD recommendations
- **Attachment G:** Group 2 MAD recommendations
- **Attachment H:** Group 3 Open/Closed recommendations



Attachment A: Properties with Management Area Designations



OSMP Management Areas

Management Area Designations

- Habitat Conservation Area
 - Active
 - Inactive
- Agricultural Area
- Natural Area
- Passive Recreation Area

/ / / / No Public Access
 Other Public Lands
 P Trailhead

Trails Managed by OSMP

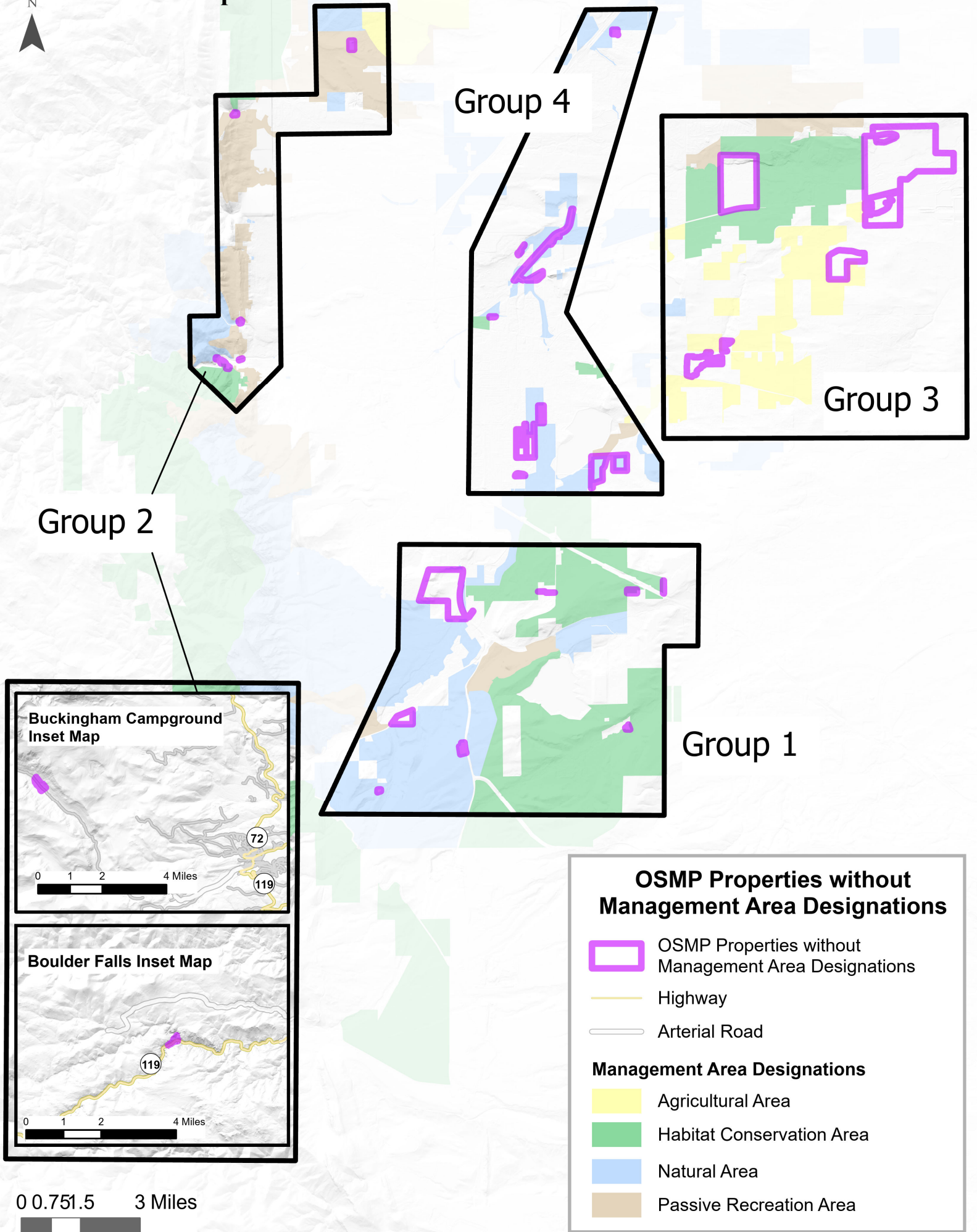
- Hiking Trail
- Multi-use Trail

Non-OSMP Trails

- All Trail Types



Attachment B: Properties without MADs

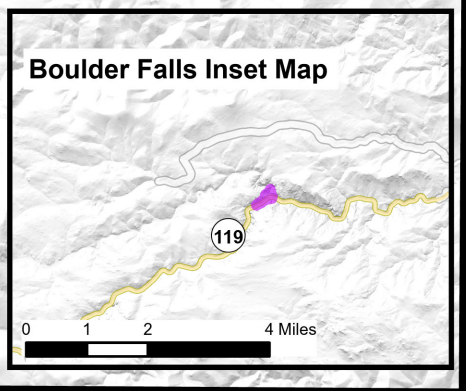
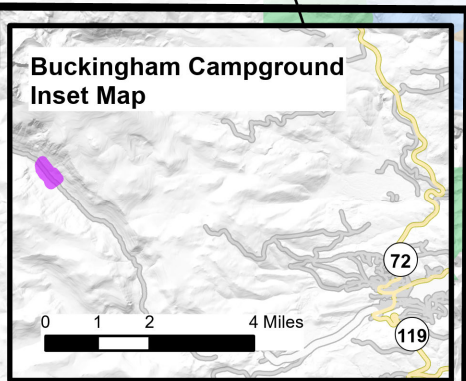


Group 4

Group 3

Group 2

Group 1



OSMP Properties without Management Area Designations

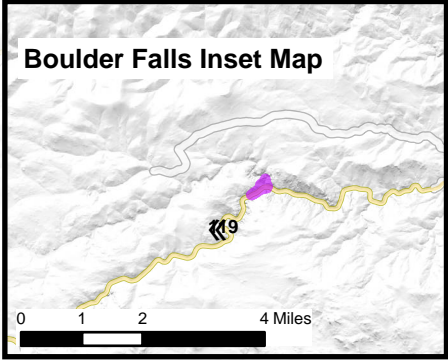
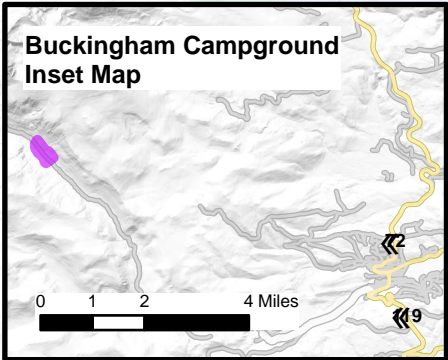
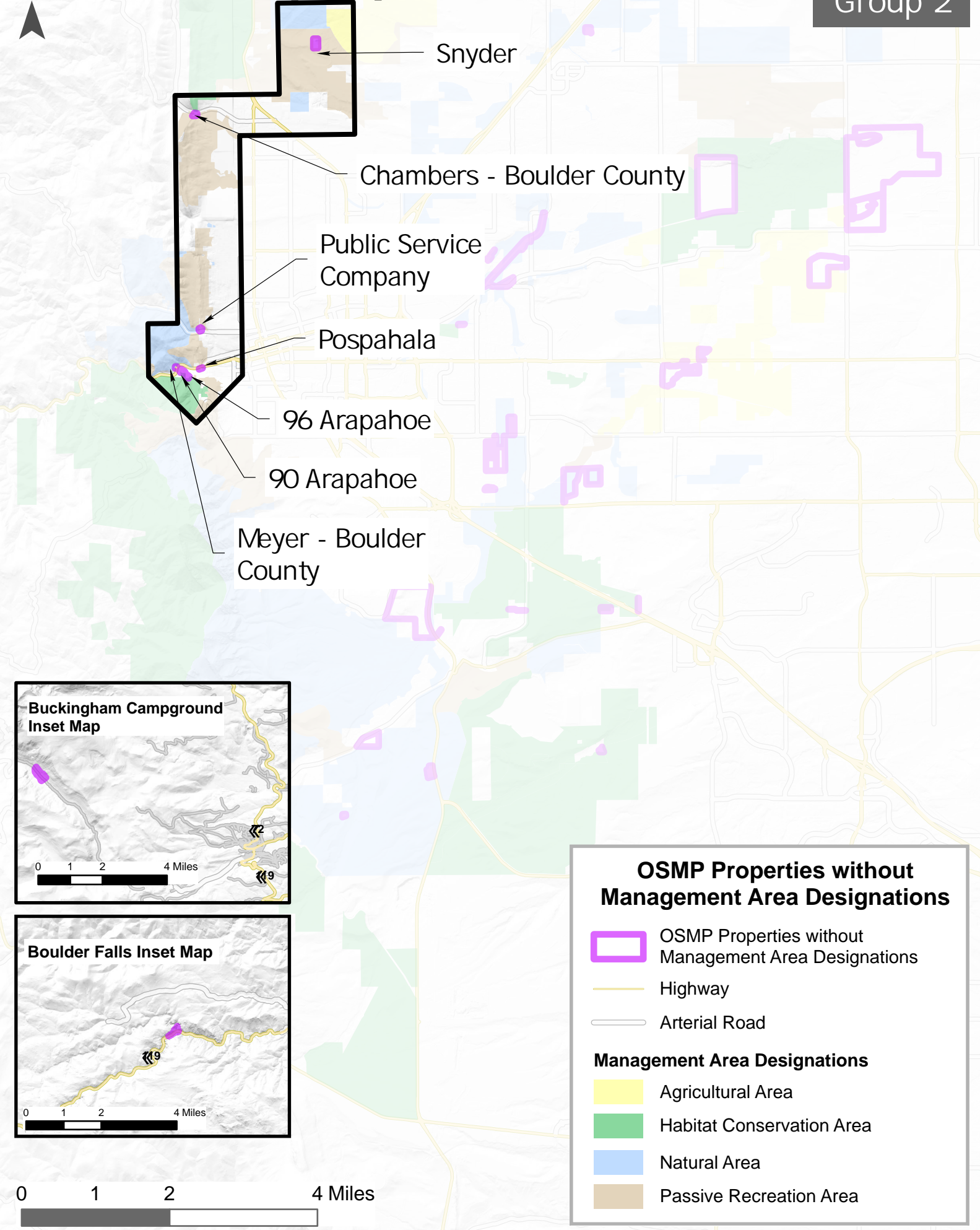
-  OSMP Properties without Management Area Designations
-  Highway
-  Arterial Road

Management Area Designations

-  Agricultural Area
-  Habitat Conservation Area
-  Natural Area
-  Passive Recreation Area

Attachment C: Group 2 Properties without MADs

Group 2

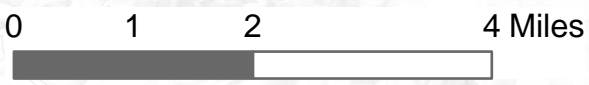


OSMP Properties without Management Area Designations

- OSMP Properties without Management Area Designations
- Highway
- Arterial Road

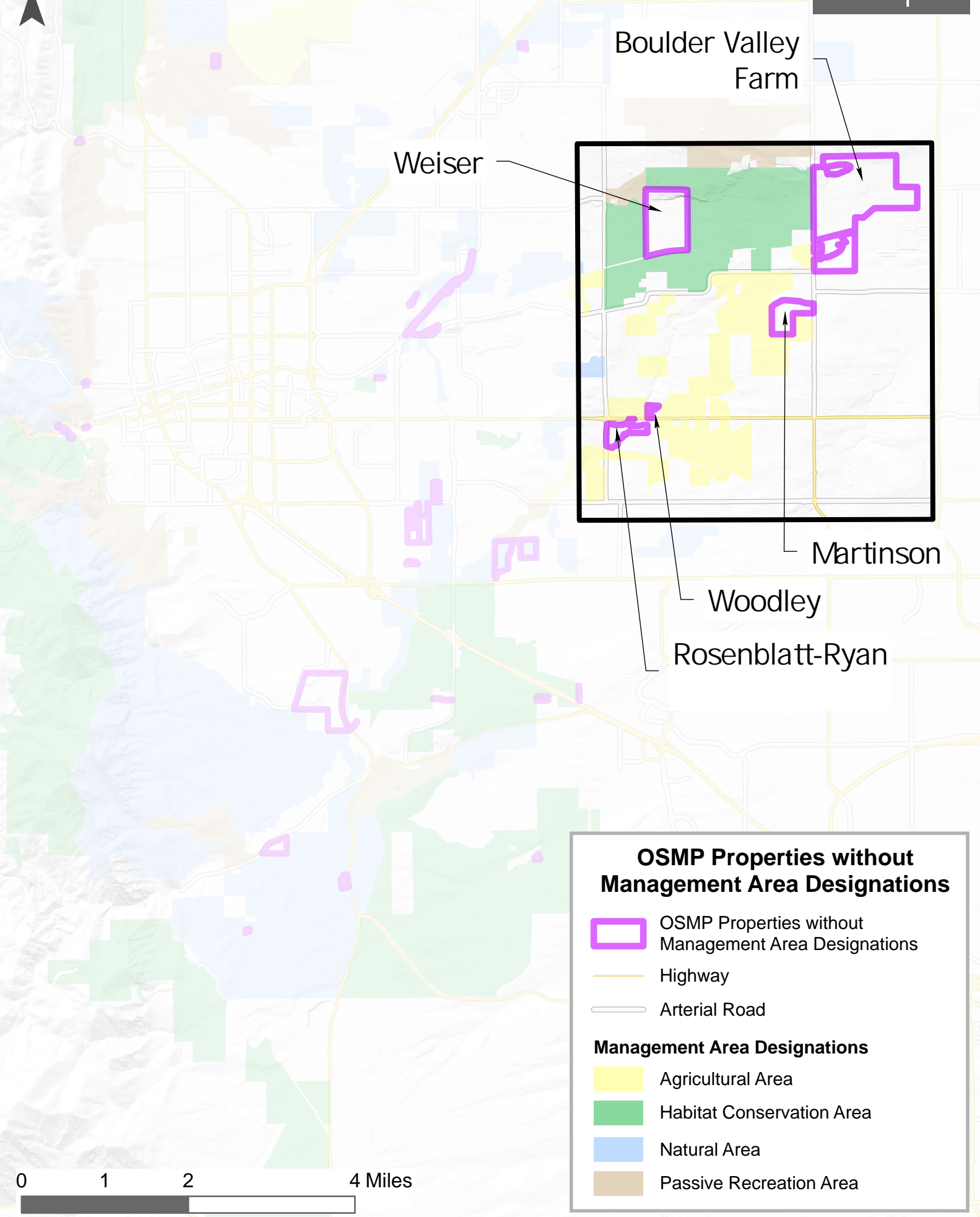
Management Area Designations

- Agricultural Area
- Habitat Conservation Area
- Natural Area
- Passive Recreation Area



Attachment D: Group 3 Properties without MADs

Group 3



OSMP Properties without Management Area Designations

- OSMP Properties without Management Area Designations
- Highway
- Arterial Road

Management Area Designations

- Agricultural Area
- Habitat Conservation Area
- Natural Area
- Passive Recreation Area

Attachment E: Visitor Master Plan (VMP) MAD Characteristics, Goals, and Criteria

Passive Recreation Area Designation

Characteristics

- Generally in close proximity to city or county development.
- Higher level of visitor use and density of existing trails.
- More evidence of human use and impacts.
- May include some interspersed patches of high-quality habitat.

Goals

- Provide a high level of public access to destinations and connection through designated trails.
- Maintain or improve passive recreational and educational opportunities, while protecting and preserving natural lands and resources.
- Accommodate high levels of visitor use with appropriate management, trails and trailheads, and services.
- Reduce conflicts among visitor activities.
- Minimize the number of undesignated or "social trails;" eliminate undesignated trails when they are duplicative or damaging to resources.

Criteria for Inclusion of Management Areas in the Passive Recreation Area Designation

- Higher level of visitation.
- Trails and trailheads that accommodate high levels of visitor use.
- High density of trails.
- Offers destinations for a wide range of different passive recreational activities.
- Compatibility with adjacent land use (i.e., opportunities to coordinate with neighboring or nearby landowners/managers in providing recreational services).

Natural Area Designation

Characteristics

- Locations can be both close to and remote from development.
- Varying levels of visitor use, types of activities, and availability of facilities.
- Conditions of natural ecosystems are variable- many areas with ecological systems in good condition, some with evidence of human use and impacts.
- May be in proximity to agricultural production and operations.

Goals

- Accommodate low-impact visitor activities where adequate trails exist or can be built, and resource impacts can be minimized.
- Provide opportunities for passive recreational and educational activities that require topographic relief or a natural setting (e.g., hang/paragliding, climbing/bouldering, nature study, scenic viewing).

- Protect the quality of natural and agricultural resources (especially where high value resources exist).
- Eliminate undesiguated trails when they are redundant or damaging to resources.

Criteria for Inclusion of Management Areas in the Natural Area Designation

- Interspersed recreational and natural values require that management determine the appropriate mix of open space purposes and manage multiple uses accordingly.
- Relatively high resource and recreation values.
- Compatibility with adjacent land use (i.e., opportunities for coordinating habitat protection and connections and passive recreational activities/trail linkages).

Agricultural Area Designation

Characteristics

- Rural areas in the Boulder Valley.
- May be in proximity to areas of either high or low visitor use.
- Areas of intensive agricultural production or operation.

Goals

- Maintain the efficiency of agricultural production and operation.
- Manage agricultural production and operation to ensure safety for operators and visitors in the vicinity.
- Provide, where appropriate, public access and passive recreational opportunities that have minimal impacts on agricultural production and operation or other resources.
- Manage visitor access in areas of intensive agricultural production or operation to ensure visitor safety.
- Eliminate undesiguated trails when they are redundant or damaging to resources.

Criteria for Inclusion of Management Areas in the Agricultural Area Designation

- Crop production and irrigated hay fields and grazing areas.
- Areas where conflicts with visitors and their pet companions could or do adversely affect the efficiency of agricultural production and operations or endanger visitor safety.
- Compatibility with adjacent land use (i.e., opportunities for coordinating agricultural protection and recreational activities/trail linkages).

Note: Areas of concentrated livestock activity (corrals, horse boarding, etc.), private residences, machinery storage areas, etc. will be addressed in a separate policy.

Habitat Conservation Area Designation

Characteristics

- Tend to be located in more remote areas.
- Typically represent the largest blocks of an ecosystem type with few, if any, trails or roads.
- Lower level of visitor use; no or few trails and trailheads.
- Naturally functioning ecosystems (but may contain areas with evidence of human use and impacts).

Goals

- Maintain, enhance, and/or restore naturally functioning ecological systems.
- Maintain, enhance, and restore habitat for species of concern identified in the Boulder County and the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plans.
- Provide public access and passive recreational opportunities that foster appreciation and understanding of ecological systems and have minimal impacts on native plant communities and wildlife habitats or other resources.
- Eliminate all undesignated trails, unless they are made part of the designated trails system or provide specialized access to appropriate low-use destinations.
- Where sustainable infrastructure exists, continue to allow public access to appropriate destinations.

Criteria for Inclusion of Management Areas in the Habitat Conservation Area Designation

- Large habitat blocks with a low density of trails, roads, or development.
- High potential for restoration of natural ecosystems (including areas with restoration underway).
- Plant communities that are rare or unique on Open Space and Mountain Parks lands.
- Habitat for species of concern such as threatened, endangered, rare, and other species.
- Areas with high biodiversity such as wetlands and riparian areas (especially un-trailed riparian reaches).
- Comparatively lower visitation levels.
- Compatibility with adjacent land use (i.e., opportunities for coordinating habitat protection and connections and recreational activities/trail linkages).

Boulder Valley Farm






Weiser

Martinson





Woodley

Rosenblatt-Ryan

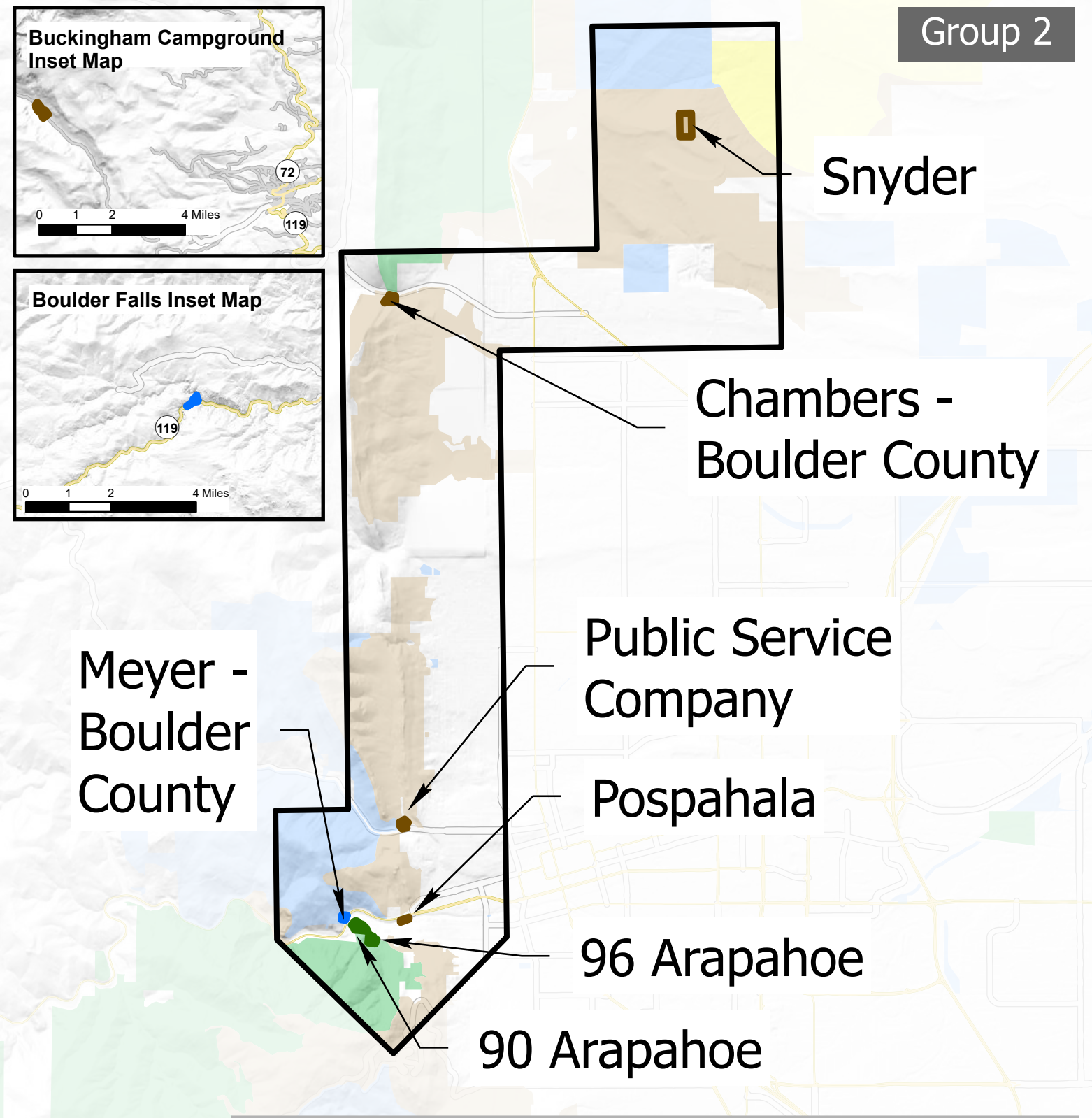
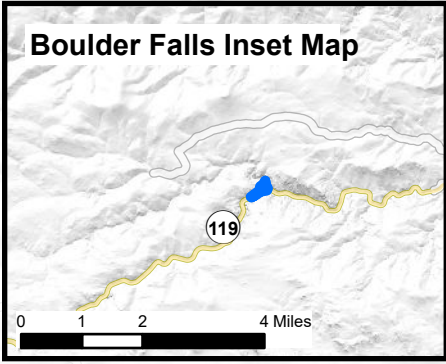
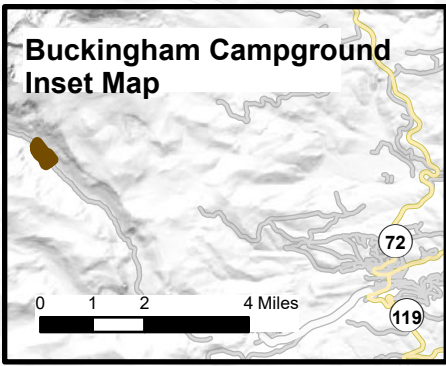
Proposed Management Area Designations

-  Habitat Conservation Area
-  Natural Area
-  Agricultural Area
-  Highway
-  Arterial Road

Management Area Designations

-  Agricultural Area
-  Habitat Conservation Area
-  Natural Area
-  Passive Recreation Area





Meyer - Boulder County

Snyder

Chambers - Boulder County

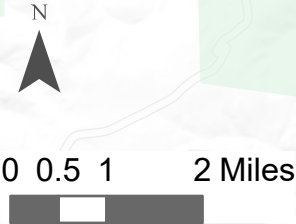
Public Service Company

Pospahala

96 Arapahoe

90 Arapahoe

Proposed Management Area Designations		Management Area Designations	
	Habitat Conservation Area		Agricultural Area
	Natural Area		Habitat Conservation Area
	Passive Recreation Area		Natural Area
	Highway		Passive Recreation Area
	Arterial Road		



Boulder Valley Farm

Weiser

Martinson

Woodley


Rosenblatt-Ryan

Proposed Management Area Designations

 Habitat Conservation Area

 Natural Area

 Agricultural Area

 Proposed Property Closures

Management Area Designations

 Agricultural Area

 Habitat Conservation Area

 Natural Area

 Passive Recreation Area

 Highway

 Arterial Road

0 0.5 1 2 Miles



**CITY OF BOULDER
OPEN SPACE BOARD OF TRUSTEES AGENDA ITEM**

MEETING DATE: June 12, 2024

AGENDA TITLE

Consideration of a request from Public Service Company of Colorado (dba Xcel Energy) for a permanent utility easement of approximately 0.1 acres to install and maintain a buried natural gas line within the City of Boulder's William Arnold Open Space property pursuant to the disposal procedures of Article XII, Section 177 of the City of Boulder Charter.

PRESENTERS

Dan Burke, Director, Open Space and Mountain Parks
Lauren Kilcoyne, Deputy Director
Bethany Collins, Real Estate Sr. Manager
Marc Pedrucci, Sr. Property Agent

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This agenda item is the consideration of a request received by the Open Space and Mountain Parks Department (OSMP) from HDR, Inc. (HDR) on behalf of Public Service Company of Colorado (dba Xcel Energy) to approve an ~0.1-acre permanent utility easement for installation of a segment of an 8" natural gas pipeline within a portion of the City-owned William Arnold Open Space property shown on **Attachment A** (OSMP Property). The pipeline would replace a segment of an existing gas line that has become exposed where it passes under Boulder Creek.

The existing gas line is within the right-of-way (ROW) for the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) railroad and close to, and parallel with another 12" gas line. Due to Xcel's Pipeline Compliance & Standards spacing requirements for existing and new gas pipelines, there is not adequate space in the BNSF ROW for the replacement section of the 8" gas line. Therefore, Xcel Energy is proposing to construct the new gas pipeline segment directly south of the BNSF ROW on the OSMP Property within a ~42'-wide permanent easement.

Construction of the new 8" gas pipeline will be done by means of horizontal directional boring at a depth of 30' to 50' below grade within the easement alignment shown on **Attachments A and B**, and there will be no surface impacts to the OSMP Property. The entry and exit boreholes and connection points will be within the adjacent private property and BNSF ROW.

The replacement project will also cross the Boulder Community Hospital Conservation Easement property as well as city's 48th Street ROW. The easement requests for these properties do not require OSBT review or approval.

The OSMP Property was acquired by the city as open space in 1977 via donation primarily to preserve this portion of Boulder Creek and its floodplain and for development of the Boulder

Creek Trail which is managed by Parks and Recreation. Authorizing the conveyance of a utility easement through the OSMP Property must be consistent with Article XII, sections 175(a) and 177 which require an OSBT approval and recommendation to City Council. If recommended and approved by OSBT and approved by City Council, OSMP staff will work with the City Attorney's Office (CAO) and Xcel Energy to draft and execute the utility easement.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Open Space Board of Trustees make a motion to approve and recommend that City Council approve the conveyance of a permanent utility easement of approximately 0.1 acres to Public Service Company of Colorado (dba Xcel Energy) to install and maintain a buried natural gas line within the City of Boulder's William Arnold Open Space property pursuant to the disposal procedures of Article XII, Section 177 of the City of Boulder Charter.

COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENTS AND IMPACTS

- Economic – If approved, Xcel Energy will bear all costs related to the gas line replacement and no economic impacts to the city or open space program are anticipated.
- Environmental – The gas line replacement will not have surface impacts to city-owned land and will mitigate any hazard associated with the existing line currently exposed within Boulder Creek.
- Social – Approval of this proposed easement ensures Xcel Energy will have the rights necessary to continue to operate and maintain reliable gas services to City of Boulder residences and businesses.

OTHER IMPACTS

- Fiscal – Xcel Energy has offered to provide compensation in the amount of \$2,091 for the permanent utility easement based on market valuation which will be deposited in the open space fund for use towards open space acquisition and stewardship needs.
- Staff time – Staff time towards this project is part of the normal 2024 work plan for the OSMP Real Estate Services workgroup.

PUBLIC COMMENT AND PROCESS

This item is being heard as part of this public meeting advertised in the Daily Camera on June 9, 2024. A Notice of Disposal of Open Space Lands was published in the Daily Camera on May 31 and June 1, 2024 pursuant to Article XII, Section 177 of the Boulder City Charter.

ANALYSIS

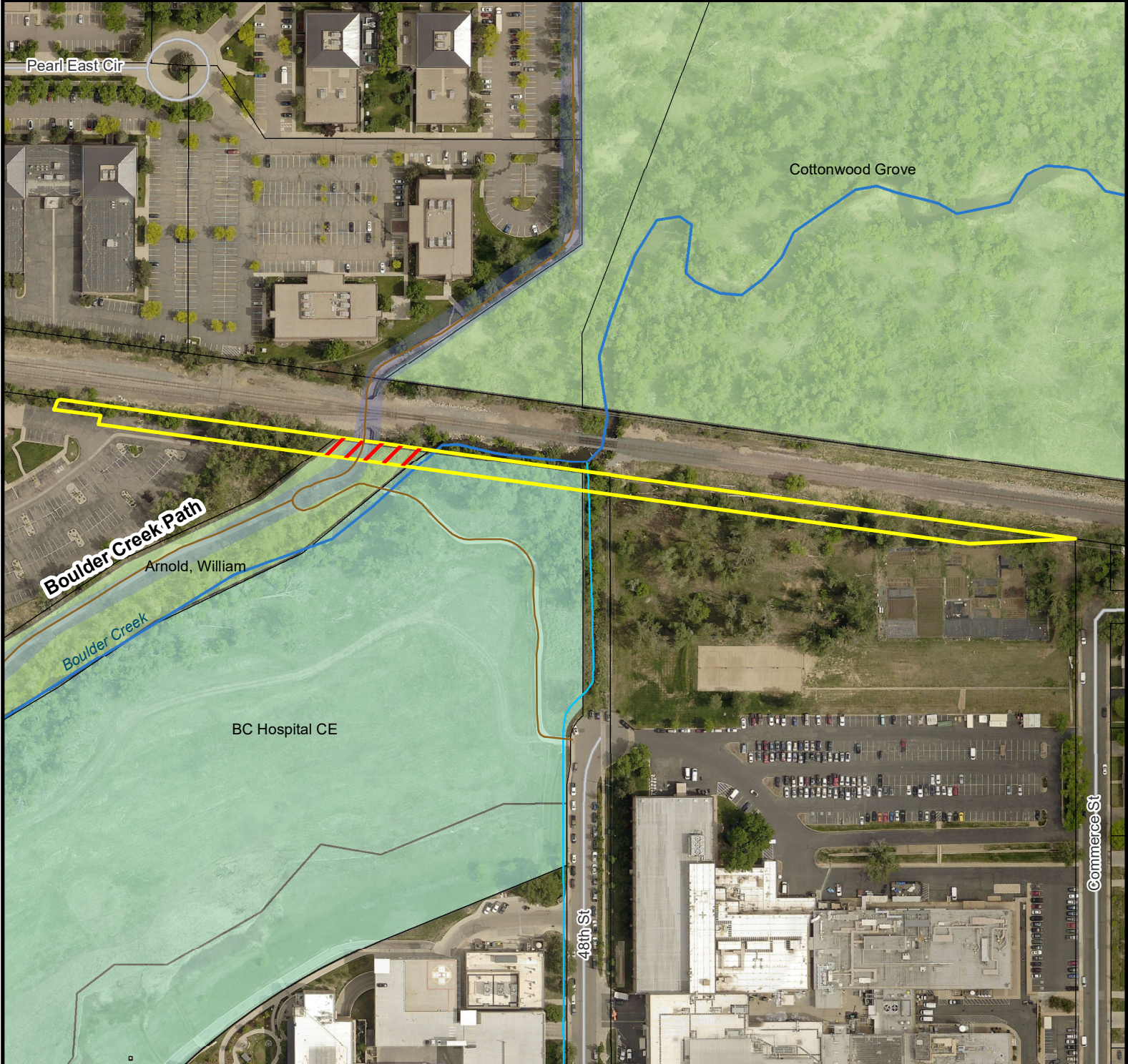
OSMP staff has reviewed and supports Xcel Energy's easement request. The gas line segment will be installed via boring, with excavation on adjacent, impacted properties and will not impact the OSMP Property or resources. The replacement section will also mitigate any environmental or safety hazards that may exist with the aging, exposed existing line in Boulder Creek. City staff will work to determine if wetland and floodplain permitting are required for the project as well as whether the existing line will be required to be removed or abandoned in place.

OSMP staff recommends that OSBT approve the request and make a recommendation to City Council. If approved by City Council, OSMP staff will work with the CAO and Xcel Energy to draft and execute the utility easement. The easement will also include provisions for reversion and termination if the infrastructure is abandoned or no longer used.

