

**BOULDER, MONTANA**  
**GROWTH POLICY UPDATE**  
**2018**



**NOVEMBER 2018**

Cover photo courtesy of the Boulder Monitor.

RESOLUTION NO. 2018-15

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BOULDER, MONTANA TO  
ADOPT THE CITY OF BOULDER GROWTH POLICY UPDATE**

WHEREAS, in 2009, the Boulder City Council adopted the Boulder Growth Policy as guidance for the general policy and pattern of development of the City of Boulder pursuant to Montana Code Annotated Title 76, Chapter 1, Part 601 *et seq*; and

WHEREAS, the Boulder City Council has appointed the City of Boulder Planning Board to plan for future development of the Boulder jurisdictional area; and

WHEREAS, the City of Boulder Planning Board has worked to update the Boulder Growth Policy to address current and projected challenges for the betterment of the City's future; and

WHEREAS, the City of Boulder Planning Board held a public hearing on the proposed Growth Policy update on September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2018 with notices of the public hearing published in the Boulder Monitor newspaper on July 25<sup>th</sup>, 2018 and August 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2018, more than 10 days prior to the hearing as required by Montana Code Annotated 76-1-602; and

WHEREAS, after considering the recommendations and suggestions elicited at the public hearing, the City of Boulder Planning Board forwarded a recommendation to the Boulder City Council to adopt the 2018 Boulder Growth Policy update with revisions; and

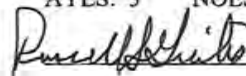
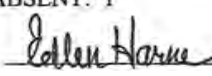
WHEREAS, the City of Boulder City Council held a public hearing on the proposed Growth Policy update on October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2018 with notices of the public hearing published in the Boulder Monitor Newspaper on September 26<sup>th</sup>, 2018 and October 3, 2018, more than 10 days prior to the hearing as required by Montana Code Annotated 76-1-602; and

WHEREAS, following the public hearing, the City of Boulder City Council adopted a Resolution of Intention to adopt the 2018 Boulder Growth Policy update with revisions.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City of Boulder City Council, after considering the recommendations of the City of Boulder Planning Board and public testimony, to adopt a Resolution to adopt the 2018 Boulder Growth Policy update, and to pursue the goals, objectives, and policies therein.

PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED this 19<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2018 with the City of Boulder City Council voting as follows:

AYES: 3    NOES: 0    ABSENT: 1

 Mayor     Attested by City Clerk



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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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## **Boulder City Council**

Russell S. Giulio, Mayor

Bettie Schlueter, President  
Drew Dawson  
Sherry Lepley  
Shane Maichel

## **City of Boulder Planning Board**

Ray Hayes  
LaDana Hintz  
Rodger Johnson  
Sherry Lepley  
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Dennis Wortman

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Ellen Harne, City Clerk  
Diana Van Haecke, Former City Clerk  
Casey Gifford, City Clerical  
Dennis Wortman, Public Works Director  
Parry Lepley, Assistant Public Works Operator  
Joe Canzona, Chief of Police  
Juan Trujillo, Former Chief of Police  
Michael Hecht, Fire Chief  
Michele St. George, Ambulance Dept Director

## **Boulder Transition Advisory Committee (BTAC)**

A special thanks to the members of BTAC who provided guidance and direction throughout the development of this plan.

## **Consulting Planners**

**LAND  
SOLUTIONS, LLC**

## **Citizens of Boulder**

Thank you to all of the dedicated residents of the Boulder community who contributed to this plan by participating in public meetings, submitting comments, and filling out surveys. Your time, efforts and ideas are very much appreciated and reflected in this plan.

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

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<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>Key Issues.....</b>	<b>37</b>
What is a growth policy?.....	3	<b>Implementation.....</b>	<b>41</b>
How will it be used?.....	4	Timetable and Action Steps.....	41
Background.....	4	Growth Policy Review.....	57
Public Input Process.....	5	Priority Plans and Projects.....	58
Community Vision.....	6	Land Use Recommendations.....	63
<b>Conditions, Trends, and Projections.....</b>	<b>7</b>	Future Land Use Map.....	66
Introduction.....	8	Policies for Annexation.....	67
Population.....	9	Funding Opportunities.....	68
Housing.....	11	<b>Requirements of State Law.....</b>	<b>71</b>
Employment.....	15	<b>Appendix.....</b>	<b>77</b>
Local Services.....	17	A) Survey Results.....	79
Land Use.....	23	B) Public Meeting Summary.....	84
Natural Resources.....	31	C) Trail-Related Recommendations.....	92
Special Considerations.....	35		

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# INTRODUCTION

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## What is a Growth Policy?

A growth policy is a long-range comprehensive plan for a city or county that addresses land use, housing, economic conditions, local services, natural resources, and other areas at the discretion of the governing body (which in Boulder's case is the City Council). Growth policies in Montana are regulated by Montana Code Annotated (MCA) 76-1-601 in terms of what growth policies must contain, how they are adopted, and how they are used.

The purpose of a growth policy is to allow a community to examine its existing conditions, projected trends, and decide how it wants to embrace the future. These future goals and aspirations are developed into a strategic implementation plan with action steps, timelines, and partners to move the community forward. Additionally, a growth policy provides guidance and recommendations regarding future land use and development strategies. The Boulder Growth Policy is intended to be focused on implementable action steps that community members and leaders can use as guidance to take action and measure success.

## How will this Growth Policy be used?

This growth policy is an important guide that will enable Boulder to allow planned and desirable growth and development; however, the document is not regulatory in terms of providing ordinances related to development. The growth policy identifies community priorities and provides guidance and direction for future development patterns. This guidance can be found primarily in the implementation section of this plan that outlines goals, objectives, and actions.

- **Goals** are broad statements describing a desired future condition.
- **Objectives** are general descriptions of the steps Boulder needs to take to meet its goals. Objectives should be attainable and measurable.
- **Actions** are specific steps needed to achieve objectives.

These tools are outlined in the implementation section, and will guide how funding is allocated, projects are prioritized, and work plans are created. The Boulder Growth Policy will serve to guide the specifics for the anticipated zoning code and map updates to ensure that future development falls within the overall goals of the community. Additionally, the growth policy takes into account the changing economic conditions of Boulder with the closure of the Montana Developmental Center (MDC) and other specific issues the community is facing.

## Background

State law requires that growth policies are reviewed at least every five years and updated at the discretion of the governing body. Boulder's current growth policy was updated in 2009 and based on recent changes, must be updated to reflect new conditions and aspirations for the community. Additionally, a regional planning effort named "Making Boulder's Future Bright" was completed in 2017 and is described as a prequel to an updated growth policy. This effort was instigated by the 2015 Montana Legislature's decision to close the MDC, which will invariably impact the community's identity, economy, and function in the future. Therefore, this growth policy update is timely and relevant, and will ensure that current conditions and projected trends are addressed and accounted for in the future.

Throughout the process, the Boulder Transition Advisory Committee (BTAC) served as the steering committee who provided oversight and direction to the growth policy update.

# INTRODUCTION

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## Public Input Process

The public input process was intended to be in-depth and inclusive, while also accounting for the community's previous efforts in order to build-off of what had already been done. At the beginning of the project, a website was created to serve as a clearinghouse for information and allow people to submit comments or questions to the planning consultants. The project included two public meetings and a comprehensive survey to gather feedback regarding the community's desires and priorities. The first public input meeting took place on February 22, 2018 with about 25 people in attendance, and the general purpose of the meeting was to present draft goals to the public, garner feedback on potential action steps, and prioritize of issues according to the community's preferences.

The community survey was distributed in March of 2018 and gave respondents an opportunity to rank priorities and provide their opinions of the community's identity, strength, assets, and challenges. Survey results are included in Appendix A.

A second public meeting was held on May 23rd, 2018 with the purpose of reviewing the draft growth policy and gathering feedback on the key issues and specific goals, objectives, and actions, as well as presenting a draft Future Land Use Map for comments.

Additionally, a walking tour was held to include on-the-ground concepts and ideas for the downtown area.

A full summary of the public meeting efforts is in Appendix B.





## Community Vision

Because the community had already undergone initial efforts to determine an overall vision through the “Making Boulder’s Future Bright” plan, that vision was used as a starting point and was presented to the community during the first public meeting. This statement was further refined to capture the identified direction the community wants to go.

A vision statement will serve as a guiding statement for the shape and direction of the future of the Boulder community. It answers the question, “What do we want Boulder to be in the future?”

## Vision Statement

Boulder is a strong community committed to planned growth that enhances new economic diversity while preserving our natural beauty, clean environment, and friendly small town atmosphere. Boulder is a family-friendly town with an emphasis and focus on promoting safe and healthy living for its residents, and creative new learning opportunities. Boulder has a diverse economy that builds on its natural resources and heritage while safeguarding our traditional agricultural culture. We continue to support and encourage local businesses and artisans while promoting value-added products.

# CONDITIONS, TRENDS, AND PROJECTIONS

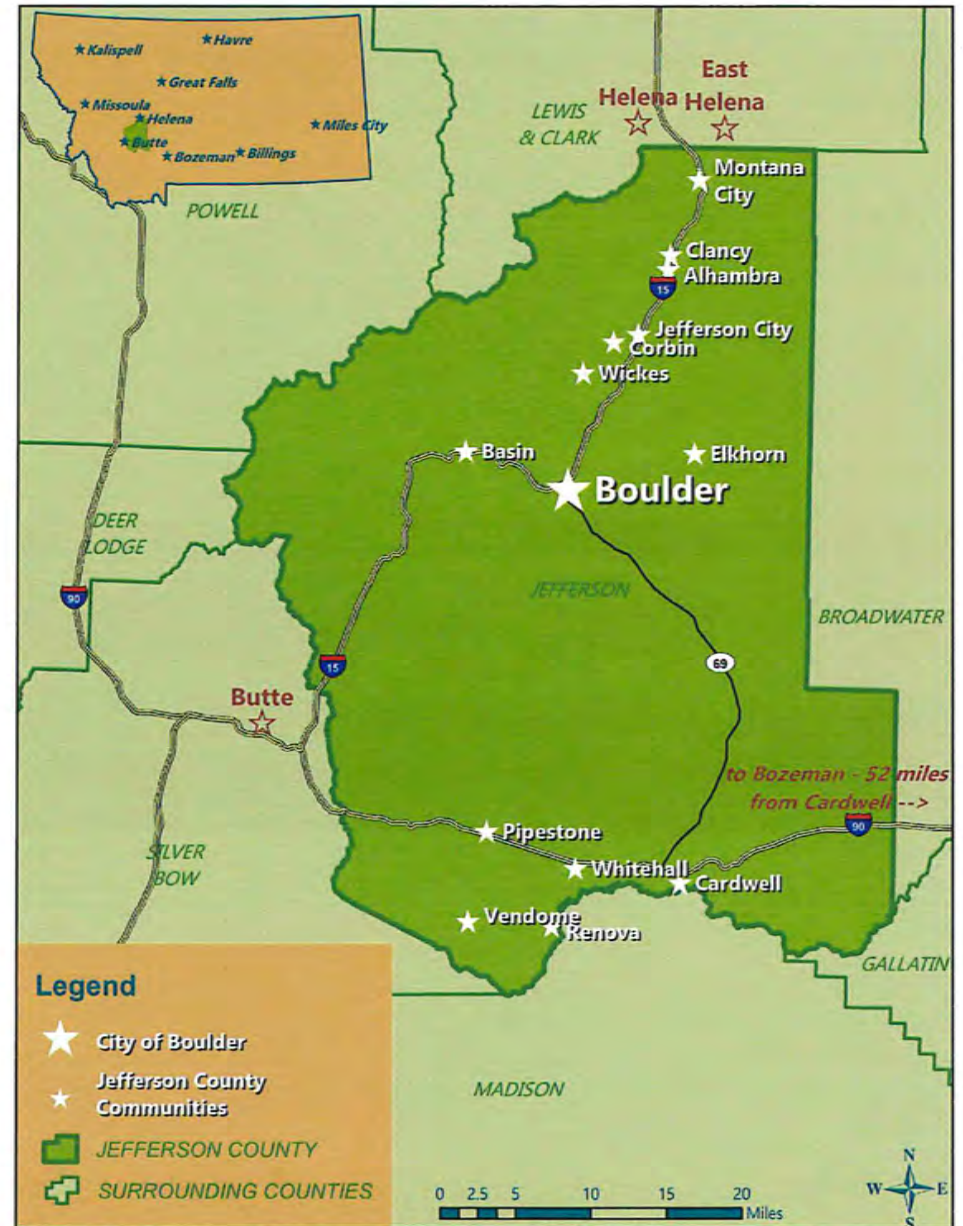


FIGURE 0.1 - BOULDER LOCATION MAP

## Map Disclaimer

Land Solutions used the best available information when making the maps in this document. No maps nor data shown on them are official and are only intended to represent the topics using best available information.

The city limits data used for these maps have been provided by Jefferson County and are provided for reference purposes only and are NOT an official record or based on official data. Such data can come from many sources and may be incomplete or inaccurate. Jefferson County doesn't warrant in any form the completeness or accuracy of data.

Maps do not contain survey grade data and are not based on complete records or laws for municipal annexations. NO DATA on these maps may be used to locate actual property boundaries or encroachments.

The Boulder city limits shown are approximate, and do not reflect the update done in late 2018 at this time.

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## Introduction

These conditions, trends, and projections were compiled through a review of the existing background data and planning efforts, and intend to meet Montana state law with regards to information required to be included in growth policies.

It is important to note that the future trends are based on past data. For example, the future population projections are based on Boulder's population change from 2010 to 2016, which shows a decline.

However, Boulder is currently on the path towards community betterment, and will use the action steps outlined in this document to help create a place where more people want to live, work, and play. In this instance, although the data predicts that the population will decline in the future, it may be that the opposite will occur as more and more people discover Boulder and its quality of life aspects.



