



**Boulder County  
Comprehensive Plan  
Open Space Element Update  
DRAFT GOALS AND POLICIES  
Open House  
July 28, 2015**



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**Goals and Policies**

1. **Boulder County values and preserves open space for its contribution to an exceptional quality of life.**
  - 1.01 Boulder County supports all conservation efforts that uphold open space values.
  - 1.02 Boulder County shall utilize its Open Space program as an important tool for preserving the county's open space values.
  - 1.03 Open space values, and impacts to county Open Space, shall be considered in the review of development proposals submitted through the Land Use Department.
2. **Boulder County conserves the rural character of the unincorporated county by protecting and acquiring lands and waters of significant agricultural, cultural, environmental, open space, recreational, and scenic value.**
  - 2.01 Boulder County acquires real estate interests in land, water, and minerals through appropriate real estate methods such as fee title, conservation easements and trail easements.
  - 2.02 Boulder County considers open space values when acquiring an interest in real property rights, including the following, in no particular order:
    - Establishment and preservation of community buffers and scenic corridors.

- Preservation of lands or features designated in other Boulder County Comprehensive Plan Elements.
  - Protection and preservation of agricultural lands, especially agricultural lands of local, statewide, and national importance.
  - Protection and management of water resources, including agricultural water and in-stream flows.
  - Creation and establishment of public access on open space properties and trail linkages between properties.
  - Protection and restoration of native plants, wildlife, ecological processes, and significant habitats including riparian zones, wetlands, stream corridors, grasslands, shrublands, and forests.
  - Protection and restoration of historic and cultural resources.
  - Enlarging existing open space properties and protections.
- 2.03 Boulder County maintains and protects its real estate interest in Open Space properties to the maximum extent possible and works to prevent illegal uses and minimize impacts from legal third-party activities.

**3. Boulder County purposefully stewards its open space resources through sound management practices and appropriate visitor uses.**

- 3.01 Boulder County prepares management plans and policies as appropriate for Open Space properties where the county has management authority and uses the plans and policies to manage its open space resources and assets.
- 3.02 Plans and policies are based on sound planning practices, public input, and desired future conditions.
- 3.03 Through planning and management, Boulder County balances the protection and preservation of significant resources with passive, sustainable, and enjoyable public uses that connect the public to their environment
- 3.04 Boulder County monitors and evaluates uses and resources on Open Space to inform management decisions and seeks to be innovative in its approaches to on-the-ground management of Open Space resources utilizing current knowledge, latest science, best technologies and practices.
- 3.05 The county will provide appropriate improvements that serve the approved open space functions of the property while maintaining the rural and natural character.
- 3.05.01 Recreational facilities shall be designed to provide an exceptional user experience, be sustainable, and avoid or minimize impacts to significant resources.
- 3.05.02 Open Space trails shall provide for multiple uses, unless otherwise specified in a management plan.
- 3.05.03 Regional trails linking to Open Space are coordinated with Boulder County Transportation and other government agencies.

- 3.05.04 The county may establish regional parks such as the Boulder County Fairgrounds or similar facilities at the direction of the Boulder County Commissioners.
- 3.05.05 Agricultural infrastructure such as center pivot sprinklers, hay sheds, grain bins and other improvements may be constructed as appropriate to support agricultural goals.
- 3.05.06 Infrastructure needed to support the use and management of historic structures, museums, and other related resources shall be developed in a manner compatible with the setting and historic character of the resources.

**4. Boulder County actively engages the public in stewarding, understanding, and enjoying county Open Space.**

- 4.01 The county commissioners shall appoint a Parks and Open Space Advisory Committee to provide a forum for public input and advice to the Board of County Commissioners and Parks and Open Space Department regarding Parks and Open Space plans, programs, and actions.
- 4.02 Boulder County shall promote awareness and stewardship of the county's open space resources and recreational opportunities through a variety of communication methods and programs designed to reach a broad spectrum of people, visitors, stakeholders, organizations, and businesses.
- 4.03 Boulder County shall reach out to the public through educational programs, volunteer opportunities, and regular interactions at open space properties.
- 4.04 Boulder County shall seek and consider public input about open space acquisitions and management through a variety of informal and formal engagement tools.
  - 4.04.01 Open Space land acquisitions, the capital improvement plan (CIP), and management plans and policies require approval by the Board of County Commissioners, after a public hearing and after review and input by the Parks and Open Space Advisory Committee.

**5. Boulder County collaborates with stakeholders and partners to promote and protect open space values.**

- 5.01 The county shall collaborate with businesses, organizations, stakeholders, volunteers, property owners, and partners to promote the county's open space values.
- 5.02 The county shall work closely with federal, state, and local authorities to promote and achieve mutual acquisition and management goals.
- 5.03 Boulder County shall annually solicit input from municipalities and stakeholders on open space preservation and trail priorities.
- 5.04 Boulder County Parks and Open Space shall respect nearby private property owners through communication, cooperation, and appropriate actions.