ATTACHMENTS:

- **Attachment A:** Property Map with Gas Line Corridor
- **Attachment B:** Gas Line Easement Exhibit

Attachment A-Property Map and Gas Line Corridor









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Legend

-  Easement Intersecting William Arnold Open Space
-  Gas Pipeline Replacement Corridor
-  Properties Managed by COB Parks and Recreation
-  OSMP Ownership
-  OSMP Easement
-  Trail, Hard Surface

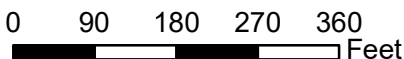
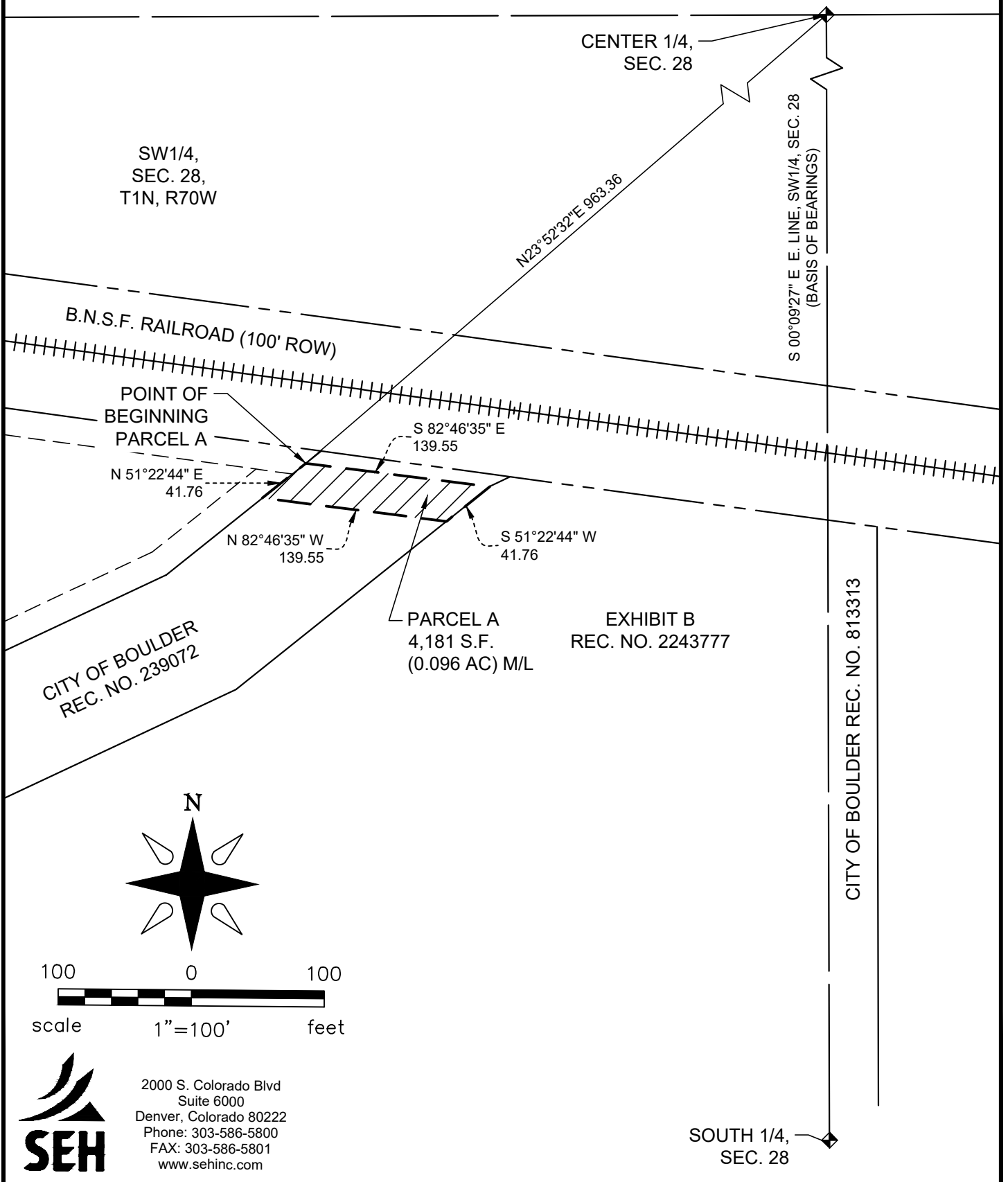


EXHIBIT A - CITY OF BOULDER PARCEL A - PERMANENT EASEMENT

SHEET 2 OF 2



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SOUTH 1/4,
SEC. 28



**CITY OF BOULDER
OPEN SPACE BOARD OF TRUSTEES AGENDA ITEM**

MEETING DATE: June 12, 2024

AGENDA TITLE

Public Hearing and Board consideration of a motion to support continued collaboration with Boulder County on design alternatives for the North Foothills (US 36) Bikeway

PRESENTER/S

Dan Burke, Director, Open Space and Mountain Parks
Lauren Kilcoyne, Deputy Director, Central Services
Kacey French, Planning Senior Manager
Marni Ratzel, OSMP Principal Planner

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This memo provides an update on the feasibility study to assess the practicality, considerations and impacts of a bikeway adjacent to North Foothills Highway (US 36) connecting Boulder to Lyons. Open Space and Mountain Parks (OSMP) is requesting board consideration of a motion to support the bikeway and encourage OSMP's continued participation for the bikeway project as it proceeds to the next phases of evaluation and design.

The feasibility study is being led by Boulder County's Transportation Planning Division in the Community Planning & Permitting Department (CP&P) with input from OSMP as part of an interagency Steering Committee that includes representatives from City of Boulder Transportation and Mobility, Boulder County Parks & Open Space (BCPOS), Town of Lyons and Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT). A final report summarizing the overall findings of the study will be available later this summer. It identifies a potential alignment along the east side of US 36. City of Boulder/OSMP owns or has conservation easements on lands adjacent to the conceptual bikeway alignment. Four small areas totaling about 2 miles need additional analysis and evaluation in a future project phase before a more detailed preferred design alignment can be identified, two of which are on OSMP lands, which is estimated to be less than 1 mile of the bikeway (See **Attachment A**). While an objective is to avoid use of OSMP lands as much as possible, the study findings suggest that it will be necessary to locate the bikeway on OSMP land at a few site-specific locations. Additionally, for the section where the bikeway is located within CDOT right of way adjacent to OSMP land, grading impacts that encroach onto city open space are anticipated intermittently. A future project phase is planned to look more in-depth and evaluate detailed design alternatives at locations impacting OSMP land and to inform the selection of a preferred design alternative (i.e. specific trail alignment).

A Boulder to Lyons regional trail has been identified in several OSMP plans and as such is an important collaborative effort for the City of Boulder and OSMP. Regional trail initiatives continue to be of community interest as they contribute to visitor experience, trail connectivity, wellness and improve the

quality of life in our community. They also help meet the city’s Climate Commitment goal by reducing the number of vehicle miles traveled to reach local trails, in turn helping to preserve the ecosystems and habitats that make up OSMP. The OSMP Master Plan guides staff participation in these collaborative projects by envisioning a connected network of local and regional trails (outcome RRSE.E), defining a strategy that encourages multimodal access to trailheads and leverages regional trail partnerships (strategy RRSE.4 and RRSE.7), and addressing the global climate crisis here and now (EHR. 3).

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff requests the Open Space Board of Trustees make the following motion:

- 1) OSBT supports a North Foothills (US 36) bikeway to connect Boulder to Lyons including the use of city open space for the bikeway at the specific locations of Old Broadway and Neva Road, and grading impacts onto city open space adjacent to the bikeway, and
- 2) OSMP supports the department’s continued collaboration with Boulder County on the next phase of the project which will include further analysis and design including exploring ways to reduce OSMP impacts and the selection of a preferred design alternative (i.e. specific trail alignment)

PUBLIC COMMENT AND PROCESS

Letters to property owners

Boulder County reached out to the landowners directly adjacent to study area through two mailings before reaching out to the general public. The first mailing was sent July 2023 to 107 property owners on the east side of US 36. Soon after this mailing went out the [project web page](#) was launched. The second mailing was sent February 2024 to 328 property owners on both sides of US 36. A few emails of support were received in response and a few questions on how the bikeway would affect private property access to mailboxes and intersecting roads were received.

Email comments

- A letter of support with 45 signatures from residents of Lake of the Pines, a subdivision located along US 36
- A few comments expressing concern for how the bikeway will impact intersections and cross driveways were received.
- Email of support from Second Wind Cycling Club
- 16 support emails in addition to support letters called out above
- One email was received in opposition to the bikeway, and in support of just adding wider shoulders.

Public meetings

In April, Boulder County hosted two meetings to share information and gather input on the Bikeway project. On April 16, a [virtual public meeting](#) was attended by 65 community members. An in-person public meeting was held in Lyons on April 30, with 33 attendees including two Town of Lyons elected officials. Many of the meeting attendees expressed support. A few had concerns about whether the bikeway would impact motor vehicle drivers along US 36 and at interactions. Community attendees asked questions about how the bikeway would connect to city and county open space trails such as the Joder,

North Sky and Heil trails west of US 36, funding, why the Feeder Canal project was stopped, and where the ROW was in relation to a landowner's property.

Online survey

The [project web page](#) requested community input through an online questionnaire. Key findings gathered from responses to the questionnaire are highlighted below:

- 282 respondents (as of May 23, 2024)
- 17% were strong and fearless riders (self-categorized)
- 48% were enthusiastic and confident riders (self-categorized)
- 34% were interested but concerned (self-categorized)
- 2% not able or not interested in cycling (self-categorized)
- Of those that ride on US 36 now 75% would ride the bikeway if it were built
- Of those that do not ride US 36 now 95% would ride the bikeway if it were built
- 18% of respondents live within one mile of US 36/N. Foothills Hwy
- 23% live in Lyons and 32% live in Boulder

Board Updates

The Open Space Board of Trustees (OSBT) received a written information item in the [February 14, 2024 OSBT meeting packet](#) (page 93) on the North Foothills Bikeway Feasibility Study. The City of Boulder Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) also received project updates in February and June of 2024. The TAB will consider a motion to support continued collaboration with Boulder County on the North Foothills Bikeway project at their June 10 meeting. In April 2024, the Boulder County Parks & Open Space Advisory Committee (POSAC) received an update about the bikeway and the planning for the North Foothills Wildlife Crossing which would be on Boulder County Open Space (BCPOS) lands, and which is being coordinated with the bikeway project.

ANALYSIS

Purpose and Need

US 36 between Boulder and Lyons is one of the most popular road segments in the county for cycling. Some reasons for its popularity are the undeveloped scenery and dramatic vistas, most of which are protected by the City of Boulder and Boulder County open space programs; connections to other good roads for cycling such as Lefthand Canyon and Neva Road; and access to several city and county trails through trailheads along or near the road. US 36 also is the location of the most cycling relating crashes in unincorporated Boulder County with 30% of all severe bicycle and pedestrian crashes (20 of 67) from 2009 to 2018 occurring along this section of the US 36 corridor. Most of these crashes were caused by motorists leaving the travel lane, driving into the shoulder and crashing into cyclists. Separation of motorists and cyclists can greatly reduce bike/vehicle crashes. The bikeway would provide that separation. US 36 between Boulder and Lyons also has the highest rate of significant vehicle crashes involving wildlife. The project is coordinating with a Wildlife Crossing initiative being led by BCPOS. The safety and protection of all—motorists, cyclists, and wildlife—is a shared aspiration of both the bikeway study and the wildlife crossing initiative.

Conceptual Alignment and Feasibility Findings

The bikeway is slated to be 12 feet wide, hard surface and plowed in the winter. Major constraints of designing the bikeway are the steeply undulating topography, limitations of the existing CDOT right-of-way (ROW), and environmental resources. Due to these reasons, the alignment focused on the east side of the highway, as shown in **Attachment A**. The goal is to design a bikeway that:

- Is within CDOT right-of-way to the greatest extent possible

- Consists of a hard surface that is plowed in winter and maintained year-round
- Maximizes separation from US 36 vehicle lanes
- Uses guardrails, barriers and retaining walls when needed for separation when right-of-way is lacking.

Overall, OSMP staff support the conceptual alignment identified in the feasibility study. By keeping the bikeway on the east side of the highway and within the ROW for most of the route, its construction and use will have very minimal impacts to environmental resources and avoid the North Foothills Habitat Conservation Area west of US 36. In addition to transportation and safety related benefits that align with goals and missions of other project partners, the bikeway also could provide improved connectivity to city open space trails as well as offer an alternative connection to complement the existing OSMP trail system between Boulder and Lyons. A detailed summary of these potential benefits were summarized in the written update included in the [OSBT Feb. 2024 meeting packet](#) (beginning on page 94).

While an objective is to avoid use of OSMP lands as much as possible, the study findings suggest that it will be necessary to locate the bikeway on city open space at a few site-specific locations. Additionally, for the section where the bikeway is located within ROW adjacent to OSMP land, grading impacts that encroach onto city open space are also anticipated intermittently. These are described below.

Use of Open Space for the Bikeway

The study findings suggest that it will be necessary to locate the bikeway on OSMP land at a couple of site-specific locations. The first is in the vicinity of Old Broadway at the south end of the bikeway corridor. The conceptual alternatives encroach onto city open space at the intersections where Old Broadway ties into the US 36. The second location is at the junction of Neva Road (south access road) where a segment of the bikeway would be located on city open space at a pinch point along the road right of way. Except for these locations, the feasibility study found that the bikeway can be contained within ROW.

The specific trail alignments for locating the bikeway on city open space land requires more in-depth study beyond the scope of the feasibility study. OSMP requires field level assessment to confirm and refine existing conditions, impacts, mitigation, and cost estimates, and to ensure minimal impacts to environmental and cultural resources on OSMP land. A future project phase would look more in-depth at the conceptual alignment, evaluate detailed design alternatives at these locations, and guide the selection of a preferred design alternative. Consideration of whether disposal of open space land would be required or desirable will also be determined.

Use of open space adjacent to the bikeway

Grading impacts onto OSMP land are anticipated intermittently adjacent to where the bikeway alignment would be contained within ROW. It is estimated that, North of Old Broadway, approximately 16% of the bikeway adjacent to OSMP land would have intermittent grading impacts on open space land. Overall, OSMP staff supports design options that would require grading onto city open space. An exception would be for locations within wetland, stream, and drainage areas. The feasibility study findings indicate that the bikeway and grading can be contained within the ROW in these areas by installing a retaining wall or barrier as shown in **Attachment B**. Impacts to wetland buffers on OSMP land can be considered permissible if mitigated for under the city wetland ordinance, but direct impacts to mapped and/or delineated streams and wetlands should be minimized to the greatest extent possible by using fill walls or alternative alignments. While a temporary easement may be needed during construction, it is anticipated that grading impacts alone would not require disposal of open space land.

NEXT STEPS











The feasibility study and accompanying final report are anticipated to be complete and available for public comment in July and presented to the Boulder County Commissioners on August 13. The final report will include a Right of Way map, an evaluation of conceptual alignments, summary of public engagement, conceptual level cost estimates, identification of potential bikeway alignments and next steps for further analysis and design. Completion of the Feasibility Study positions Boulder County to identify funding for future design phases and construction, which has not yet been secured. Updates on the bikeway project will be provided as a future update to the Board as information is available.

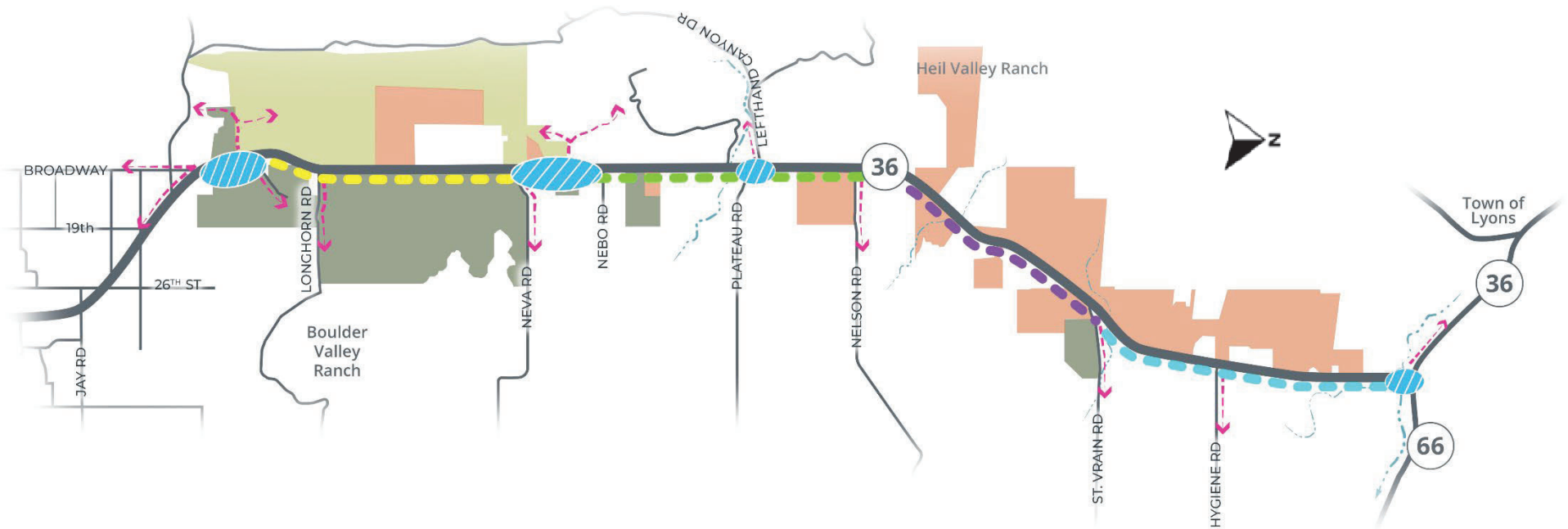
ATTACHMENTS:

- **Attachment A:** North Foothills Bikeway Conceptual Alignment Map
- **Attachment B:** Percent of bikeway needing walls or barriers



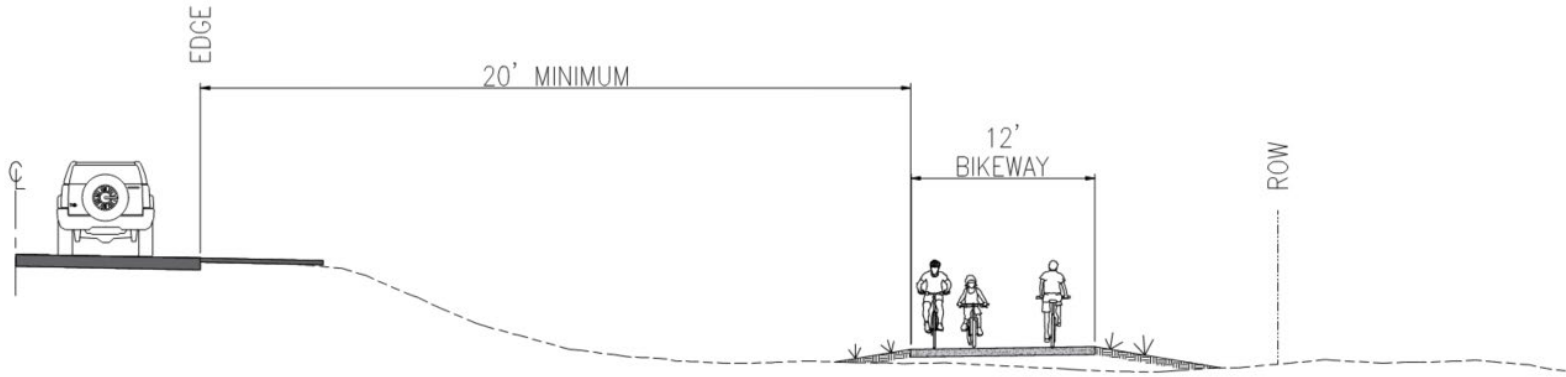
North Foothills Bikeway Feasibility Study

-  Boulder County Parks and Open Space
 -  City of Boulder Open Space and Mountain Parks
 -  Open Space and Mountain Parks - Habitat Conservation Area managed land
 -  *Future Analysis Required:* conceptual alignments require future analysis and more in-depth study which was beyond the scope of this feasibility study.
-
-  Popular on road bike routes and trail connections
 -  Creeks/Drainages
 -  Segment 1
 -  Segment 2
 -  Segment 3
 -  Segment 4



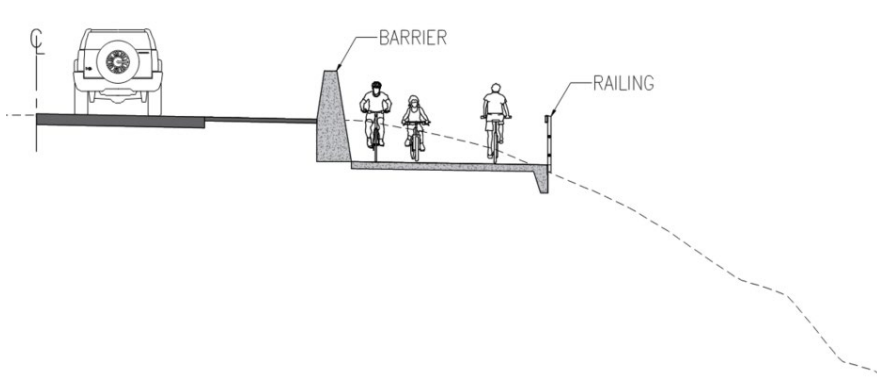


BIKEWAY SECTIONS - SUMMARY

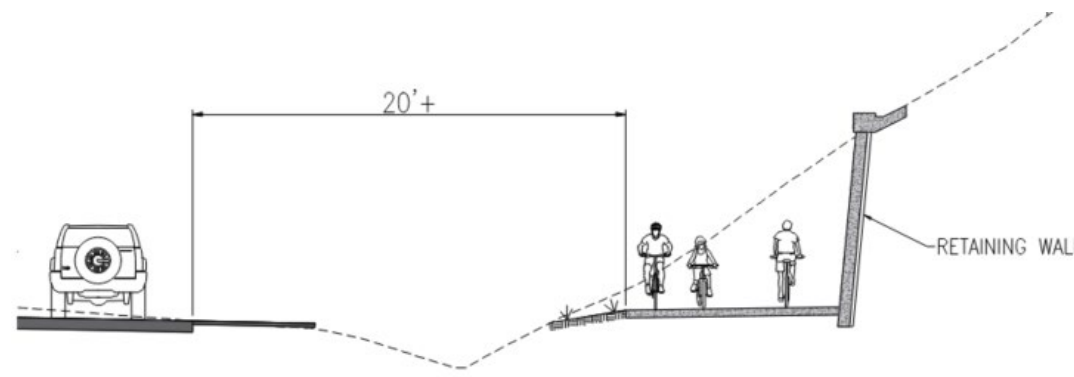


64% of the Project Length (7 Miles)

FURTHER FROM ROAD + NO SLOPE = NO STRUCTURES REQUIRED



36% of the Project Length (4 Miles)



FURTHER FROM ROAD + SLOPE = RETAINING WALLS

CLOSE TO ROAD + SLOPE + LIMITED ROW = RETAINING WALLS

MEMORANDUM

TO: Open Space Board of Trustees

FROM: Dan Burke, Director, Open Space and Mountain Parks
Heather Swanson, Deputy Director of Resource and Stewardship
Adam Gaylord, Recreation Stewardship Supervisor
Lisa Goncalo, Recreation Stewardship Senior Program Manager
Ryan Pioreschi, Wildlife Ecologist

DATE: June 12, 2024

SUBJECT: Bear Habitat Suitability and Seasonal On-Leash Trail Regulations Evaluation

The Open Space Board of Trustees (OSBT) and Open Space and Mountain Parks (OSMP) staff have been working over the last four years to examine the seasonal leash restrictions that are implemented on foothills trails to protect bears, dogs and their guardians. During this time, staff have worked to assess compliance; explore options for better communication with visitors to increase compliance; make minor modifications to the locations of the regulations to make them easier for visitors to understand (e.g. moving the start of regulation to a trail intersection); and most recently to evaluate whether the current regulations still line up with the places that bears can be expected to be feeding during the fall season as they prepare for hibernation (a critical point in their annual cycle when disturbance can have negative impacts on health and survival through the winter).

In an effort to use adaptive management principles, staff have been collecting information and data, and using that new understanding to inform changes in management to better meet the goals of the program and to set visitors up for success in understanding and following the regulations.

The results of the 2014-2018 Voice and Sight Tag Monitoring Report, presented to OSBT on Oct. 14, 2020, found that while the overall leash and tag compliance rate for Voice and Sight Tag trails was 89%, annual compliance levels for seasonal leash use ranged from 56% (n=171, 95% CI, 49 to 64) to 62% (n=209, 95% CI, 56 to 69). Since that time, staff has communicated to the board on its efforts to increase compliance through the following written updates:

- Sept. 9, 2021: Written information in the [board packet](#) detailing actions taken within existing policy to increase compliance with the seasonal leash regulation.
- March 9, 2022: Written information in the [board packet](#) on staff efforts to increase compliance for seasonal leash through signs, targeted outreach and patrol efforts by Rangers and Volunteers and direct messaging to dog guardians.
- Aug. 10, 2022: Written information in the [board packet](#) on existing policy guidance, how the landscape has changed over time, and a commitment to assess current bear habitat and visitor use.
- Aug. 9, 2023: Written information in the [board packet](#) detailing initial bear habitat evaluation, modifications to regulations on the Ski Jump, Meadow and Bluebell Baird trail to better align with bear habitat and trail intersections and identifications of next steps to occur in 2023-2024.

This memo will provide a summary of the detailed bear habitat evaluation that was conducted in the Fall of 2023 from Baseline Road to South Mesa, some planned changes for 2024 implementation and anticipated next steps.

Background:

To protect bears, dogs, and dog guardians in areas where there is believed to be a higher probability of encountering bears, OSMP enacts seasonal leash requirements through City Manager Rule 8-3-3.C (22). The on-leash requirement locations are shown on the map in **Attachment A**. This requirement goes into effect every year from August 15 to November 1 at five locations:

1. Portions of the Gregory Canyon Trail and Ski Jump/Meadow/Bluebell Baird Trails
2. Saddle Rock Trail
3. Amphitheater Trails
4. Skunk Canyon up to the Mesa Trail
5. The Doudy Draw Trail above the Community Ditch intersection

The seasonal leash requirement is timed to coincide with the period of the year when bears are most active. This is when bears are spending a large proportion of their time foraging to reach sufficient weight to enter hibernation and successfully survive the winter. Repeated disturbance of feeding bears can lead to decreased over-winter success or can push bears to seek other food sources (potentially within city limits). Staff consider reductions in potential bear-dog interactions to be beneficial to bear populations. In addition, interactions between visitors or dogs with bears can be stressful or dangerous for both bears and the visitors and their dogs.

Operational Evaluation:

The trail locations and duration for the temporary leash restriction pre-dated the Visitor Master Plan (VMP) that was adopted in 2005. The VMP and the West Trail Study Area Plan (WTSA) in 2011 both formally adopted these restrictions. Since that time, the OSMP system has changed through natural events like the 2013 flood event, several wildfires (Flagstaff Fire, NCAR fire), and through designed trail improvements and re-alignments. It is important that a leash restriction for the protection of bears, accurately reflects the existing conditions on the ground, 12 years since it was re-affirmed in the WTSA.

To help understand the current state of drainages that provide high quality habitat for bears, wildlife ecology staff completed detailed field assessment of fall bear habitat in foothills drainages on OSMP between Baseline Road and South Mesa Trailhead. This assessment provides data on low/medium/high fall bear foraging habitat quality that informed staff plans for any modifications to the seasonal leash program.

The overall framework for the program was created by Mountain Parks staff in the late 1990s, and re-affirmed by both the Visitor Master Plan and West TSA Plan in processes that can be considered “big wheel” adaptive management (details of OSMP approach to Adaptive management can be found in the board packet dated [March 8, 2023](#)). These processes included extensive evaluation of the overall program and regulatory framework and included robust public and decision-maker engagement. Current evaluations are focused on specific elements within this overall framework, and modifications necessary to ensure that the program remains responsive to changing conditions on the land. These ongoing “little wheel” evaluations and modifications provide the opportunity to work within the larger regulatory framework created to ensure the program continues to meet the goals of protecting foraging bears, dogs and their guardians while being responsive to changing conditions through time. This example of “small wheel” adaptive management includes a repeating cycle of data gathering and analysis, and communications with OSBT/community around resulting implementation modifications and then additional data gathering as conditions change, or new information becomes available. These “small wheel” modifications do not include substantial changes to the overall regulatory framework or management approach, which would fit within the category of “big wheel” adaptive management.

Bear Seasonality and Habitat Data Collection:

Following work related to compliance and public communication, staff began to examine the spatial and temporal extent of the regulations to determine if these were appropriate for current conditions on OSMP properties.

Timing of Regulations: To examine timing of the regulations, currently August 15- November 1, OSMP looked at a variety of data sources including observations of fruiting shrub phenology, remote camera photographs, information collected on bear encounters and conflicts within the urban areas of Boulder, ranger reports of bear encounters and conflicts, and discussions with Colorado Parks and Wildlife officers and biologists related to seasonality of bear activity in the Boulder area.

Habitat Assessment: In the fall of 2023 wildlife ecology staff from OSMP established a protocol to assess bear fall forage habitat. The data was collected to assess bear fall forage habitat and did not assess if the habitat would be used by or may be important for bears at other times of the year. Staff selected drainages for data collection to include all areas with trails that have seasonal leash requirements or voice-and-sight regulations that were adjacent to areas that contained vegetation that could support some level of bear use during fall foraging. This included 12 drainages between Flagstaff Road and Eldorado Springs Drive. Staff was able to complete data collection on all but one of the drainages (Bear Canyon) before weather and leaf drop ended the data collection window for the year.

In teams of two, wildlife ecology staff assessed 8 overall drainage characteristics including 4 characteristics that were used to determine fall forage habitat quality. Characteristic measurements were taken every 200 meters along a drainage, and they included: width of riparian corridor, total canopy cover, total percent of woody mast-bearing fruiting shrub and tree species, and percentages of each species- categorized as either high value mast-bearing species (e.g. American Plum, chokecherry), or lower value mast-bearing species (e.g. Oregon Grape, Three-leaf Sumac).

Once field data was collected, wildlife staff assigned scores to each measurement from 0-3 based on quartiles of the data distribution. Staff included weighting of data associated with shrub species, with percentage of high-quality shrubs weighted 3x higher than lower quality shrubs. Once scores were combined for each of the four characteristics measured, staff again divided the data distribution into quartiles to assign an overall score to each point from 0-3. These scores correspond to non-bear foraging habitat (0), low-quality bear foraging habitat (1), medium-quality bear foraging habitat (2) and high-quality bear foraging habitat (3).

Between data collection points, qualitative data was collected to determine if the habitat up-stream and downstream from each point was similar to the point location. This allowed staff to extrapolate from the point data to provide linear sections of habitat with the same quality rating. The data was then displayed spatially (**Attachment B**) and overlaid with current trail alignments and current extent of seasonal on-leash restrictions. This allowed staff to evaluate how well current regulations align with current habitat conditions in OSMP foothills drainages.

Bear Activity Results/Conclusions:

Based on information related to shrub fruiting season and bear life-cycle, staff concluded that August 15 accurately reflects the time that bears begin to intensify their foraging activity to begin developing fat stores for survival during winter hibernation. However, information from remote cameras, ranger and staff observations, encounter and conflict data and CPW staff knowledge and observations suggest that bear activity and foraging regularly continues through November and in some years, into December. The time at which a bear enters hibernation is impacted by a variety of factors including food availability, reaching appropriate hibernation weight, and weather. As a result, there is variability between individuals and in different years. While some bears remain active into December, most bear activity in and near Boulder has declined or ceased by the end of November.

Bear Habitat Quality Results/Conclusions:

Based on the detailed assessment of habitat described above, OSMP staff identified 46 distinct segments of habitat adjacent to trails in 11 drainages totaling 8.20 miles. The habitat scores for these segments were as follows:

Habitat Ranking	Number of Drainage Segments with this ranking	Number of Assessed Drainages containing habitat with this ranking	Total length (miles) of habitat within assessed drainages with this ranking
0 (Non-fall bear foraging Habitat)	10	6	1.30
1 (Low quality fall bear foraging Habitat)	14	8	2.12
2 (Medium quality fall bear foraging habitat)	14	8	1.95
3 (High quality fall bear foraging habitat)	8	5	2.83

Staff found that in many cases, the current seasonal on-leash restrictions lined up well with habitat conditions, with seasonal on-leash requirements in place along stretches of high and medium quality fall bear foraging habitat, and no regulations in areas of low quality or non-fall foraging habitat.

Trails where this consistency was found include:

- Gregory Canyon Trail above Crown Rock intersection
- Ski Jump/Meadow/Bluebell Baird Trails (modifications were made in 2023- see above)
- Skunk Canyon
- Doudy Draw Trail above Spring Brook Loop intersection

A few notable exceptions were found, however, these include:

- Gregory Canyon lower section- seasonal on leash requirements overlap with low quality/non-foraging habitat that exists between patches of higher quality habitat
- Amphitheater/ Saddle Rock Trails- seasonal on-leash requirements overlap with high/medium quality habitat along the lower portions of the trail, but overlap low/non-foraging habitat as the trail climbs steeply away from the drainage
- Mesa Trail where it crosses the Bluebell drainage near the terminus of the Bluebell Road
- Bear Canyon Trail- the Bear Canyon Trail transitions from on-leash restrictions on the lower sections on NCAR property (Federal regulations) to voice-and-sight once the trail lies on OSMP property. The trail remains close to the drainage for quite a distance beyond this with habitat that staff believe to be high quality bear fall foraging habitat. Quantitative data was not collected in 2023 due to seasonality and staff capacity and as a result, evaluation of the situation on this trail was not possible at the level that was completed for the others.
- Upper Big Bluestem Trail- seasonal on-leash requirements were not in place despite consistently high/medium quality habitat throughout the drainage adjacent to the trail
- Shadow Canyon South- seasonal on-leash requirements were not in place despite consistently high/medium quality habitat throughout the drainage adjacent to the trail
- Doudy Draw Trail- seasonal on-leash requirements overlap low/non-foraging habitat on the lower sections between Community Ditch trail intersection and the Spring Brook Loop Trail.

Planned Continuation and Changes in Seasonal On-Leash Requirements to Protect Bears:

Based on the data collected and analysis presented above, staff examined each area where regulations were not consistent with bear activity and habitat conditions and have developed the following modifications planned for implementation in 2024:

Regulation Timing:

Based on the information available related to timing of bear activity, staff plan to extend the end date for seasonal on-leash restrictions to better capture the full fall activity time for most bears. December 1 will be the new end date for seasonal on-leash restrictions beginning in 2024. This change is supported by Colorado Parks and Wildlife and the City of Boulder’s Urban Wildlife Coordinator.

Location/Spatial Extent of Regulations:

For the trails where habitat and regulations are consistent throughout the extent of seasonal on-leash restrictions, staff plan to continue with implementation of the seasonal on-leash restrictions as they have been in the past, with the exception of the timing changes detailed above. These trails include:

- Ski Jump/Meadow/Bluebell Baird
- Skunk Canyon

Staff determined that despite mis-alignment between habitat conditions and habitat quality, no changes to seasonal on-leash requirements were warranted in the following areas at this time:

- Gregory Canyon below Crown Rock intersection- extent of regulation mis-alignment with habitat conditions is very short (<0.2 miles) and high/medium quality habitat exists above and below this section of trail making bear movement through this short section likely.
- Amphitheater/ Saddle Rock trails- although the upper sections of these two trails that form a loop gain elevation and climb out of the high/medium quality bear fall foraging habitat, no clear location exists to implement a change in regulations that will be easily understood by visitors or enforced by rangers. This provides the option of maintaining the regulations on the full loop, or removing the regulations for the full loop. Due to the adjacent drainages being an area that rangers observe more bear use than anywhere else on the system, staff determined that seasonal on-leash restrictions will be retained on the full loop.
- Mesa Trail where it crosses the Bluebell Drainage near the terminus of the Bluebell Road- despite the high- quality habitat and high use in this area, the trail remains in the drainage for only a short distance as it descends from Bluebell Road, crosses the drainage, and then climbs steeply up to Enchanted Mesa. A seasonal on-leash restriction that lines up with the habitat conditions would need to begin and end mid-way through the segment of trail and result in a regulatory situation that would be difficult for visitors to understand and for rangers to enforce. In addition, concerns over social trailing within the drainage suggest that modifications designed to address not only potential disturbance of bears from off-leash dogs, but also off-trail use by a variety of users is warranted. As a result, staff are evaluating the potential for use of fencing and/or signage in this area to encourage visitors and dogs to remain on trail and out of the bear habitat and riparian drainage.
- Bear Canyon- due to lack of quantitative data collection in Bear Canyon in 2023, staff are not planning any changes to this trail in 2024. Data will be collected on this drainage in 2024 followed by a similar evaluation of the habitat data and current regulations in 2025.
- Upper Big Bluestem- Year-round dog management and regulations on Upper Big Bluestem are amongst the most complicated on the OSMP system. During the West TSA, the regulations were changed from voice and sight with a seasonal leash requirement from August 15 to November 1, to dogs on leash Saturdays and Sundays with voice and sight regulations the other days. The West TSA also called for the Upper Big Bluestem Trail to be re-routed higher up the slope and out of the riparian area, and elimination of the seasonal on-leash restrictions following the re-route. The trail re-route was completed, moving the trail further from the drainage, though due to terrain and requirements for sustainable trail design, it still lies in close proximity to the riparian area in several sections. Due to the current complexity of regulations and plan guidance from the West TSA on removing the seasonal leash restriction, staff are not planning to re-institute the seasonal leash regulations on this trail at this time despite the existence of high quality bear foraging habitat in this area. However, as discussed in next steps, due to the complexity of regulations on this section of trail, staff intend to evaluate the regulations further to determine the best approach to protect natural resources while providing clear, understandable, consistent regulations for a high-quality visitor experience.