# CONDITIONS, TRENDS, AND PROJECTIONS

## Population - Overall Trends

As of 2016, the population of Boulder was estimated at 1,144 which is a small decrease (3.3%) since 2010.

This decline is a consistent trend, since 1960. This decline in population contrasts with Jefferson County, which has experienced modest growth since 2000, with an increase of 15.9%. See Figure 1.0 for Boulder's population change chart.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS)

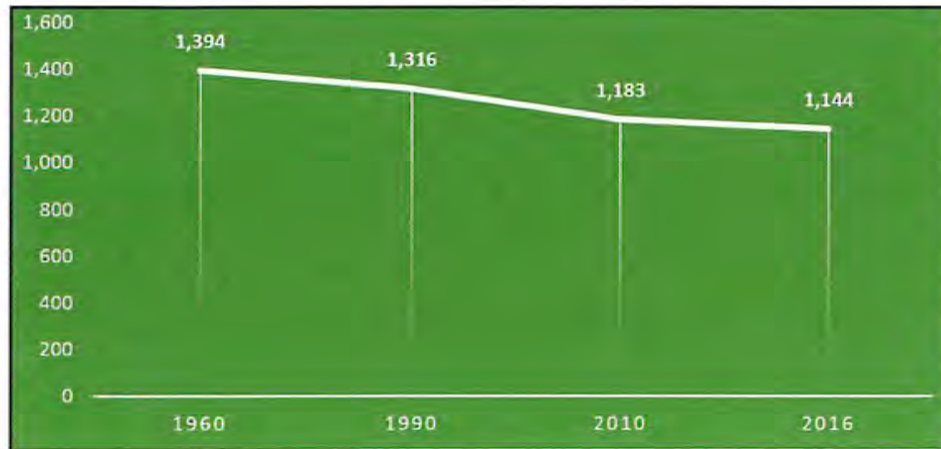


FIGURE 1.0 - BOULDER POPULATION CHANGE

**-3.3%**  **Boulder's Population Change Since 2010**

## Population - Age Distribution

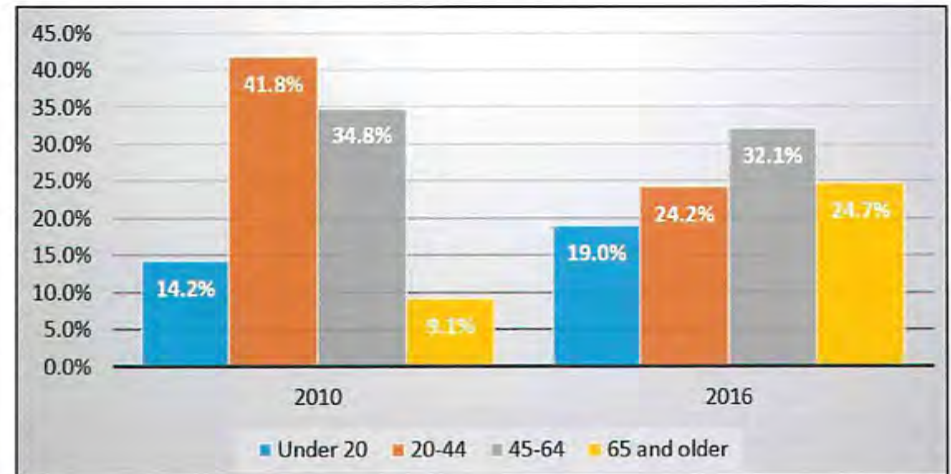


FIGURE 1.1 - BOULDER AGE DISTRIBUTION

**39**  **47.1** **Boulder's Median Age, 2010 to 2016**

**39.7**  **39.8** **Montana's Median Age, 2010 to 2016**

U.S. Census Bureau data point to an aging population in Boulder. From 2010 to 2016, the median age of Boulder residents increased from 39 to 47.1 years of age. During that same period, the median age in the State of Montana stayed roughly consistent at 39.8 years. The age distribution (Figure 1.1) also shows a relatively high percentage of persons 65+ in Boulder at 24.7% in 2016. Across the state, the 65+ population was 17.7% in 2016. The increase in older individuals is not expected to slow down. This is notable because the aging population has different needs for transportation, housing, accessibility and healthcare than some other portions of the population.

## Population - Projections

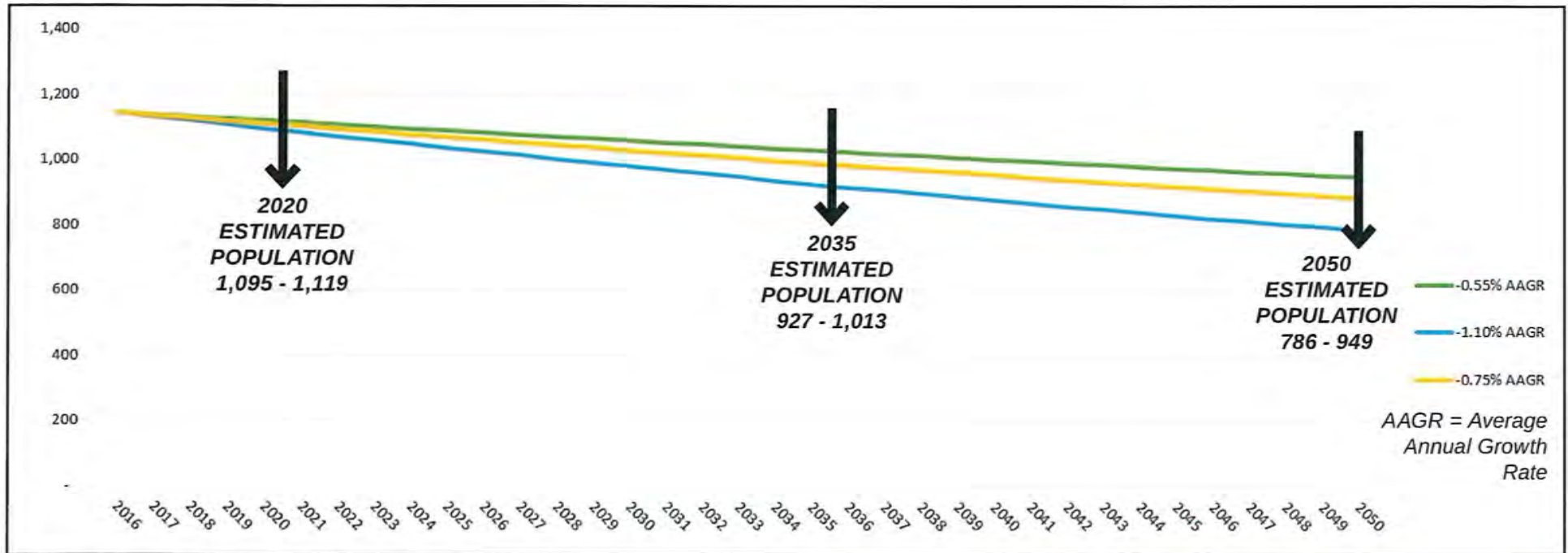


FIGURE 1.2 - BOULDER POPULATION PROJECTIONS

Figure 1.2 shows linear projections assuming that previous population change rates will be an indicator of future change. Population average annual growth rates were -0.9% from 2000 to 2010, -0.55% from 2010 to 2016, and -1.10% from 2013 to 2016. The chart shows population projections based on growth rates of -0.55%, -0.75%, and -1.10%. With current outlooks, Boulder's population will likely continue to decline, however, **with added amenities, industries, and opportunities for economic growth, Boulder could see a stabilization or increase in population in the future.**

Source: American Community Survey, 2016

**Boulder's population is growing older, which will create a need for more comprehensive healthcare, more housing options for seniors, and improved ADA accessibility throughout the community. Additionally, public transportation to provide trips to Helena and/or Butte for healthcare visits should be explored along with a plan for promotions, as needs for these services will likely increase in the future.**

# CONDITIONS, TRENDS, AND PROJECTIONS

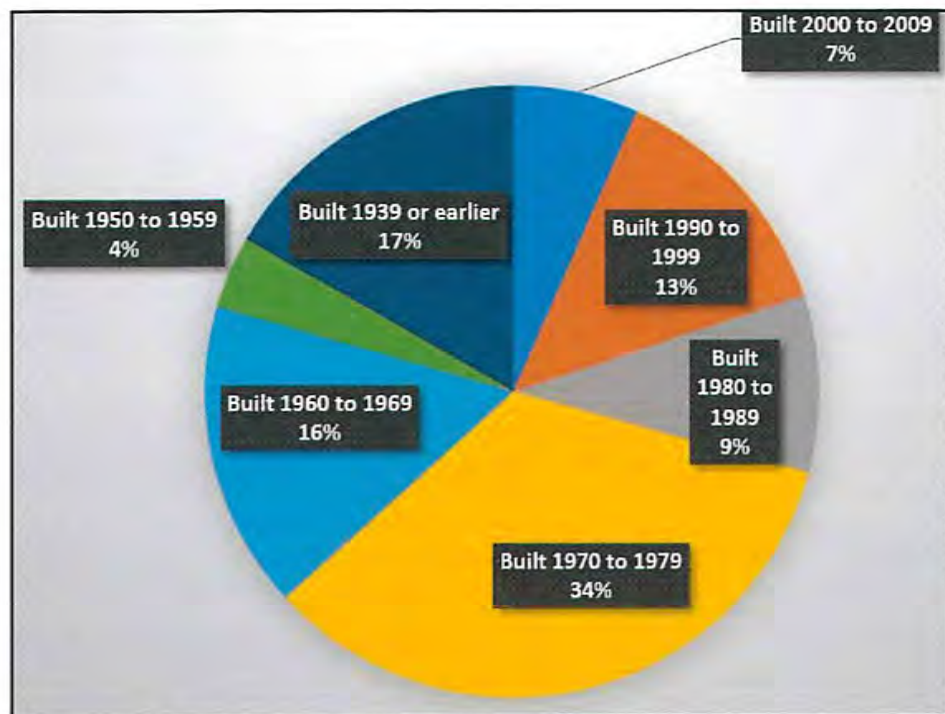
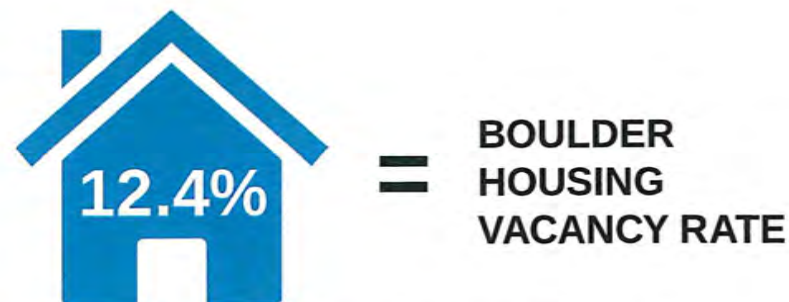


FIGURE 2.0 - HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

## Housing - Characteristics

As seen in Figure 2.0, Boulder's housing stock is aging. As of 2016, there are 564 housing units in Boulder with the majority of those being constructed prior to 1980. Only 7% of the housing stock was constructed after 2000.

Source: 2010-2014 American Community Survey (2010-2014), U.S. Census, and Making Boulder's Future Bright.



Compared to 16% in Montana and 12.2% nationwide.

(Source: American Community Survey, 2016)

## Housing - Occupancy

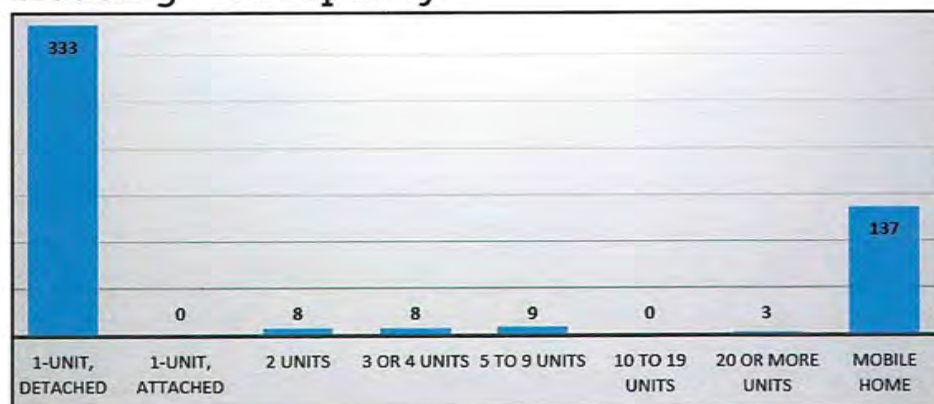


FIGURE 2.1 - HOUSING OCCUPANCY TYPES

The majority of housing in Boulder is single-family, as seen in Figure 2.1. 27.5% of Boulder's housing are mobile homes, compared to 11.1% in the State of Montana. More people are renting now, as compared to 2010 (See Figure 2.2). These figures may not reflect 2018 realities, with a few types shifting from one category to another.

Source: 2016 American Community Survey

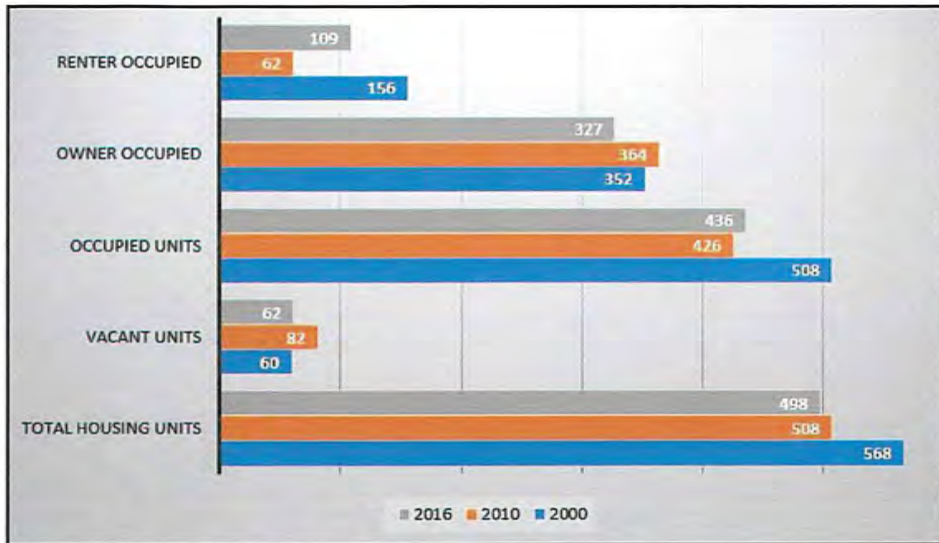
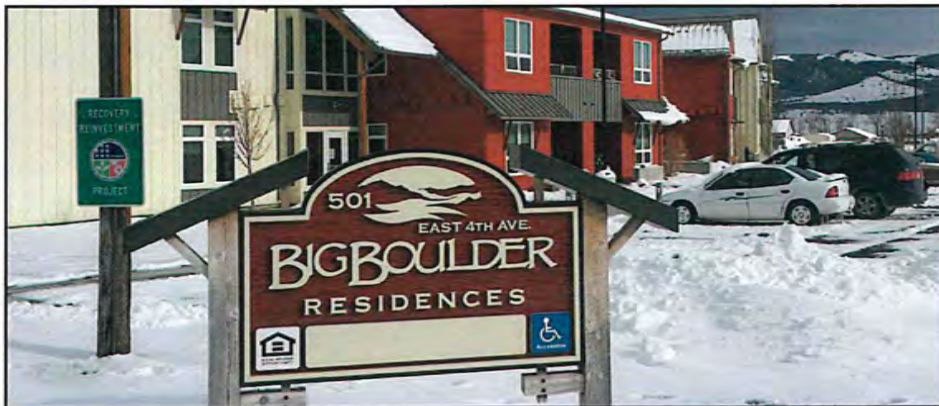


FIGURE 2.2 - HOUSING OCCUPANCY INDICATORS



Big Boulder Residences consists of 36 one & two bedroom apartments. The property has a 32 unit apartment building and a single level 4-plex. The site features a community room with full kitchen, a playground, and a community garden space. 35 of the 36 units are for low-income individuals and families.

## Composition

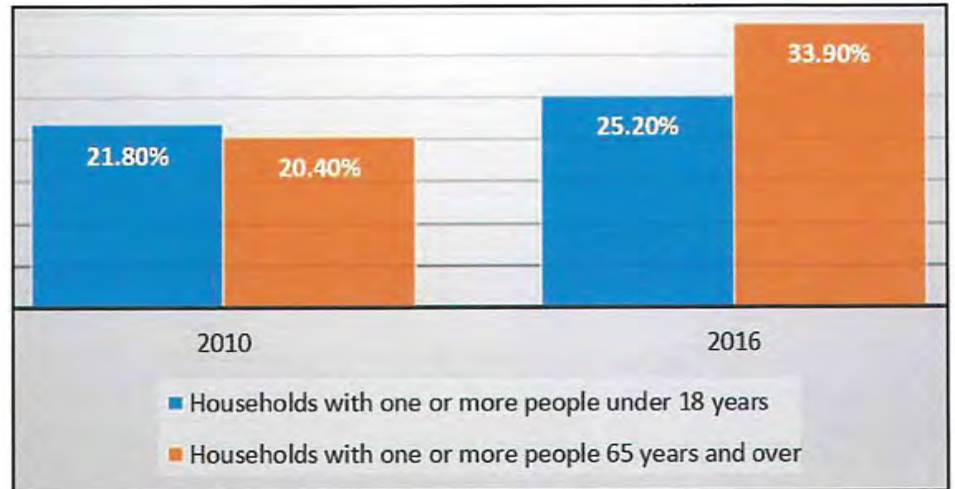


FIGURE 2.3 - HOUSING COMPOSITION

Households are including both older and younger occupants than they have in the recent past (See Figure 2.3). 72.5% of Boulder's homes have 2-3 bedrooms, which suits the average household size.



**Boulder's average household size was 2.38 in 2016.**

(Source: American Community Survey, 2016)



FIGURE 3.4 - AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE

# CONDITIONS, TRENDS, AND PROJECTIONS

## Housing - Affordability

For both renters and owners, housing in Boulder is not affordable for many families. Figure 2.4 shows the percentage of people paying over 30% of their household income towards rent or mortgage payments. The 30% figure is important because it is used to analyze housing costs as a percent of household income. The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development defines **housing cost burden** as paying more than 30% of household income on housing.

Recognizing the need for additional affordable housing, Habitat for Humanity has been involved with recent projects in Boulder to help replace some of the older mobiles with safe, efficient single family residences.

Sources: 2016 ACS and Jefferson County Planning Department

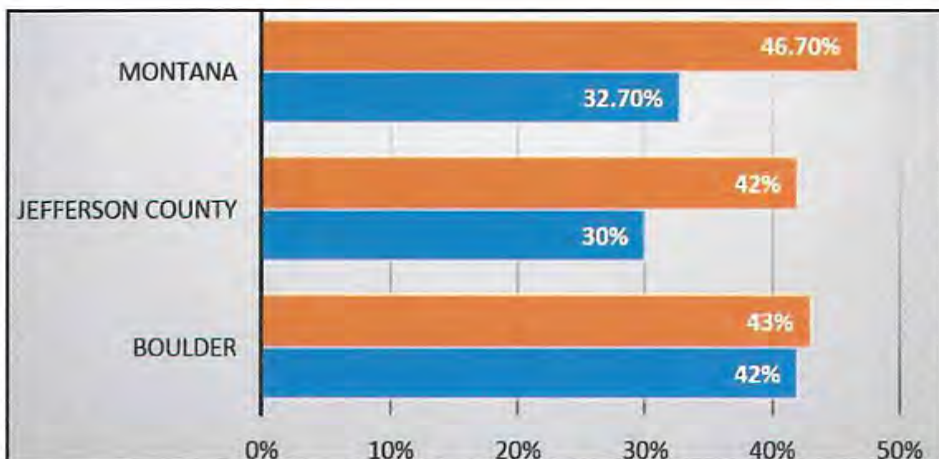


FIGURE 2.4 - HOUSING AFFORDABILITY ■ RENTERS ■ OWNERS

Average price of houses sold in 2017 in Jefferson County		
Place	Number of Houses Sold	Average Price
Montana City	9	\$426,000
Clancy	10	\$377,000
Jefferson City	6	\$322,000
Boulder/Basin/Whitehall	13	\$178,600



FIGURE 2.5 - RECENT HOUSING PRICES  
Source: 2018 Tri-County Housing Needs Assessment

### Median Value of Owner-Occupied Units

#### BOULDER



#### MONTANA



#### UNITED STATES





The Tri-County Housing Needs Assessment is currently underway which will identify current housing needs as well as project the future needs of residents Lewis and Clark County, Broadwater County and Jefferson County. Results of the Tri-County housing needs assessment and implementation plan will determine a long-term strategy for meeting the Tri-County area's housing needs to address challenges and opportunities in the area's housing market. While not a part of the Growth Policy project, the housing needs assessment should be utilized as a more in-depth look at Boulder's housing needs.



**Boulder's housing stock is old (the majority built before 1970), with over a quarter of the total housing stock being mobile homes, and a general lack of affordability. More single-family homes and multi-family units with at least 2-3 bedrooms are needed, along with affordable and accessible housing options for the growing senior population.**

# CONDITIONS, TRENDS, AND PROJECTIONS

## Employment - Overview

Employment in Boulder is a shifting picture, with the impending closure of the Montana Developmental Center (MDC), a state institution for people with intellectual disabilities which at one time employed up to 300 people. Other major employers in the region include Youth Dynamics, Inc., Jefferson County High School, Boulder Elementary School, Riverside Youth Correctional Facility, Jefferson County, and Elkhorn Treatment Center. The Boulder Chamber of Commerce has about 49 members, of which eight

are individuals and 41 are businesses and organizations. Also pertinent to employment are the Jefferson County offices and MDOT maintenance offices. Additionally, it's worth noting that the Golden Sunlight Mine near Whitehall and the Montana Tunnels Mine near Jefferson City reduced their workforce over recent years, and that the Montana Tunnels Mine is currently not operating, but may reopen in the future. See Figure 3.0 for Boulder's employment by industry from 2010 and 2016.

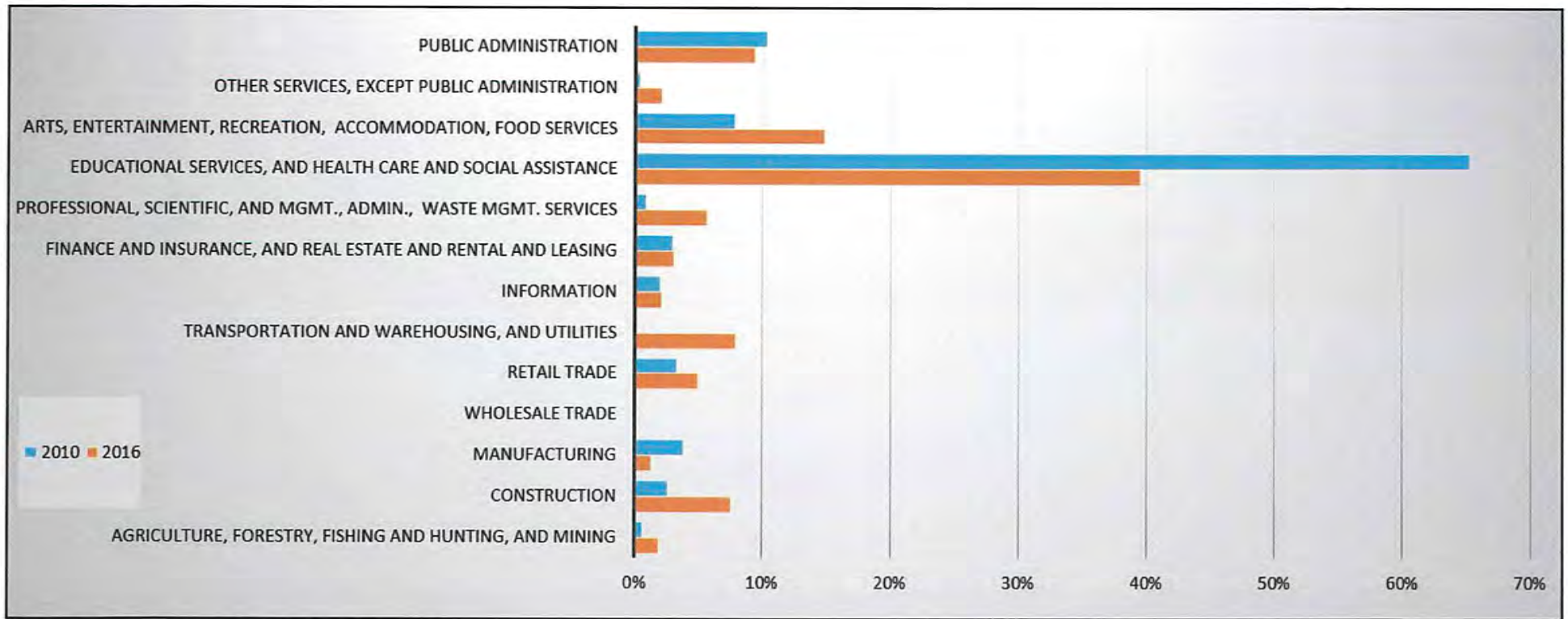


FIGURE 3.0 - EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY

## Employment - Earnings

See Figure 3.1 for Boulder's median household income compared to Montana and the rest of the United States. In 2010 Boulder's median income was 14.8% lower than that of Montana and in 2016 Boulder's median income was 13.4% lower than that of Montana.