Planned Modifications of Seasonal On-Leash Requirements in 2024:

Based on the habitat data collected and current extent of seasonal on-leash regulations, staff determined that modifications to the regulations on the following trails were warranted based on the assessment described above:

- Shadow Canyon South- Due to extensive segments of high/medium quality bear foraging habitat along this trail, staff determined that adding a seasonal on-leash requirement from August 15-December 1 was warranted. The Shadow Canyon South Trail deviates from the Shadow Canyon trail at its base, and then rejoins the trail at the top (near Stockton Cabin). The Shadow Canyon Trail will continue to provide a voice-and-sight opportunity along its full length for those visitors that desire an uninterrupted voice-and-sight opportunity in this same area. To ensure the most easily understood, communicated and enforceable regulations, staff will implement a seasonal on-leash regulation for the length of the Shadow Canyon South Trail (approximately 0.9 miles). The location and extent of this is depicted in **Attachment C**.
- Doudy Draw- Based on the habitat evaluation, the section of Doudy Draw from Community Ditch Trail to Springbrook Loop Trail that currently includes a seasonal on-leash regulation overlaps with low quality and largely non-bear foraging habitat. As a result, staff plan to move the initiation of the seasonal on-leash regulation up to the Spring Brook Loop Intersection, resulting in a reduction in the length of seasonal on-leash regulations on this trail by approximately (0.7 miles, or 41%) (**Attachment C**).

Based on the above planned modifications, the changes will result in very minor shifts in the on-leash vs. voice-and-sight opportunities on OSMP. During the 3.5 months that the leash regulations are in place, 0.7 miles of on-leash regulations will be removed, and 0.9 miles of on-leash regulations will be added, resulting in a net addition of 0.2 trail miles covered by seasonal on-leash regulations (less than 0.2% of the total trail miles open to dog use on OSMP).

Anticipated Next Steps:

Implementation of changes to seasonal on-leash requirements in 2024:

Following the conversation with OSBT on June 12, staff will finalize plans for changes to implementation of the seasonal on-leash regulations for 2024. These changes will be communicated to the public using focused outreach to stakeholders, social media, press release, postings on the OSMP website, and signage on the effected trails. Staff will also work to update the interactive online trail maps and signs to include these changes.

Further Evaluation of Trails and regulations:

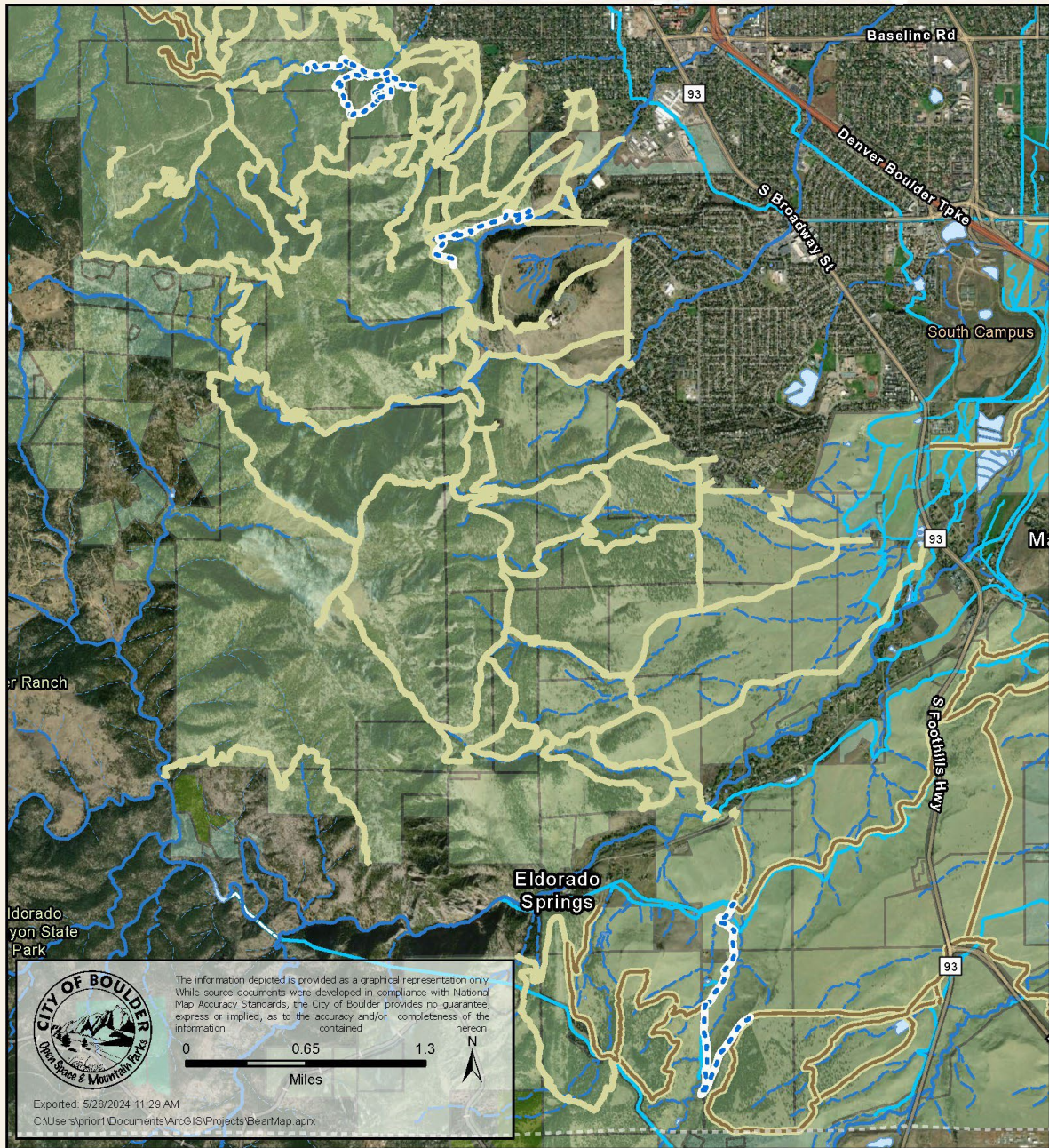
Staff will complete habitat evaluation on the Bear Canyon Trail in the fall of 2024 to collect information similar to that collected on the other drainages in 2023 (**Attachment D**). This data will inform evaluation of the current regulations on Bear Canyon Trail to determine if any changes are warranted in the future.

Staff will also work to assess the complicated regulations on the Upper Big Bluestem trail to identify changes that will lead to consistency and clarity in regulations, support for visitors and dogs accessing the area, and protection of sensitive natural resources (**Attachment D**). Rangers, recreation stewardship and ecological stewardship staff will be involved in this evaluation process and any resulting recommendations.

Attachments:

- **Attachment A:** Current Seasonal Leash Requirements for Dogs in Bear Fall Forage Habitat
- **Attachment B:** Map of Fall Bear Foraging Habitat Quality
- **Attachment C:** Map of Planned Seasonal On-Leash Modifications for 2024
- **Attachment D:** Map of Trails to be further evaluated in next steps

Attachment A: Current Seasonal Leash Requirements for Dogs in Bear Fall Forage Habitat



Seasonal Dog Trail Regulations

Leashing for Bears
August 15th - November 1st
● Leash Required

Trails and Trail Access Locations

Trails Managed by OSMP
● Hiking Trail
● Multi-Use Trail

Hydrology

Reservoirs and Ponds
Streams and Ditches
● Perennial Stream
● Intermittent Stream
● Ephemeral Stream

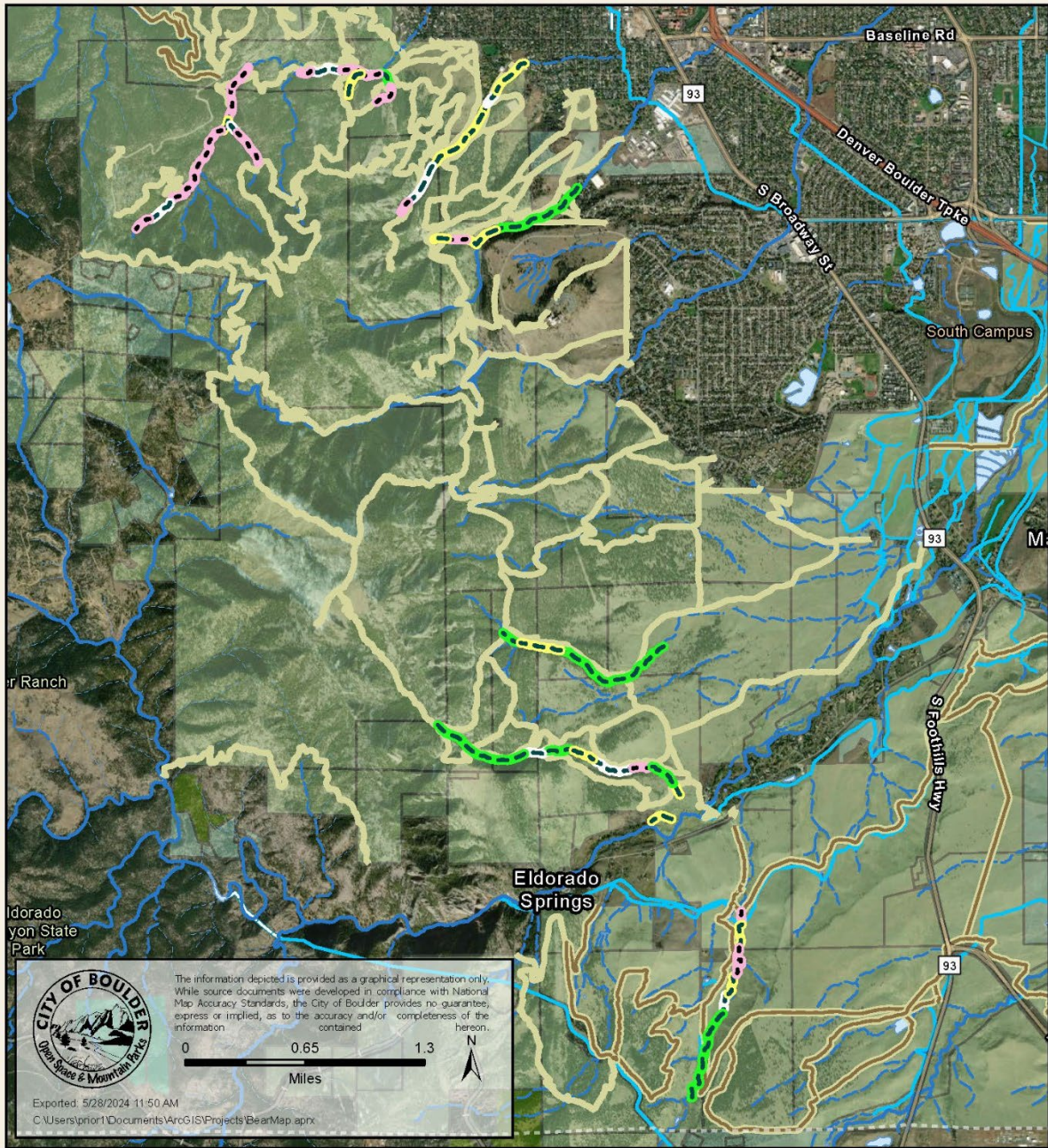
● Main Ditch
● Lateral Ditch
● Aqueduct

OSMP Lands
OSMP Land
● OSMP Fee Ownership

● OSMP Joint Ownership
● OSMP Joint Easement
● OSMP Easement

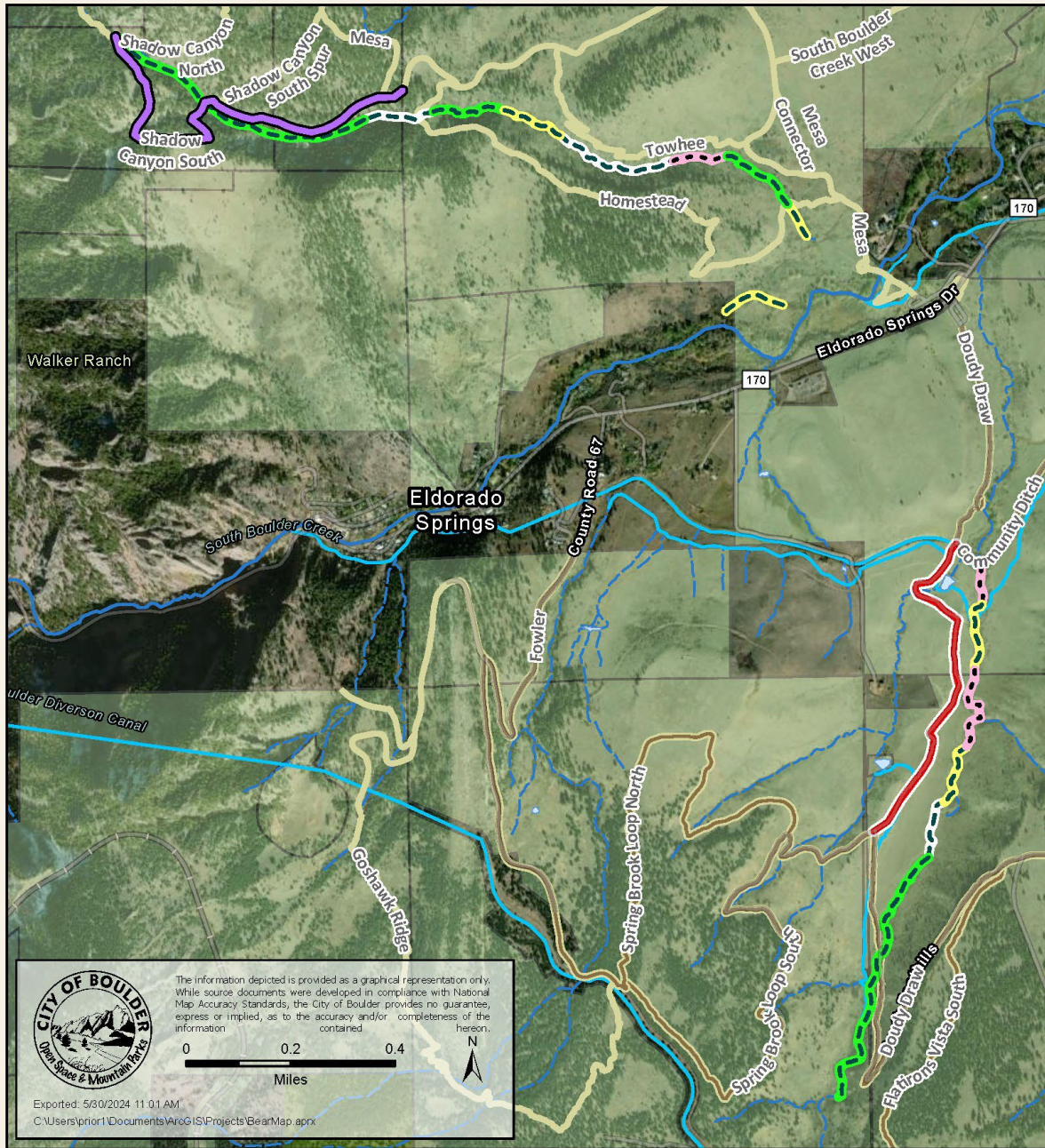
City of Boulder, Boulder County, Esri, TomTom, Garmin, SafeGraph, GeoTechnologies, Inc., METI/NASA, USGS, EPA, NPS, USDA, USFWS, Maxar

Attachment B: Map of Fall Bear Foraging Habitat Quality



City of Boulder, Boulder County, Esri, TomTom, Garmin, SafeGraph, GeoTechnologies, Inc, METI/NASA, USGS, EPA, NPS, USDA, USFWS, Earthstar Geographics

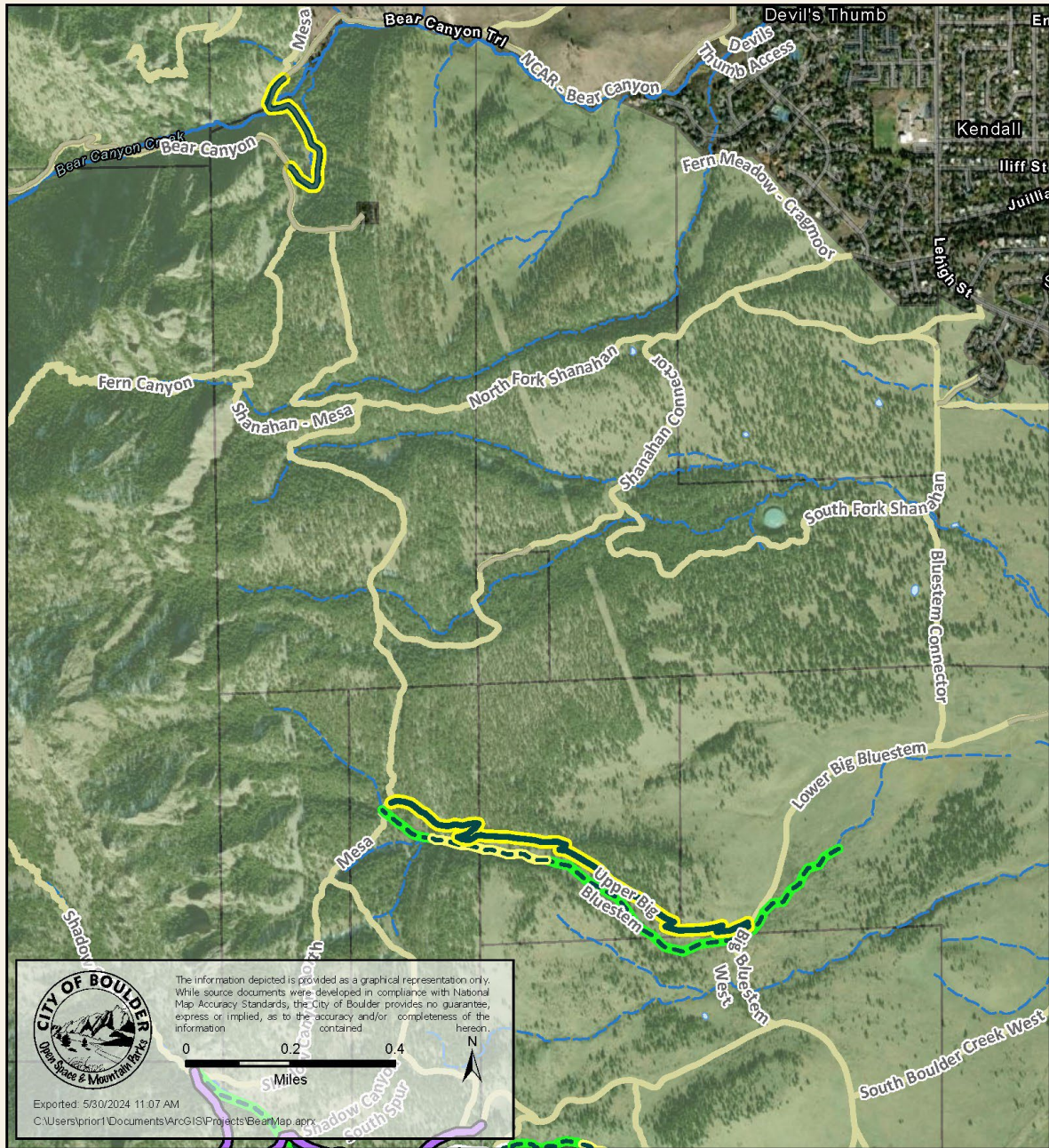
Attachment C: Map of Planned Seasonal On-Leash Modifications for 2024



- | | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|---|
| Seasonal On-Leash Requirement Changes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Add — Remove - - - Evaluate Possible Changes | Bear Habitat Segment Scores
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - - - Non-habitat - - - Low Quality - - - Medium Quality — High Quality | Trails and Trail Access Locations
Trails Managed by OSMP
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Hiking Trail — Multi-Use Trail | Hydrology
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Reservoirs and Ponds — Streams and Ditches — Perennial Stream - - - Intermittent Stream — Main Ditch | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Lateral Ditch OSMP Lands ■ OSMP Land ■ OSMP Fee Ownership ■ OSMP Joint Ownership |
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Esri Community Maps Contributors, Boulder County, Esri, TomTom, Garmin, SafeGraph, GeoTechnologies, Inc., METI/NASA, USGS, EPA, NPS, US Census Bureau, USDA, USFWS, Maxar

Attachment D: Map of Trails to be further evaluated in next steps



- | | | | |
|--|--|--|---|
| <p>Seasonal On-Leash Requirement Changes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Add — Evaluate Possible Changes | <p>Bear Habitat Segment Scores</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Non-habitat — Medium Quality — High Quality | <p>Trails and Trail Access Locations</p> <p>Trails Managed by OSMP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Hiking Trail <p>Hydrology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Reservoirs and Ponds | <p>Streams and Ditches</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Perennial Stream — Intermittent Stream <p>OSMP Lands</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — OSMP Land — OSMP Fee Ownership |
|--|--|--|---|

Esri Community Maps Contributors, City of Boulder, Boulder County, Esri, TomTom, Garmin, SafeGraph, GeoTechnologies, Inc., METI/NASA, USGS, EPA, NPS, US Census Bureau, USDA, USFWS, Maxar

MEMORANDUM

TO: Open Space Board of Trustees

FROM: Dan Burke, Director, Open Space and Mountain Parks
Lauren Kilcoyne, Deputy Director of Central Services
Jeff Haley, Deputy Director of Visitor Experience & Infrastructure
Samantha McQueen, Business Services Senior Manager
Cole Moffatt, Senior Accountant

DATE: June 12, 2024

SUBJECT: Update on *Draft* 2025-2030 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) & 2025 Operating Budget

Executive Summary

The purpose of this item is to provide the Open Space Board of Trustees (OSBT) with an overview of the operating budget development process, and to share an update on OSMP's 2025-2030 Capital Improvement Program (CIP), particularly future year projects.

OSMP staff are proposing a revised schedule to review and discuss 2025 CIP and operating budget information with OSBT. Because OSMP staff continues to work with the Finance Department to refine cost estimates and expected revenues for 2025, and more detailed budget information is still expected to be forthcoming ahead of the July business meeting, staff is adding a budget touch point with OSBT in August. This additional August touch will allow the OSBT more time to review detailed 2025 budget impacts and to more effectively deliberate. The updated schedule proposes moving the public hearing and OSBT's recommendation on the budget from July to August. The proposed series of budget agenda items for the OSBT is as follows:

- In January, OSMP staff presented and discussed with the OSBT strategic, high-level budget guidance.
- In April, staff provided a written update to introduce OSMP's draft 2025 work plan and budget.
- In May, staff presented the draft CIP budget and some related operating budget details for discussion.
- This month, staff are presenting information on the operating budget and updates to the CIP budget.
- In July, staff will share detailed 2025 operating budget information, including a fund financial to itemize revenues, expenditures, and reserves for the Open Space Fund, and any updates to the CIP budget. City Finance staff are also expected to attend.
- In August, the OSBT will hold a public hearing and make recommendations on the CIP and operating budget for the Planning Board and City Council.

This memo will share a share a list of the department's upcoming projects, an update on expected financial conditions to inform 2025 budget planning, provide background information on the operating budget development process, and explain how operating budget expenditures support core service activities.

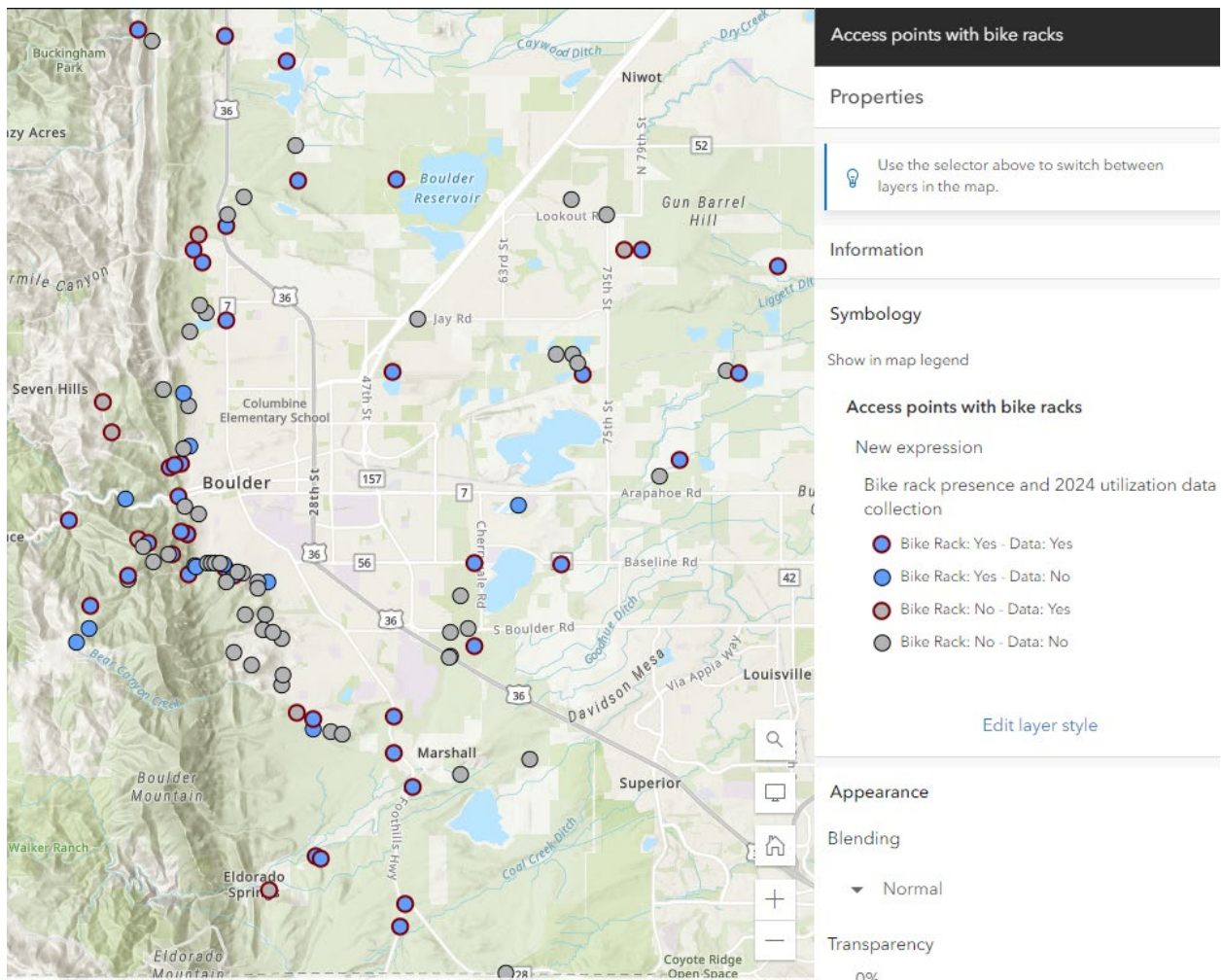
Update on 2025 Budget Planning

At the May OSBT meeting, board members requested staff to provide a variety of information specifically related to bike racks and bike parking options at trailheads and access points across the OSMP system with an overall intention to provide better access to OSMP for alternative means of

transportation. This intention ties directly with several OSMP Master Plan themes as well as the recent citywide Strategic Plan goal for improving multi-modal access to OSMP trails and trailheads. Bike racks are one of the various amenities that are provided to visitors at all the formal trailheads and access points with the intention of providing a transportation option to access OSMP areas as well as simply locking up your bike while spending time at the trailhead.

Inventory and Condition

Among the approximately 111 formal trailheads and access points across OSMP, there are approximately 50 locations that have bike racks. The bike racks are typically found on all formal trailheads and are now called for as part of the current design standards. However, access points are different from trailheads in many ways and are more informal. Therefore, until recently bike racks weren't specifically included in OSMP's design standards, but increasingly they have been placed at access points throughout the system due to demand. The graphic below shows the various bike rack locations across the system.



Data Collection Related to Bike Racks

To better inform the conversation and future planning, staff are collecting data on bike rack utilization at most formal trailheads and select access points during 2024 to inform future direction. Staff will systematically visit locations from June through October on weekdays and weekends and morning, mid-day, and evening time periods to record several variables associated with bike parking including the

number attached to the rack, if the rack is at capacity, and whether bikes are parked in the vicinity but not attached to a rack.

Staff also have data from onsite Public Opinion and Visitor Experience surveys (POVES 2021-2023) and found that most (86%) people who bike to the access point continue to bike on the trail (likely are not using the bike racks). 14% of the people who do another activity likely use a bike rack, and responses were well spread out across OSMP locations, with some concentrations in the Chautauqua, Sanitas, and Wonderland Lake areas. From previous onsite survey data (2016-2017), respondents were asked to rate the importance and quality of bike racks if they used them. 84% rated them as “moderately” or “very” important, and 71% rated at “good” or “very good” quality. (This question was asked again 2021-2023 but the response rate was too small.) From a resident survey conducted as part of the master plan, respondents were asked to indicate things that kept them from visiting OSMP areas more often. 9% marked “Not easy to get there by bus, bike or walking”.

Biking and Climate Goals

In a recent consultant study aimed at understanding GHG emissions and strategies to reduce the OSMP footprint, a variety of options were explored including increased bike parking. The strategy to increase bicycle parking at trailheads intends to encourage and accommodate visitors who bicycle to the trailhead but wish to engage in a different activity at the trailhead. By the defined cost ranges, this strategy is low cost at a few hundred dollars per rack. Increasing bike parking at trailheads should lead to trail users taking their bikes to the trailhead instead of their single-occupant vehicle, which reduces greenhouse gas emissions. Emissions reduction relies heavily on adoption of that behavior change. Broadly, local visitors are about twice as likely as visitors from outside of Boulder County to bike to OSMP trailheads. 10% of local visitors report biking to trailheads, suggesting Boulder County already has an existing culture of biking to trailheads and that visitors may be likely to adopt the strategy. Trailheads already have, according to the OSMP survey, a significant percentage of visitors that use active transportation to travel to the trailhead, indicating that Boulder is building on an existing norm and the presence of more bicycle racks may serve as a reminder to visitors that they can bike next time they wish to visit.

Bike Rack CIP Proposal for 2025

The current approach to bike racks is that staff use existing operating funds to update bike racks as staff have capacity, and update through annual redesign and renovation projects such as the upcoming Marhsall Mesa Trailhead, Chapman Trailhead and Sawhill Ponds Trailhead. However, staff are only able to update a handful of locations each year outside of Trailhead redesigns due to the workplan being very full, and the time-consuming nature of installation.

Staff are recommending a more phased and strategic approach that would continue the current approach but to also enhance our work through the request of \$50K in the 2025 CIP to target high priority locations that need additional racks as well as replace outdated, substandard racks with the new standards. This would allow for approximately 25 high-priority locations throughout the system such as the Sanitas area, Shannahan, Chautauqua, Wonderland, Bear Canyon and neighborhood access points around south Boulder. The standard to be installed is the inverted U style rack mounted into a concrete pad. With this proposal, the overall 2025 Trailhead Enhancement and Renovation project will be reduced by \$50K to allow for the separate and distinct bike rack improvement project to be tracked and completed with transparency to the community. This will result in the overall Trailhead Enhancement and Renovation project to be \$1.35M. Finally, another alternative option is to reallocate existing 2023 CIP funds that have been carried into 2024 and expedite the bike rack work. This would result in no changes to the current 2025 proposed CIP and allow for the work to begin as soon as possible this year in 2024. At the regular business meeting, staff will be prepared to discuss with the trustees about questions and options that exist.

Draft 2025-2030 CIP Projects

Draft 2025 CIP projects and the department's work planning process were shared during the May OSBT meeting and are included in **Attachment A** for reference. As part of OSMP's work planning process and aligned with the city's six-year fund financial horizon, project managers and department leaders assign budget and staffing resources to projects over a six-year timeline. The OSBT recommends and City Council approves OSMP's budget on a one-year basis, and out-year capital project projections are refined annually based on revenue projections, project readiness, and other factors. To plan for future annual budget cycles, the department identifies multiyear and upcoming projects to align priorities with staffing and funding in the near and out years. This process also provides a clear roadmap for the department, which can be adjusted as economic conditions change.

At the fall 2023 OSBT retreat, the OSBT expressed interest in seeing projected out-year capital projects to inform feedback on the budget process and to provide information that may support priority-setting during the next board retreat in 2024. **Table 1** lists the 2025 projects that were included in the May OSBT memo, whether they are expected to continue in future years, and identifies new projects that may be put forward for funding in future years based on current review and prioritization of projects that OSMP project managers have requested. Some projects are listed for potential funding each year as they include annual CIP activities, like the Facility Maintenance, Rehabilitation, and Enhancements project. Other projects are phased over a shorter period with expectations for planning, design, and construction activities. North Trail Study Area Implementation: Wonderland Lake is an example of a project that is phased from 2025 through 2027 to include planning, design, and construction actions. This project would then be considered completed.

Last month, OSMP informed the OSBT that revenue and expenditure projections for 2025-2030 were shifting, including a flattening of sales tax revenues and an increase in the cost of doing business (e.g. inflationary pressures, implementation of Living Wage, cost allocation, and the cost of other services provided by city service departments like technology and fleet repair and replacement). More information on operating budget development is included below and we have added an August business meeting to allow more time for operating budget discussion as we continue to refine budget targets, but it is worth noting that OSMP has preemptively adjusted CIP projections as one part of our overall financial management approach. The draft 2025 CIP as reflected in this packet and the May memo is \$330,000 less than originally planned, and several projects were deferred to ensure adequate funding in the Open Space Fund to support the highest priority 2025 projects. Similarly, OSMP has reviewed out-year capital budgets and has reduced the 2026 CIP estimate by \$1,000,000 as compared with what is shown in the approved 2024 fund financial. CIP budget projections for 2027 through 2030 have not changed from what was presented last year as the department wants to ensure adequate CIP funding to address capital maintenance needs on the land system. OSMP continues to prioritize projects based on citywide and department goals and alignment with the Master Plan and other approved department plans. Adjustments to the CIP are part of a balanced, phased overall approach, and OSMP continues to work to minimize impacts to service delivery in a fiscally constrained environment. In any budget development process, updated revenue projections that either increase or decrease available funds may cause the department to add or defer projects. OSMP is confident that the CIP projects for 2025 as reflected in this memo and attachments address priorities on the land system.

In previous fiscally constrained budget cycles, OSMP has provided the OSBT with an unfunded projects list for awareness and to illustrate the department's approach to prioritization. Related, during the fall 2023 retreat the OSBT asked for more detailed information around what we are "saying no to" to support board feedback around budget priorities. **Attachment B** provides examples of unfunded and reduced capital projects in this budget development cycle, and while this list is not exhaustive it conveys which projects may be funded next as additional revenues become available and/or may show up in capital planning beyond the current six-year horizon.

A current six-year capital look is provided below. This list in **Table 1** is subject to change as OSMP works with the Finance Department to understand revenue forecasts and increasing costs. Estimated costs for each project will be refined for projects proposed to take place in 2026 through 2030. Anticipated projects are listed in alphabetical order. As the list continues to be refined over time, OSMP will ensure alignment with the CIP investment guidance by focus area as outlined in the Master Plan and highlighted during the annual budget memos for OSBT.

Table 1: List of Anticipated 2025-2030 CIP Projects

Anticipated Project Title	Anticipated Funding Year(s)					
	2025 \$6.8M	2026 \$6.0M	2027 \$5.5M	2028 \$5.0M	2029 \$5.0M	2030 \$5.0M
Bluebell Road Repairs			x			
Boulder Valley Ranch Trailhead Redesign			x			
Chautauqua Site Plan Implementation: Ranger Cottage, Restroom, Trailhead Parking		x	x	x		
Coyote Trailhead Schematic Design, Road, and Highway Improvements			x			
Design Fish Passage at New Dry Creek Carrier on South Boulder Creek		x				
Development of a Food Forest on an Open Space Location	x	x	x	x	x	x
Facility Maintenance, Rehabilitation, and Enhancements	x	x	x	x	x	x
Fencing Infrastructure Installation, Maintenance, and Removal	x					
Flagstaff Site Plan Implementation		x	x	x		
Foothills South Trail Re-route		x				
Fort Chambers/Poor Farm Site Management Plan Implementation	x	x	x	x		
High Quality Trail Network and Reducing Trail Maintenance Backlog	x	x	x	x	x	x
Irrigation Infrastructure Improvements and Maintenance	x	x	x	x	x	x
Livestock Corrals Installation on Leased Properties	x	x	x			
Local Food Farm Sites Improvements	x	x	x	x	x	x
Mount Sanitas Trail Improvement Project	x					
North Trail Study Area Implementation: Wonderland Lake	x	x	x			
OSMP Climate Plan Implementation	x	x	x	x	x	x
OSMP Staff Work and Operations Space Strategic Plan Implementation		x				
Repair or Reroute Lower Bluestem Trail		x				
Restoration of Irrigated Agricultural Fields with Prairie Dog Conflict	x	x	x	x	x	x
Restoration of Vegetation, Riparian Habitats, and Wetlands	x	x	x	x	x	x
Soil Health Improvement Projects	x	x	x	x	x	x
South Boulder Creek Instream Flow Initiative	x					
Stockwater Planning for Drought Resilience and Support of Diversified Agriculture	x	x	x	x	x	x
Trailhead Improvement Projects to Support Accessibility, Visitor Experience and Responsible Recreation	x	x	x	x	x	x

Anticipated Project Title	Anticipated Funding Year(s)					
	2025 \$6.8M	2026 \$6.0M	2027 \$5.5M	2028 \$5.0M	2029 \$5.0M	2030 \$5.0M
Visitor Communication and Education Enhancements	x					
Wildfire Resilient Landscapes: Fuels Mitigation	x	x	x	x	x	x

OSMP staff will continue to update the OSBT on proposed CIP projects during the 2026 through 2030 budget planning processes.

2025 Operating Budget Development Process

The draft 2025 OSMP operating budget allocates core service activities supporting the important ongoing work required to protect, maintain, and support the open space system. Projects and programs supported through OSMP’s operating budget and are a part of the department’s core mission include, but are not limited to: ecosystem monitoring, maintenance, and restoration; climate resilience, including wildfire resilience; agricultural lands and water resources management; cultural resources management; safety and enforcement; ongoing strategic property acquisitions; conservation easement compliance and other real estate-related activities; day-to-day maintenance of trails, trailheads and signage; routine facilities and fleet management and maintenance; strategic and resource planning; community engagement, volunteer coordination, and visitor outreach, education, and events; human dimensions research and monitoring; media services, web-based information, and social media management; permitting and fees management; administrative, financial, and technical support for the department; personnel management; support for the OSBT; etc. Some core services of any municipal department often can be invisible to its customers yet are important to manage and maintain the valuable assets supported by the local community.

While the department is making efforts to strategically align the CIP and operating budget processes and timing, the citywide process to develop the annual operating budget differs from the process to develop the CIP in a few key ways. The CIP supports discrete projects that cost a minimum of \$50,000 and meet city definitions of capital maintenance, enhancement, planning, and acquisition. The operating budget supports recurring or ongoing core service projects and programs, as well as the staffing and other resources needed to carry out the day-to-day work of the department. Unlike the CIP, the next year operating budget is developed from a current year “base budget.” During the operating budget development process, it is generally assumed that base budget will continue to be funded, except during budget reduction cycles.

Any “increase to base” necessitates submission of a budget request to the city’s internal Executive Budget Team (EBT). EBT is comprised of representatives from the City Manager’s Office, the Finance Department, and a rotating subset of department directors who ensure a consistent city budget approach and responsible fund stewardship. The group is tasked with reviewing operating and CIP budgets for potential budget issues, citywide policy issues, opportunities to address city priorities and for coordination across the city, or major conflicts that City Council should be aware of during the budget development process. If a department’s budget requests (“increases to base”) are approved by EBT, they become part of the City Manager’s Recommended Budget, which is reviewed by City Council in the fall. The OSBT review of the CIP and operating budget is concurrent with EBT review.

OSMP considers economic conditions when planning for any increases to base. The Open Space Fund builds in a six-year forecast of revenue and expenditures, which informs short-term budget requests. The following section details current economic conditions and base cost changes to inform 2025 budget planning.

Update on Financial Forecast
2024-2030 Revenue Update

At the May 9 City Council Study Session, the Finance Department presented an overview of local and national economic conditions, the city’s financial outlook, and implications for 2025 budget development tax categories. The May 9 financial update study session materials are included in **Attachment C**. The city’s [December 2023 year-end revenue report](#) provides information and analysis of 2023 revenue. Sales and use tax categories represented 93% of the Open Space Fund’s overall revenue in 2023 and is the focus of most of the department’s attention when reviewing revenue reports. Across all funds, sales tax revenue in 2023 increased by 3.8% when compared year-to-date from December 2022. This is a notable change from the 11.6% percent increase seen in the same tax categories from December 2021 to December 2022. It indicates slower revenue growth compared to sales and use tax revenues collected in the previous year. Some use taxes, including business use, saw a decrease from 2022 to 2023, moderating some of the gains from other categories. Other use taxes, including construction use, increased over the previous year. Revenues from use taxes are highly variable and see large increases or decreases year-over-year.

In the update to council, the Finance Department also presented an update on economic conditions and revenue forecasts. The city contracts with the University of Colorado Business Research Division to develop six-year sales and use tax projections. These projections inform the budgeting approach for the Open Space Fund. In reviewing these projections, the Finance Department recommends scenarios that take a cautious budgeting approach balanced with realistic projections.

OSMP has received updated 2024-2030 sales and use tax revenue projections from the Finance Department. Beginning in 2023, the city’s sales and use tax projections forecasted an economic slowdown, and year-end numbers demonstrated the expected slower growth in revenues. The sales and use tax projections provided to the OSBT in June 2023 accounted for an economic slowdown, and updated projections now factor in even fewer increase year-over-year. The new 2024-2030 sales and use tax projections presented in **Table 2** anticipate an economic slowdown continuing into 2024 while still representing modest year-over-year increases. The 2024-2030 sales and use tax revenue projections are in draft form and subject to change.

Table 2: Sales and Use Tax Projections

Year	Revenue Projections for 2024 Budget Process (as of 5/30/2023)	Updated Revenue Projections for 2025 Budget Process (as of 5/24/2024)	Change to Open Space Fund
2024	\$35,589,280	\$34,782,011	(\$807,269)
2025	\$36,665,716	\$35,711,710	(\$954,006)
2026	\$37,627,376	\$36,440,980	(\$1,186,396)
2027	\$38,508,526	\$37,317,557	(\$1,190,969)
2028	\$39,389,407	\$38,224,908	(\$1,164,499)
2029	\$40,275,037	\$39,164,612	(\$1,110,425)
2030	-	\$40,138,429	-
Total projected sales and use tax revenue change to the Open Space Fund over 6-year planning horizon			(\$6,413,564)

2025 Expenditure Update

At the same time the Open Space Fund is experiencing slowed revenue growth, the cost of doing business is increasing. In addition to increased costs for existing services, materials, and staffing in the operating budget, OSMP is expecting increases to cost allocation, the citywide Enterprise Technology Fund, and the citywide Equipment Replacement and Fleet Operations & Replacement Funds.

A cost allocation plan is an accounting document that identifies agency-wide indirect cost and allocates those costs to benefiting departments and funds. Indirect costs are found in departments that provide services to other city departments, whereas direct costs are found in departments that provide services to the public. Examples of areas of indirect costs at the department level include City Attorney's Office, City Manager's Office, Human Resources, Information Technology, and Accounting. The cost allocation model is intended to reflect the department's utilization of services that other city departments provide and that are not paid for directly. Additional background information on cost allocation was sent in an email to OSBT members ahead of the May business meeting. This email is included as **Attachment D**.

The Enterprise Technology Fund (ETF) is an updated internal service fund that evaluates and prioritizes the city's enterprise-wide technology investments. This includes devices like laptops and computers, as well as citywide software costs and other technology support performed by staff in the Innovation & Technology (IT) Department. Some of the costs included in the ETF were previously funded directly by OSMP, including software charges, or were included in the cost allocation plan. The budget for charges now included in the ETF will be removed from Open Space Fund and cost allocation plan in 2025.

The Equipment Replacement Fund (ERF) and Fleet Operations & Replacement Fund are internal service funds managed by the city's Facilities & Fleet Department that centralize the cost for certain types of citywide equipment, including vehicles and radios used by Rangers and other staff in the field. Departments make annual replacement contributions based on the equipment's original cost, life cycle, and a standard inflation factor. The Facilities & Fleet Department updated cost projections for vehicle replacement, fuel, and radios based on general cost escalation for existing equipment and replacement costs. For this reason, OSMP is anticipating increased contributions to the ERF and Fleet Operations & Replacement Fund in 2025.

Although we are still awaiting final numbers, OSMP expects significant increased charges to the Open Space Fund to pay for cost allocation in 2025 and beyond. The cost of doing business has increased since the cost allocation plan was last updated in 2022. The new plan incorporates increased costs to perform internal services. Since the plan was last updated, the city's budget has grown by about 30%. Property and casualty insurance costs are also reflected in the cost allocation plan, and these costs have also increased significantly for the city in the wake of the Marshall Fire. The city has launched major enterprise system upgrades including new human resource and financial systems and new systems to comply with legislation around body worn cameras and evidence management for law enforcement, including OSMP Rangers. The Library Department, which previously paid into cost allocation, exited the city organization and this changed the way that internal services were allocated to departments. Technology funding, which was previously included in the cost allocation plan but which is now accounted for separately as the Enterprise Technology Fund, is also expected to increase significantly. OSMP and the Finance Department are currently partnering and discussing how these increased costs can best be phased in over time and/or addressed in a manner that will minimize impacts to OSMP's ability to deliver services, program and projects. An update on these discussions and what a phased (or other approach) may look like will be included in the July packet.

Beyond the payments to the General Fund listed above, OSMP is expecting increases to expenditures related to the city's compensation philosophy. Every two years, the Human Resources Department completes benchmark data analysis around the market rate for positions in the city and performs pay range movement to align with market data. The "market" is generally defined as other local government agencies along the front range and/or government agencies with comparable jobs (e.g. land management agencies for OSMP jobs). Additionally, the City Council passed an update to the city living wage, which applies to all standard and temporary positions and some contracted work. The living wage increased from \$17.42 to \$22.44 with this Council action, and OSMP has been implementing living wage concurrent with our temporary hiring for the 2024 field season. Finally, this fall the City Council will

review a proposal to adopt a regional minimum wage which is above the state minimum wage recognizing the high cost of living in the Boulder area. OSMP will budget for this increase to ensure adequate budget dollars are available if this proposal is approved, and if it is not approved OSMP will de-obligate or reallocate those funds.

As the City prepares to finalize the cost allocation and other payments to the General Fund, OSMP has started the internal work to gradually reduce department expenditures over the six-year horizon to ensure strong financial stewardship of the Open Space Fund within the shifting budget climate. Just as we reduced CIP projections, we have taken a balanced look at other expenditure types, and it is likely that we will program reductions in future years to offset flattening revenues and rising cost of doing business. We are still finalizing our targets and approach and will provide more detail in upcoming budget packets including connections to service delivery.

2025 Operating Budget Structure

The department organizes most of its operating budget by Service Area/Office of the Director (OD), with each of OSMP's four Service Areas containing several workgroups and programs consistent with the organizational chart. The four Service Areas are Central Services, Community Connections, Resource Stewardship, and Visitor Experience & Infrastructure. These Service Areas will be presented as "Programs" in the published 2025 budget, with the Office of the Director and business services functions included in the Administration title.

Under each program, workgroups will be reflected as "Sub-programs." Budgeted dollars will be shown at the Program level when the final citywide budget is published, and Sub-programs will serve to describe a Program's functions. OSMP's Programs and Sub-programs for the 2025 budgeting process are as follows:

- Administration: The Administration program ensures strategic alignment of OSMP's projects with the department's mission and priorities, including implementation of the Master Plan and focus on strategic enhancements like equity, climate resilience, and presence on the land. Administration also supports the customer service and finance tasks in the department, including preparation, analysis, and management of the OSMP budget and related financial systems. This program includes the director, deputy directors, and business services staff.
- Central Services: The Central Services program supports the daily internal operations of the department. This division offers real estate, information resources, and planning services, including acquisition of land interests, addressing real estate related matters, and management of easement requests; management of data, geographic information systems, and web content; and department-wide planning and design efforts. Central Services includes the following sub-programs:
 - Planning & Design Services
 - Real Estate Services
 - Resource Information Services
- Community Connections: The Community Connections program engages community members around the mission and vision of OSMP. This program coordinates public-facing community efforts in education, outreach, and Ranger services, including volunteer projects and services, as well as the Junior Ranger Program; and visitor engagement, emergency response, and law enforcement. Community Connections includes the following sub-programs:
 - Education & Outreach
 - Ranger Services
 - Volunteerism, Service Learning & Partnerships
- Resource Stewardship: The Resource Stewardship program enhances Boulder's natural environment by protecting its ecological, agricultural, cultural, and water assets. This program contains expertise in wildfire resilience, natural resource management, ecological systems, and recreation and cultural stewardship, including preservation and restoration of ecological,

agricultural, water, historical, and cultural resources; and tracking and monitoring of the variety of systems across OSMP. Resource Stewardship includes the following sub-programs:

- Agricultural & Water Stewardship
- Ecological Stewardship
- Science & Climate Resilience
- Vegetation Stewardship
- Visitor Experience & Infrastructure: The Visitor Experience & Infrastructure program supports the design, construction, and maintenance of OSMP's physical assets, as well as management of recreation activities, cultural resources, and human dimensions data. This program is responsible for maintaining OSMP's trails network, signs, trailheads, and other access points; office buildings and other structures across the open space system; the department's equipment and vehicle assets; cultural resources on the system; and research around visitor use and impacts. Visitor Experience & Infrastructure includes the following sub-programs:
 - Facilities
 - Fleet
 - Recreation & Cultural Stewardship
 - Visitor Infrastructure

Master Plan Alignment with Budget

Detailed input of 2025 ongoing service programs into OSMP's work planning software will not be finalized until the end of the third quarter in 2024. Provided here is information from the 2024 operating work plan. The department anticipates that the 2025 work plan will be like 2024 in terms of investment in and alignment to Master Plan strategies. The Master Plan calls for and provides integrated budget guidance specific to the CIP. The percentages provided in the plan outline where the department should direct CIP funding over ten years.

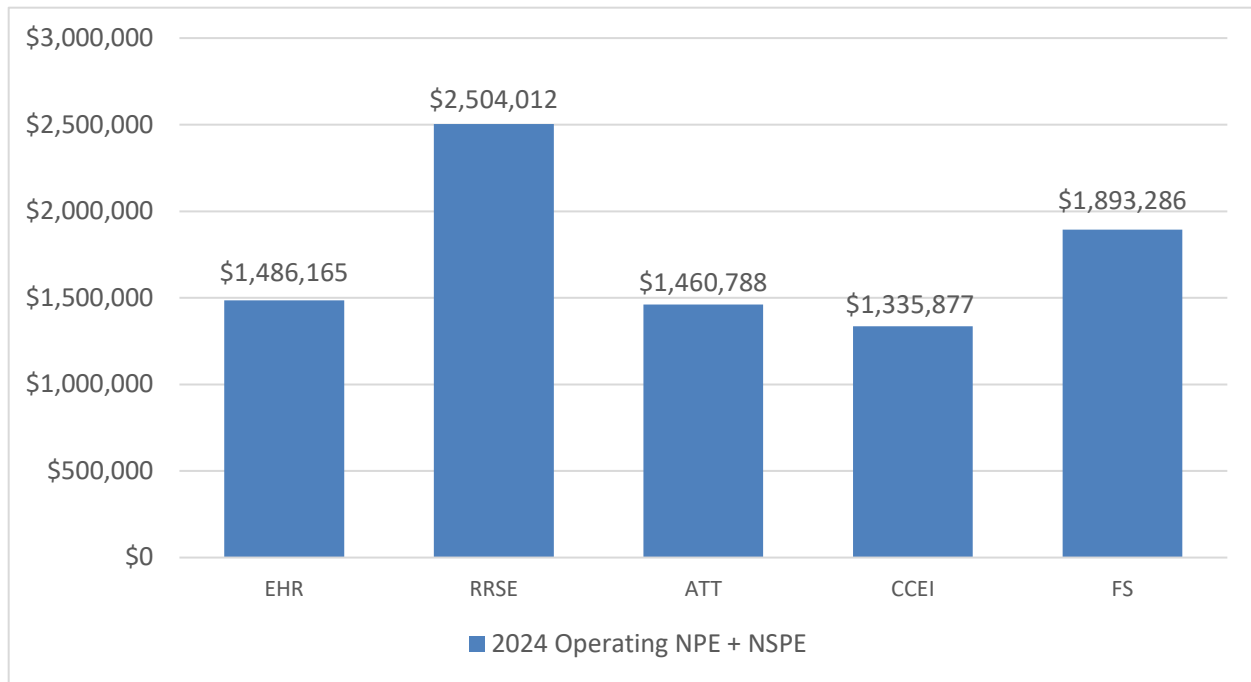
Internally, OSMP has taken steps to track investment beyond the CIP. All projects in the work plan software that utilize CIP, non-personnel dollars (NPE), and non-standard personnel dollars (seasonal and temporary positions, NSPE) now link to Master Plan strategies. While not reflected in this analysis, OSMP also supports standard full-time equivalent (FTE) employees. A standard FTE is assumed to be an ongoing part of the department's staff capacity and base budget, and a 1.0 FTE is modeled at 2080 hours per year in the department's work plan. Although this work is planned for, the department has not yet linked standard FTE positions to Master Plan strategies. This is a limitation of the information presented, as staff salaries represent most of the operating budget. Staff salaries are also the most challenging to link to the Master Plan because any one standard ongoing position may work on a variety of strategies each year. That said, it is a goal of the department to improve FTE tracking against the Master Plan as part of the upcoming intake in future budget process. The department will look to make iterative improvements to this process each year.

As a reminder, the Master Plan identifies five focus areas, or central management themes. The focus areas are:

- Agriculture Today and Tomorrow (ATT)
- Community Connection, Education, and Inclusion (CCEI)
- Ecosystem Health and Resilience (EHR)
- Financial Sustainability (FS)
- Responsible Recreation, Stewardship, and Enjoyment (RRSE)

In 2024, the combined operating investment in NPE and NSPE by focus area is as follows.

Table 3: 2024 Operating NPE and NSPE by Master Plan Focus Area



The Financial Sustainability focus area is typically a large share of the operating budget compared to the CIP. Highlighted within Financial Sustainability are those dollars that support FS.4) Take care of what we have and FS.9) Invest in workforce development and operational needs. Together these strategies support ongoing maintenance and operations work in the department, including reduction of the trail maintenance backlog, fencing replacement and repair, software application administration, and records management. In 2024, OSMP shifted funding for ongoing maintenance projects from the CIP to the operating budget in the Ecosystem Health and Resilience and Responsible Recreation, Stewardship, and Enjoyment focus areas. Responsible Recreation, Stewardship, and Enjoyment in particular has increased as a share of the operating budget to account for ongoing work like signs maintenance, road repairs, and undesignated trails maintenance.

Shifting to a review of operating budget investment by Master Plan strategy, the current makeup of NPE and NSPE by strategy is as follows.

Table 4: 2024 Operating NPE and NSPE by Master Plan Strategy

Tier	Master Plan Strategy	2024 NPE and NPSE
1	ATT.1) Reduce maintenance backlog for agricultural and water infrastructure	\$527,294
1	ATT.2) Increase soil health and resilience	\$127,530
1	ATT.3) Address conflicts between agriculture and prairie dogs	\$150,540
1	CCEI.1) Welcome diverse backgrounds and abilities	\$313,402
1	CCEI.2) Enhance communication with visitors	\$269,064
1	EHR.1) Preserve and restore important habitat blocks and corridors	\$716,008
1	EHR.2) Update system plans guiding ecosystem management	\$128,500
1	EHR.3) Address the global climate crisis here and now	\$88,367
1	RRSE.1) Assess and manage increasing visitation	\$76,811

Tier	Master Plan Strategy	2024 NPE and NPSE
1	RRSE.2) Reduce trail maintenance backlog	\$1,654,751
2	ATT.4) Protect water resources in a warmer future	\$108,931
2	ATT.5) Encourage diverse and innovative agricultural operations	\$193,850
2	CCEI.3) Connect youth to the outdoors	\$390,480
2	EHR.4) Reduce undesignated trails	\$2,157
2	EHR.6) Control invasive species	\$280,860
2	EHR.7) Develop a learning laboratory approach to conservation	\$76,944
3	ATT.6) Support the success of ranchers and farmers	\$336,176
3	ATT.7) Integrate native ecosystems and agriculture	\$3,600
3	ATT.9) Enhance enjoyment and protection of working landscapes	\$12,867
3	CCEI.5) Foster wellness through immersion in the outdoors	\$11,256
3	CCEI.6) Inspire environmental literacy and new involvement in OSMP	\$64,978
3	CCEI.7) Cultivate leaders in stewardship	\$250,005
3	CCEI.8) Heighten community understanding of land management efforts	\$36,692
3	EHR.9) Reduce and offset OSMP's greenhouse gas emissions	\$193,329
3	RRSE.6) Support a range of passive recreation experiences	\$4,598
3	RRSE.8) Provide welcoming and inspiring visitor facilities and services	\$740,154
3	RRSE.9) Develop a learning laboratory approach to recreation	\$27,698
N/A	FS.4) Take care of what we have	\$624,957
N/A	FS.9) Invest in workforce development and operational needs	\$1,268,329
	Total	\$8,680,128

During the May business meeting, OSMP staff shared alignment of proposed 2025 CIP projects to the Master Plan. If we combine 2024 NPE and NSPE operating allocations with the 2025 draft CIP, investment by focus area and strategy is as follows.

Table 5: 2024 Operating NPE and NSPE, and 2025 Draft CIP by Master Plan Focus Area

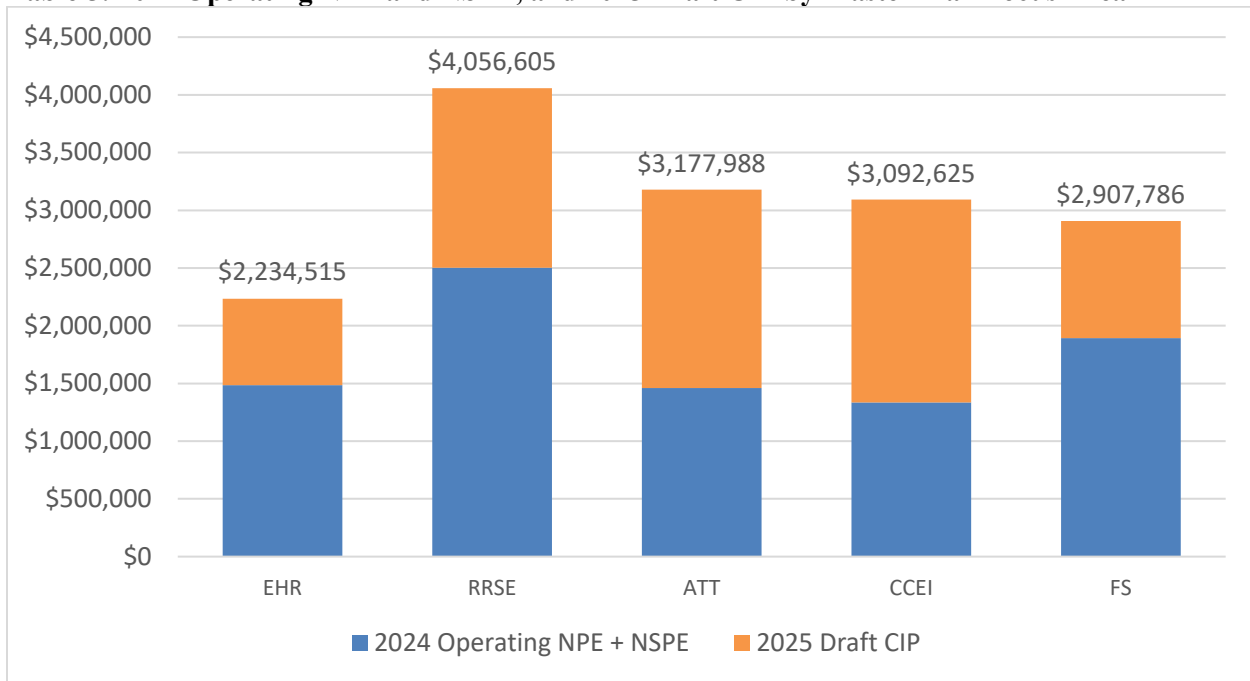


Table 6: 2024 Operating NPE and NSPE, and 2025 Draft CIP by Master Plan Strategy

Tier	Master Plan Strategy	2024 NPE and NPSE + 2025 Draft CIP
1	ATT.1) Reduce maintenance backlog for agricultural and water infrastructure	\$889,594
1	ATT.2) Increase soil health and resilience	\$335,430
1	ATT.3) Address conflicts between agriculture and prairie dogs	\$490,540
1	CCEI.1) Welcome diverse backgrounds and abilities	\$1,097,650
1	CCEI.2) Enhance communication with visitors	\$619,064
1	EHR.1) Preserve and restore important habitat blocks and corridors	\$1,234,258
1	EHR.2) Update system plans guiding ecosystem management	\$128,500
1	EHR.3) Address the global climate crisis here and now	\$254,867
1	RRSE.1) Assess and manage increasing visitation	\$781,161
1	RRSE.2) Reduce trail maintenance backlog	\$2,142,548
2	ATT.4) Protect water resources in a warmer future	\$169,031
2	ATT.5) Encourage diverse and innovative agricultural operations	\$453,850
2	CCEI.3) Connect youth to the outdoors	\$781,980
2	CCEI.4) Support citywide engagement with federally recognized American Indian Tribes and Indigenous Peoples	\$170,000
2	EHR.4) Reduce undesignated trails	\$10,857
2	EHR.6) Control invasive species	\$335,860
2	EHR.7) Develop a learning laboratory approach to conservation	\$76,944
3	ATT.6) Support the success of ranchers and farmers	\$637,076
3	ATT.7) Integrate native ecosystems and agriculture	\$174,600

Tier	Master Plan Strategy	2024 NPE and NPSE + 2025 Draft CIP
3	ATT.9) Enhance enjoyment and protection of working landscapes	\$27,867
3	CCEI.5) Foster wellness through immersion in the outdoors	\$11,256
3	CCEI.6) Inspire environmental literacy and new involvement in OSMP	\$85,978
3	CCEI.7) Cultivate leaders in stewardship	\$250,005
3	CCEI.8) Heighten community understanding of land management efforts	\$36,692
3	CCEI.9) Preserve and protect Boulder’s cultural heritage	\$40,000
3	EHR.9) Reduce and offset OSMP's greenhouse gas emissions	\$193,329
3	RRSE.6) Support a range of passive recreation experiences	\$317,045
3	RRSE.8) Provide welcoming and inspiring visitor facilities and services	\$767,154
3	RRSE.9) Develop a learning laboratory approach to recreation	\$48,698
N/A	FS.4) Take care of what we have	\$1,277,207
N/A	FS.9) Invest in workforce development and operational needs	\$1,630,579
		\$15,469,620

Operating and CIP Budget Development Processes

Key dates for the budget development processes are included below. This table includes an additional budget touch point in August.

Table 7: 2025 Budget Development Milestones

Milestone	Date
<i>OSBT Strategic Budget Guidance Update</i>	<i>January 17</i>
<i>OSBT Draft 2025 Work Plan & Budget Written Update</i>	<i>April 10</i>
<i>OSBT Draft 2025 CIP & Operating Budget Introduction</i>	<i>May 8</i>
Financial Forecast & Budget Update to City Council	May 9
<i>OSBT Draft 2025 CIP & Operating Budget Update</i>	<i>June 12</i>
<i>OSBT Draft 2025 CIP & Operating Budget Update</i>	<i>July 10</i>
<i>OSBT 2025 CIP & Operating Budget Public Hearing and Recommendation</i>	<i>August 14</i>
Planning Board City CIP Hearing	Mid-August TBD
City Council Budget Study Session	September 12
City Council Budget Consideration (1 st Reading)	October 3
City Council Budget Consideration (2 nd Reading)	October 17

Attachments

- **Attachment A:** OSMP Draft 2025 CIP List from May 8, 2024 OSBT Packet
- **Attachment B:** OSMP’s Unfunded and Reduced Funding Project List
- **Attachment C:** May 9 Financial Update to City Council
- **Attachment D:** May 8 Email to OSBT on Cost Allocation

OSMP's Draft 2025 CIP List

No changes have been made to this draft 2025 CIP list since the May business meeting.

Project	Proposed 2025 Funding	Initiate/ Continue/ Complete	Associated Department Assessment/Plan
Development of a Food Forest on an Open Space Location	\$50,000	Initiate	Agricultural Resources Management Plan
Facility Maintenance, Rehabilitation, and Enhancements	\$620,000	Continue	OSMP Facilities Assessment and Citywide Strategic Plan
Fencing Infrastructure Installation, Maintenance, and Removal	\$50,000	Continue	Visitor Master Plan
Fort Chambers/Poor Farm Site Management Plan Implementation	\$500,000	Continue	Visitor Master Plan, Master Plan, and Citywide Strategic Plan
High Quality Trail Network and Reducing Trail Maintenance Backlog	\$963,749	Continue	Visitor Master Plan, Master Plan and Trail Study Area Plans
Irrigation Infrastructure Improvements and Maintenance	\$133,000	Continue	Agricultural Resources Management Plan
Livestock Corrals Installation on Leased Properties	\$50,000	Initiate	Agricultural Resources Management Plan
Local Food Farm Sites Improvements	\$200,000	Continue	Agricultural Resources Management Plan
Mount Sanitas Trail Improvement Project	\$342,743	Initiate	Visitor Master Plan and Trail Study Area Plans
North Trail Study Area Implementation: Wonderland Lake	\$1,025,000	Continue	North Trail Study Area Plan
OSMP Climate Plan Implementation	\$150,000	Continue	Master Plan and Citywide Strategic Plan
Restoration of Irrigated Agricultural Fields with Prairie Dog Conflict	\$500,000	Continue	Master Plan and Preferred Alternative Approach for Managing Irrigated Agricultural Fields with Prairie Dog Conflict
Restoration of Vegetation, Riparian Habitats, and Wetlands	\$250,000	Continue	Grassland Management Plan
Soil Health Improvement Projects	\$210,000	Continue	Agricultural Resource

Project	Proposed 2025 Funding	Initiate/ Continue/ Complete	Associated Department Assessment/Plan
			Management Plan and Master Plan
South Boulder Creek Instream Flow Initiative	\$60,000	Initiate	Grassland Management Plan and Agricultural Resource Management Plan
Stockwater Planning for Drought Resilience and Support of Diversified Agriculture	\$60,000	Continue	Agricultural Resource Management Plan
Trailhead Improvement Projects to Support Accessibility, Visitor Experience and Responsible Recreation	\$1,400,000	Continue	Visitor Master Plan and Trail Study Area Plans
Visitor Communication and Education Enhancements	\$100,000	Continue	Visitor Master Plan and Citywide Strategic Plan
Wildfire Resilient Landscapes: Fuels Mitigation	\$125,000	Continue	Master Plan and Citywide Strategic Plan
Total	\$6,789,492		

OSMP's Unfunded and Reduced Funding Project List

OSMP has a robust work planning system through which program and project managers request funding for projects each year. The OSMP Director's Team prioritizes requests based on project readiness, funding availability, staff capacity, connection to city and department priorities, acceleration of Tier One Master Plan strategies, and other factors. In the fiscally constrained 2025 environment, the draft OSMP CIP proposes to fund the highest priority projects from the work planning process. To ensure adequate funding, many projects were phased over several years to align with project deliverables (e.g., design, permitting, then construction). Other projects were scaled to decrease the 2025 awarded amount, meaning that less on-the-groundwork would be achieved but we would still make progress around core maintenance activities. Many projects were deferred to a future year. The list of unfunded projects and/or projects with reduced funding, below, is not exhaustive, but gives examples of which current projects would have budget increases if more funding becomes available, and which projects would be funded next based on review of department priorities.

Project Title
Administer Topical and Exploratory Human Dimensions Research
Boulder Valley Ranch Trailhead Redesign
Centennial Trailhead Redesign
Chautauqua Meadow Fencing
Cottonwood/Shrub Grow-Outs & Wetland Seed Collections
Create Fish Passage at Goodhue Ditch
Deconstruct Joder Facilities
Dry Creek Trailhead Redesign
Education and Outreach Framework (EOF) Site Interpretive and Concept Design Planning
Flagstaff Site Plan
Gebhard Integrated Site Plan Construction
Install Center Pivot on Bixler / Eddy / Martinson Property Complex to Improve Irrigation Efficiency
Install Center Pivot on Johnson Property
Marshall Mesa Trailhead Renovation
NCAR Weather Trail Reconstruction
North Foothills Fencing Removal
OSMP Economic Impact Assessment
Peoples Crossing Site Infrastructure Improvements
Refurbish Martinson Property Residence
Remodel Cherryvale South and Foothills Nature Center
Repair or Reroute Lower Bluestem Trail
Replace Boundary and Interior Fencing on the Van Vleet Property
Replace Existing Barn on Manchester Property
Restore Joder Area Riparian System
Restore Joder Pastures
Restore Wetlands on Fancher Property
Saddle Rock Trail Construction
Tallgrass Prairie East Site Planning & HCA Activation
Varra Mine Reclamation
Vehicle and Equipment Purchase Program Beyond Replacement Funds
Visitor Communication and Education Enhancements



STUDY SESSION MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and Members of City Council

FROM: Nuria Rivera-Vandermyde, City Manager
Chris Meschuk, Deputy City Manager
Kara Skinner, Chief Financial Officer
Charlotte Huskey, Budget Officer

DATE: May 9, 2024

SUBJECT: **Financial Forecast & Budget Update**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this item is for council to receive an update on the city's financial forecast and an update on the preparations for the 2025 budget. Each year, staff delivers a financial forecast and budget update to provide an overview of economic conditions and budget assumptions for the upcoming fiscal year.

Beginning in 2023, the city's sales and use tax projections forecasted an economic slowdown, and year-end numbers demonstrated a flattening of revenues in 2023. Current economic conditions point to this trend continuing through 2024. With sales and use tax comprising approximately 40% of total city revenues, this remains of significant consideration for the 2025 budget process. The city recognizes the need to budget within a constrained environment by focusing on realigning existing dollars to support key community priorities and citywide goals.

To support this effort, the city is in the third and final year of implementing Budgeting for Resilience and Equity, an outcome-based budgeting approach to budget development and decision-making. Budgeting for Resilience and Equity aligns the city budget to community and citywide goals within the [Sustainability, Equity, and Resilience Framework](#). With significant new investments made toward community and council priorities in recent years, coupled with the limitation of ongoing funding, the implementation of Budgeting for Resilience and Equity becomes that much more important to focus on the outcomes of our investments to support key priorities and goals.

Questions for Council

- Does council have any questions regarding the 2023 preliminary, unaudited year-end financial results and economic outlook?
- Does council have any questions regarding the 2025 Budget outlook and feedback related to the major budget assumptions?

BACKGROUND

The City of Boulder has partnered with the University of Colorado-Boulder, Leeds School of Business since 2020 to forecast revenues based upon an econometric model. These forecasted revenues are utilized to guide budget projections, annual budget development and monitoring.

This financial forecast provided annually by staff shares an update on the City's major revenue sources, current and forecasted economic conditions, and major budget assumptions utilized within the annual budget process. This section provides an overview of the prior and current fiscal year and the framework guiding the 2025 budget process.

2023 Budget

The city's [2023 Approved Budget](#) was \$515.4 million, comprising an operating budget of \$354.6 million and capital budget of \$160.8 million. This represented an 11% increase compared to the 2022 Approved Budget and included a total of \$33.9 million in one-time and ongoing enhancements to address community needs. The General Fund budget was \$188.4 million, representing a 15% increase compared to 2022.

In the 2023 budget, the city made significant ongoing investments in wildfire resilience, public space management, behavioral and mental health programming and services, and homelessness solutions. At the time, these investments were made at the maximum level of ongoing costs that the General Fund could support based on projections. The city also committed one-time dollars to pilot programs, including the Safe and Managed Spaces program and the Community Assistance Response and Engagement (CARE) behavioral health response program. This programming, among others, will require a funding strategy if permanent ongoing funding is considered in the future.

The 2023 budget also made further investments using the recently renewed Community, Culture, Resilience, and Safety Tax funding to support \$27.0 million in capital infrastructure and maintenance projects such as the Xcel streetlight acquisition project, fire station #3 final funding, and continued core arterial network investments. In addition, the budget included significant funding toward enterprise technology solutions and competitive compensation for city employees.

2024 Budget

The [2024 Approved Budget](#) is \$515.4 million across all funds, comprising an operating budget of \$374.2 million and capital budget of \$141.2 million, representing a less than 1% increase over the 2023 Approved Budget. This budget included a change in budgeting practice for capital bond proceeds, which impacts Utilities-related capital projects in 2024. The 2024 General Fund approved budget is \$196.1 million, a 4.1% increase over 2023.

Key year-over-year changes in the operating budget reflect the voter creation of a Boulder Library District that eliminates library operating costs, the subsequent programming of available resources to meet our commitments in service expansions, and perhaps most importantly, our continued investment in city employees to ensure a competitive and effective workforce who are fundamental to carrying out city services and programs across the community.