(Source: United States Census Bureau, 2016)

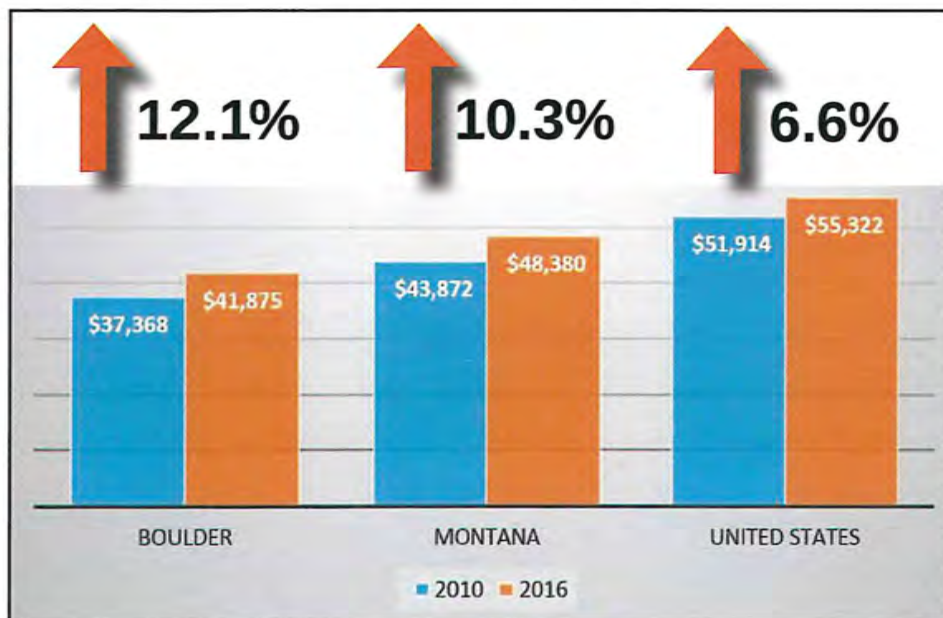


FIGURE 3.1 - MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

**8.7%** = BOULDER 2016  
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

**3.6%** = MONTANA 2016  
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

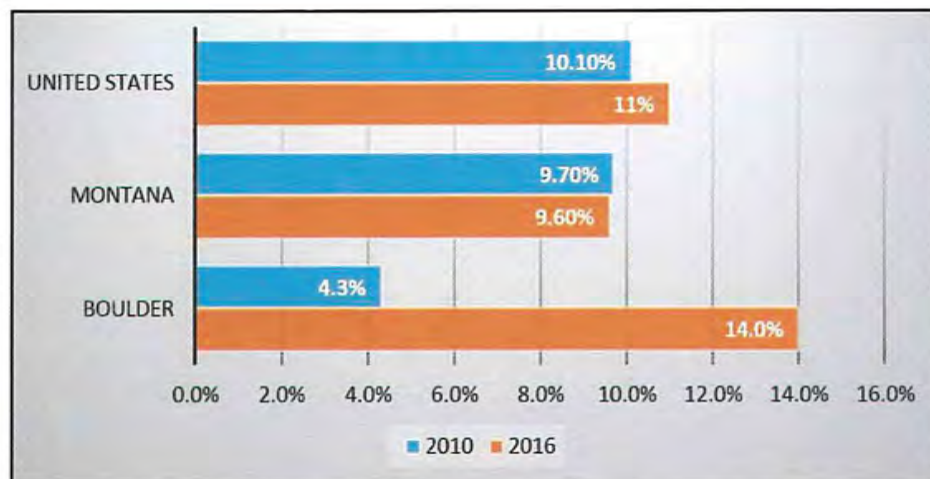


FIGURE 3.2 - FAMILIES WITH INCOME BELOW THE POVERTY LINE  
Boulder has seen a measurable increase in poverty since 2010, especially when compared to Montana and the United States.

(Source: United States Census Bureau, 2016)

**Boulder's economy is changing as a result of the closure of MDC. While income levels are rising for some, there is a notable increase in the percentage of families below the poverty level. Steps should be taken to create jobs with a livable wage and affordable housing in the Boulder community.**

# CONDITIONS, TRENDS, AND PROJECTIONS —

## Local Services

### City Facilities

- City Hall
- Boulder Cemetery
- Boulder Community Library
- Swimming pool
- Four parks with:
  - Baseball field
  - Playground equipment
  - Public restrooms
  - Skate park
  - Picnic tables
  - RV parking

### City Personnel

- Public service officers
- Administrative staff
- Operations management
- Ambulance services

## Recreational Amenities



**10.8 = Acres of parkland within Boulder**

(not including Jefferson County Recreation Park)



**Based on Boulder's population, the recommended amount of parkland is around 13 acres.**

*(Source: National Recreation and Park Association, 2016)*

## RECREATION PARK AND FAIRGROUNDS

The Jefferson County Recreation Park is a 20-acre resource, located a half-mile south of the city limits of Boulder. Facilities at the park include an arena, grandstand, carousel, three occupied buildings, and several other historic structures including a silo, granary, and boiler facility. The facility is owned by Jefferson County and managed by the county's Fair Board. The county is currently in the process of creating a master plan for the facility.

The County fair and rodeo is held annually at the Recreation Park, and it is open to the public the rest of the year. Current recreational amenities include picnic tables, swings, a volleyball net, a gazebo, and a miniature golf course. Camping is allowed on-site with electric sites and a bike shelter. Previous planning efforts have identified the Recreation Park as a "key component in the region and its sense of place". The community has expressed interest in the expansion, development, and enhancement of the park as a regional hub of activity and recreation. A Master Plan is in development.



## BOULDER RIVER

One of the largest natural city amenities is the Boulder River, located to the south of town. This resource appears to be vastly untapped, and could be accentuated with trails, parks, and access for public enjoyment and recreation. Portions of the corridor are located on private property, which may limit development potential in some areas.

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## Local Services - Transportation

Main Street runs through the center of town and has the iconic presence of a typical small community. In 2003, the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) improved Main Street (State Highway 69) and improved storm drainage as part of the project. Additionally, some streetscaping amenities were constructed such as landscaping, sidewalks, and crosswalks.

Sidewalks along Main Street are in good condition and are important for safe pedestrian access to businesses and other public services. However, throughout the majority of Boulder, sidewalks are missing with a few exceptions of those around the courthouse and schools, which can create ADA issues. While the sidewalks around the school property are a positive attribute, more sidewalks and safe connectivity should be provided for pedestrians to and from schools, parks, and other community service locations. Additionally, current city street conditions cause stormwater drainage issues, localized flooding, and road surface breakdown. The MDC campus appears to have a complete and connected sidewalk system, which could be connected to the rest of the city if future uses allow public access.



# CONDITIONS, TRENDS, AND PROJECTIONS —

## Local Services

### Water

The City of Boulder provides water and sewer services for the community, and upgraded its water system in 2001 with 10 miles of new water mains and 500 new service connections. The upgrade was accomplished by using the proceeds of State Revolving Loan Fund Bond, which will be paid back in 2020.

During the 2016 reconstruction of Highway 69, sleeves were placed under the road in anticipation of the expansion of municipal water service. The city's water supply has the potential for additional capacity, however any development proposal must include a feasibility study to document needs and required improvements or expansion. The impending closure of MDC does not eliminate its connections to the water system, and the state will have to continue to pay any minimum charges and user fees.

In terms of demand, the city is currently running two pumps in the high demand/summer time. With a third pump, the city could potentially add another 300-400 people to the population. There are currently plans to get the third pump operable, but no improvement plans outside of that.

*Sources: Boulder Area Chamber of Commerce, Making Boulder's Future Bright, City of Boulder staff*

### Wastewater

Boulder's wastewater system was recently replaced with a mechanical wastewater treatment plant, along with installation of water metering for all existing city residence and business locations. Funding for this project was provided by the issuance of a 40-year bond through the Rural Development Loan Program of the USDA. The debt will be repaid in 2055. The city's wastewater system extends across the Boulder River providing sewer service to the South Campus and Highway 69 includes sleeves under the road in anticipation of the expansion of municipal wastewater infrastructure. The treatment plant was designed with the capacity for the community to double in size.

*Sources: Boulder Area Chamber of Commerce, 2016, Making Boulder's Future Bright, 2017*

### Internet

- Coverage:
  - DSL = 90%
  - Satellite = 99%
- Download speeds:
  - DSL = Up to 10 Mbps
  - Satellite = Up to 16 Mbps



Broadband internet (download speeds faster than 25 Mbps), is available in some areas of Boulder, provided by a Century Link fiber along Highway 69.

Average download speed =



**5.64 Mbps**

BOULDER

VS.

**19.9 Mbps**

MONTANA



Source: Broadbandnow.com, 2018.

## Fire

The Boulder and Bull Mountain Volunteer Fire and Rescue Departments operate in the community of Boulder (Bull Mountain Fire District). The volunteer organization relies on the city/county dispatch system and utilizes both the city fire department and the Bull Mountain Volunteer fire department to combine efforts, equipment, and services.

The fire department equipment is not adequate to support current needs, with new trucks and shops needed, along with an upgraded city siren system. Additionally, equipment specific to wildland fires is needed as the department also responds to area wildfires.

The volunteer department is always in need of more people, and with many current volunteers reaching retirement age, that need is expected to be higher in the near future.

## Police

The Boulder Police Department provides law enforcement within the city limits of Boulder. The Jefferson County Sheriff's office also provides assistance on an as needed basis.



**2**

= number of city officers in the Boulder Police Department

According to national data, this aligns with average officer per capita rates in the U.S. (17 per 10,000 residents).

Source: GOVERNING, 2017.

## Media



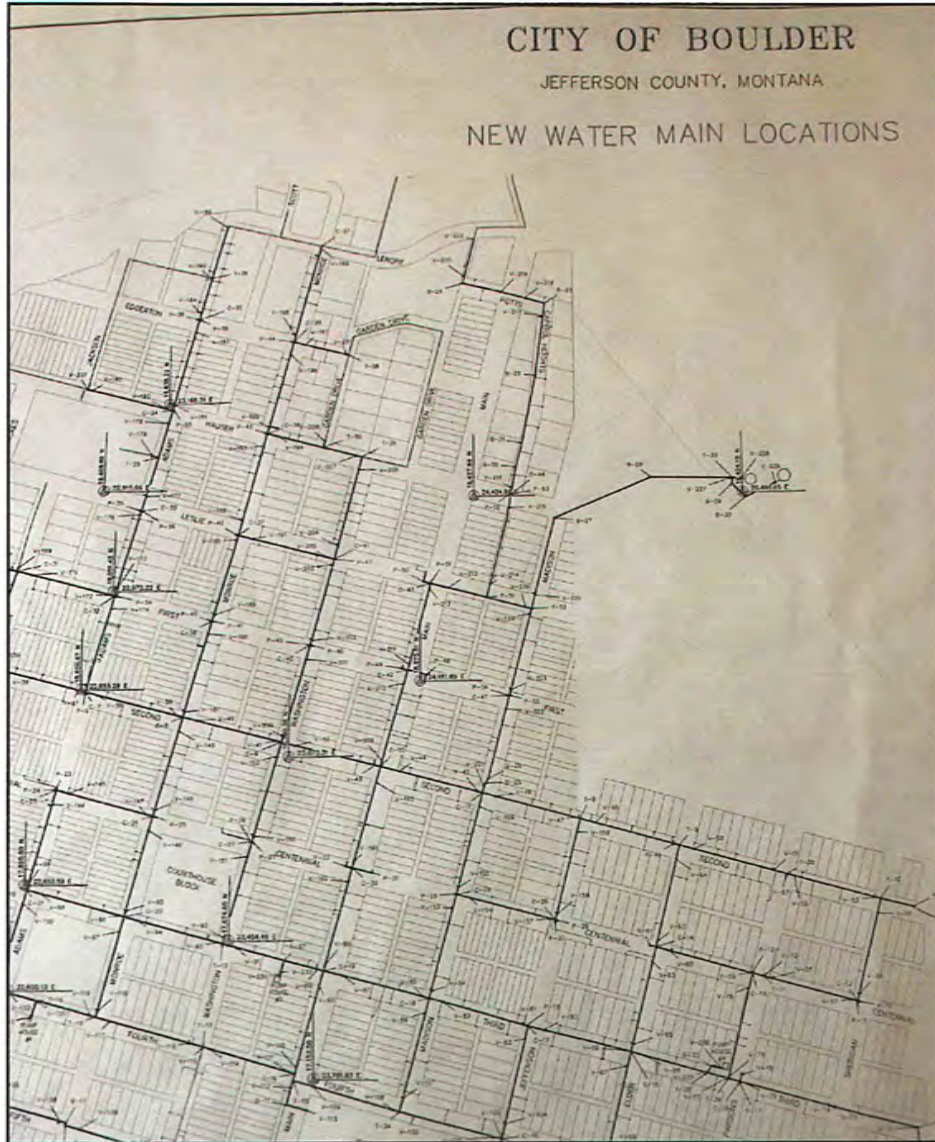
The Boulder Monitor is a weekly newspaper published in Boulder. KEME, 105.9 FM, owned by Jefferson County Disaster and Emergency Services, broadcasts from Boulder. A licensed FM radio translator, K296AN, owned by the Boulder TV Association, also broadcasts from Boulder.

## Medical



The Boulder Medical Clinic is a primary care clinic that offers by appointment services for annual exams, chronic disease management, sports physicals, and lab work. They also offer walk in care for acute illness/injury. St. Peter's Hospital in Helena is the closest comprehensive care facility for Boulder residents. A volunteer ambulance service is provided by the city.

# CONDITIONS, TRENDS, AND PROJECTIONS



Although small in size, Boulder is a full-service community with a vast array of public services that contribute to residents' quality of lives. While the city functions with its current facilities, improvements could be made with increased parkland and water service expansions. With an increased occurrence of those telecommuting, internet capacity will have a large effect on future population growth and economic development including infill development on existing parcels.



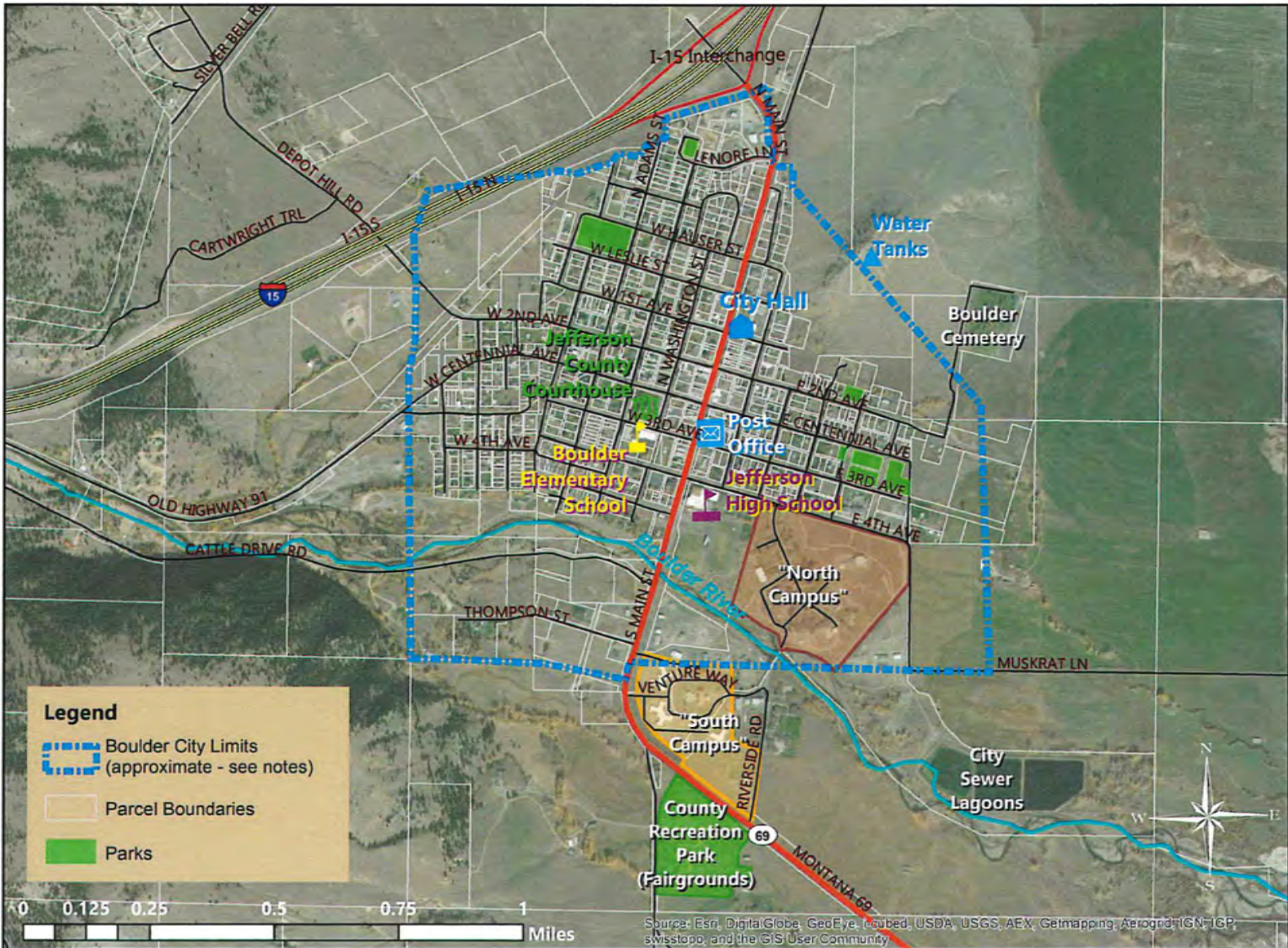


FIGURE 4.1 - BOULDER COMMUNITY MAP

\*See map disclaimer, page 7

# CONDITIONS, TRENDS, AND PROJECTIONS —

## Land Use Overview

The City of Boulder is located between Butte and Helena, east of the Continental Divide, and at the intersection of Interstate 15 and Highway 69. According to the United States Census Bureau, the city has a total area of 1.13 square miles.

Boulder is laid out in a grid pattern with the commercial core running north-south along Main Street, which is also a state highway. Residential neighborhoods flank Main Street on the east and west. On the north end of Boulder is the access to the interstate. The south end of Boulder includes the MDC north and south campuses, Jefferson High School, and the fairgrounds/Recreation Park. See Figure 5.0 for the general land use of the city and surrounding area based on Montana Department of Revenue tax classifications.

Future growth of the community will likely take place as infill development and in areas to the north, east, or west of town. See Figure 5.1 for a land ownership map depicting private and publicly owned land. When comparing this map with the land use map, it appears that most of the area to the southwest of town is not suitable for development due to the constraints of the Boulder River, state and publicly owned land, and topographic and geological constraints (slopes, drainages, bedrock, etc.). Land to the north and across the interstate may be difficult for urban scale development in the short-term due to a lack of public services; however, development could be a reality if there is community support and funds to extend services in this direction. Therefore, the area to the east of town may be best suited for short-term potential future development when

looking outside of the current city growth center. Overall, there are many options for new development in and around Boulder.

## JURISDICTIONAL AREA

The zoning jurisdiction of the City of Boulder includes only the land within the corporate limits of the City, as a result of a court ruling (*Wygala v. City of Boulder*, 2018).

For the purposes of planning for future growth and development, the one-mile area surrounding the city was studied. This includes the outskirts of the city, as well as other areas where the extension of municipal services can logically be expected. A future land use map is provided in this growth policy with the intent that the development patterns shown thereon will be observed and considered in future land use decisions by both the City and County.

## Land Use Patterns

The categories shown in Figure 5.0 are from the Montana Department of Revenue's tax classifications which identify the use of property. As can be seen, commercial development is generally focused along Main Street, while the rest of Boulder is dominated by residential and exempt (non-taxable) properties. There are a variety of vacant properties (shown in white) that may have potential for infill development where appropriate. The large amount of agricultural and farmland properties to the east may also have potential for development if property owners chose to develop or sell. The large area to the southeast of the city that is shown as exempt is the MDC

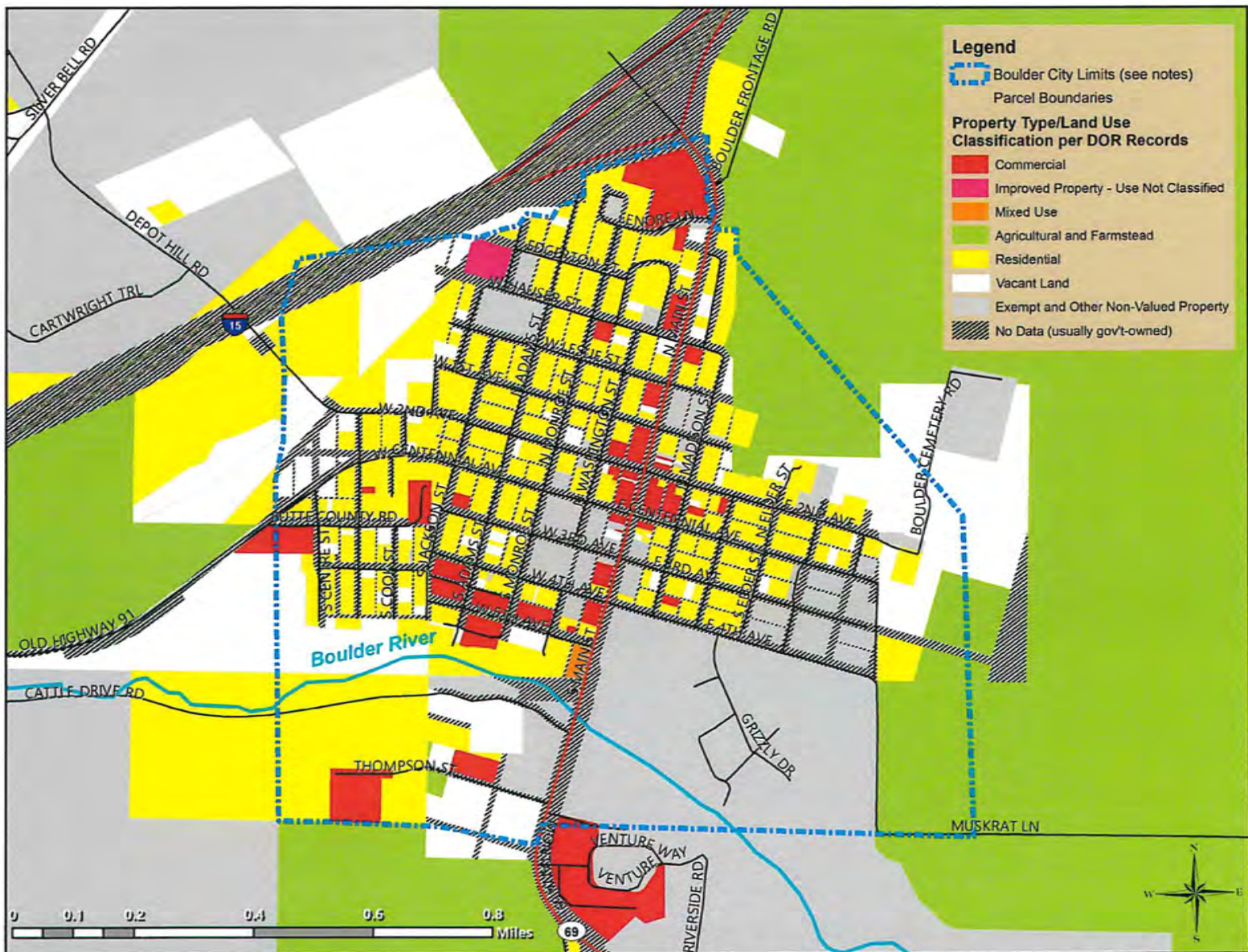


FIGURE 5.0 - DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE LAND USE CLASSIFICATIONS

\*See map disclaimer, page 7

# CONDITIONS, TRENDS, AND PROJECTIONS

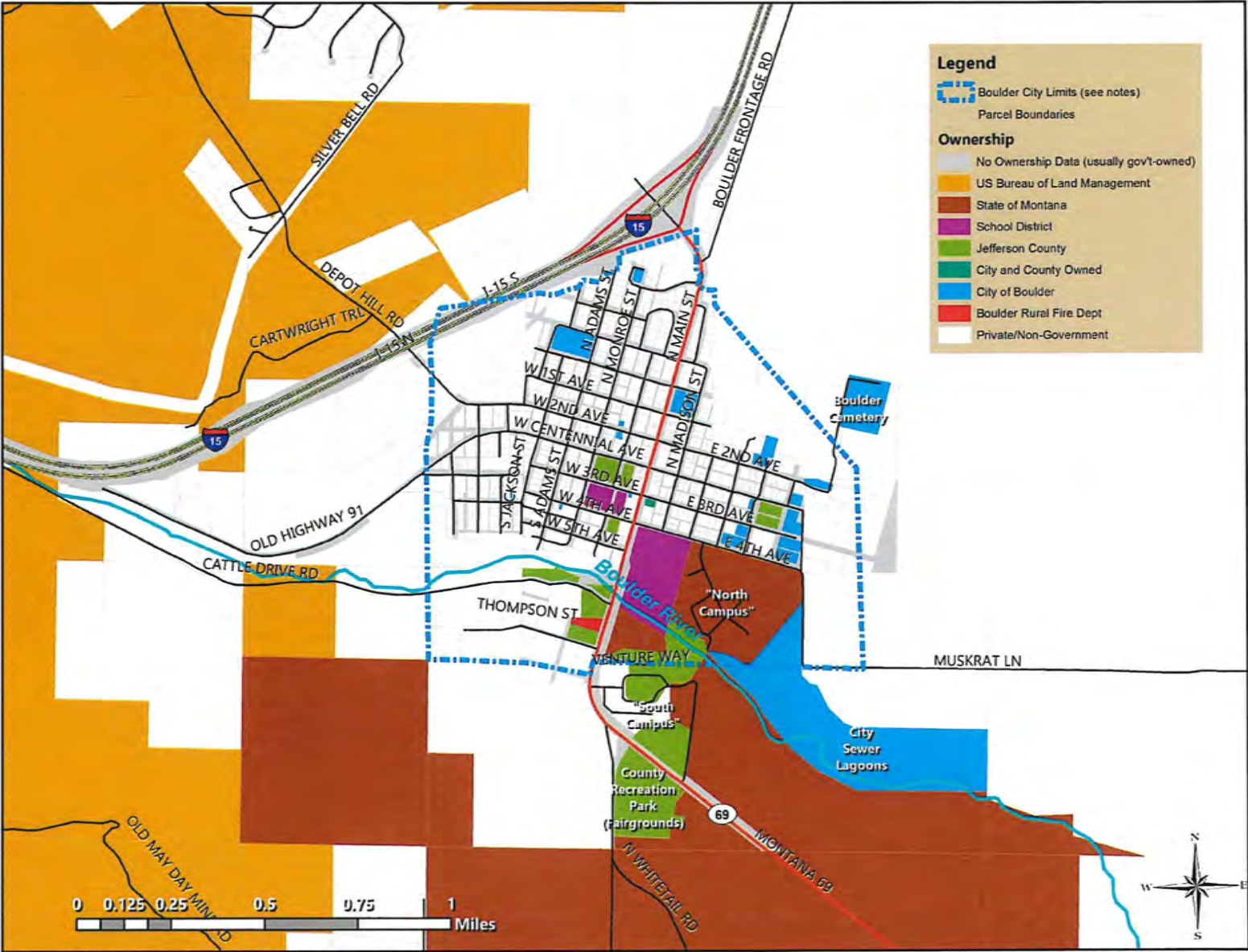


FIGURE 5.1 - PROPERTY OWNERSHIP

\*See map disclaimer, page 7

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campus site which has significant redevelopment potential but is hampered by a cohesive redevelopment strategy and depends on the state's plan for transition of the property.

## Zoning Districts and Analysis

When analyzing the current City of Boulder Zoning Map and Ordinance, several discrepancies exist between the map, the text, and the realities on-the-ground, which help inform potential changes to incorporate into the City's zoning code.

As shown in Figure 5.2, the zoning map does not show color shading or hatching to depict properties assigned as R-1 or R-2 districts. From verbal conversations with the City, R-1 zoned land is that which is vacant or outside of the city limits and not assigned to be commercial, business, or park land. R-2 is intended to be all properties within the city limits that are not assigned as commercial, business, or park land. The lack of distinction on the map for the R-1 and R-2 zones may cause confusion and conflict, and should be remedied in the zoning map and ordinance update efforts that are planned for early 2019.

Although the City's current zoning map and text show Boulder having extraterritorial zoning authority outside the City, in 2018 a Montana District Court ruling found that Boulder is not exercising its authority over land use issues outside of City limits. As a result, the City's forthcoming zoning update will remove reference to zoning in areas outside the City limits of Boulder and no portion of the Growth

Policy is meant to imply the City is exercising its extraterritorial zoning authority.