The 2024 Approved Budget includes [\\$21.1 million in total enhancements](#). Overall, the budget makes permanent investments in critical areas, such as community wildfire resilience, behavioral health response programs, day services center operations, and housing support. In addition, the 2024-29 Capital Improvement Program included significant enhancements and planned spending toward key community and citywide projects such as the Civic Area Phase 2 project, Pearl Street Mall improvements, fire stations #2 and #4 replacements, and renovations at the East Boulder Community Center.

2025 Budget – Year 3 Budgeting for Resilience and Equity

The city is in its third and final year of implementing a new budgeting approach, called Budgeting for Resilience and Equity, which shifts from a traditional increment-based budgeting approach to outcome-based budgeting. This shift in budgeting focuses on heightened and strategic decision-making based on outcomes the city intends to achieve. This approach, through an understanding of programmatic outcomes across the organization, intends to maximize the allocation of dollars toward community and citywide priorities. Below is a summary of our three-year implementation of Budgeting for Resilience and Equity:

Year 1, staff implemented a new budgeting software, [OpenGov](#), and aligned city programs and budgets to the city’s Sustainability, Equity, and Resilience Framework. This effort supported greater transparency of the city’s budget by demonstrating how our investments aligned to community goal areas.

Year 2, the city added specificity by developing intended outcomes for each program area in the city and added data measurements to be able to measure the impact of our investments. This was also the first year the city worked directly with Community Connectors-in-Residence (CC-in-Rs) and their communities to incorporate their input and priorities into the budget development process. This engagement generated significant input that was then used during key decision-making of the 2024 budget.

Year 3 focuses on the refinement of outcomes and performance measures and continued engagement with CC-in-Rs and additional community members through CC-in-R engagement sessions, a citywide 2025 budget questionnaire, and boards and commissions engagement. The 2025 budget direction focuses on realignments of existing dollars and utilizing refined performance measures to guide budget decisions and allocate dollars toward prioritized outcomes.

ANALYSIS

City of Boulder Financial Conditions and Projections

Major Revenue Sources

Sales and Use Tax

The city’s primary revenue source is sales and use tax, which comprises over 40% of the city’s revenues and over 50% of revenues when excluding utility revenues. In 2022, staff shifted the sales and use tax modeling approach to utilize a less conservative forecast to maximize the potential of ongoing revenues and to create ongoing spending opportunities to meet the significant needs across

the community. Also, in 2022, sales and use tax revenues increased significantly during a period of high inflation. Inflationary pressures declined in 2023, which resulted in a downward revision of projections of retail sales for the 2023 revised budget.

As shown in the table below, 2023 year-end unaudited revenues resulted in \$175.9 million in total sales and use tax revenues (101.5% of revised projections). While total sales and use tax revenues came in slightly above anticipated amounts, retail sales tax and business use tax came in \$2.5 million below revised projections. Staff also observed a year-over-year decline in December revenues between 2022 and 2023, which typically is the largest revenue generating month for the city. Year-end retail sales tax and business use tax revenues showing a recent decline in revenues indicate a flattening of sales and use tax revenues.

Construction Use Tax and audit revenues generated 124.1% and 177.0% of anticipated revenues, offsetting the drop in retail sales tax and business use tax revenues. While total sales and use tax revenues still came in just above budget, staff acknowledges that construction use taxes, dependent on current year development activity, is highly volatile, and audit revenues above a baseline are generally considered one-time.

The Recreational Marijuana Sales Tax, which is an additional 3.5% sales and use tax on recreational marijuana dedicated to the General Fund, has also seen a decrease of 18.7% from prior year actuals. This decline in revenues primarily stems from a decrease in demand since the pandemic period in addition to an oversupply of product in the market driven by pandemic-level demand. Staff anticipates this downward trend continuing in 2024 until reaching a revenue plateau.

Staff currently anticipates a 2.0% annual growth in total sales & use tax revenues between 2024-2030. At the May 9 Financial Update presentation, staff and CU Boulder will provide further detail on current and forecasted economic conditions and forecasted sales & use revenues.

Sales & Use Tax 2023 Year-End Unaudited Revenues	2023 Approved Budget	2023 Revised Projections	2023 Year- End Actuals	Actuals as % of Approved	Actuals as % of Revised
Retail Sales	\$141.3M	\$138.1M	\$137.7M	97.40%	99.70%
Business/Consumer Use	\$12.8M	\$12.4M	\$10.3M	80.40%	82.90%
Motor Vehicle	\$6.2M	\$6.4M	\$6.4M	103.30%	100.60%
Construction Use	\$9.3M	\$13.3M	\$16.5M	178.10%	124.10%
Audits	\$1.8M	\$1.8M	\$3.1M	177.00%	177.00%
Recreation MJ	\$1.9M	\$1.4M	\$1.4M	72.60%	102.70%
Non-Audit Penalties/Interest	Not budgeted	Not budgeted	\$412K	N/A	N/A
Total	\$173.3M	\$173.4M	\$175.9M	101.50%	101.50%

Property Tax

Property values are reassessed by the county assessor's office every two years, on every odd-numbered year. For the 2024 and 2025 revenue years (which are 2023 and 2024 tax years), property taxes are based on the 2023 reassessment performed by the county, and is based upon home sales from July 1, 2020, to June 30, 2022, with sales during that period age-adjusted to the June 30, 2022 appraisal date.

The city received 2024 Preliminary Assessed Values (AVs) from Boulder County in late April. As shown in the table below, due to reassessment years occurring every odd-numbered year, staff does not anticipate a significant increase in AVs for the 2025 revenue year (2024 tax year) and 2025 budget.

Property Taxes – City of Boulder (in millions)					
	2022 Actual	2023 Actual	2024 Projection (Prelim. AV)	2024 Approved Budget (Revised AV¹)	2025 Preliminary Projection
Tax Revenue	\$50.81	\$48.74	\$63.62	\$58.74	\$60.78
<i>Changes in Revenue</i>		-4.07%	30.53%	20.52%	3.47%
Assessment Values (AV)	\$4,281.86	\$4,227.30	\$5,573.55	\$5,146.22	\$5,324.72
<i>Change in AV</i>		-1.27%	31.85%	21.74%	3.47%

¹ Preliminary AV was reduced for the 2024 Budget due legislative impact and uncertainty.

Staff continues to monitor potential legislation that may impact property tax revenues. As is described in the Ballot Measures Study Session memo, currently there are two initiatives, Initiative #50 and #108, that relate to property taxes or property tax revenue that have had titles set for the 2024 statewide ballot. Initiative #50 will be on the November 2024 ballot, which would change the Colorado Constitution to require a taxing jurisdiction that is projected to receive more than 4% of property tax revenues, to place a question on the ballot asking for voter approval to retain the revenue above 4%. Initiative #108 is circulating for signatures and would reduce the assessment rate to 24% for all real property except residential, producing mines, and lands or leaseholds producing oil or gas, and setting the residential assessment rate at 5.7% beginning in 2025.

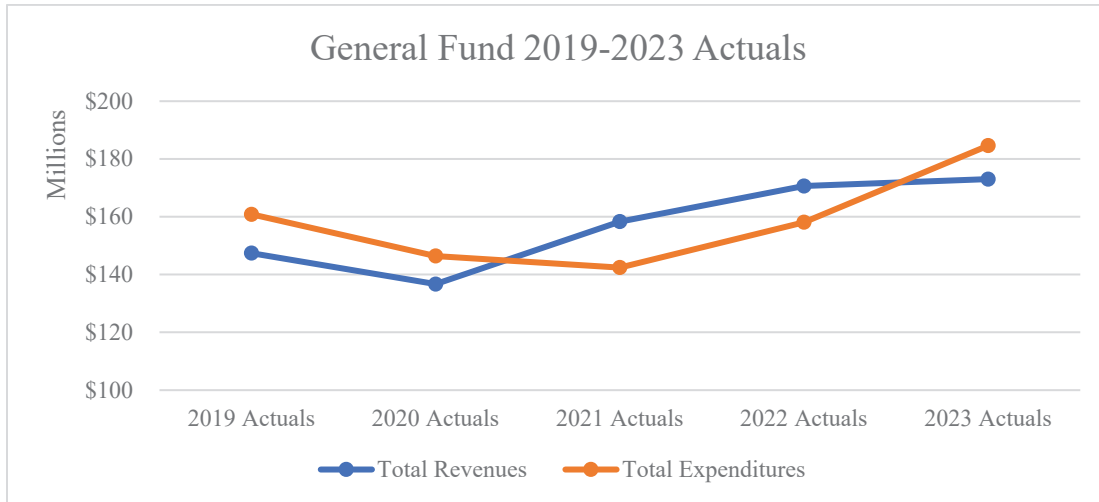
The Colorado General Assembly is currently considering property tax legislation, and staff will share more detail on the fate of potential legislation at the May 9 study session.

Fund Updates

General Fund

- The General Fund ended 2023 drawing approximately \$8.0 million from fund balance, leaving an estimated \$20.1M in fund balance after reserves. The draw from fund balance was planned, in particular, the city planned a draw from fund balance to transfer to the Governmental Capital fund for the Alpine-Balsam Western City Campus project (\$5.6 million) and the Day Services Center (\$5.0 million). In addition, the General Fund transferred fund balance reserves to the Climate Tax Fund (CTF) to consolidate climate funding within the CTF. In addition, year-end numbers also represent an increased level of spending in 2023 compared to recent years, which is likely due to increased staffing levels, increased pace of operational expenses across departments, and the spending of new investments made in 2023. Staff continue to regularly monitor General Fund revenues and expenditures to ensure the accuracy of appropriation levels and to capture potential one-time savings within the annual

budget cycle to fund community and citywide needs. With upcoming significant investments such as the Alpine Balsam-Western City Campus project, staff anticipates bringing forward an adjustment-to-base in 2024 to again utilize a portion of the year-end balances to support this key project. Staff will continue to monitor the fund for potential flexibility for other one-time investments in the upcoming 2025 budget. The below chart represents the five-year trend of sources and uses within the General Fund between 2019-2023.



Affordable Housing Fund

- The Affordable Housing Fund ended 2023 drawing \$4.6 million from fund balance after reserves due to total uses exceeding total sources within the fund. Affordable Housing Fund revenues, supported primarily by cash-in-lieu contributions, development impact fees, and real estate sales, saw an approximate 75% decline in cash-in-lieu revenues in 2023 compared to 2019-2022 collections. The Affordable Housing Fund, in addition to the city's three other housing funds, continues to be the primary city funding mechanism to support the development, purchase, and maintenance of affordable housing units in Boulder.

Transportation Fund

- In 2023, the Transportation Fund utilized appropriately 74% of the revised budget, realizing approximately \$15.4 million in savings. Most of this underspending is attributed to delays of original construction and permitting schedules of capital projects within the Transportation Department's Capital Improvement Program; this capital funding will roll forward into the 2024 Revised Budget to support current year spending of the adjusted timeline of those capital projects. While current projections reflect a stable fund balance in the 2025-29 fiscal years, considerations of potential impacts include the rapid cost escalation impacting the capital construction environment will likely result in mid-year budget adjustments appropriating additional funding for capital projects.

Open Space Fund

- In 2023 the Open Space Fund, which funds the acquisition and maintenance of open space land, ended the year with roughly \$3.6 million in savings, obligating approximately 72% of the total revised budget. Year-end fund balance after reserves are currently projected to average \$2.0-3.0 million between 2025-2029.

Recreation Activity Fund

- In 2023 the Recreation Activity Fund, which funds recreation, reservoir, and golf course programs and services, obligated 95% of the revised budget, yielding \$738,000 in savings compared to the revised budget. The fund is projected to have a negative fund balance after reserves beginning in 2025. Implementation of a new fee policy will help to support fund revenues, as it is currently dependent on transfers from the General Fund, and the Parks & Recreation Department and Central Budget continue to work toward a greater funding strategy in support of these programs.

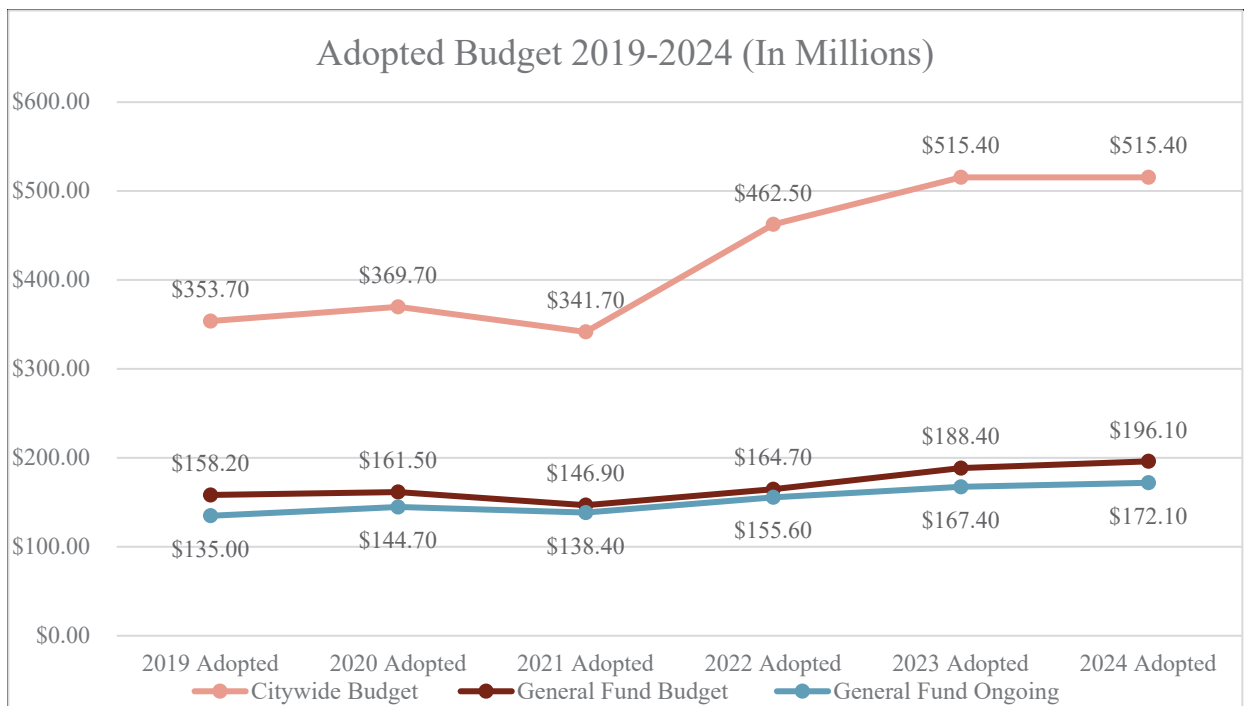
2025 Budget – Key Assumptions

The year’s key budget assumptions, as described below, are major factors that will inform the 2025 Budget. While staff carefully considers and reviews a comprehensive set of assumptions during the annual budget development cycle, the following major assumptions and policy issues will be of significant consideration during this year’s budget development.

1. Slowing Economic Growth and Known Funding Constraints

As mentioned above, a slowing in economic growth and a flattening of the city’s major revenue source, sales & use tax, further constrains the funding flexibility to support new enhancements to the budget and one-time funded pilot programs currently without identified ongoing funding.

In recent years, as demonstrated below in the Adopted Budget 2019-2024 chart, the city has invested significantly with one-time and ongoing funding across the organization in support of community, citywide, and council initiatives. Since 2021, the budget across all funds has increased by 51%. While we recognize the significance of these investments, this same growth rate in recent spending is unsustainable for the 2025 budget and beyond.



Additional uncertainties and risks suggest caution, including high commercial vacancy rates, remote work practices with fewer workers in Boulder, and the upcoming fiscal cliff of expiring pandemic

stimulus dollars. While the city remains in a constrained environment, staff will continue to uplift the recent work of Budgeting for Resilience & Equity implementation to utilize outcomes to realign existing funding toward community and citywide goals.

2. Potential Property Tax Legislation and Related Revenue Impacts

Potential legislative impacts generate uncertainty on the future of property tax revenues and revenue growth. Property tax comprises 13% of total city revenues, and 17% of revenues when excluding utility revenues. Property tax represents a major revenue source for the General Fund, comprising 25% of fund revenues, and is a stable source of revenue that supports key general government purposes such as public safety operations and human services programming.

As described above, as well as in the Ballot Measures Study Session May 9 memo, two property tax initiatives, Initiative #50 and Initiative #108, have titles set for the 2024 statewide ballot. Recent legislation (SB22-238) for revenue years 2024 and 2025 impacted property tax revenues by approximately \$2.2 million by reducing assessment rates. Staff anticipates receiving this state backfill from Boulder County in Q2 2024, which will help to offset potential sales & use tax shortfalls this fiscal year. Staff will continue to monitor property tax bills throughout this year's legislative session to consider budgeting assumptions of the potential fiscal impact into the 2025 budget. Staff will share further updates at the May 9 study session.

3. Sustainable Capital Maintenance Funding

The 2025-30 Capital Improvement Program will continue to focus on supporting the goals and objectives within the city's Sustainability, Equity, and Resilience Framework, the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan, and subcommunity and area plans. Capital maintenance and enhancement projects typically comprise the majority of investments across the six-year capital improvement program (CIP). In the 2024-29 CIP, capital maintenance projects comprised 57% of the CIP, including investments in projects such as the Potable Water Transmission System Maintenance (\$14.0 million in 2024, \$45.5 million in the 2024-29 CIP), the Barker Dam Outlet Rehabilitation & Replacement (\$13.2 million total in 2024), Transportation Pavement Management Program (\$5.4 million in 2024, \$32.3 million in the 2024-29 CIP), and East Boulder Community Park (\$2.2 million total in 2024).

Key to this continued investment in ongoing capital maintenance is funding our city facilities at the "Maintain Well" level as outlined in the [Facilities Master Plan](#) accepted by City Council in 2021. The Maintain Well initiative supports appropriate service and funding standards for city facilities by investing in enhanced, ongoing annual funding to maintain new buildings well into the future, and to plan for future capital renewal needs and building adaption that will ultimately result in savings in operations and maintenance budgets. Current building infrastructure within the city's portfolio is old and does not align with the city's climate, social, or financial goals. Significant investments in equipment and systems replacement are required to prevent failures and meet ongoing service delivery needs for the organization as well as the community. Historically, while the city has invested in capital maintenance across other areas, the city has underfunded operations and maintenance in city buildings, which now results in a large, deferred maintenance backlog.

Due to this underfunding, in recent years the city has seen failures in systems and costly investments for emergency repairs. Therefore, as part of the 2025 budget, staff will continue to align funding resources and ensure sustainable funding strategies to support this standard across city facilities.

4. Continue to Address Community Needs Strategically across all Funding Sources

Staff will continue to evaluate the flexibility across all city funds, including dedicated and nondedicated funds and existing budget allocations to continue to support key community investments and needs. Budgeting for Resilience and Equity will continue to serve as a foundational tool to support this effort by utilizing data that measures the impact of our investments and prioritize funding toward those measurable impacts.

Last year, staff conducted a Dedicated Funding Analysis to understand legal and management restrictions of funding across the city. Approximately 60-70% of all city funding is dedicated, which limits the flexibility of uses across funds to support key initiatives and community needs. While dedicated funding may be a successful method of generating funding for specific programs, it restricts future funding opportunities and the utilization of balances to react quickly to changing community needs and interests. As we learned during the pandemic period, dedicated funding reduces organizational capacity and financial resiliency and creates challenges to respond to service needs during economic downturns.

As part of the Long-Term Financial Strategy, the city will establish a plan to perform a comprehensive fee study and a multi-year strategy for approaching tax renewals. The development of this long-term strategy, including an evaluation of current revenue structures and future revenue opportunities, will help to provide financial sustainability and resilience to the city and, ultimately, in service delivery across the community.

5. Arts, Culture and Heritage Fund

In 2023, voters approved dedicating a portion of an expiring general-purpose tax for Arts, Culture and Heritage, beginning in 2025. The city will create and budget a new special revenue fund named the Arts, Culture and Heritage Fund to account for the dedicated 0.075% sales and use tax and the spending per the 2A ballot measure. Funding for arts, culture and heritage uses will be considered along with other budget requests.

As was shared during the 2023 ballot measures discussions and the 2024 budget approval process, passage of this previously undedicated tax to a dedicated tax would significantly impact existing general government operating dollars, and therefore the 2024 budget assumed that the portion of the renewed tax now dedicated to arts, culture, and heritage would fund current art operating programs. This assumption is in alignment with budgeting practices of similar dedicated tax funds across the city, including the recent approval of the Climate Tax and realignment of climate-related funding to the Climate Tax Fund. This assumption also does not impact other departments' current ongoing or one-time arts funding across the organization, such as city facility subsidy leases to arts organizations, additional Community, Culture, Resilience, and Safety Tax non-profit grants funding to the arts community, and the 1% for public art policy applied to capital projects.

6. Living Wage Increases and Minimum Wage Assumptions

In 2024, to support competitive compensation for city employees, the city increased living wage for standard positions to \$22.44. This amounted to \$441,000 across the organization and applied to approximately 105 employees across twelve funds.

In addition to the recent living wage updates that impact standard positions, the City of Boulder, in coordination with Louisville, Longmont, Lafayette, and Erie, is currently exploring a regional approach to increasing the local minimum wage which would impact some of the city's non-standard (seasonal/temporary) positions. Current minimum wage within the city of Boulder is \$14.42 or \$11.40 including tips. While the work with our partners is in process, current assumptions for the

2025 budget process is that the city may align to Boulder County’s current minimum wage rate of \$16.57 in 2025 to \$25.00 in 2030. As demonstrated in the table below, early estimates indicate minimum wage would require between \$43,000 to \$253,000 of ongoing funding in 2025. This will largely impact Parks & Recreation, Open Space, and Utilities employees across the Recreation Activity Fund, 0.25 Sales Tax Fund, General Fund, Open Space Fund, and Water Utility Fund.

We recognize the significance of this change within a constrained budgeting environment. At the June 7 council meeting, staff will share an update on a regional economic analysis for increasing the minimum wage. If municipalities decide to implement a minimum wage increase, it would become effective January 1, 2025.

Minimum Wage Estimated Expense – All Funds 2025-2030

Minimum Wage Assumptions	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
Minimum Wage Increase	\$43,000	\$170,000	\$38,600	\$662,000	\$983,000	\$1,353,000
Minimum Wage Increase and Wage Compression	\$253,000	\$571,000	\$932,000	\$1,334,000	\$1,770,000	\$2,242,000

7. Long-Term Financial Strategy

During its 2024 retreat, council agreed to include the creation and implementation of a Long-Term Financial Strategy (LTFS) as a council workplan priority. In the fall of 2023, staff shared with the Financial Strategy Committee and City Council the overarching framework of a LTFS, including four key elements guiding the strategy:

1. Overall Performance Budgeting Philosophy
2. Long-Term Financial Plan Governance and Supporting Structures
3. Revenue and Fee Policies and Practices
4. Fund Management Structures and Strategies

The LTFS will support the achievement of the city’s long-term goals as aligned to the Sustainability, Equity, and Resilience Framework and the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan by clearly articulating current and anticipated risks and funding challenges, and identifying financial strategies to address those risks and challenges. The LTFS will set a holistic view and strategically planned approach to the city’s financial structures and policies. As part of the strategy, staff will develop guiding financial principles and policies, perform a current state assessment to understand core service delivery needs and funding gaps, evaluate and establish a plan for comprehensive fee study, develop a communications and engagement plan, and identify future steps to support the continued development and evaluation of Budgeting for Resilience and Equity. As part of this year’s efforts, staff plans to identify and propose a timeline and focus areas that will support the initial development of a comprehensive fee study to study current and potential new fees to address policy goals, explore other funding mechanisms to support core city services, and develop a three-to-five year ballot measure strategy.

Council's action step of naming the LTFS as a council priority lays the foundation for staff to focus our efforts on the development of this financial strategy this year. The Financial Strategy Committee will provide the main project oversight on behalf of council with several touchpoints with the full council before approval of the LTFS. The expected timeline includes a Q4 2024 council review and a Q2 2025 approval of a strategy.

Summary of Key Budget Assumptions

A major purpose of the annual financial forecast and budget update is to provide insight into the conditions and policies that will impact the development of the upcoming budget. The 2025 key budget assumptions, listed below, summarizes the key factors influencing this year's budget development:

1. Slowing economic growth and known funding constraints significantly limit budget flexibility for ongoing costs.
2. Potential legislative impacts generate uncertainty on the future of property tax revenues and revenue growth.
3. The Capital Improvement Program will continue to focus on investing in sustainable funding strategies for the ongoing capital maintenance of city facilities and infrastructure.
4. Flexibility across all funds, including dedicated funds and existing budget allocations, will continue to be explored and emphasized to support key community investments and needs.
5. The city will create and budget a new special revenue fund named the Arts, Culture and Heritage Fund with a dedicated revenue source being the dedicated 0.075% sales and use tax per the 2A ballot measure approved by voters in November 2023. Funding for arts, culture and heritage uses will be considered along with other budget requests.
6. Recent living wage increases and potential changes to the minimum wage ordinance impacting city employees will be a factor when considering flexibility across funds.
7. Other ongoing funding needs are significant and beyond funding availability, requiring a long-term financial strategy across all funds and city functions.

The above key budget assumptions demonstrate the limited flexibility of ongoing funding opportunities in the upcoming 2025 budget. The city's goal is to effectively and strategically utilize existing resources and dollars to invest in community and citywide goals. Our efforts toward implementing Budgeting for Resilience and Equity, coupled with the development of a Long-Term Financial Strategy, demonstrates a commitment to sustainable and strategic planning for future funding to address critical needs across the community.

COUNCIL QUESTIONS

- Does council have any questions regarding the 2023 preliminary, unaudited year-end financial results and economic outlook?
- Does council have any questions regarding the 2025 Budget development and feedback related to the key budget assumptions?

From: [Kilcoyne, Lauren](#)
To: [Burke, Dan](#); [Brady Robinson](#); [Harmon Zuckerman](#); [Jon Carroll](#); [Michelle Estrella](#); [Sarah Glynn OSBT](#)
Cc: [Mcqueen, Samantha](#); [Moffatt, Cole](#)
Subject: RE: Cost Allocation Questions
Date: Wednesday, May 8, 2024 2:36:12 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Good afternoon OSBT,

Thank you for sending over your questions in advance of tonight's budget presentation. Questions to date have focused on cost allocation and Lottery funding. As Dan mentioned, the final cost allocation modelling results are not in yet and staff will be providing more information on cost allocation at the June meeting, including having Finance Department staff representation at the meeting. That said, we wanted to share some high-level information around cost allocation for your review as we prepare for the June discussion, and below have also provided the Q&A related to the individual questions we've received from board members. We've onboarded a few new OSBT members since the last cost allocation plan update, and while you may already be familiar with cost allocation, we want to share the city's thinking and approach.

What is a cost allocation plan?

A cost allocation plan is an accounting document that identifies agency-wide indirect cost and allocates those costs to benefiting departments and funds.

This definition can be broken into three components. The first component is that the cost allocation plan is an accounting document. The cost plan is based on financial records, either actual expenditures or budgeted expenditures for a given fiscal year.

The second component is that the cost allocation plan identifies agency wide indirect costs. Indirect costs, in general terms, are costs found in departments that provide services to other departments. Those departments are mostly inward facing, with services benefiting other departments. Examples of areas of indirect costs at the department level include Human Resources and Accounting.

The third component is that the cost allocation plan distributes indirect costs to benefiting departments and funds.

The overall objectives of a cost allocation plan are to:

1. Identify the internal administrative and support departments
2. Document the costs of the internal administrative and support departments
3. Document the services provided by the internal administrative and support departments (e.g. payroll within Accounting or talent acquisition within HR)
4. Distribute the internal administrative and support cost based on meaningful, measurable and auditable allocation bases or metrics to all departments and funds
5. Sum or total the administrative and support costs allocated to every department and fund.

What is the basis for a cost allocation plan?

The Federal Government provides principles and requirements to local governments for cost allocation plans. These requirements are found in The Code of Federal Regulations Part 200. (2 CFR Part 200). These requirements used to be found in OMB Circular A-87.

Additionally, cost allocation plans follow GAAP (Generally Accepted Accounting Principles) requirements and GFOA (Government Finance Officers Association) recommendations and best practices.

Why do cities and counties prepare a cost allocation plan?

There are numerous reasons that local governments prepare cost allocation plans. The first is to recover indirect costs on federal and state grants and awards. The cost allocation plan is the set of calculations to identify and document the cost of general fund administrative and support services provided to all operating departments. For certain grants and awards, this support, and the associated cost, can be reimbursed or recovered.

The second primary reason local governments prepare a cost allocation plan is to identify and document the general fund administrative and support services provided to non-general fund funds. In specific instances, this support, and the associated cost, can be reimbursed or recovered from enterprise and special revenue funds. In over simplified terms, the cost allocation plan is a single invoice for total services.

It is important to differentiate the terms “allocate” and “charge”. Every general fund operating department and non-general fund fund are “allocated” costs in the cost allocation plan. Not every operating general fund department and non-general fund fund is however, “charged”.

General fund operating departments are typically not “charged” their allocated costs. The costs allocated in the cost allocation plan are incurred by general fund departments. If for example, the jurisdiction “charged” the Police or Fire department, the city would have to appropriate additional general fund money to pay the allocated costs. This situation is essentially swirling the same general fund dollars.

However, it is common for Enterprise Funds and some special revenue funds to be “charged” for allocated costs. These funds either operate as a business with a unique customer base and revenue source or have characteristics that make it appropriate for these funds to actually pay for the administrative and support services they receive.

Should a local government choose not to charge an enterprise fund or certain special revenue fund for the administrative and supports services provided, then the jurisdiction is subsidizing those funds. The general fund is covering the administrative and support costs incurred by those enterprise and /or special revenue funds.

While these are the two most common reasons, local governments prepare cost allocation plans for

other reasons as well.

How do you test for reasonableness on charges?

A common reasonableness check is to compare the total allocated costs to a department's share of total Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) employees. FTE is a basis for this test because many administrative and support services are labor driven. Meaning the more personnel a department has, will often result in the more services, and therefore costs, that the department receives. Open Space is one of the larger departments from an FTE perspective, and in general the percentage of allocated cost is consistent with department size. Other large departments like Parks and Recreation and Transportation are treated similarly in the plan. Departments like Police and Fire are funded by the general fund, so they are not generally charged cost allocation. Another reasonableness test for allocated costs is the ratio of allocated costs to total expenditures for a department.

Next, we want to provide answers to individual OSBT questions. OSBT members have sent us over some great questions about cost allocation and Lottery funding. It may be of benefit for the whole OSBT to be aware of these questions and staff response. Questions received to date include:

General Budget Structure Questions

Q. How much of the overall funding of the department comes from the general fund vs. dedicated taxes?

A. OSMP receives a majority of funding from dedicated taxes, typically 92-96% of the Open Space Fund's overall revenues. The department previously received a transfer from the General Fund to pay for a Property Agent position that supported citywide efforts. The work of this position was changed to support OSMP exclusively in 2020 and the Open Space Fund absorbed the budget for the Property Agent on an ongoing basis in the 2020 budget. OSMP also previously paid into the general fund to account for Fire Department support around Wildland Fire. This payment to the general fund was eliminated and OSMP ensures role clarity around joint wildland fire initiatives through work planning and internal collaboration. OSMP also receives some allocation each year from the Climate Tax, depending on priority projects across the city. In 2024, for instance, the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) pilot project receives some funding from the Climate Tax to support programmatic work.

Q. Over the last few years, what is the percentage share of OSMPs budget relative to the total city budget? Is it growing? Is it shrinking?

A. OSMP's operating and CIP budget in 2024 is ~8% of the city's \$515.4M overall 2024 budget. If we go back the last several years, OSMP's budget has stayed about the same at 6-8% of the city's overall budget.

Cost Allocation Questions

Q. What would you say to people who think increasing the cost allocation is a way to divert dedicated OS funds to pay for overhead?

A. OSMP and the city organization have experienced incredible change since the last cost allocation

plan update – changes in the local economy, cost inflation impacting contracts and services, legislative changes like the Equal Pay for Equal Work Act which changed salary bands for employees, long-term financial impacts from the Marshall Fire like 100% increases to city property and casualty insurance, etc. As a city, we have also increased staffing and dollars across departments and across funding sources to support Council priorities, for example housing and homelessness, climate and wildland fire resilience, and asset management. The city has invested in major business infrastructure improvements like new financial and HR information systems. Across the city, the way that costs are allocated significantly changed with the exit of the Library Department from the organization, with other departments needing to absorb the cost allocation share that the Library previously paid. OSMP has actively participated in all these changes and initiatives and OSMP both receives and provides services across cost allocation categories.

The general fund and the cost allocation plan update are attempting to reckon with what it now takes to deliver internal or indirect services to the organization. Every time the cost allocation plan is updated, OSMP is interviewed around what services we receive, and we provide feedback around allocation methodology, shifts we'd like to see in the plan, etc. Every model is imperfect, but updating every few years allows us to capture changes over time. The previous model of cost allocation was updated in 2022 and was updated with a mix of 2021 and 2022 data. Increasing costs in the General Fund have mirrored increased costs in other funds across the city and this plan attempts to incorporate changes for the 2025 budget cycle.

There is no question that the cost allocation amount needs to be considered during OSMP's budget and workplan decision making. In 2025 we are anticipating a fiscally constrained environment, and with cost allocation increasing significantly while revenue growth slows, we will need to make strategic and balanced decisions across our OS Fund expenditure types to ensure a fiscally responsible budget. This does mean that within our current revenue structure we will accomplish fewer on the ground projects to afford the cost allocation increase. OSMP is fortunate to have a robust work planning and project management system, and even without cost allocation increases we are always in the position of needing to prioritize and fund only the highest priority items within annual revenues. The anticipated increase in cost allocation does impact our workplan for 2025, however it would be inaccurate to say that OSMP does not utilize the services that are listed in the cost allocation plan. We always provide feedback to Finance during plan development around the level, quality, and type of service we receive, but we also actively use and benefit from the services outlined in the cost allocation plan.

Q. Cost Allocation - The memo states that you expect cost allocation to increase in 2025 and that we will discuss it more in June. I would be curious to know if cost allocation is increasing for all City departments or if the OSMP share is increasing disproportionately.

A. Yes, cost allocation increases will be experienced by all departments receiving internal services support. Because OSMP is one of the largest departments, the amount of cost allocation dollars OSMP contributes is larger than smaller departments. In terms of proportionality, while the plan update has not been finalized yet, typically in years past the percentage of our budget that is directed

towards cost allocation is in line with other departments receiving these services. Right now, the city is still finalizing the cost allocation plan and determining when and how different components of the plan will be implemented. We will be prepared in June to provide some more details around cost allocation and address the question of proportionality.

Lottery Fund Questions

Q. Has the percentage or amount we received from the Lottery Fund changed over the years? Other than internal agreement on allocation, was there anything formal that said OSMP should get a set amount or percentage?

A. The Parks and Recreation Department, the Utilities Department, and OSMP have been appropriated Lottery Funds since 2011 in alignment with an understanding developed with the Central Budget Office. The understanding allocated ~42% of Lottery Fund dollars to OSMP, which has come out to about \$428,000 each year since the start of the agreement. Parks and Recreation historically received the same percentage of Lottery funds as OSMP, with the balance being dedicated to the Greenways program within Utilities. A key component of that understanding was that if the revenues shifted significantly or departmental needs changed, the structure of funding distribution could be changed. In 2023, the City Manager's Office and the Finance Department partnered to review all funding sources across the city and which revenues had fixed allocation (voter approved ballot measure, Boulder Revised Code language, City Manager rules, etc.) and which funding items had flexibility around how they could be allocated to accomplish city priorities. The decision was made during the 2024 budget development cycle in mid-2023 to change the way that Lottery funds were distributed. Beginning in the 2024 budget, Lottery Fund dollars were no longer appropriated based on the legacy understanding from 2011. Instead, they are appropriated at the direction of the Executive Budget Team and City Manager's Office on an annual basis.