According to the current zoning ordinance, current districts include:

- (R-1) Low Density Residential
- (R-2) Medium Density Residential
- (CBD) Central Business
- (GC) General Commercial

There are discrepancies found within the zoning ordinance to address for residential zoning, including:

- The difference between the purposes of the "low-density" and "medium density" residential districts does not seem to be tied to actual densities of neighborhoods on-the-ground. While the ordinance specifies R-1 as "low-density", the map specifies R-1 as any residential lands outside of the current city limits. The map specifies R-2 as "medium-density", while the ordinance intends for R-2 zoned land to be those deemed appropriate for residential expansions.

According to the zoning ordinance, the purpose of the R-1 district is *"intended to provide for the development of single-family residences and two-family residences at a density compatible with existing residential development. This district also accommodates those institutional and public uses compatible with residential neighborhoods."*

# CONDITIONS, TRENDS, AND PROJECTIONS —

The purpose of the R-2 district is *“to recognize the existing residential neighborhoods of the community as well as those areas which are deemed appropriate for residential expansions. A variety of residential types and densities, including multiple family homes, will be accommodated to provide a balance of housing types within the community. It is intended that this district be maintained and expanded to preserve the residential attractiveness in a mixed use atmosphere. This district also will accommodate those institutional and public uses compatible with residential neighborhoods.”*

Additionally, there are discrepancies found within the zoning ordinance to address for commercial and business zoning, including:

- The Central Business District is shown on the map as a concentrated area at the center of town, and does not include the current city offices on 1st Avenue. As described below in the purpose of the CBD district, government offices are intended to be located within that zone.
- The intentions of the CBD and GC districts are similar and some areas of the CBD zone may be better suited with a “Public or Institutional” designation to avoid confusion with the intention of the GC district.

According to the zoning ordinance, the purpose of the CBD zone is *“intended to be the central focus of the City’s business, government, service and cultural activities. The uses in this district should be those that are appropriate in a high density, intensively developed*

*commercial center. Appropriate area should be provided for the logical and planned expansion of the present District. The area should be developed as an attractive, functional and convenient commercial environment, and to provide the mix of activities necessary to maintain the downtown character.”*

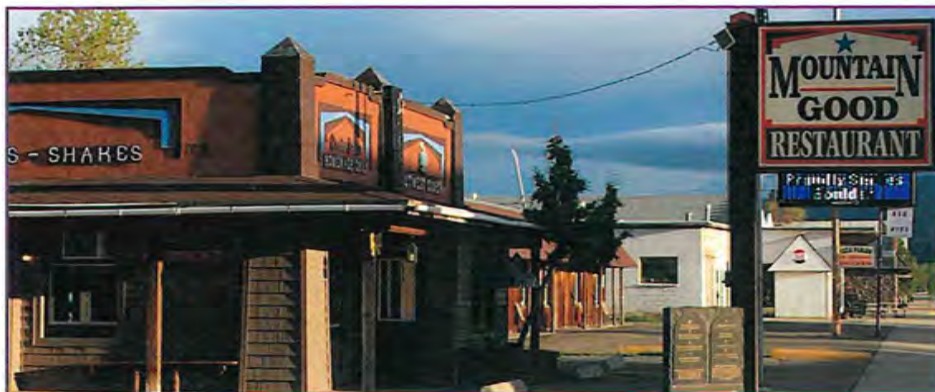
The purpose of the GC zone is *“to accommodate general business uses while preserving the traffic capacity of the street system and the desirability of adjacent residential development. The area should be developed as an attractive, functional and convenient commercial development.”*

An additional portion of the zoning ordinance that may need to be addressed is what is described as the “Historic Preservation Overlay District” (HPOD). The ordinance describes the purpose of this district *“to stimulate the restoration and rehabilitation of structures and property that contribute to the character and fabric of established residential, commercial, or industrial neighborhoods.”* The ordinance further describes the district intention as to protect and enhance the historic and diverse features of the district. While it doesn’t appear that the HPOD has been established within the current regulations, the ordinance notes that the City Council may designate an area of the city to these boundaries. Once enacted, any development must conform to the regulations of the district.

Additionally, the Making Future Bright Master Plan identified potential strategies to meet land use needs including:

- *Classify the lands west of the Interstate for uses that promote secondary, value adding economic development*

- *Classify lands west of the Interstate for transportation related services and infrastructure*
- *Classify lands that support mixed use developments, such as commercial buildings with upper-story residential units in downtown Boulder*
- *Classify the North Campus lands for uses that support institutional and associated group residential housing*
- *Classify the South Campus lands for uses that support residential, institutional and commercial uses*
- *Classify lands to support commercial, congregation, recreational and agricultural-related uses at and around the Recreation Park*
- *Designate growth areas in and around the City of Boulder*
- *Enhance community character by investing in the existing commercial core of Boulder*
- *Encourage in-fill development (and create larger city lots within zoning)*



## Urban Renewal Plan

Montana law allows municipalities to create Urban Renewal Districts (URDs) to address blight conditions and promote redevelopment within a defined area. Tax Increment Financing (TIF), when adopted as part of an URD, allows the community to use money for the redevelopment of the area. As part of the establishment of an URD and in order to utilize TIF funds, a city must adopt an Urban Renewal Plan (URP). The URP is designed to reflect a defined district's priorities, desires, and its vision, while also detailing goals and objectives for achieving them.

Revenues generated by TIF funds may only be spent within the designated district, and can be used for projects that were identified in the Urban Renewal Plan. The City of Boulder should consider creating an Urban Renewal Plan to address blighted areas and to determine if TIF would be beneficial to the community. The Downtown Plan also addresses guidance for the development of a URP.

# CONDITIONS, TRENDS, AND PROJECTIONS —



The zoning ordinance and map should be updated and coordinated for consistency and to promote the best growth pattern for the future of Boulder and surrounding area. Potential growth or expansion of the city may be best suited as infill development and to the north, east, and possibly south.







FIGURE 5.2 - CITY OF BOULDER ZONING MAP

\*See map disclaimer, page 7

# CONDITIONS, TRENDS, AND PROJECTIONS —

## Geography

Boulder lies at an elevation of 4,990 feet and is on the north bank of the Boulder River, a tributary of the Jefferson River. The city has a total area of 1.13 square miles. Due to the Boulder Batholith formation, the Boulder River valley was once home to gold mining operations and eventually became an agriculture and trading center.

The Boulder area is vast in natural resources and amenities, and its location in the middle of an agricultural valley and surrounded by mountains and public lands makes it a prime recreation destination. Opportunities for recreation include hiking, river walks, bird watching, fishing, hot springs, radon mines, geo-caching, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, antler hunting, rock hounding, horseback riding, wildflower identifying, hunting, fishing, cycling, hiking, camping, four wheeling, and more.



THE ELKHORN MOUNTAINS TO THE EAST OF BOULDER

## Vegetation

Vegetation within the Boulder Valley area varies with elevation, precipitation, and depth to groundwater. Vegetative species near rivers and creeks include Cottonwood, Willow, Aspen, and wetland grasses. Upland vegetation includes grasses, sagebrush, Ponderosa Pine, Douglas Fir, Lodgepole Pine, Engleman Spruce, and Whitebark Pine. Agricultural areas are dominated by alfalfa and grass hay.



## Fish and Wildlife

According to the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the following threatened species may occur in the planning area:

- Bald eagle
- Gray wolf
- Canada lynx
- North American wolverine



The Boulder River drainage contains fish species common to southwestern Montana including westslope cutthroat trout, mountain whitefish, mountain sucker, longnose dace, longnose sucker, Rocky Mountain sculpin, and white sucker. Nonnative species are the rainbow trout, brown trout, brook trout, and common carp. Boulder lies within Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks Region 3.

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About 60% of the region is made up of public lands administered by the U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management. Hunting and fishing opportunities are plentiful on public lands surrounding Boulder. Also worth noting is the Elkhorn Cooperative Management Area that enhances the fish and wildlife environment in the region and plays a significant role in the area's economy by bringing in hunters and other recreationalists.

## Water Resources

Water resources within the Boulder Valley include irrigation canals, irrigated fields, wells, and septic systems. The main sources of irrigation water are the Boulder River, Elkhorn Creek, and Muskrat Creek. Canals affect groundwater by recharging underlying aquifers through leakage. Irrigated fields provide infiltration recharge when water is applied in excess of crop demand. Wells extract water and septic systems return a portion of that water to the groundwater system.

Portions of the Boulder River typically run dry late in the summer when appropriations exceed physical flow. Diversions by senior water-rights holders may eliminate the ability to irrigate for junior water-rights holders, and impact the river's utility for aquatic life and recreation. This has been a long-standing issue, and thus there are concerns that additional groundwater development in the watershed will further reduce water availability.

*(Source: Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology Open-File Report 688, Hydrogeologic Investigation of the Boulder Valley, March 2017)*

## Sand and Gravel Resources

DEQ Opencut Mining Program data indicates there are two permitted open cut mining operations and a third proposed mine within or in adjacent to the city limits.

These resources are needed for many infrastructure and development projects. Transportation costs are high, so having these resources to close by is most effective. The city contracts with Helena Sand and Gravel and other local contractors to provide these resources for development projects.

## Trails and Fishing Access

All authorized trails associated with the BLM or Forest Service lands are currently mapped. Angling access is readily available due to the dominance of federal land ownership (USFS, BLM), and public roads located along the river upstream of Boulder. From the city of Boulder to the confluence with the Jefferson River, access is generally limited to county road bridges. There are no fishing access sites administered by FWP on the Boulder River, but the Candlestick Ranch near Cardwell provides a unique access opportunity provided by Golden Sunlight Mine in coordination with FWP.

See Appendix C for a map of trail-related recommendations.

*(Source: Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks)*

# CONDITIONS, TRENDS, AND PROJECTIONS —

## Soils

Soil types within Boulder's growth area are predominately cobbly clay sand and loam with good to moderate drainage. A soil's drainage properties influence development with regards to flooding, suitability for building, and absorption rates for waste water treatment. A soil's drainage properties also impact its ability to adequately absorb and treat effluent from on-site wastewater treatment systems (such as septic systems).

The Natural Resources Conservation Service's Soil Survey defines building suitability by analyzing properties that affect the load-supporting capacity including depth to a water table, ponding, flooding, subsidence, shrink-swell potential, and compressibility. The properties that affect the ease and amount of excavation include depth to a water table, ponding, flooding, slope, depth to bedrock or a cemented pan, hardness of bedrock or a cemented pan, and the amount and size of rock fragments.

The table below reflects the Boulder planning area's suitability for development from the properties above. It is also worth noting that the Boulder Batholith and bedrock play a significant role in the soils found in this area and may limit development potential.

Suitability for Development	Acres	Percent of AOI
Very limited	951.8	57.9%
Somewhat limited	428.9	26.1%
Not limited	223.4	13.6%
Null or Not Rated	38.7	2.4%
Totals for Area of Interest	1,642.8	100.0%

## Fire and Wildland Fire

Montana state law requires that growth policies include "an evaluation of the potential for fire and wildland fire in the jurisdictional area, including whether or not there is a need to delineate the wildland-urban interface, and adopt regulations requiring defensible space around structures, adequate ingress and egress to and from structures and developments to facilitate fire suppression activities, and adequate water supply for fire protection."

The 2015 Update Tri-County Regional Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) addresses wildfire risk in Lewis & Clark, Broadwater, and Jefferson counties.

According to the CWPP, the majority of the land immediately surrounding Boulder is defined as "Group A". "Group A fuels have potential for fast spreading fires when grass is cured such as early spring before green-up and late summer and fall. These are areas of grass, weeds, and brush less than 2 feet high. The fire hazard can easily be mitigated in these fuels. These areas are generally not a problem for development from a fire protection standpoint. Humans can usually avoid burning areas with ease and firefighters can work easily and efficiently under normal weather conditions. Heavy damages are still possible when items are within the burning area without adequate fuel treatments, clearances, or protection. This fuel type will accommodate the heaviest and widest range of developments with respect to wildfire hazards."

While Boulder is in close proximity to forests and grasslands at risk

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of wildfire, the fuel type in the city's surroundings allows for proper mitigation and future development. While Boulder is not heavily forested in the city, there is the potential for fires in surrounding areas. The Boulder Complex Fires occurred in 2000 to the west and north of town and remnants of those fires can still be seen on surrounding hillsides. Wildland fires are a concern considering the vast amount of public lands surrounding the City and the minimal management and beetle killed timber present in this area.

As there is already a delineated WUI, there is not a present need to further delineate the WUI more so than it currently exists (according to the CWPP). Boulder does have exposure that could be further mitigated with defensible space, ingress and egress regulations, and water supply.

**The Boulder region has an abundance of natural resources and recreational opportunities to protect, utilize, and promote. Trails and public access should be highlighted and connected to provide linkages for users. All future development should respect the area's natural resources, wildlife, and scenic qualities that make Boulder unique.**

# CONDITIONS, TRENDS, AND PROJECTIONS

## Special Considerations

### Montana Developmental Center

Historically, Boulder has been home to state schools for the deaf, blind, and developmentally disabled that were established as far back as 1892.

Recently, up to 300 people were employed in Boulder at the Montana Developmental Center (MDC), a state institution for people with developmental disabilities. In 2015, the Montana Legislature passed Senate Bill 411, which, in conjunction with 2017 House Bill 387, will result in closing of MDC. It was formerly the City of Boulder's and Jefferson County's largest employer and has been part of the fabric of the community for more than 100 years.

In response to this change, a Boulder Transition Advisory Committee was formed. The committee, along with local residents, embarked on a community discussion and planning project that resulted in the Making Boulder's Future Bright Master Plan. The Master Plan recommends a series of steps to be taken by the community to respond to change and prepare for a brighter future.

The implementation section and the "Priority Plans and Projects" section address specific recommendations for the north and south campus sites of MDC, and their potential for reuse to align with community goals.