The city's Executive Budget Team (EBT) reviews all budget requests across the city to determine if the request will be included in the City Manager's recommended budget which goes to City Council. The city has seen an increase in capital needs for parks, recreation spaces, and playgrounds over the years, so the EBT determined for 2024 that all Lottery funds would go to Parks and Recreation. OSMP updated the OSBT around this change, which occurred after the OSBT had already reviewed the capital plans for both the OS Fund and Lottery Fund. OSMP shared with OSBT that for 2024 we were not going to reduce capital projects because we could afford to absorb the projects that we thought would be Lottery funded into the OS Fund. At the time EBT decided to allocate Lottery Fund dollars to Parks and Recreation for 2024, the EBT indicated to OSMP that this would likely be true for 2025 as well. Trends for OSMP and Utilities also show more flexibility than Parks and Recreation funds due to the nature of the fund structure. During our "after action review" of the 2024 budget process with our partners in the Finance Department, OSMP requested that the EBT create a process through which departments could request access to Lottery Fund dollars so that there was clear understanding of Lottery Fund criteria and city priorities each year. The Finance Department indicated that this is something that they would be interested in developing, so it's possible in future years that OSMP could submit proposals for Lottery funding for consideration by the EBT. At this time, we don't

have a timeline for when this process may be created or implemented.

Q. What was the rationale for not getting lottery funding? Is this a one off or the new normal?

A. Appropriating the Lottery Fund at the direction of the Executive Budget Team and City Manager's Office on an annual basis will allow for more flexibility in the fund's uses on capital projects that meet the Lottery Fund's restrictions of use and assist with overall fund sustainability for all funds in the organization. We expect this type of annual review of Lottery Fund appropriations going forward.

Q. CIP and Lottery Funds - The memo states that OSMP's CIP has been funded by the Lottery Fund in past years and will not be funded by Lottery Funds in 2025. Why is this? What is the history of Lottery Fund allocation? Who makes this decision?

A. Up until the 2024 budget (in which OSMP did not receive any lottery proceeds), Lottery proceeds were typically divided up between Parks and Recreation, Utilities, and OSMP with OSMP receiving around \$428,000 per year which we typically allocated towards a CIP project. Last year, the city's Executive Budget Team and City Manager's Office made the decision that 100% of Lottery proceeds should be allocated to Parks and Recreation and this same allocation method will be in play again for the 2025 budget. Therefore, OSMP is not building in any Lottery proceeds into our budget. The city has been identifying a more sustainable funding strategy for the Parks and Recreation Department given some shortfalls/challenges that they have experienced with their specific revenue source streams.

Q. Is OSMP unable to do what it needs to do without this Lottery funding? If so, what are those things?

A. The Lottery Fund has historically provided around \$428,000 to OSMP which has been used to fund capital construction projects that meet the criteria for Lottery Fund projects. The OSMP projects that have been best suited to Lottery Fund criteria have been our cultural resource historic agricultural tenant housing rehabilitation projects and our capital trail construction projects, because they are discrete with clear project start/end dates, require one-time major investment and not ongoing dollars, and are "plaque-able", in other words can be attributed to being accomplished because of the investment of the Lottery Fund, compared with needing a variety of funding sources to accomplish which makes Lottery Fund financial tracking/reporting difficult. In 2024 when we learned we would not receive Lottery Fund dollars, we were able to absorb the projects we thought would be funded by the Lottery Fund into the OS Fund as a one-time decision based on 2024 funding availability. In general, yes, it does impact OSMP that this funding is no longer available, and based on annual OS Fund revenues OSMP will need to make strategic decisions around what level of funding is appropriate for capital projects compared with other department business needs. It is likely that fewer capital projects will be accomplished without these dollars or that a particular project may need to be scaled back or phased. That said, OSMP still funds capital construction out of the OS Fund and will continue to fund the highest priority capital projects that are requested through our annual work planning process.

We are not in a position of OSMP not being able to do what we need to do. In every budget cycle, we receive more project requests from staff than we can fund, and we know that we have deferred

maintenance needs across the OSMP system from both an ecological and infrastructure perspective. We will continue to make budget decisions that are aligned with city and department priorities and Master Plan Tier One strategies in a fiscally constrained environment.

We look forward to presenting the draft CIP tonight and will make sure to incorporate answers to any additional questions into the June budget materials.

Thank you,
Lauren

Lauren Kilcoyne
Deputy Director – Central Services
(pronouns: she/her/hers) [What's this?](#)

OSMP_lockup_COBLogo



kilcoynel@bouldercolorado.gov

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The City of Boulder acknowledges the city is on the ancestral homelands and unceded territory of Indigenous Peoples who have traversed, lived in and stewarded lands in the Boulder Valley since time immemorial. Those Indigenous Nations include the: Di De'i (Apache), Hinono'eiteen (Arapaho), Tsétséhéstáhese (Cheyenne), Nǫmǫnǫǫ (Comanche), Caiugu (Kiowa), Čariks i Čariks (Pawnee), Sosonih (Shoshone), Oc'eti S'akowin (Sioux) and Núuchiu (Ute). The City of Boulder recognizes that those now living and working on these ancestral lands have a responsibility to acknowledge and address the past and must work to build a more just future. [Read our full staff land acknowledgement.](#)

From: Burke, Dan <BurkeD@bouldercolorado.gov>

Sent: Wednesday, May 8, 2024 9:58 AM

To: Brady Robinson <Brady.Robinson.OSBT@gmail.com>; Harmon Zuckerman <harmon.OSBT@gmail.com>; Jon Carroll <jon.carroll.osbt@gmail.com>; Michelle Estrella <estrellaosbt@gmail.com>; Sarah Glynn OSBT <Sarah.Glynn.OSBT@gmail.com>

Cc: Kilcoyne, Lauren <Kilcoynel@bouldercolorado.gov>; Mcqueen, Samantha <McqueenS@bouldercolorado.gov>; Moffatt, Cole <MoffattC@bouldercolorado.gov>

Subject: Cost Allocation Questions

Good morning, Trustees. A few of you have written to me/staff on questions regarding cost allocation. What is it? How much does OSMP contribute compared to other departments? . etc..

Instead of responding individually to the trustee who asked the question, we think it would benefit the whole board if staff would send out responses and prepare some more context on cost allocation to all of you prior to tonight's meeting. As you know, the final cost allocation modelling results are not in

yet and that staff will be providing more information on cost allocation at the June meeting, including having finance staff representation there. But for context setting, we will put something together today and email that to you all by end of day. Thank you,

Dan

Dan Burke
Director, City of Boulder Open Space and Mountain Parks
303-817-3143

MEMORANDUM

TO: Open Space Board of Trustees

FROM: Dan Burke, Director, Open Space and Mountain Parks
Brian Anacker, Science and Climate Resilience Sr. Manager
Paul Dennison, Wildland Fire Sr. Program Manager
Andy Pelster, Agriculture and Water Stewardship Sr. Manager
Burton Stoner, Ranger Sr. Manager
Heather Swanson, Resource Stewardship Deputy Director
Chris Wanner, Vegetation Stewardship Sr. Manager

DATE: June 12, 2024

SUBJECT: Written Information: Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP); Open Space and Mountain Parks Disaster Response Team

This memo provides information on two projects:

1. The City of Boulder Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP), and
2. Open Space and Mountain Parks (OSMP) new disaster response effort called the Departmental Operations Center (DOC).

CWPP

This memo provides information regarding the 2024 update to the city of Boulder's Community CWPP (**Attachment A**). This is a city staff-initiated, consultant-supported, community-centered, cross-departmental planning effort to enhance the city's holistic and strategic approach to wildfire risk mitigation. The need for an update was galvanized by the Marshall Fire of 2021. The CWPP update and its implementation is funded in part by Boulder's Climate Tax, passed by voters in November 2022.

The overarching goal of the CWPP is to heighten the safety & resilience of the Boulder community to wildfire. The CWPP is not a regulatory document but a risk assessment with accompanying recommendations to mitigate those risks. The process to develop the 2024 CWPP update included forming a cross departmental city team, hiring a consultant, engaging external agency stakeholders, and performing technical analyses.

Public engagement also played a crucial role in the 2024 CWPP update, with community members actively providing input through various outreach opportunities. This included four webinars, a project webpage, public feedback on a first draft, and a public survey with 271 respondents. A key theme from the community engagement of relevance to OSMP was the need for coordinated fuels management, including continuous management of surface fuels, reforestation where appropriate, and designing treatments with habitat protection in mind.

The Boulder City Council was given an update on the CWPP at their May 23, 2024 study session (**Attachment B**), where staff received supportive feedback.

The CWPP contains nearly 40 operational recommendations structured around the three main goals of a larger national cohesive strategy: restoring and maintaining landscapes, fire-adapted communities, and wildfire response. City staff estimates that about 60% of the recommendations are already in motion and will be enhanced based on this plan update. For example, OSMP has a long history of vegetation management for the co-benefits of ecological health and wildfire risk reduction. These efforts align with many of the Resilient Landscapes (RL) recommendations, such as:

1. RL-01: Implement the ecological and wildfire mitigation strategies of past planning efforts (Current CWPP, Open Space and Mountain Parks Master Plan, Fire Master Plan, etc.)
2. RL-05: Develop prescriptions and implement hazardous fuels reduction in strategic locations targeting timber and shrub fuel models at the landscape level.

Recent and future enhancements that are connected to these Resilient Landscape recommendations have included increasing the size of the OSMP forestry crew, accelerating work on OSMP ditch fuel management, creating the OSMP WUI Perimeter Mowing Program, continuing ongoing weed management on OSMP property, and increased coordination and planning for prescribed fire and grassland research. These enhancements also support and align with recommendations in the CWPP to protect residential areas and promote fire adapted communities.

CWPP NEXT STEPS

1. Staff will implement the CWPP's stated recommendations using a cross departmental wildfire resiliency team that will help determine how best to prioritize, sequence, schedule, and assess the cost and capacity needed to address the plan's recommendations.
2. Regular monitoring and reporting of CWPP implementation will occur.
3. Several of the recommendations may be brought back to the Open Space Board of Trustees (OSBT) in the form of budget requests or policy decisions over the next five years.

OSMP Disaster Response Team

OSMP staff have created a model to improve their disaster response capabilities. This OSMP-specific disaster response team is referred to as the "Departmental Operations Center" or DOC. This effort is directly related to the CWPP Recommendation Safe and Effective Fire Response FR-04: "Encourage relevant City of Boulder Departments to develop plans and procedures for activating Departmental Operations Centers."

The name DOC was chosen based on consultation with staff from the Office of Disaster Management (ODM). ODM runs Boulder County's Emergency Operation Center (EOC), which

serves as the primary hub for disaster coordination. ODM staff welcomes and encourages City Departments to form their own disaster response team and suggests the brand of "DOC" to show alignment and avoid confusion between departmental efforts and the services provided by the ODM via their EOC.

The most critical period for the new OSMP DOC is during the initial hours of an escalating incident that is or is threatening to impact OSMP when other regional efforts like the EOC and Incident Command (IC) have yet to be fully established. The OSMP DOC provides clarity on how OSMP staff's roles shift during an event, provides key information about OSMP resources to staff and the EOC, IC, and other partners, determines how OSMP red carded staff might be deployed, and ensures that there is continuity of key OSMP services.

The new OSMP DOC will support the OSMP Ranger work group, which will continue their primary roles during disasters, such as incident/threat detection and communication of relevant information to OSMP leadership and other parties. The goal of the OSMP DOC is to augment the services that OSMP rangers already provide by increasing the pace and quality of coordination and communications.

The OSMP DOC will train staff to have dedicated roles during an emergency. When fully activated, the OSMP DOC calls for staff to be trained in five key roles:

1. OSMP DOC Director
2. OSMP DOC Coordinator
3. OSMP DOC Agency Representative (senior-most ranger)
4. OSMP DOC Planning and Operations Group Supervisor, and
5. OSMP DOC Logistics and Administration Group Supervisor

Currently, the OSMP DOC plan is still in draft. The plan contains several organizational charts, job aides to clarify expectations for staff filling different roles in emergency response, and flow charts to guide decision making.

OSMP DOC Next Steps

1. Staff will continue to develop and test the OSMP DOC model by conducting additional trainings and table-top exercises.
2. Staff will adapt and evolve the OSMP DOC with lessons learned during training and real events.

ATTACHMENTS:

- **Attachment A** – [City of Boulder Community Wildfire Protection Plan \(Interactive Story Map\)](#)
- **Attachment B** – [May 23, 2024 City Council Study Session Memo](#)

MEMORANDUM

TO: Open Space Board of Trustees

FROM: Dan Burke, Director, Open Space and Mountain Parks
Lauren Kilcoyne, Deputy Director of Central Services
Kacey French, Planning and Design Senior Manager
Katie Knapp, Principal Planner

DATE: June 12, 2024

SUBJECT: Written Information: Fort Chambers / Poor Farm Site Management Plan Update

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide a written update for the Fort Chambers / Poor Farm planning process ([Fort Chambers / Poor Farm Management Plan | City of Boulder \(bouldercolorado.gov\)](#)), sharing results from the recent community engagement window and anticipated next steps.

Context

The Fort Chambers / Poor Farm property is located east of North 63rd Street and south of Jay Road (an area map is included as **Attachment A**). The property is important to Open Space and Mountain Parks (OSMP) and the community due to its history and association with the Sand Creek Massacre and the land's significant ecological and agricultural resources.

City staff are working on a government-to-government basis with the three Sovereign Tribal Nations affected by the Sand Creek Massacre (the Cheyenne and Arapaho, the Northern Arapaho and the Northern Cheyenne) to receive and incorporate their meaningful input into the development of a management plan for the property. The Site Management Plan will identify future property improvements and guide ongoing land uses associated with the property.

Background

The 113-acre property was purchased in 2018 due to its ability to fulfill many OSMP charter purposes. Information about the property is shared online through an interactive [site information report](#) that informs the site planning process. The most recent Open Space Board of Trustees (OSBT) update was on March 13, 2024, where:

- information was provided about the site and ongoing planning process,
- Tribal Representatives joined OSMP staff to present a draft, collaborative [Concept Plan](#) based on the shared vision for the site: "Heal the Land; Heal the People," and
- the upcoming steps for community engagement were presented.

Previous updates to the board and council are available on the [project webpage](#).

Community Engagement Window

Community Engagement Goals and Outreach

There were multiple goals for the engagement window:

- inform the community about the site, its resources, history, and connection to the Sand Creek Massacre;
- share the collaborative efforts of staff and the Tribes to co-develop the plan; and
- understand the level of community support (or not) for the draft Concept Plan.

To gauge the level of understanding around the site's history and get feedback on the [draft Concept Plan](#) community members were invited to participate in an online questionnaire from March 25, through April 14, 2024. In addition, OSMP staff held two "office hours" or in-person listening sessions to hear directly from community members and answer questions.

The engagement window was broadly communicated through press releases, radio, email and newsletter announcements and social media, as well as being featured on the Denver 7 evening news. Additional outreach was done to reach and invite local indigenous community members.

Community Engagement Results

473 Community Members participated in the questionnaire (results are included as **Attachment B**). When asked about their familiarity with the Fort Chambers / Poor Farm site and the Sand Creek Massacre, respondents reported a higher level of familiarity with the Sand Creek Massacre (26% extremely familiar and 41% moderately familiar) and less familiarity with the Fort Chambers / Poor Farm site (10% extremely familiar and 25% moderately familiar). Respondents also showed a higher level of knowledge about specific information related to the Sand Creek Massacre and were not as aware that:

- After gold was discovered in 1859, the Boulder City Town Company was founded and settlers moved into the area, violating the 1851 Treaty of Fort Laramie which recognized Colorado and the Boulder Valley as Cheyenne and Arapaho lands (51% aware).
- In 1864, more than 100 Boulder area residents formed Company D, a U.S. cavalry unit that actively participated in the Sand Creek Massacre (53% aware).

As part of the questionnaire, information was provided about the city's collaborative efforts with Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribal Representatives to co-create a Concept Plan that reflects our shared values. Respondents expressed a high level of support for this collaboration (86% strongly support, 6% somewhat support).

Respondents also showed a high level of support for the recommendations included in the draft concept plan:

- "Healing the land" through a large-scale ecological restoration effort along the Boulder Creek corridor (84% strongly support, 9% somewhat support)
- "Healing the people" through an interpretive, healing trail that provides space for people to learn, reflect and heal (83% strongly support, 8% somewhat support)

- Continued agricultural operations utilizing the high-quality agricultural land for vegetable production, continuing hay field operations and improving existing structures to support agricultural uses (54% strongly support, 23% somewhat support).
- Overall recommendations in the Concept Plan (66% strongly support, 18% somewhat support)

To better understand why people might support or oppose the plan recommendations, respondents were asked about specific items:

- The shared vision of “Heal the Land; Heal the People” (80% strongly support, 9% somewhat support).
- The integration of ecological restoration, agriculture, and interpretation / contemplative, recreational experiences on the site (73% strongly support, 16% somewhat support).
- Providing educational information about the Sand Creek Massacre that includes Indigenous perspectives (86% strongly support, 6% somewhat support).
- The repair and restoration of the Queen Anne style historic house (42% strongly support, 23% somewhat support).
- The planting and harvesting of indigenous plants (80% strongly support, 10% somewhat support).
- Limiting recreational activities to walking/hiking only to support contemplative experiences (68% strongly support, 15% somewhat support).

The questionnaire provided a small space for written comments with an option to provide longer length comments through a comment form. Over 300 written comments were received. The comments were sorted into unique ideas/themes and grouped by subject area to provide an overview of community sentiment (see **Attachments C and D**). There were also several questions included in the comments. A list of questions and clarifications are provided as **Attachment E**. A full [compendium of comments](#) is also available.

The comments spanned a wide range of ideas with a few prominent themes:

1. **Tribal Collaboration and Indigenous Representation:** Many comments stress the importance of meaningful collaboration, consultation, and prioritization of the desires and needs of Indigenous Tribes.
2. **Overall Support and Appreciation:** The project is seen as a valuable step towards acknowledging and addressing historical injustices. Many expressed gratitude and hope that it will set a positive precedent.
3. **Historical Acknowledgment and Healing:** There was a strong emphasis on recognizing historical injustices, such as the Sand Creek Massacre, and supporting efforts for healing, education, and commemoration of Indigenous history and heritage.

During the engagement period, a few community members expressed concerns that the Concept Plan lacked a visual representation of Fort Chambers (a marker, memorial or reconstruction) and that the Tribal Representatives concerns were not being addressed. Information was distributed that encouraged people to comment about this. We received a batch of similar comments requesting that we listen to the Tribes and include a visual representation of the fort. Other community members expressed interest in telling the story of early settlers. Comments concerning the design of interpretive elements will be further considered after the Concept Plan is finalized in a subsequent, more detailed design phase. More details are provided below under “next steps”.

Standard demographic questions were included to better understand who participated (and did not participate) in the questionnaire. Results indicate that the most respondents were from the City of Boulder (48%) or the surrounding area (44%). There was a good mix of respondents with different income and education levels. The majority of people who provided information on their background indicated their race was white (90%); 7.4% indicated they were American Indian/Native Hawaiian. This number is significant because only 0.9% of people in the City of Boulder were American Indian/Native Hawaiian according to the 2020 census.

Tribal Collaboration

The community input was reviewed and discussed with Tribal Representatives on May 29, 2024. There was encouragement by the high level of community support and general consensus that the Concept Plan would not need revisions to support the shared vision and the educational and interpretive elements desired. Tribal Representatives reaffirmed that the site should be a healing place for all and they would like Boulder County residents to be included in sharing information and healing from past atrocities. They also confirmed that they have felt listened to throughout the process and our collaboration has been a positive experience.

Next Steps

Based on the strong level of community support for the draft Concept Plan and follow-up conversations with Tribal Representatives, no major revisions to the Concept Plan are anticipated. Minor revisions are expected as the design advances. It is anticipated that staff will return to the board later this summer (likely at the July OSBT meeting) with a *final* Concept Plan for board consideration.

Once the OSBT provides its feedback and guidance on the Concept Plan, we will continue our collaboration with the Tribes, designing interpretive elements along the healing trail - exploring what information to share, and how it is presented. We will also start the design and implementation of other plan elements including the ecological restoration and farmstead improvements. This next phase of the project will include finer scale design, cost estimating, and implementation sequencing.

Attachments

- **Attachment A:** Area Map
- **Attachment B:** Questionnaire Results
- **Attachment C:** Short Comment Summary
- **Attachment D:** Long Comment Summary
- **Attachment E:** Questions and Clarifications



FORT CHAMBERS / POOR FARM - AREA MAP

P OSMP Trailhead with Parking

A OSMP Access Point - parking on public roads

P Other Boulder Area Trailhead

--- OSMP Hiking Trail

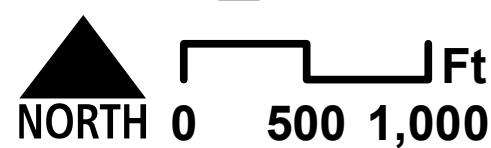
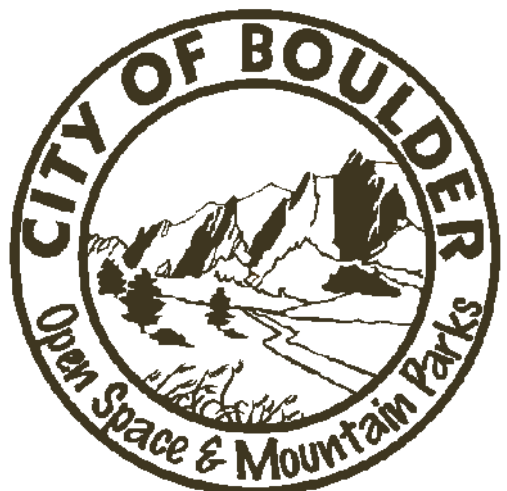
--- OSMP Multi-Use Trail

--- Other Boulder Area Trails

--- OSMP Easement

--- OSMP Ownership

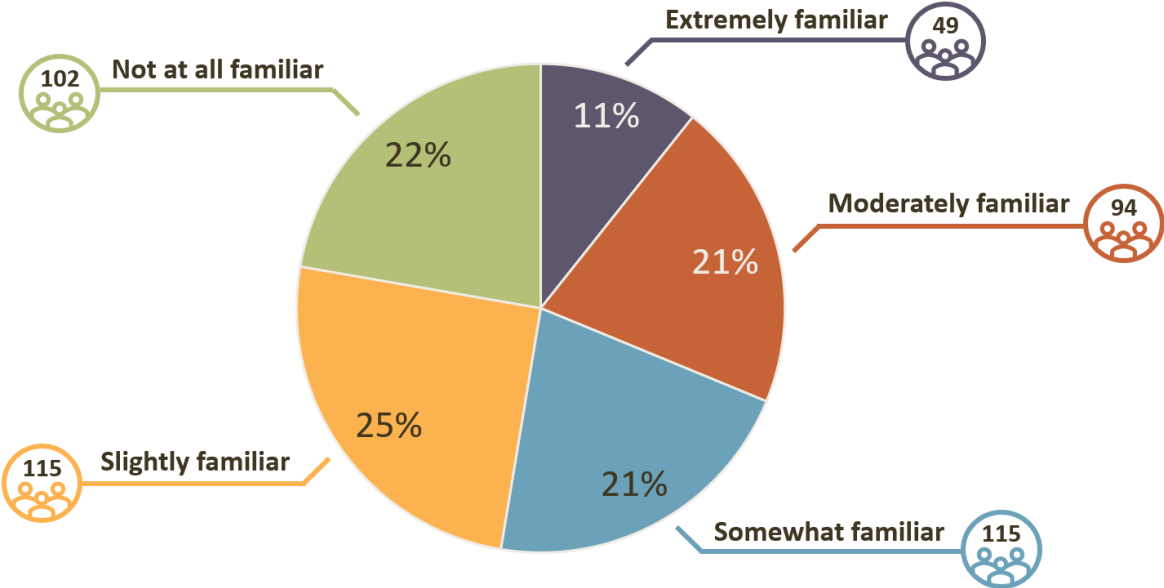
--- Boulder County Open Space



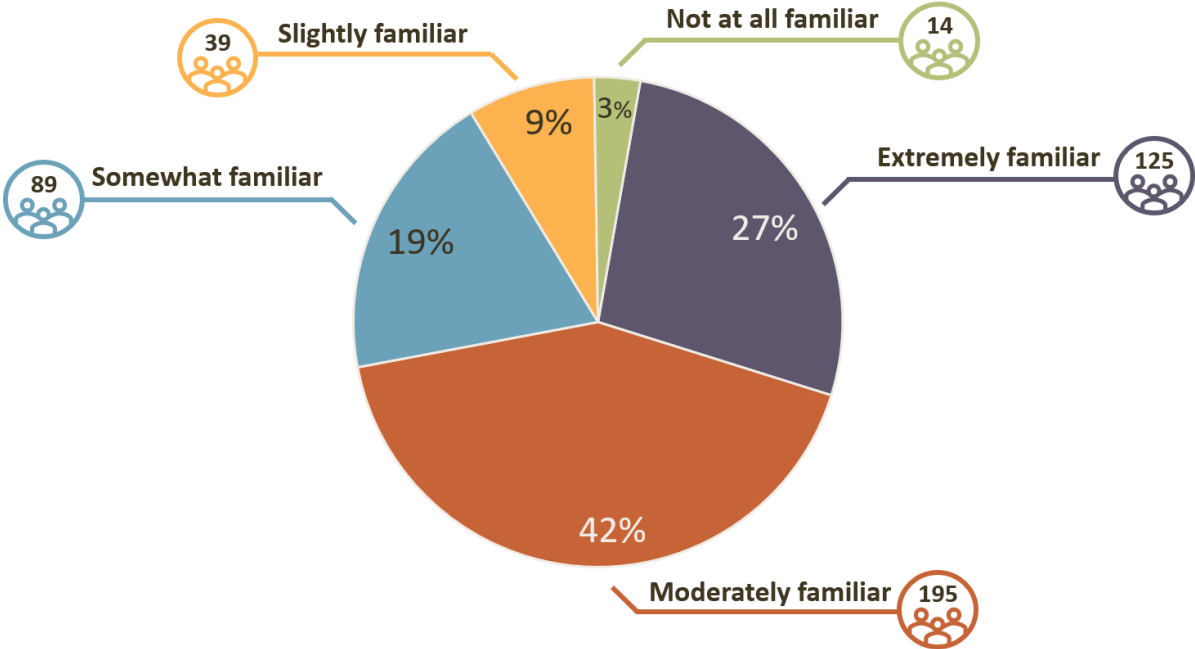
Fort Chambers / Poor Farm Concept Plan Feedback

Questionnaire Response Summary

Q1: Are you currently familiar with the Fort Chambers / Poor Farm Property?

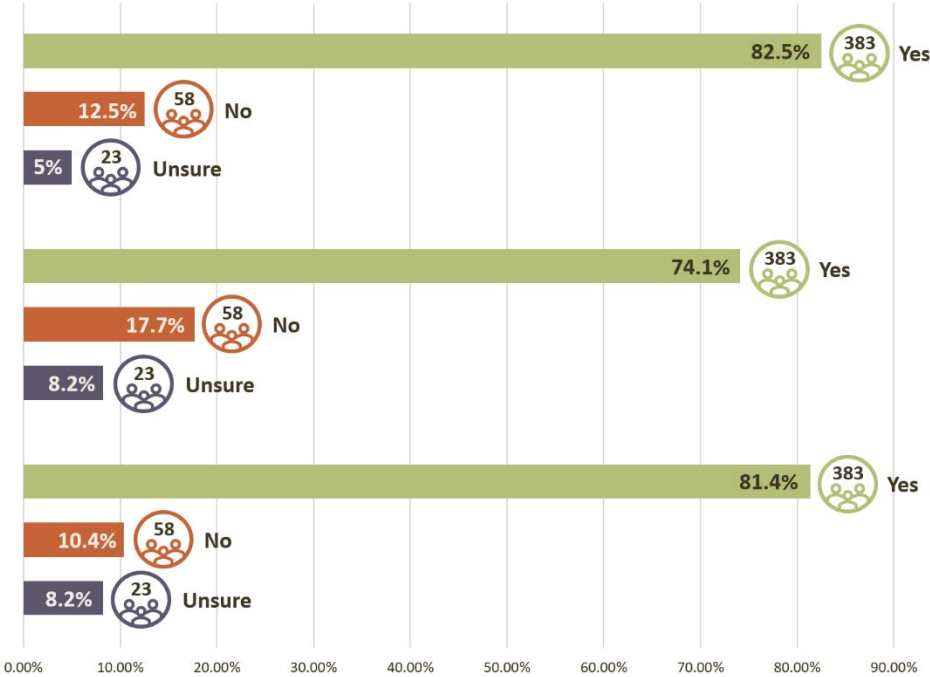


Q2: How familiar are you with the Sand Creek Massacre?

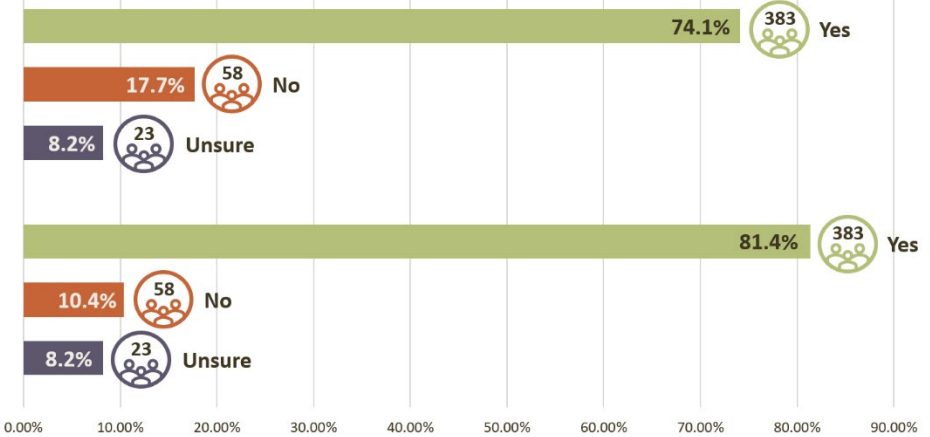


Q3: Did you know...

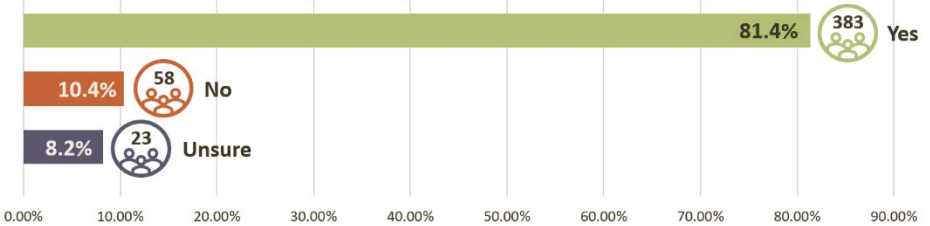
The Sand Creek Massacre was the deadliest day in Colorado history; 230 people were killed, mostly women, children, and elders.



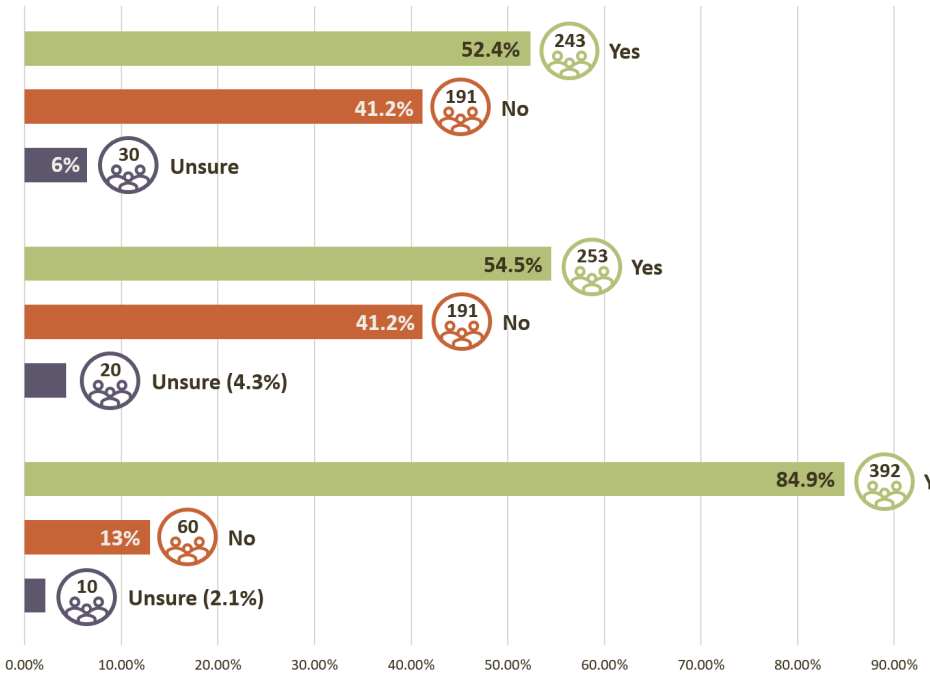
Boulder Valley residents benefitted directly from Indian removal policies and the spread of misinformation about Indigenous Peoples and historic events.



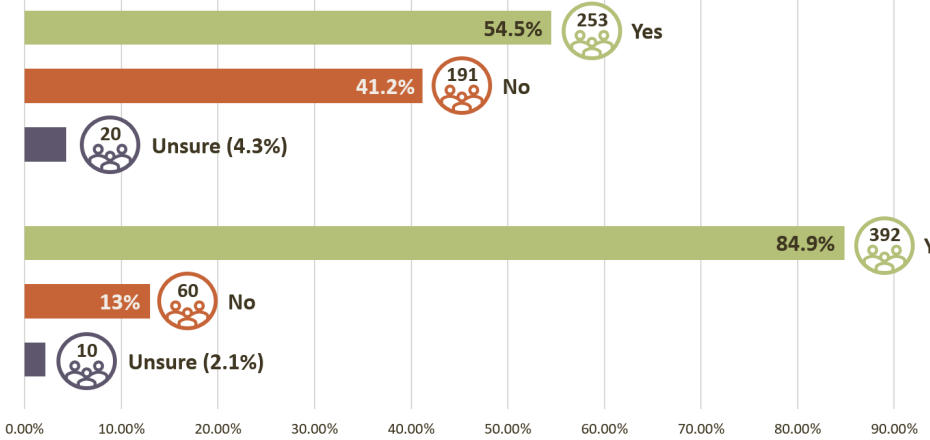
The intergenerational trauma from the massacre continues to impact Tribal members today.



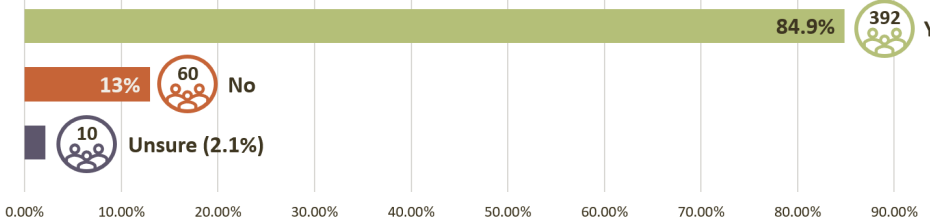
After gold was discovered in 1859, the Boulder City Town Company was founded and settlers moved into the area, violating the 1851 Treaty of Fort Laramie which recognized Colorado and the Boulder Valley as Cheyenne and Arapaho lands.



In 1864, more than 100 Boulder area residents formed Company D, a U.S. cavalry unit that actively participated in the Sand Creek Massacre.

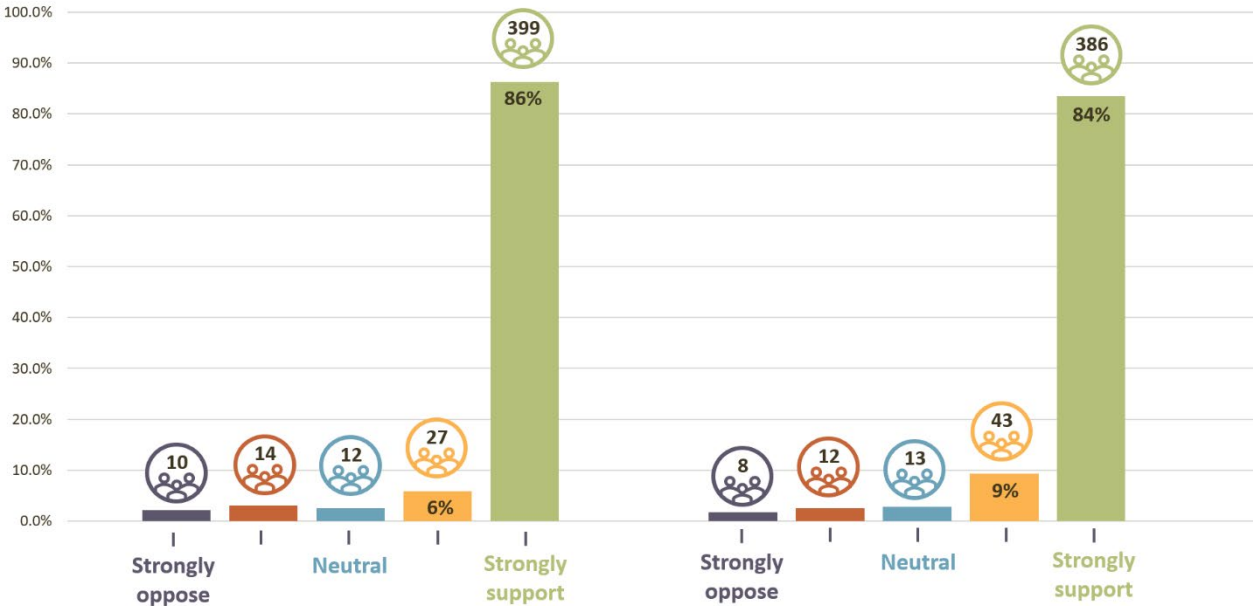


On November 29, 1864, the Cheyenne and Arapaho people were surprise-attacked by U.S. troops after being promised protection.