FIGURE 7.0 - MDC CAMPUS SITES

*\*See map disclaimer, page 7*

### Health Mines

The Boulder area is home to commercial health mines that offer radon therapy for those seeking a complement or alternative to current methods of disease symptom management. These unique resources contribute to the economy of the area by attracting tourists. As alternative healing methods are becoming more popular, the health mines of Boulder may serve to attract more visitors to the area and should be utilized as a special asset to the community.

## Correctional Programs

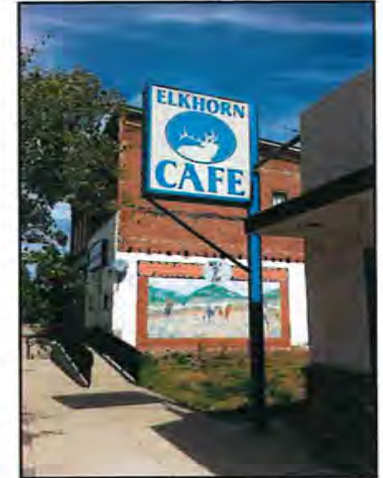
Approximately 100 people work for Alternative Youth Adventures (Youth Dynamics, Inc.), which provides residential services for troubled youth. In addition, Riverside Corrections, a state-run detention center for adult females, employs about 30 people and is run by the Department of Corrections. Additionally, Boulder is home to the Elkhorn Treatment Center (a Boyd Andrews Community Services center) which is a correctional facility serving adult Montana women employing 31 people.

## Historic Buildings

Boulder has three buildings on the National Register of Historic Places. The Jefferson County Courthouse, on Centennial Avenue, was added in 1980. The Montana Deaf and Dumb Asylum, also known as the Old Administration Building, off Montana Highway 69 (formerly Montana Secondary Highway 281) near Boulder, was added in 1985. The Boulder Hot Springs Hotel, southeast of Boulder on Montana Highway 69, was added in 1979.

Additionally buildings in Boulder that contribute to the historic and unique character of the downtown include Hardware Hanks, the Windsor Bar, Salina's Salon, Boulder Cash, Elkhorn Family Dental, L&P Grocery, the Heritage Center, Mountain Good Cafe, and Elkhorn Cafe, among others. Street trees, awnings, lighting, planters, and facade features add to the uniqueness of downtown Boulder.

*Source: 1980 Boulder Community Design Center, The Heritage Center*



FROM TOP LEFT, CLOCKWISE: HISTORIC MAIN STREET, ELKHORN CAFE, JEFFERSON COUNTY COURTHOUSE, THE HERITAGE CENTER (CREDIT: HERITAGE CENTER),

# KEY ISSUES

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## Introduction

Throughout the development of the growth policy, several issues emerged as ones of key significance. A key issue is an overarching topic that helped inform the implementation steps in the following section.

Each key issue then includes the following attributes:

- **Goals** are broad statements describing a desired future condition.
- **Objectives** are general descriptions of the steps Boulder needs to take to meet its goals. Objectives should be attainable and measurable.
- **Actions** are specific steps needed to achieve objectives.

Boulder's growth policy is intended to be a working document that is implemented over time to achieve the city's vision for the future. This following section provides a guide for putting the plan into action through the implementation table that lists a series of goals and objectives aimed at achieving the community's vision and addressing the key issues facing Boulder. For each objective, individual actions are included to provide a specific direction forward.

## Key Issues

### Identity and Marketing

The Boulder community has been home to the Montana Developmental Center since 1893. With the closure of MDC comes the need for Boulder to reinvent itself. The community needs to identify what it is, and what its future will look like. Several themes have emerged that provide some direction as to what the residents of the community want to be known for. The rich heritage of agriculture, mining, and homesteading is still present in the landscape. The vast natural resources of mountains, streams, and rivers hold a place of special significance to those who live in the valley. Additionally, several unique features have a home in Boulder, such as natural hot springs and health mines. All of these factors are what makes Boulder special and should be highlighted into a unique and cohesive theme and identity to help guide the vision for the future.

Boulder's identity holds significant importance. Throughout the public input process, many positive comments about the assets of the community kept arising. Residents feel that Boulder is safe, with a low cost of living, and quality school systems. There's a good opportunity to live a good life in Boulder, and many residents are proud of their community. This quality of life should be highlighted and marketed to attract new residents and businesses to Boulder. Additionally, the goals, objectives, and action steps related to this key issue aim at creating a high quality of life for those who live and work in Boulder, such as outdoor amenities and recurrent community events.



One of the key components that is important to attracting new residents and visitors to Boulder is to create a consistent strategy for marketing the city's assets and strengths. This should be done through an initial organizing effort to collaborate among various groups and organizations that are involved in planning for Boulder's future. This issue also relates to the community's identity, as a city brand that is appealing and unifying can be an important part of a marketing strategy.

Marketing is important because with the creation of new amenities, services, and community features, there must be an accompanying effort to advertise and spread the word, as to entice new residents and visitors to the community. Many individuals at the public meetings expressed a desire to use the current momentum of the community's planning efforts to create a new perception of Boulder being more than an institutional town among outsiders.

## **Public Infrastructure and Local Services**

The functional aspects of the community are one of the most vital components to allowing responsible growth and development. Water, sewer, streets, sidewalks, utilities, and other functional attributes of the community must be in place and effective to allow more growth and to create a healthy community. Additionally, fire, emergency services, health care, and transportation must be evaluated to ensure the needs of Boulder's residents are being met. During public meetings, residents expressed concern over adequate health care continuing to be offered within the city. New

proposed residential development would be contingent upon the extension of available city services, and must be planned for. Additionally, many comments were made over the perceived safety of pedestrians along Main Street. Potential improvements to this would potentially increase downtown visitation and provide more economic development opportunities.

## **Health and Recreational Opportunities**

Boulder is home to many natural resources that provide recreational opportunities for residents and visitors. The health mines add an additional unique attraction, and the public comments received indicated an interest in defining Boulder's future as one in which there are a variety of healthy outdoor activities to partake in year-round. In order to have this, attention must be given to address inadequacies in existing city parks and facilities. While these improvements would help provide additional amenities and a better quality of life for residents, they could also be seen as a bolster to economic development opportunities. As more people discover Boulder, amenities such as city parks and playgrounds help entice families to relocate, and visitors can benefit from visible gathering spaces that can be used as a rest area while they stop and take in the sights of the community.

## **Community Appearance**

Boulder is highlighted by beautiful views and natural resources, as

# KEY ISSUES

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well as a picturesque historic downtown and Main Street. While there are many inherent strengths in Boulder's appearance, there are also opportunities for improvement. Preservation of appealing views and careful screening of undesirable views can go a long way in a visitor's first impression of a community. Additionally, while the business district has a rich architectural appeal and history, facade improvements, streetscaping additions, and pedestrian-scaled public spaces would further create the impression of a prideful and unique community. Many public comments received addressed the desire to improve the community's appearance, both in small ways such as painting buildings, and in larger ways with programs that address facade improvements and design guidelines.

## Housing

The housing stock in Boulder is aging and lacking in options and affordability. Efforts should be taken to create more rental properties and in the improvement and development of new housing. As trends point to an aging population, special considerations will need to be taken to provide adequate housing for seniors in the future.

Many participants at the community meetings expressed concern over the inadequate housing stock, and how that may be hindering new businesses and residents from relocated to Boulder. Recommendations within the plan address both the improvement of the existing housing stock, as well as actions that aim to incentivize new development.

## MDC Campus Repurposing

As MDC has had a longstanding history in the community, with its closure comes both opportunities and challenges. The repurposing of the campus site and facilities is important to the changing conditions of the Boulder community. The north and the south campus sites are different in many ways, with both the potential for redevelopment, and the process of how ownership, deed restrictions, and transition plans are handled. Many community members expressed concern over the unknown future of these sites and expressed an interest in prioritizing finding new owners or tenants that would align with the rest of the community's goals.

## Resources and Operations

For the growth policy to be successful, it is important that Boulder has sufficient personnel resources, is adept at acquiring funding for important projects, and is achieving its strategic planning goals. Effort should be made to organize the resources and organizations to be used for implementation.

## Downtown Revitalization and Economic Development

These issues are of the utmost importance to the future vitality of Boulder. The 2018 Downtown Boulder Master Plan addresses these key issues and further defines the goals, objectives and actions for the downtown.

# KEY ISSUES



# IMPLEMENTATION

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## Timetable and Action Steps

Montana Code Annotated requires that Growth Policies include a timetable for implementing the growth policy. The City of Boulder Growth Policy is generally based on a 20-year timeline, however, it is intended to be fluid and flexible to respond and adapt to the changing needs of the community. Due to the critical timing of the MDC closure and how that may affect the community, it is recommended that the Growth Policy will be reviewed every two years and revised as necessary. Implementation efforts will be on-going and directed by the community members and organizations listed as potential partners under each action step.

### Timeline

The timeline column outlines the anticipated amount of time to implement each action. Timelines are organized in the following manner:

- Short-term: initiated or completed within 1 to 3 years of adoption of the growth policy
- Mid-term: initiated or completed within 4 to 6 years of adoption of the growth policy
- Long-term: initiated or completed within 6 years or longer after adoption of the growth policy
- On-Going: occurring continually

### Partners

Recognizing that implementation will require working with other agencies and organizations, the partner(s) column identifies the parties likely to play key roles in implementation of each action. Partners are identified using the following acronyms:

- MDT - Montana Department of Transportation
- JLDC - Jefferson Local Development Corporation
- COB - City of Boulder
- JC - Jefferson County
- COC - Boulder Chamber of Commerce
- BTAC - Boulder Transition Advisory Committee
- BDFB - Boulder Development Fund Board
- MT - State of Montana (Dept. of Commerce or DPHHS)
- BM - Boulder Monitor Newspaper

### Priority

The priority ranking column is intended to be used as a tool for prioritizing the allocation of limited resources. The priority rankings are a reflection of where Boulder residents feel the town should be investing its time and resources, based on public input. Priority rankings are organized as follows:

1. High Priority (main focus)
2. Medium Priority (secondary focus)
3. Low Priority (contingent upon available resources)

The priority rankings serve to identify where to begin in implementing the growth policy. For instance, an action with a long-term timeline but a high priority ranking indicates that action will likely take an extended period of time to complete but that initiation of that action should begin as soon as resources are available.

# IMPLEMENTATION

## KEY ISSUE: IDENTITY AND MARKETING

**Goal 1: Boulder has a unified brand identity that promotes the community's unique assets and attracts visitors.**

Objectives	Action Steps	Partner(s)	Timeline	Priority
<b>1.1</b> Promotional materials use a unified community brand that is effective at marketing the community's assets and creating a sense of place.	Action 1.1.1: Hire a designer to create a full identity branding package for Boulder which includes a logo, typeface, tagline/slogan, and color palette. Assets to consider in the brand include local hot springs, health mines, outdoor recreation, an active and walkable community, a peaceful small town atmosphere, a low cost of living, and other attributes.	COB JC COC BTAC BDFB	Short-term	High
<b>1.2</b> Boulder's branding is visually displayed throughout the community.	Action 1.2.1: Develop signage (using the community's branding theme) throughout town, including seasonal banners, highway signs, sculptures, murals, and other elements, as well as functional wayfinding signage that directs users to area amenities. Coordinate this action with the Downtown Master Plan temporary wayfinding action step.	MDT COB COC BTAC BDFB	Short-term	High
<b>1.3</b> Boulder is an outdoor recreation hub which is effective in attracting tourists and visitors.	Action 1.3.1: Coordinate with Jefferson County's efforts to create a website that offers maps and information on opportunities such as hunting, fishing, health mines, hot springs, ghost towns, walking tour, ATVs, hiking, outdoor sports, biking, and other recreation. Also support the development of Jefferson County's Parks and Recreation Master Plan.	COB JC COC BTAC BDFB	Short-term	Medium

# IMPLEMENTATION

## Goal 2: Boulder hosts many events throughout the year and has plentiful things to do for entertainment and enjoyment.

Objectives	Action Steps	Partner(s)	Timeline	Priority
<b>2.1</b> A consistent event calendar that is advertised to locals and visitors.	Action 2.1.1: Create a paid position that is tasked with scheduling, promoting, and managing local events year-round. Coordinate with the Downtown Master Plan action steps regarding event planning. Coordinate with Jefferson County's Event Coordinator position.	JLDC COB COC BTAC BDFB JC	Short-term	High

## Goal 3: Boulder is a destination community with adequate accommodations and tourist amenities.

<b>3.1</b> More accommodation options for visitors and tourists.	Action 3.1.1: Create ordinances to allow permitted short term vacation rentals within the city's zoning ordinance.	COB	Short-term	Medium
	Action 3.1.2 Work with Jefferson County to expand RV facilities at the fairgrounds and/or encourage the creation of an RV park in Boulder.	COB JC BTAC BDFB	Short-term	High

## Goal 4: A unified and consistent marketing strategy that promotes Boulder's assets.

<b>4.1</b> Residents, visitors, and potential developers can find information about the City easily and conveniently.	Action 4.1.1: Create a City of Boulder website that includes a calendar of events (or links to an existing calendar), information about housing, and developer incentives for business and residential construction.	COB BDFB	Short-term	High
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# IMPLEMENTATION

## Goal 4: Continued

Objectives	Action Steps	Partner(s)	Timeline	Priority
4.2 Information about local events is widely distributed and advertised.	Action 4.2.1: Utilize a social media strategy to increase community engagement.	COB COC BM JC	Short-term	Medium