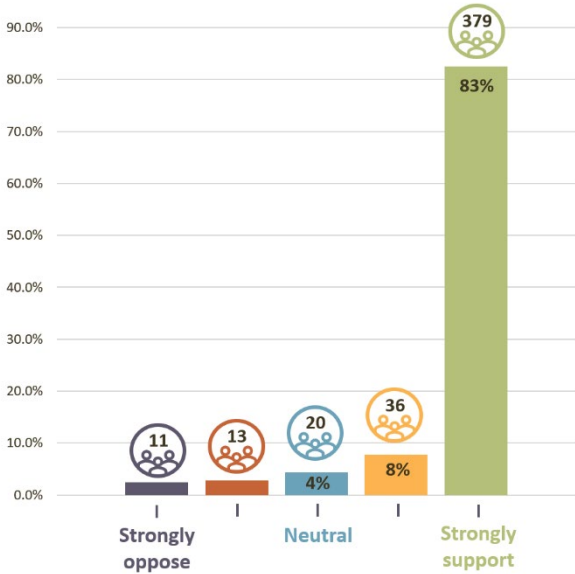


Q4: To what extent do you support or oppose the city’s collaboration efforts with Tribal Representatives to co-create a Concept Plan that reflects our shared values?

Q5: To what extent do you support or oppose the recommendations for “healing the land” through a large-scale ecological restoration effort along the Boulder Creek corridor?

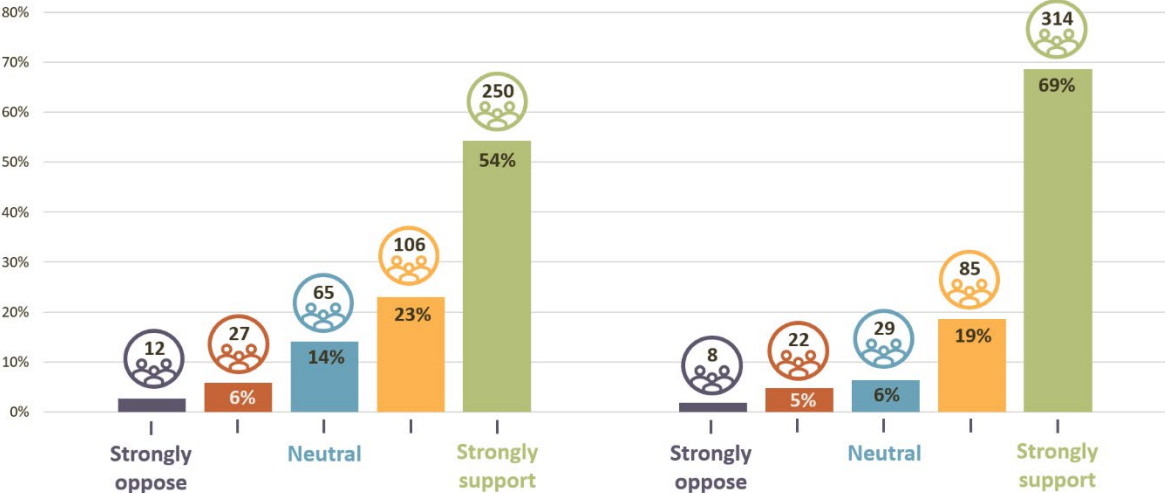


Q6: To what extent do you support or oppose the recommendations for “healing the people” through an interpretive, healing trail that provides space for people to learn, reflect, and heal?

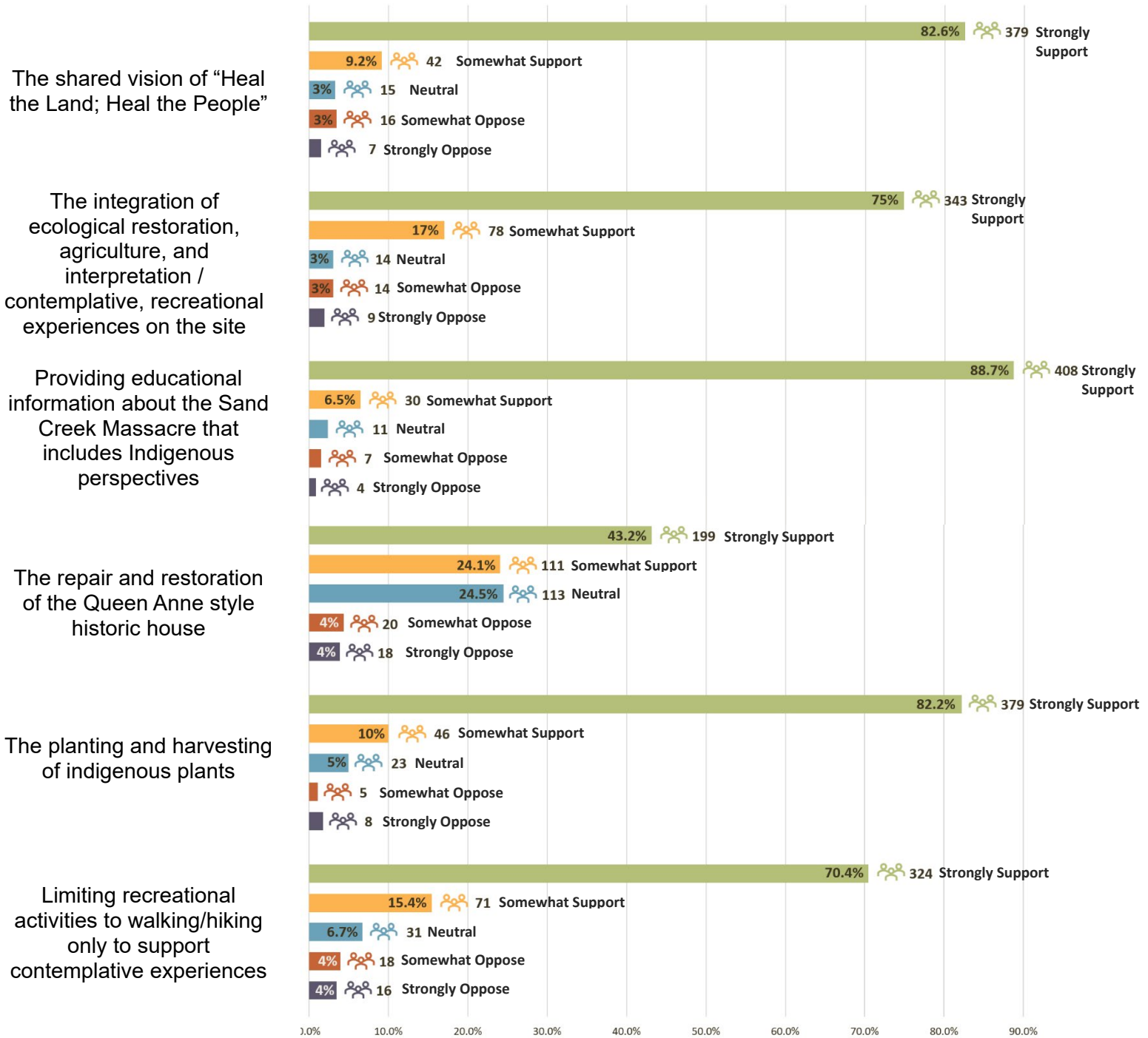


Q7: To what extent do you support or oppose the recommendations for continued agricultural operations on the site, utilizing the high-quality agricultural land for vegetable production, continuing hay field operations, and improving existing structures to support agricultural uses?

Q8: Overall to what extent do you support or oppose the recommendations in the Concept Plan?



Q9: Please indicate to what extent you support or oppose the following plan recommendations.

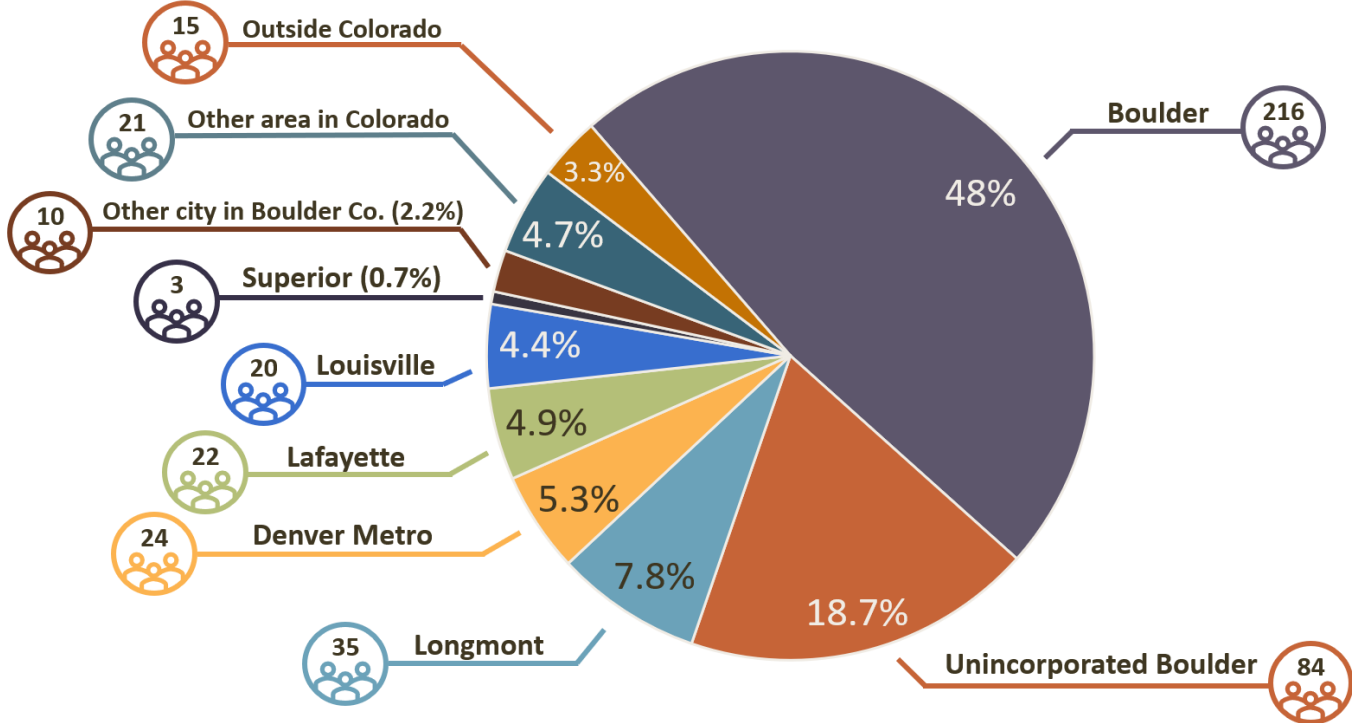


Q10: Please indicate any additional reasons you might support or oppose the draft Concept Plan:

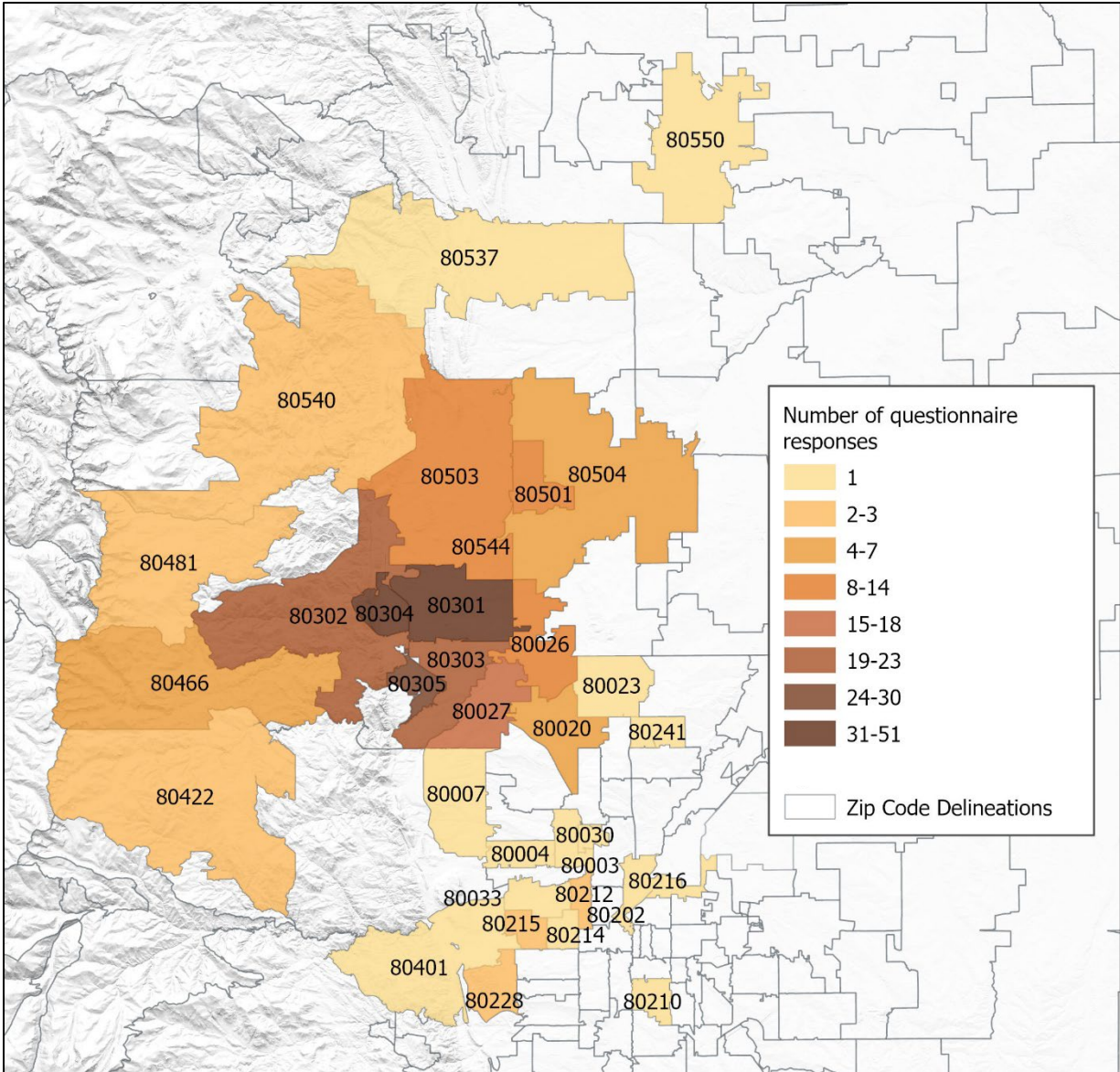
Please see the comment summaries and [compendium](#) for written comments.

Demographic Questions:

Q11: Where is your PRIMARY residence?



Q12: What is your zip code?



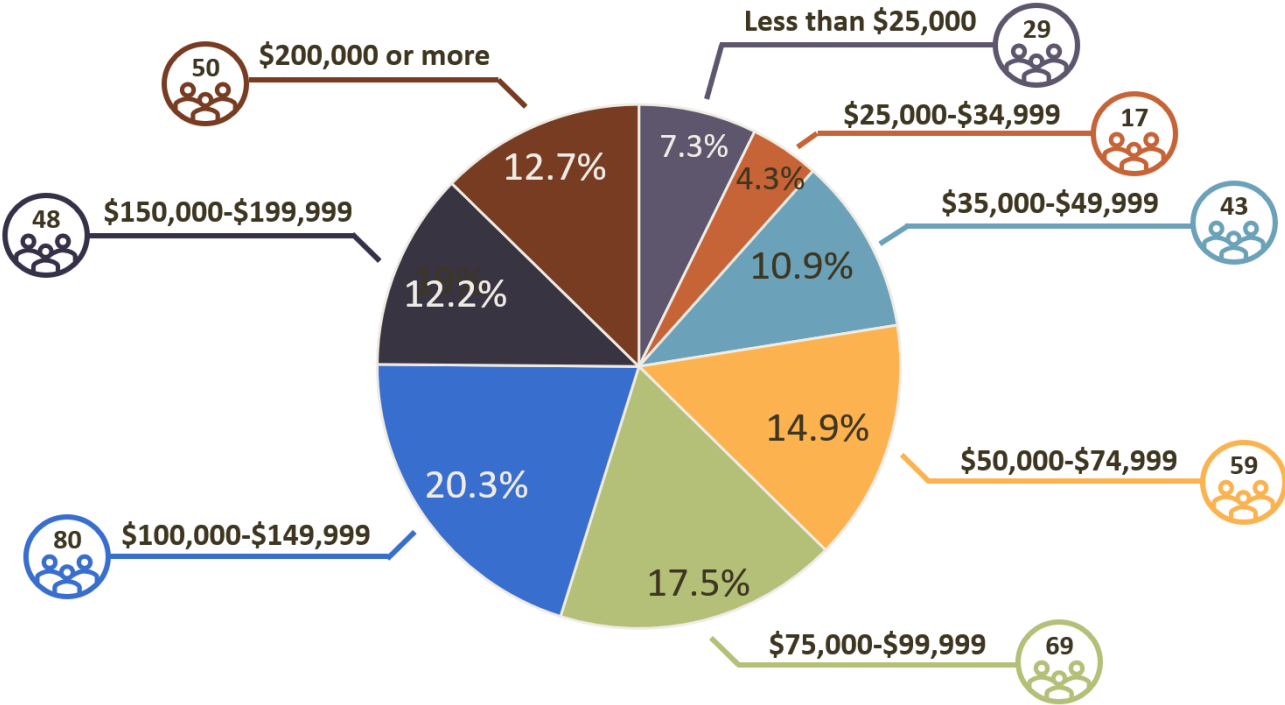
Rest of Colorado:

- Monument, CO 80132 – 1 response
- Parker, CO 80134 – 1 response
- Grand Junction, CO 81507 – 1 response
- Woodland Park, CO 80863 – 1 response

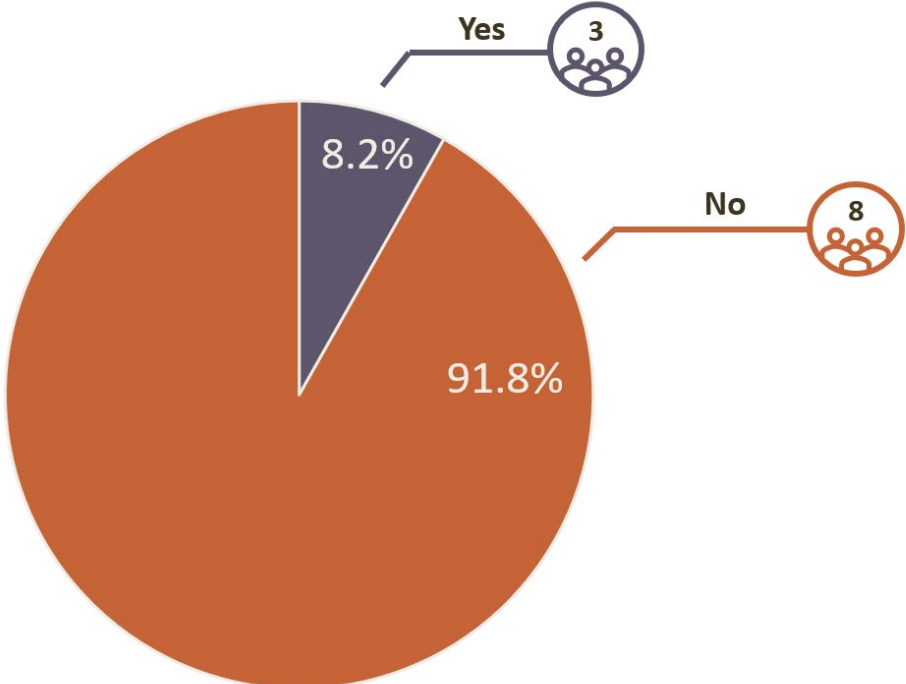
Outside Colorado:

- San Anselmo, CA 94960 – 1 response
- Colfax, NM 87740 – 1 response
- Placitas, NM 87043 – 1 response
- Gallup, NM 87301 – 1 response
- Norman, OK 73071 – 1 response
- Concho, OK 73022 – 1 response
- Fort Worth, TX 76179 – 1 response
- West Salem, WI 54669 – 1 response

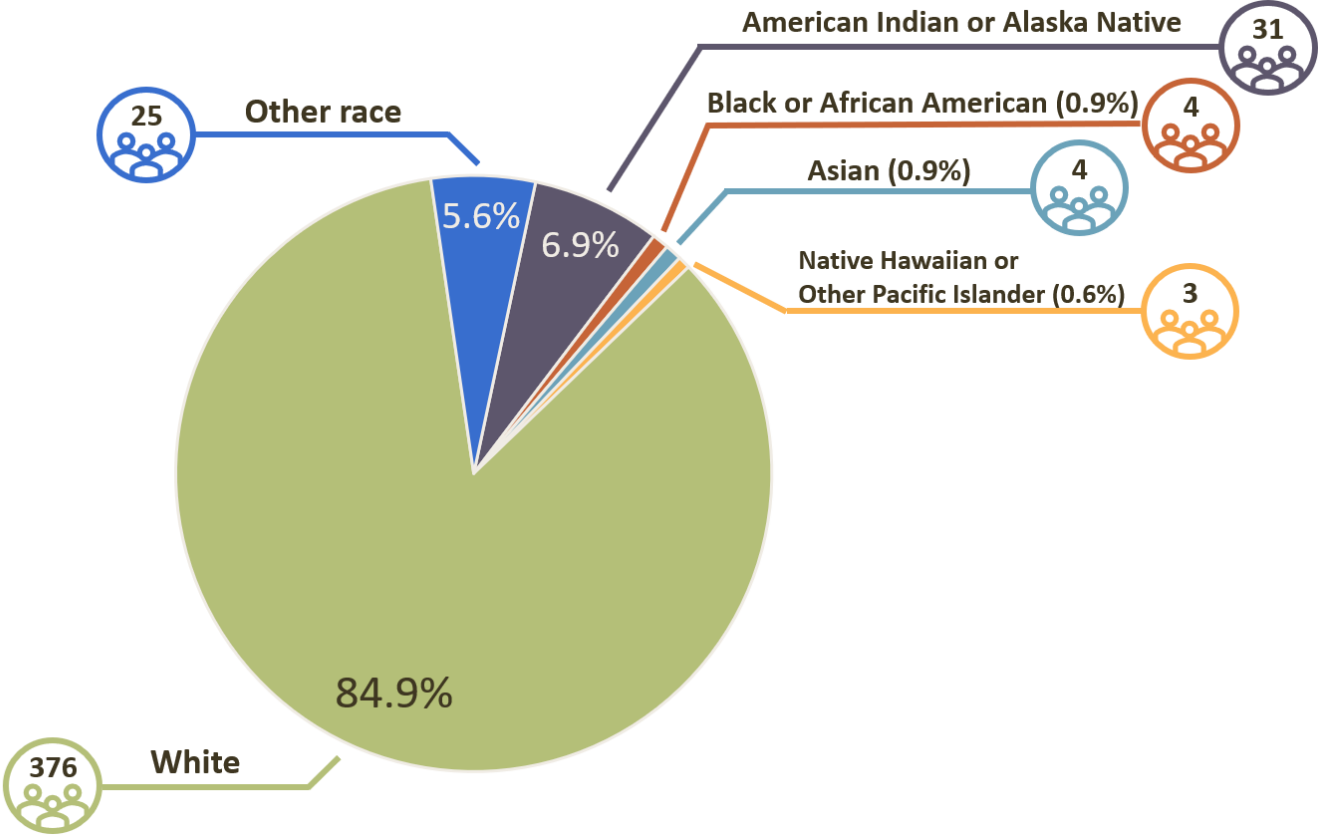
Q13: What range most closely represents your total household income?



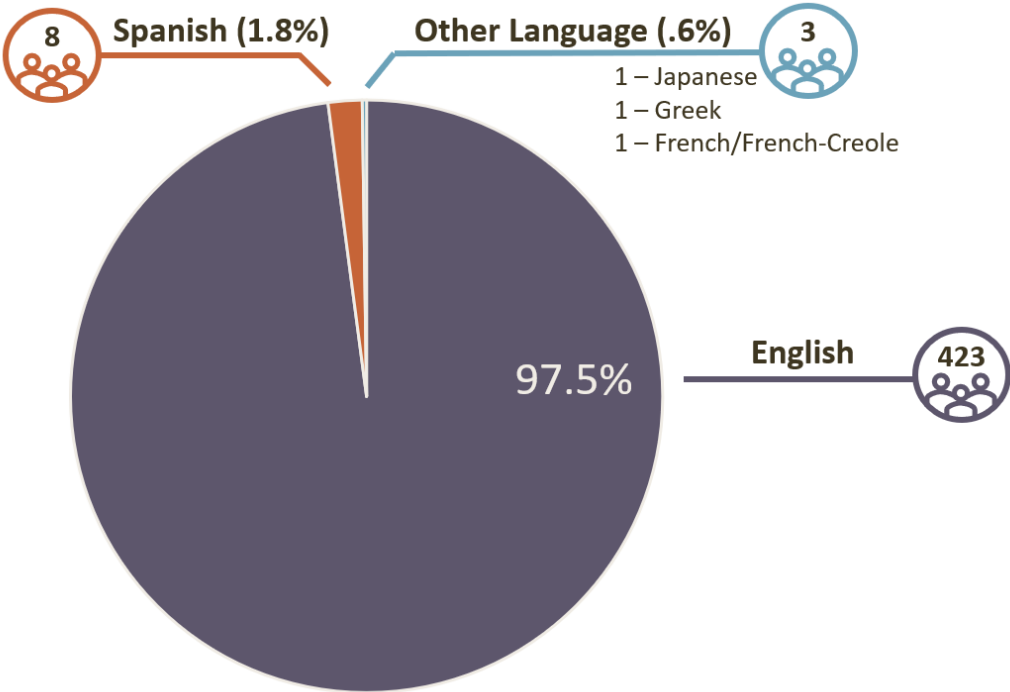
Q14: Are you or Hispanic, Latina or Spanish origin?



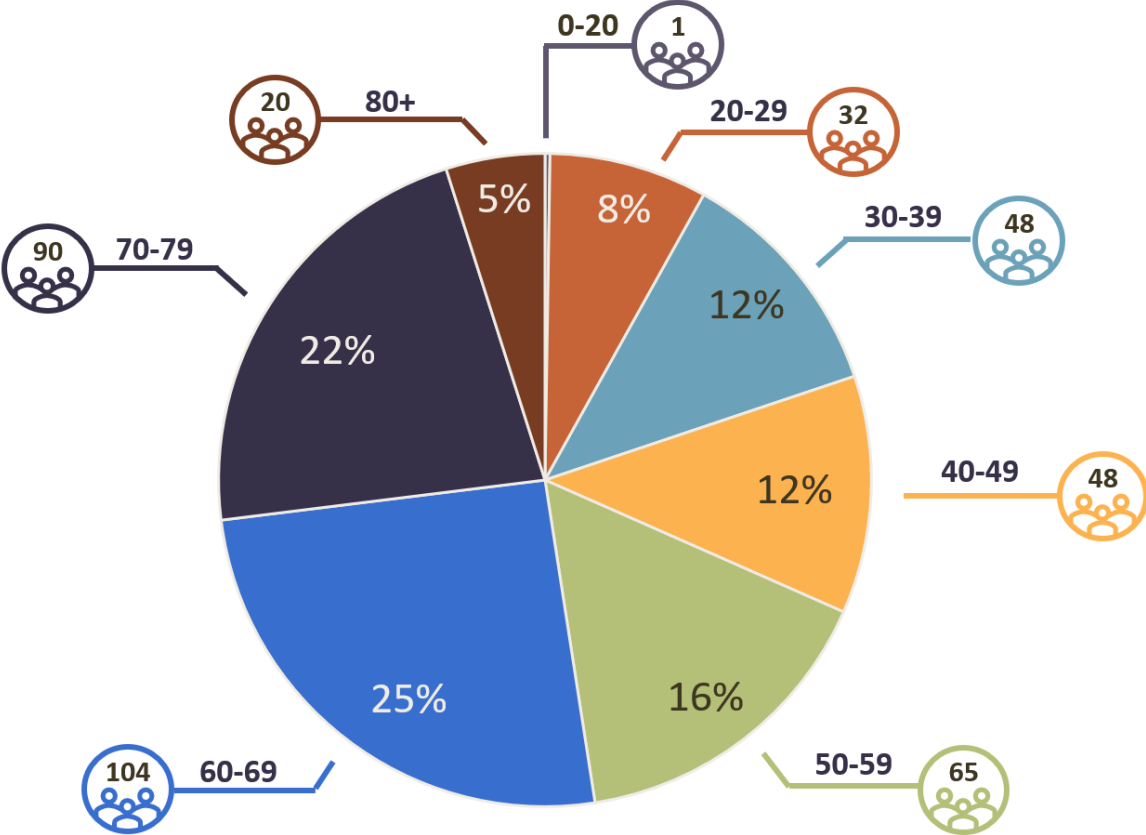
Q15: What is your race? (select one or more boxes)



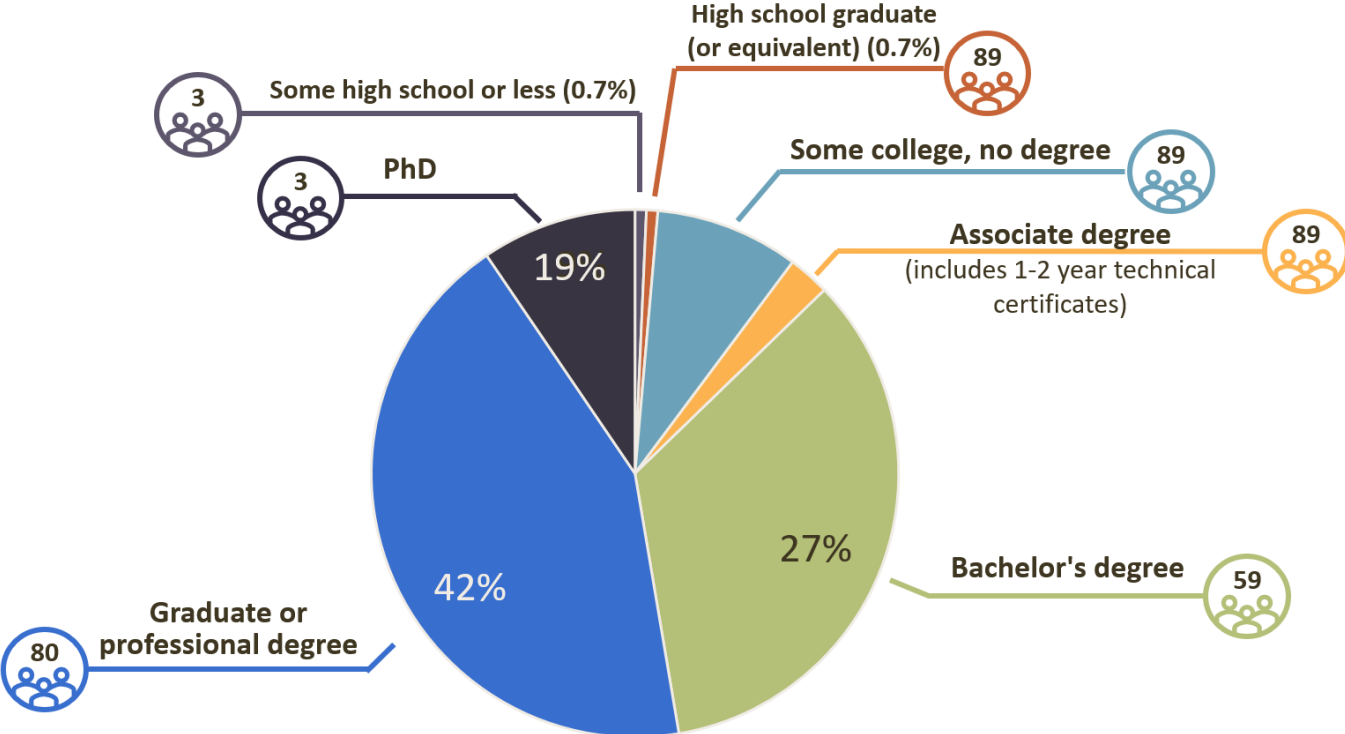
Q16: What language do you primarily speak at home?



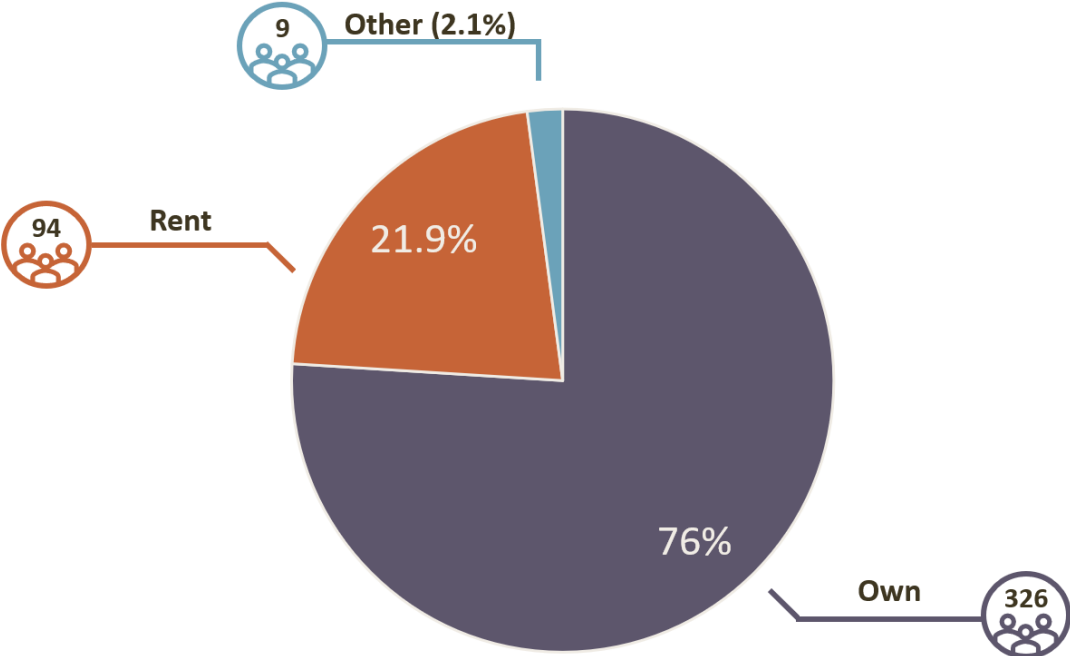
Q17: How old are you (in years)?



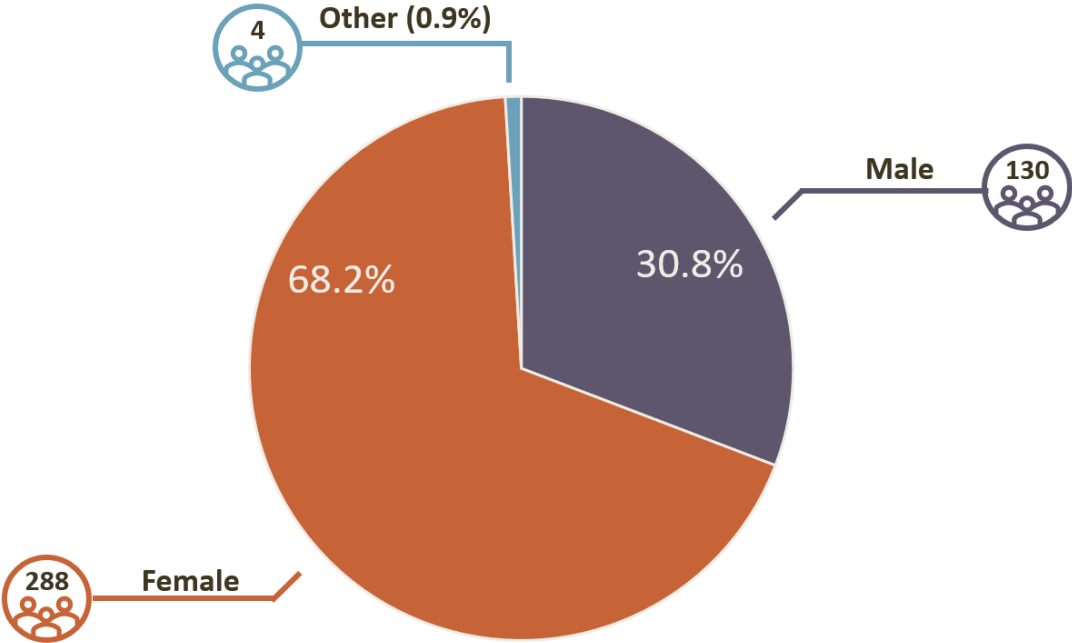
Q18: What level of education have you completed?



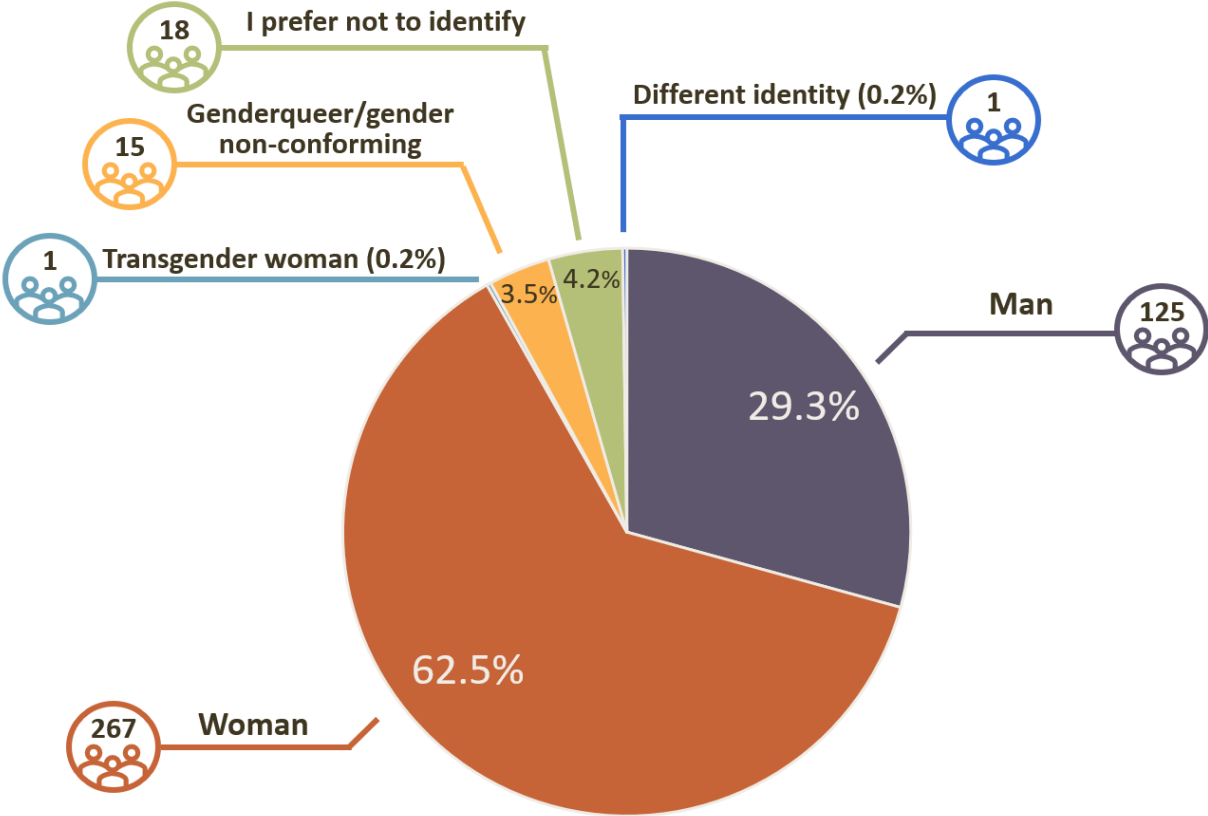
Q19: Do you rent or own your home?



Q20: What sex were you assigned at birth?



Q21: What is your current gender identity?



Fort Chambers / Poor Farm Concept Plan Feedback

Questionnaire Comment Summary: Unique Ideas and Themes

An online questionnaire was developed to receive community feedback on the city's collaboration with Tribal Representatives and the recommendations presented in the draft Concept Plan. Respondents provided comments through an open comment box in the questionnaire. These comments have been grouped into categories with unique ideas presented below. Similar ideas were tallied together with individual comments shown *in italics*.

Tribal Collaboration/Indigenous Rights	Count	% of Respondents
Support for honoring Tribes / Indigenous People in stewardship/decision-making process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>I encourage you to incorporate and involve Tribal perspectives and leadership to your fullest extent.</i> <i>As descendant of a Colorado homesteader, I am grateful to honor the true ancestors of this land.</i> <i>I support the plan to the extent that it truly represents the wishes of the original stewards</i> <i>Going forward, I hope that the tribes are consulted at every stage in the process.</i> 	46	9.7%
Suggestions to return/share land to the Arapaho and/or Cheyenne Nations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Give the land back to the Arapahoe and Cheyenne</i> <i>The stolen land and home should be given back to Indigenous people with no strings attached.</i> 	13	2.3%
Support for Tribal rights, justice/reparations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Justice for Indian removal and massacre is long over-due.</i> <i>Reparation needs to happen and this is a good start.</i> 	7	1.5%
Concerns that Tribal perspectives not fully represented <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Although it looks good in print, I'm not sure OSMP is being responsive to the requests of the tribes</i> <i>Consultation with the Tribes has lacked FPIC and overlooks their concerns about the fort itself</i> 	6	1.3%
I am Native American and/or have a connection to the Sand Creek Massacre <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>I am an enrolled member of the Cheyenne & recognized survivor of the Sand Creek Massacre.</i> <i>I am the first generation of my lineage to reclaim our native roots here in Colorado.</i> 	5	1.1%
Support for indigenous beliefs/knowledge/practices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Resilience through indigenous practice</i> <i>Indigenous communities can flourish</i> 	4	0.8%
Allow Tribes to use site (gathering, teepees, camps, etc.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>include the opportunity for tribal people to convene meetings, camps, education, erect teepees etc</i> 	3	0.6%
Support for Native people sharing perspectives / teachings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Input from native people - impt to share their perspectives / they should write interp panels.</i> 	3	0.6%
Broken/violated treaties <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>we broke EVERY Treaty, and the earth itself.</i> 	2	0.4%
<i>Interested in who the Tribal representatives are and their qualifications for selection.</i>	1	0.2%
<i>I believe OSMP should contact Indigenous people who live in Boulder Valley for their feedback.</i>	1	0.2%
<i>I also support options that financially benefit Arapaho nation members & other tribal people.</i>	1	0.2%

Tribal Collaboration/Indigenous Rights	Count	% of Respondents
<i>I would like to know how this will be connected to furthering Tribal presence and livelihood in BoCo</i>	1	0.2%
<i>I believe it should be the cheyenne and Arapaho member that should be the ones to distrust any soil.</i>	1	0.2%
<i>City can be the part of hosting group but not main leader of this. It is too traumatic for native.</i>	1	0.2%
<i>Should recognize the Arapahoe teepee circles on the land north of CO72 at Coal Creek Canyon. Rename</i>	1	0.2%
<i>I empathize with those whose elders were slaughtered because my family members were also slaughtered</i>	1	0.2%
Total Comments:	97	20.5%

Ecological Restoration	Count	% of Respondents
Preference for native habitat over agricultural land/ hayfields <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>I would prefer a native prairie grassland instead of the hay fields.</i> <i>I think we need to reduce the agricultural footprint and restore more land to natives.</i> 	3	0.6%
Support for environmental restoration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Return this land to its natural state for ecological balance for native animals/plants organically.</i> 	2	0.4%
<i>Will the restoration and maintenance be done in the most respectful + environmentally friendly ways?</i>	1	0.2%
<i>call the governor, get yourselves some wolves!</i>	1	0.2%
<i>Ecological restoration should be the primary focus followed by education. Recreation should not focu</i>	1	0.2%
<i>I would more native plants/native animal habitat than what is shown by planting native hedgerows.</i>	1	0.2%
Total Comments:	9	1.9%

Healing Trail / Education & Interpretation / Recreation	Count	% of Respondents
Support for education/learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>This is an incredibly valuable educational opportunity.</i> <i>I feel it's important to create opportunities for local residents and visitors to learn the TRUTH!</i> 	19	4.0%
Support for healing concept / healing programs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Any way we can move toward healing trauma is necessary and commendable.</i> <i>I support giving more land to the Healing Trail for healing purposes.</i> 	10	2.1%
Comments recognizing site history/information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>This is not a place of honor but rather a camp where a shameful plan started.</i> <i>the story of this land is a beautiful complex painful one that very much points to who we are</i> <i>I'd like to see the agricultural history and the Poor House buildings included in the plan.</i> 	9	1.9%

Healing Trail / Education & Interpretation / Recreation	Count	% of Respondents
Do not support limiting the use. (Biking/horseback or additional paths desired.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>I am not sure about limiting the use. What about biking and horseback riding?</i> <i>Let the people bike. Cars are bad.</i> <i>connect to sawhill for better access please</i> 	5	1.1%
Mark/rebuild the fort/provide visual representation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Please provide a visual representation of Fort Chambers so we don't forget what happened there</i> <i>make the Fort physically visible as indiginous recomme</i> <i>Mark and memorialize the location of the fort.</i> 	5	1.1%
Comments questioning site history/information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Some of the facts in City literature don't appear to be accurate and I suggest review for accuracy</i> <i>No evidence Ft Chambers here; encourages victim mindset</i> 	4	0.8%
Reinstall stone marker <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>I think it extremely important to resurrect 1959 marker as an educational tool!</i> <i>Agree with Mosqueda the original marker should return, but only along with education and new one.</i> 	2	0.4%
Questions/concerns about healing concept <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>this "healing" thing is OLD !!!</i> <i>It seems there is support for "heal the land" is there more being planned for the "heal the people"</i> 	2	0.4%
Additional parking <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Add more parking.</i> <i>Need 20 spaces.</i> 	2	0.4%
Support for youth participation & programs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Bring youth of the Arapahoe and Cheyenne Nations to participate in open events.(some in DVR)</i> <i>Integrate school programs for life skills and state history. Bring kids out to learn and plant trees</i> 	2	0.4%
<i>This area should not be a place for joyful rec.</i>	1	0.2%
<i>limit to walk/hike IF good bike parking</i>	1	0.2%
<i>Plan for large commemorative events.</i>	1	0.2%
<i>Put the markers by parking, not by road</i>	1	0.2%
<i>Entry and interpretive sign site #2</i>	1	0.2%
<i>Please make sure it's handicapped accessible and also interesting for kids</i>	1	0.2%
<i>Please add bathrooms</i>	1	0.2%
<i>Locking restrooms. Ranger & museum house. Water station.er</i>	1	0.2%
<i>no need for a bathroom</i>	1	0.2%
<i>I would like dogs to be allowed</i>	1	0.2%
<i>Keep it dog free</i>	1	0.2%
<i>Please model the walking path after that of Pipestone Natl Monument. Contemplative.</i>	1	0.2%
<i>I've spent time at the Sand Creek Massacre site. It's well done and important educationally.</i>	1	0.2%
Total Comments:	73	15.4%

Agriculture / Farmstead Structures	Count	% of Respondents
Support agriculture for good cause / food for Tribes / food banks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Distribute fresh produce to food banks and tribes.</i> • <i>Native people should benefit from the harvest on the Poor Farm property.</i> • <i>Would support use of agricultural land more if it went to a good cause, like food bank</i> 	7	1.5%
Support for continued agriculture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>We need local agriculture, please support the farmers who steward this land.</i> • <i>needs ag worker housing + better ag access</i> • <i>PRESERVE THE OPEN SPACE, AG, HOUSE</i> 	5	1.1%
Suggestions for sustainable, or specific agricultural practices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>I support ag only if TEK and sustainable methods are used. Consider agrivoltaics as well!</i> • <i>Working agriculture should either be regenerative or historical in nature.</i> • <i>European honeybees should be excluded.</i> 	5	1.1%
Opposition to growing hay/food for animals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Should we use water to grow hay for wealthy people's horses? I question propped up agriculture here.</i> • <i>I do not support agriculttue for non-human uses (like hay). I only support for direct human consump</i> 	5	1.1%
Comments/questions about historic house restoration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>I don't know much about the historic house & am not sure it is important to restore for this</i> • <i>Don't understand connection with the restoration of the Queen Anne style home?</i> 	5	1.1%
Support for restoration of the historic Queen Anne home and/or agricultural buildings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Immediate, better care and use for the Queen Anne home & Ag buildings is high concern.</i> 	4	0.8%
Comments/questions about agriculture/OSMP leasing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>It is unclear who would operate the farm and how the Nations would benefit.</i> • <i>I would like to know more about who would be farming the land and exactly how the house would be use</i> 	3	0.6%
Suggestions for a museum <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Hopefully, the structures can be developed into a Boulder County Agriculture Museum</i> 	3	0.6%
Opposition to funding house/structure restoration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Restoring farm buildings is a waste of resources.</i> • <i>concern: OSMP should not pay for house restoration</i> 	3	0.6%
<i>In my opinion, resources should be mostly applied to the historical aspects of the site</i>	1	0.2%
<i>Restore house for Native use lodging</i>	1	0.2%
<i>An archaeological survey/excavation should happen before continued agricultural cultivation.</i>	1	0.2%
<i>Food systems heal us.</i>	1	0.2%
Total Comments:	44	9.3%

General Comments	Count	% of Respondents
Support for plan / good idea / right step / overdue <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Full support. Thank you!!! I'm so happy to hear about this.</i> • <i>We will never take away the intergenerational indigenous suffering, but these are necessary steps.</i> • <i>I've biked and run by the site knowing the history for thirty+ yrs, and this plan is well-reasoned.</i> • <i>I think this is a long overdue plan.</i> 	31	6.6%
Opposition / general criticism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Sounds a little too woke to me...</i> • <i>The past is right where it belongs...in the past. Instead of reflecting on the negative. Look beyond</i> • <i>All of the proposals are Boulder White Liberal Hippie fantasies without regard to tribal values.</i> • <i>Very disappointed that this is so far along WITHOUT the involvement of the Valmont community!!!!!!!</i> 	9	1.9%
Concerns about traffic <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>As a person who uses jay rd often my only concern is increased traffic</i> • <i>61st/Andrus/63rd can't take more traffic without the county making significant improvements</i> 	3	0.6%
Concerns about cost <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>I'm concerned about the costs associated with plan</i> 	3	0.6%
Concerns about project being performative <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>My one apprehension is that it will become performative.</i> • <i>I want it to be a plan that will actually address pain, not just performative activism.</i> 	2	0.4%
Would like to volunteer / help with project	2	0.4%
<i>Consistent with local rural lands</i>	1	0.2%
<i>use of more mass transportation to limit impact to the ecology of the site</i>	1	0.2%
<i>What tax is Boulder county going to impose to make this happen?</i>	1	0.2%
<i>I have gone to that site many times to paint (I am an artist) and love the site and the area...</i>	1	0.2%
<i>PLEASE DO NOT BUILD MORE LUXURY APARTMENTS THERE! NO BUILDING!</i>	1	0.2%
<i>My greatest concern is for expansive education and ceremony over the 10 year implementation.</i>	1	0.2%
<i>the city could also ask for volunteers to help when able.</i>	1	0.2%
Total Comments:	57	11.8%

Questionnaire	Count	% of Respondents
More information needed/requested <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Give me more info if you want my opinion</i> • <i>I really do not know what an indigenous plant is.</i> • <i>SorryThe context is not clear.</i> 	4	0.8%
Comment box too small	2	0.4%
<i>u should provide more feedback time</i>	1	0.2%
<i>EXcellent survey.</i>	1	0.2%
<i>This ridiculous push survey is a perfect example of why I don't trust Bldr govt idealogues.</i>	1	0.2%
Total Comments:	9	1.9%

Fort Chambers / Poor Farm Concept Plan Feedback

Long Comment Summary: Unique Ideas and Themes

An online questionnaire was developed to receive community feedback on the city's collaboration with Tribal representatives and the recommendations presented in the draft Concept Plan. To supplement the questionnaire, longer comments were accepted via an online comment portal. Comments received during the March 25 – April 14, 2024 engagement period were grouped into categories with unique ideas presented below. Similar ideas were tallied together with individual comments shown *in italics*.

Tribal Collaboration/Indigenous Rights	Count	% of Respondents
Support for honoring Tribes / Indigenous People in stewardship/decision-making process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Sand Creek Massacre Foundation is deeply appreciative of the City of Boulder's collaboration with the Arapaho and Cheyenne tribes on this historically and culturally significant project.</i> • <i>It is crucial that the plan implement any recommendations from the tribal representatives, and we must fully understand what they would like this site to include.</i> • <i>Involving the tribes in the plan can't fix what happened historically, but it is the right thing to do.</i> • <i>I love this coming together for everyone. Peace will follow collaboration.</i> 	20	36.4%
Treaty violations/Land belongs to tribes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>It's also important to acknowledge that all this land is stolen and by treaty belongs to the Arapaho and Cheyenne but even more, there needs to be acknowledgment of the problematic nature of these sorts of treaties themselves and how they were often signed in coercion</i> • <i>We need to convey how Boulder's prosperity partly rests on treaty violations and on the murder of Indigenous people.</i> 	10	18.2%
Concerns that Tribal perspectives not fully represented <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>First, I believe that OSMP is making a good faith effort to include Tribal perspectives in the site management plan. Still, I have heard from connections in the Native community that "collaboration" thus far has been insufficient in their view, and that statements on the planning site indicating full support of the Tribes thus far may be somewhat inflated.</i> • <i>The Fort Chambers Management Plan indicates that Boulder OSMP has collaborated with Cheyenne and Arapaho tribal leaders. This is somewhat misleading because, while consultation has happened, OSMP has often been unresponsive to the wishes of the tribes.</i> 	6	10.9%
Allow Tribe-specific use of site (gathering, ceremonies, etc.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Are the tribal reps interested in allowing for some form of sacred site use e.g. a sweat lodge on the property or some other facility that would be primarily for tribal use? A mourning area just for tribal use? I don't know what the tribes would consider appropriate, but please have this discussion and listen to them and be willing to think outside the box to accommodate them.</i> • <i>I hope this history and healing project will have space so that the tribal people can use it for ceremonies, meet ups, and cultural rebuilding</i> • <i>include the opportunity for tribal people to convene meetings, camps, education, erect teepees etc</i> 	5	9.1%

Tribal Collaboration/Indigenous Rights	Count	% of Respondents	
Support for land back/monetary reparations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Please give the Arapaho and Cheyenne people of Boulder Valley the right to decide what will be done with their land...what should be taught to visitors and whether this portion of their land should be restored to them or whether they prefer monetary reparations made to them for this grave injustice.</i> <i>Whatever it is that [the tribes] want, fund and support that while simultaneously returning them their rights to self-governance and autonomy over their own homelands.</i> 	5	9.1%	
Support for Tribal rights, justice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>I will be disappointed if there is anything less than a full tribute to Ute, Arapaho, and Cheyenne people...It is time to take responsibility.</i> <i>Please help correct the terrible treatment of the Native Americas.</i> 	4	7.3%	
Inclusion of indigenous Boulder residents in planning/reparations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>It is especially important for the Indigenous people living in the Boulder Valley to have an opportunity to comment on the concept plan. How has the city reached out to them?</i> <i>What I miss most are the Native people themselves in Boulder – high rents, historical and other realities have pushed them out! Getting the Fort Chambers site “right” by the Arapaho and Cheyenne is therefore a high priority; along with bringing Native people into visible participation, voice, with paid positions in Boulder.</i> 	3	5.5%	
Total Comments:		53	96.4%

Ecological Restoration	Count	% of Respondents	
Support for environmental restoration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>I fully support the following: "Prioritizing future stewardship on ecological restoration and exploring opportunities for indigenous plantings and harvesting by Tribal members." ... Also support removal of invasive species.</i> 	4	7.3%	
Specific restoration suggestions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Options for Northern leopard frog habitat? Consider some native plant pollinator landscaping on the site where visitors will see it.</i> <i>Take land back to a natural grassland with the possibility of adding a few buffalo.</i> 	3	5.5%	
Total Comments:		7	12.7%

Healing Trail / Education & Interpretation / Recreation	Count	% of Respondents
Mark/rebuild the fort/provide visual representation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>We support the tribes' desire to have the location of Fort Chambers identified in the plan and we believe a visual marker must be provided so that all will remember the significance of this property.</i> <i>The tribal representatives want the fort's location to be a visual reminder of the 1864 Sand Creek Massacre. To ignore their request is shameful. Admit our crimes by honoring their perspective.</i> <i>We need a replica, sculpture or a memorial structure (ideally a replica) to remind us of the part the Boulder played in this shameful historic event.</i> 	21	38.2%

Healing Trail / Education & Interpretation / Recreation	Count	% of Respondents
Support for education/learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>We are unfortunate inheritors of that history and need to stand in healing responsiveness to it. There is much specific healing that needs to take place. It begins with education and awareness!</i> • <i>I hope that the spirit of this project is to really educate the public about the true depth of the crime committed against innocent people who had lived and hunted, prayed and played in this very environs.</i> 	11	20.0%
Support for healing concept / healing programs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The concept centered on healing the people, healing the land is inspiring and comforting.</i> • <i>The name of the plan "Healing the People, Healing the Land" is a good one. Don't overlook this opportunity to start the healing in the exact place that the pain and injury to the Cheyenne, Arapahoe, and people of Boulder began.</i> 	6	10.9%
Reinstall stone marker <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Why remove the inaccurate stone marker? Alongside the wrong "Chambers Indian war" marker there should have been an accurate marker depicting the truth.</i> • <i>Fred Mosqueda (S. Arapaho) has also asked that the marker that was placed in 1959, citing the "Indian uprising", be replaced...People need to know that the citizens of Boulder still believed there was an "uprising" in 1959 and many years after that.</i> 	6	10.9%
Support for Native people sharing perspectives/teachings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Let [the indigenous people] design or write the interpretive materials if they want. Perhaps let them re-name the property?</i> • <i>I would welcome some interp info about the tribes as they are today – where they live, what they are doing, present tense stuff, etc.</i> • <i>Truth and reconciliation meetings with Indigenous People, as they desire, could/should be held on this property.</i> • <i>Make sure Native American people can be on site to educate so we can all work toward connecting, learning from each other and becoming a we instead of us and them.</i> 	6	10.9%
Comments questioning focus on/depiction of the fort <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Granted that the Sand creek massacre was horrific, but the purpose that Fort Chambers was build is the protection of local families and they are the ones that built the fort. There was no organized militia at that time...Fort Chambers is not a tie in to the Sand Creek massacre any more that was Julesburg, Denver, Boulder or any other place that assisted or provided men for the the purpose of 'destroying' the Indian.</i> • <i>Relatively speaking, [Fort Chambers] played al very small role in the Sand Creek Massacre...All who live in Boulder are a part of a tragic history, so why do we absolve ourselves of that history and just focus on a relative few who volunteered and went to a inconsequential sod fort that didn't last long?</i> 	2	3.6%
<i>I believe the Fort Chambers plan is inadequate to accomplish the healing that is listed as a goal of the plan...How miserly and greedy are we that there cannot be a portion of this open space dedicated to [the Cheyenne and Arapaho's] use.</i>	1	1.8%
Total Comments:	59	107.3%

Agriculture / Farmstead Structures	Count	% of Respondents
Opposition to any non-Tribal focus (agriculture, building restoration, ecological restoration) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>With an additional agricultural focus, I am concerned that the current plan doesn't put reparations work and the needs/desires of the tribes as primary.</i> <i>...the most important part of the project should be to designate space for indigenous people to gather and heal, and to clearly convey the history of what happened at Fort Chambers and the impact on Indigenous people. I think land restoration and agriculture should be secondary to these goals.</i> <i>It is unclear what a farm and restored victorian home have to do with Tribal perspectives.</i>	5	9.1%
Support for sustainable, or specific agricultural practices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Do restorative agriculture to set example for global climate change problem.</i> 	4	7.3%
<i>Please restore that gorgeous old house.</i>	1	1.8%
<i>My only other comment is to express disappointment that the house or dormitories won't be restored to provide housing for Cheyenne and Arapaho and or Native students attending CU...or to create a Native American Knowledge Center.</i>	1	1.8%
Total Comments:	11	20.0%

General Comments	Count	% of Respondents
Support for plan / good idea / right step / overdue <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>As the current residents of Boulder, this is a critical opportunity to honestly and appropriately reckon with our nation's crimes of racism, genocide, and colonization is happening in many places around the country. We should set a good example for others to follow.</i> 	14	25.5%
Would like to volunteer / help with project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>I'd like to volunteer, if you can use "a little old lady in tennis shoes."</i> <i>Wildlands Restoration Volunteers is a nonprofit focusing on ecological restoration and trail construction...If WRV can help expand the capacity/ funding needed to complete these plans, we would love to do so.</i> 	10	18.2%
Would like to be kept up to date on project	6	10.9%
Opposition / general criticism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Develop it. It is not historically significant.</i> <i>The 'poor farm' was so long ago AND No one is 100% sure that location was ever the fort. Plus, this is ignored but It was the Wells farm property for 100 years!</i> 	2	3.6%
<i>There are financial considerations which must be openly addressed by taxpayers before any final plans are developed.</i>	1	1.8%
Total Comments:	33	60.0%

Questionnaire	Count	% of Respondents
Comment window too small <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The 100 character limit on comments within the questionnaire is unreasonable and clearly inadequate to facilitate meaningful comments.</i> 	4	7.3%
Feedback timeframe too short <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The 2 week comment period is too short, especially because one of those weeks was spring break.</i> 	4	7.3%
<i>I'm curious around why the survey was designed in a way that seeks feedback from all people? ...it isn't truly equitable to ask all of Boulder to decide on an issue that disproportionately impacts Native people.</i>	1	1.8%
Total Comments:	9	16.4%

Fort Chambers / Poor Farm Concept Plan Feedback

Questionnaire Comment Summary: Questions and Clarifications

1. Is it possible for the Arapaho & Cheyenne Nations to eventually have the land returned to them.

An important part of the city's collaboration with Arapaho and Cheyenne Tribal Representatives for the Fort Chambers – Poor Farm project was to understand their desired long-term relationship with this land. Tribal Representatives said they were not interested in owning the Fort Chambers / Poor Farm property but would like to remain involved long-term by providing meaningful input and advice on future land stewardship and education/interpretive materials. Our ongoing conversation with Arapaho and Cheyenne Tribal Nations is part of a broader city-wide government-to-government consultation process with 16 different Tribal Nations that is also focused around understanding their desired, long-term relationships with the land.

2. Are the perspectives of Indigenous people actually integrated into the final product? Or talk only.

Given the land's connection to the Sand Creek Massacre, the city prioritized receiving guidance from Tribal Representatives representing the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes, the Northern Arapaho Tribe and the Northern Cheyenne Tribe. With their guidance the Concept Plan was developed. Through follow-up conversations, meetings and site visits it was confirmed that the Concept Plan reflects the guidance they provided. We will continue to work with Tribal Representatives to ensure that their perspectives are accurately integrated into the final product.

3. Is this what Tribal Nations want? Or is it a compromise? SandCreek should be FROM their perspective!

Please see response above. Once this phase of the project is complete and a Concept Plan is finalized, we will move into the next phase of design. In this subsequent phase we will be working with Tribal Representatives to develop educational and interpretive elements for the site. The city recognizes that it is critical to reflect Indigenous perspectives in how the events and stories are told.

4. Will the restoration and maintenance be done in the most respectful + environmentally friendly ways?

OSMP does restoration and management in a very ecologically respectful way. We follow strict practices so that resources are protected during construction, time construction with consideration of native wildlife breeding and hibernation schedules, only use native vegetation that is often sourced locally.

5. Why is farming still being done? Where do the ag products go?

Preserving agricultural uses and land suitable for agricultural production is an [OSMP Charter purpose](#). One of the primary reasons OSMP purchased the property was to preserve agriculture values. The FCPF property has also been identified as one of a small number of properties, with adequate water, soils, and infrastructure (housing and outbuildings) suitable to support a diversified vegetable and livestock operation and represents a best opportunity to support local diversified agriculture. Agriculture has continued on the site since acquisition because ending such day-to-day stewardship would negatively impact the property's agricultural and natural resource values. Any future agricultural leases will be guided by the concept plan.

The most recent agricultural tenant operated a Community Supported Agricultural (CSA) operation and sold their agricultural products to their members and at local farmer's markets.

6. Could the agricultural land be used for Indigenous people to support local Indigenous community?

The City will use its [Agricultural Land Use Assignment Guidelines](#) (Guidelines) to select an agricultural tenant for the property. An agricultural operation that grows Indigenous crops and/or is associated with the indigenous community could be awarded the property lease if their management proposal ranks the highest using the criteria outlined in our Guidelines.

7. Problem: Do the tribes benefit from the farming.- is money generated for beneficial programs?

Please see response above. The city leases its agricultural lands to local farmers and ranchers. The money generated from the agricultural operation are the lessee's profits and ultimately supports the preservation of local agriculture. Agricultural lease payments collected by OSMP are used to support OSMP programming.

8. Should we use water to grow hay for wealthy people's horses? I question propped up agriculture here.

The Fort Chambers Poor Farm has supported various types of agricultural production over time. Hay and livestock grazing was the predominant use of the property for many years prior to OSMP's purchase of the property. The property was converted to a more diversified vegetable and livestock operation after the City purchased the property as the FCPF property was identified as one of a small number of properties suitable to support a diversified vegetable and livestock operation. Hay production may be part of future operations, but it is anticipated that the forage resources on the property will be used to support grazing animals for food production rather than hay production for sale to the local equestrian community.

9. Don't understand connection with the restoration of the Queen Anne style home?

Preserving agricultural values and land suitable for agricultural production is an [OSMP Charter purpose](#). In addition to preserving agricultural land, OSMP also preserves the necessary and associated agricultural homesteads or structures (housing and outbuildings) which are a critical component to an operation. Many of these agriculturally related structures or homes are also cultural resources. The restoration of the Queen

Anne style home is to support the future agricultural operation, it is also a significant historic structure and listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

10. Could the Queen Anne house be a museum?

Using the house as a museum was considered, but it was not recommended. The primary reason this was not recommended was because the Tribes provided guidance that the house would not be the best place to interpret their stories and fulfill the concept plan vision of heal the land; heal the people. The historic house was built after they had been removed from the area; it is not a part of their story or history. It was determined that the better place to provide education and interpretation of Tribal history, the connection to Sand Creek, and Native American perspectives would be closer to where the fort may have once stood. In addition, a museum use does not align with [OSMP Charter purposes](#), so OSMP would not have the ability to operate a museum; this option would have required a disposal (selling of the property) to another party to convert the house into a museum and oversee the operation. One of the primary reasons OSMP purchased the property was to preserve the historic high-quality agricultural operations. Disposal of the house structure would negatively impact the integrity of the farmstead and potentially be in conflict with farm operations. In historic preservation theory, the highest and best use, as well as the best form of preservation, is for a historic structure to be used for its intended purpose. For the historic farmhouse, this is the historic residential use. However, the concept plan does recommend further exploration of a potential compatible secondary interpretive or educational use in the future phases of design such as interpretive guided tours.

11. I am not sure about limiting the use. What about biking and horseback riding?

The vision for the site is to provide visitors with an opportunity to learn, reflect, contemplate, pray, and heal. Limiting uses on the property reduces distractions. Recreational uses such as biking and horseback riding would conflict with the contemplative experiences envisioned.

12. I really do not know what an indigenous plant is.

The term "indigenous plant" was used to indicate the traditional plants and medicines used by Native Tribes and Indigenous Peoples. Many of the plants that are native to Colorado and have been used by the Tribes for generations, cannot grow on the lands designated as Tribal Reservations because of the different growing conditions (i.e. Oklahoma).

13. What tax is Boulder county going to impose to make this happen?

No new taxes are being proposed. Funding would be allocated through the OSMP budget process with the potential for additional funding through grants and partnerships.

Additional Clarification:

During the engagement period, a few community members expressed concerns that the Concept Plan lacked a visual representation of Fort Chambers (a marker, memorial or reconstruction) and that the Tribal Representatives concerns were not being addressed:

The Concept Plan is intended to provide general guidance for the future of the site. The design of interpretive elements will come after the Concept Plan is finalized. This next design phase will include discussions about what information is presented and how Fort Chambers will be represented. Tribal Representatives have confirmed that the current Concept Plan provides a good foundation for providing interpretive elements and sharing information. Once the OSBT provides guidance to proceed with the Concept Plan, we will continue our collaboration with the Tribes, designing interpretive elements along the healing trail - exploring what information to share, and how it is presented.

MEMORANDUM

TO: Open Space Board of Trustees

FROM: Dan Burke, Director, Open Space and Mountain Parks
Jeff Haley, Deputy Director Visitor Experience and Infrastructure

DATE: June 12, 2024

SUBJECT: Written Information: North Sky Trail Completion

The purpose of this memo is to provide brief information to the Open Space Board of Trustees (OSBT) regarding the status and expected completion of the North Sky Trail as part of the North Trail Study Area (NTSA) Plan implementation. This widely anticipated section of trail will add approximately 3.5 miles of multi-use trail experience to the OSMP trail network and provide a variety of recreation opportunities within the area north of Boulder as well as connecting residents and visitors to many other recreation opportunities throughout the region. More information can be found [here](#).

As outlined in the NTSA Plan, the trail will follow sections of the existing 1880's-constructed railroad grade, parts of which currently serve as an undesignated trail. The North Sky Trail also requires the construction of two trail bridges – the South Bridge spanning a through-cut in the 1880s railroad grade embankment, and the other spanning the Schneider Draw drainage. OSMP's contractor has completed construction of both bridges for the North Sky Trail. Both bridges have been fully installed, with remaining work including removal of construction materials from the sites, final sign-off by the project engineer, and close-out of Boulder County permits. Both bridges are designed to accommodate mountain bikers, hikers, and equestrians, and will facilitate trail maintenance access for small equipment to sections of North Sky Trail. Both bridges are constructed of steel for longevity (with wood decking) and sit on concrete bridge foundations. The Schneider Bridge was designed to fit aesthetically with the landscape, while the South Bridge was designed with a rustic industrial aesthetic as a nod to the history of the 1880's railroad grade that the North Sky Trail follows.

The trail has been constructed and aligned with sustainable grades and drainage to minimize erosion while also providing an enjoyable experience for all uses. Much of the trail will be natural-surface (comprised of native soils) – some locations will be surfaced with aggregate base course (gravel) where terrain and soil types may result in poor drainage and prolonged muddy trail conditions. Most of the trail is complete and only finishing work remains at this point. On June 1, the annual National Trails Day was held at North Sky and approximately 60 volunteers participated in helping to put the finishing touches on a variety of areas of the trail. The trail construction is anticipated to be complete by mid-July and once the trail is constructed and opened for public use, on-trail use will be required to protect rare plants and habitat in this area and a Habitat Conservation Area (HCA) will be enacted in the immediate vicinity. Staff finalized the recommended ordinance for the Habitat Conservation Area that will be implemented and the ordinance is now being considered by City Council. A second reading of the ordinance will be before the City Council on June 20 and considered final on July 20 after a 30-day public comment period. Additionally, dogs must be on-leash and are allowed for most of the year; they are prohibited from May 1 – July 31 to protect bird nesting habitat.

A small celebration is planned for Monday, July 22 at the south terminus of the trail near the south bridge and will likely be around noon to allow City Council and OSBT an opportunity to share in this milestone of opening a new trail in Boulder. More details will be provided as the date draws closer.