## KEY ISSUE: PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE AND LOCAL SERVICES

### Goal 5: Boulder has safe and effective vehicular and pedestrian circulation.

5.1 Increase visibility and safety around the center landscaped medians on Main Street.	Action 5.1.1: Replace plant material in the medians that is unattractive and/or causes a site visibility issue with new plants utilizing appropriate site-visibility standards and vegetation that is native, drought-tolerant, and provides color and seasonal interest. Include ongoing maintenance needs into plans and budgeting, including irrigation, pruning, trimming, and replacement.	MDT COB JC BDFB	Short-term	High
5.2 Snow removal efforts ensure adequate visibility year-round.	Action 5.2.1: Create a snow mitigation plan for streets and sidewalks in coordination with efforts from MDT, City of Boulder, and private business owners with adjacent sidewalks.	MDT COB	Short-term	Medium

# IMPLEMENTATION

## Goal 5: Continued

Objectives	Action Steps	Partner(s)	Timeline	Priority
5.3 The community feels more pedestrian-friendly with safer street crossings.	Action 5.3.1: Coordinate with the Downtown Master Plan for pedestrian route improvements in the business district.	MDT COB BDFB	Short-term	High
	Action 5.3.2: Install ADA sidewalks and curb ramps throughout the city where they are not adequate or are missing, prioritizing connections to schools. Install rapid-flashing beacons at key intersections.	MDT COB BDFB	Short-term	High

## Goal 6: Expanded city water and sewer services in areas where new development may occur.

6.1 A plan for expanding city services that incentivizes and guides development to areas appropriate for future growth.	Action 6.1.1: Create a Capital Improvement Plan to assign funds to infrastructure expansion projects as they become available.	COB	Short-term	High
6.2 Connectivity and walkability to and from new developments and renovated facilities.	Action 6.2.1: Include provisions in development regulations that require developers to construct curb, gutters, sidewalks, and crosswalks along adjacent roadways. Consider adopting a Complete Streets policy.	COB	Short-term	Medium



# IMPLEMENTATION

## Goal 7: Boulder has an adequate and functional stormwater management system.

Objectives	Action Steps	Partner(s)	Timeline	Priority
7.1 Improved and coordinated stormwater drainage functionality.	Action 7.1.1: Create a city Stormwater Master Plan to plan for future development and remedy current functionality issues.	COB JC	Short-term	High

## Goal 8: Boulder has high-speed internet that is available for homes and businesses.

8.1 A plan and timeline with internet providers that addresses expanded capacity.	Action 8.1.1: Contact internet providers and determine the feasibility and timeline of expanding internet capacity throughout the community. (Note: As of spring of 2018, efforts for this action are underway and should be further pursued.)	JLDC COB JC COC BDFB	Short-term	High
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## Goal 9: Boulder has plentiful health care opportunities and emergency service resources for residents.

9.1 Developed partnerships and plans that ensure adequate healthcare resources for residents.	Action 9.1.1: Instigate a Community Health Improvement Plan that addresses policies, projects, programs, and partnerships that will improve the health of those living in Boulder. Include the consideration of a public transportation service.	COB JC BDFB BTAC	Short-term	High
9.2 A fully staffed volunteer fire department with adequate resources for needed services.	Action 9.2.1: Pursue funding opportunities to acquire additional equipment and promote volunteer efforts region-wide.	JLDC COB JC COC BTAC	Short-term	High

# IMPLEMENTATION

## KEY ISSUE: HEALTH AND RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES

### Goal 10: Boulder has new and expanded recreational opportunities.

Objectives	Action Steps	Partner(s)	Timeline	Priority
<b>10.1</b> Highlighted focus and increased visitation of the Boulder River.	Action 10.1.1: Create a park and trail system with public access along the Boulder River. (Note: Coordinate with Action Step 1.3.1).	JLDC COB JC	Short-term	High
<b>10.2</b> A city-wide bike and pedestrian trail system for all ages and abilities that can be used year-round.	Action 10.2.1: Create a trail system that is designed for walking, running, wheelchairs, bicycling, and includes workout stations. (Note: Coordinate with Action Step 1.3.1).	COB JC BTAC	Mid-term	Medium
	Action 10.2.2: Within planning efforts, include ongoing trail maintenance and consider converting some trail segments to cross-country ski trails in the winter.	COB JC BTAC	Mid-term	Low
<b>10.3</b> The existing city parks are improved and maintained.	Action 10.3.1: Add public restrooms, playground equipment, picnic shelters, and other park amenities in city parks. Consider adding basketball courts and new tennis courts.	COB BTAC BDFB	Short-term	High
<b>10.4</b> The existing city pool is highlighted and improved.	Action 10.4.1: Create a facility update plan that addresses expansion options and long-term maintenance costs associated with the pool.	COB	Mid-term	Low

# IMPLEMENTATION

## Goal 10: Continued

Objectives	Action Steps	Partner(s)	Timeline	Priority
<b>10.5</b> Additional passive recreational opportunities for all ages and abilities.	Action 10.5.1: Work with the County's Parks, Trails, and Recreation Commission to expand passive recreation opportunities such as birding, sightseeing, fishing ponds, art in the park, etc.	COB JC BTAC	Mid-term	Low
<b>10.6</b> Recreation opportunities are highlighted and promoted to encourage participation.	Action 10.6.1: Task the paid events coordinator (Action 2.1.1) to ensure recreational events are scheduled, such as 5k runs, dog walks, hikes, fishing days, bird watching tours, etc.	JLDC COB COC BDFB JC	Short-term	Medium
<b>10.7</b> A place for Boulder residents and visitors to take their dogs off leash.	Action 10.7.1: Create a fenced dog park within the city, along with signage directing travelers to the location.	COB	Mid-term	Low
<b>10.8</b> Expand and highlight Jefferson Recreation Park to increase use and visitation.	Action 10.8.1: Support the Jefferson Recreation Park Master Plan efforts and recommendations to enhance the recreation park.	COB JC BDFB	Short-term	High

# IMPLEMENTATION

## KEY ISSUE: COMMUNITY APPEARANCE

### Goal 11: Boulder’s Main Street and other important visual corridors are attractive and inviting.

Objectives	Action Steps	Partner(s)	Timeline	Priority
<b>11.1</b> Quality public spaces and pedestrian and cyclist-scaled amenities exist in key areas.	Action 11.1.1: Add signage, landscaping, seating, benches, flowers, bike racks, and trash receptacles to Main Street. Coordinate with Downtown Plan Actions.	COB BTAC BDFB	Short-term	High
<b>11.2</b> The city has incentives and guidance to improve the appearance of downtown.	Action 11.2.1: Coordinate with the Downtown Master Plan efforts regarding design guidelines and a façade improvement program.	COB COC BTAC BDFB	Short-term	Medium
	Action 11.2.2: Develop Landscape Ordinance Requirements that require new and renovated commercial properties to include landscape improvements in construction projects.	COB	Short-term	Low

### Goal 12: Boulder’s built environment is improved through programs and regulations.

<b>12.1</b> The city has a program in place to address and mitigate the effects of urban blight in defined areas.	Action 12.1.1: Coordinate with the actions found within the Downtown Master Plan to develop an Urban Renewal Plan for the prevention and elimination of urban blight.	COB BTAC BDFB	Short-term	High
<b>12.2</b> New and remodeled properties are built to ensure the health, safety, and welfare of inhabitants.	Action 12.2.1: Create new regulations within City codes that require comprehensive building inspections for new and remodeled properties.	COB	Short-term	High

# IMPLEMENTATION

## KEY ISSUE: HOUSING

**Goal 13: Boulder has an adequate supply of affordable rental properties.**

Objectives	Action Steps	Partner(s)	Timeline	Priority
<b>13.1</b> Regulatory tools allow more mixed-use and multi-family housing.	Action 13.1.1: Add mixed-use zoning updates to the zoning code to allow and incentivize second-story residential units in in properties along Main Street.	COB	Short-term	High
	Action 13.1.2: Add multi-family zoning to appropriate areas throughout town.	COB	Short-term	High

**Goal 14: Boulder has an adequate supply of affordable housing available to purchase and in a variety of types.**

<b>14.1</b> There are incentives for developers to construct affordable and senior housing.	Action 14.1.1: Allow density bonuses for developers who construct affordable housing or senior units.	COB	Short-term	Medium
	Action 14.1.2: Reduce sewer and water connection fees for developers who construct affordable housing or senior units.	COB	Short-term	Medium
<b>14.2</b> Non-profit efforts to build affordable housing are supported.	Action 14.2.1: Coordinate with Habitat for Humanity of Southwest Montana and other non-profits to build affordable housing units, while holding educational courses and home ownership classes in Boulder.	JLDC COB JC	Mid-term	Medium

# IMPLEMENTATION

## Goal 15: Boulder’s existing housing stock is improved by incentivizing and encouraging improvements.

Objectives	Action Steps	Partner(s)	Timeline	Priority
15.1 Boulder residents are encouraged to improve their properties through incentives and enforcement of regulations.	Action 15.1.1: Develop new regulations that require a minimum level of upkeep to housing units and provides an enforcement system.	COB	Short-term	High
	Action 15.1.2: Review the code enforcement standards and procedures and update to reflect this to a high priority need.	COB	Short-term	High
	Action 15.1.3: Coordinate with Habitat for Humanity, Rebuilding America, or other nonprofits to host local home improvement days where volunteers help with small household improvement projects.	JLDC COB JC BTAC BDFB	Short-term	High

## Goal 16: Boulder provides opportunities for development of new construction in infill lots and other prime areas.

16.1 Educational resources, tools, and incentive programs for developers, contractors, or potential home builders are provided.	Action 16.1.1: Catalog vacant infill lots and land that may be suited for new development and develop a database for interested parties. An infill lot is defined as being a vacant or underutilized lot within the current city limits boundaries.	COB COC BTAC	Short-term	Medium
	Action 16.1.2: Create an infill bonus for developers who build in infill lots that include a streamlined review process and permit fee reductions.	COB	Short-term	Medium

# IMPLEMENTATION

## KEY ISSUE: MONTANA DEVELOPMENTAL CENTER CAMPUS REPURPOSING

**Goal 17: Understand the capacity, infrastructure, and resources of the south MDC campus so it can be redeveloped into uses that are compatible and complementary to the Boulder community.**

Objectives	Action Steps	Partner(s)	Timeline	Priority
<b>17.1</b> A Master Plan that addresses the specific opportunities and constraints of the MDC south campus site.	Action 17.1.1: Create a Master Plan and inventory the MDC south campus buildings, including: square footage, condition, life safety issues, permits required, property taxes, utility rates, eligibility for tax credits, and facilities associated maintenance and operations costs. Consideration should also be given to the campus site as a whole, including access, views, topography, parking, and expansion potential. The plan should determine strengths and opportunities to be used in a focused outreach effort to entice interested parties.	JLDC COB BTAC BDFB MT JC	Short-term	High

## Goal 18: Establish funding and tax credits for the repurposing of the south MDC campus.

<b>18.1</b> Opportunities are maximized for federal project funding.	Action 18.1.1: Coordinate with the State Historic Preservation Office to determine eligibility for historic preservation tax credits, and pursue New Markets Tax Credits for certified Community Development Entities.	JLDC COB BTAC BDFB MT	Short-term	High
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# IMPLEMENTATION

**Goal 19: Allow the transition of the MDC campus sites to be streamlined and efficient for future uses, with a specific procedure plan set in place.**

Objectives	Action Steps	Partner(s)	Timeline	Priority
<b>19.1</b> Standard procedures are utilized when developers show interest in changing the future uses of the MDC campus sites.	Action 19.1.1: Create a committee of State of Montana representatives and Boulder representatives to establish communication and documentation regarding a transition plan.	JLDC COB BTAC BDFB MT JC	Short-term	High
	Action 19.1.2: Develop a transition plan that allows a clear and understandable process to undergo when interested organizations or developers are interested in the properties.	JLDC COB BTAC BDFB MT JC	Short-term	High

**Goal 20: Support efforts to redevelop the MDC North campus.**

<b>20.1</b> Coordination and support of the state's efforts to repurpose the north campus.	Action 20.1.1: Recommend to the State that the secure facility be considered for expansion of the number of beds.	JLDC, COB BTAC, BDFB, MT, JC	Short-term	Medium
	Action 20.1.2: Support the State of Montana and DPHHS actions in repurposing and rehabilitating the North Campus within the deed restrictions to provide jobs in Boulder and the region. Consider options such as the museum, tourist desination, veterans center, Helena Industries, a healthcare facility, Youth Challenge, and other potential uses. Collaborate with the committee to pursue options and a plan to move forward.	JLDC COB BTAC BDFB MT JC	Short-term	High



# IMPLEMENTATION

## Goal 20: Continued

Objectives	Action Steps	Partner(s)	Timeline	Priority
20.1 Continued	Action 20.1.1: Coordinate with DPHHS to pursue EPA assessments of inactive facilities.	JLDC, COB BTAC, MT, JC	Short-term	High
	Action 20.1.2: Coordinate between the City and the State for a Memorandum of Understanding for payment of current monthly sewer rates until there are a sufficient number of rate payers to offset the burden on the City. Additionally, a MOU for continuation of law enforcement personnel should be considered.	JLDC COB BTAC BDFB MT	Short-term	High

## KEY ISSUE: RESOURCES AND OPERATIONS

## Goal 21: Boulder has sufficient personnel resources, is adept at acquiring funding for important projects, and is achieving its strategic planning goals.

21.1 Ongoing and coordinated implementation efforts for the growth policy actions.	Action 21.1.1: Pursue funding for paid staff tasked with achieving goals and implementing the efforts of BTAC, BDFB, and other groups and organizations. This position could be an Economic Development Director/City Planner. Coordinate with Action 2.1.1.	JLDC COB BTAC BDFB	Short-term	High
	Action 21.1.2: Work with a grant writing coordinator (or task to position in Action 21.1.1) to maximize grant funding opportunities and assist with applications and requirements.	JLDC COB BTAC BDFB	Short-term	High

# IMPLEMENTATION

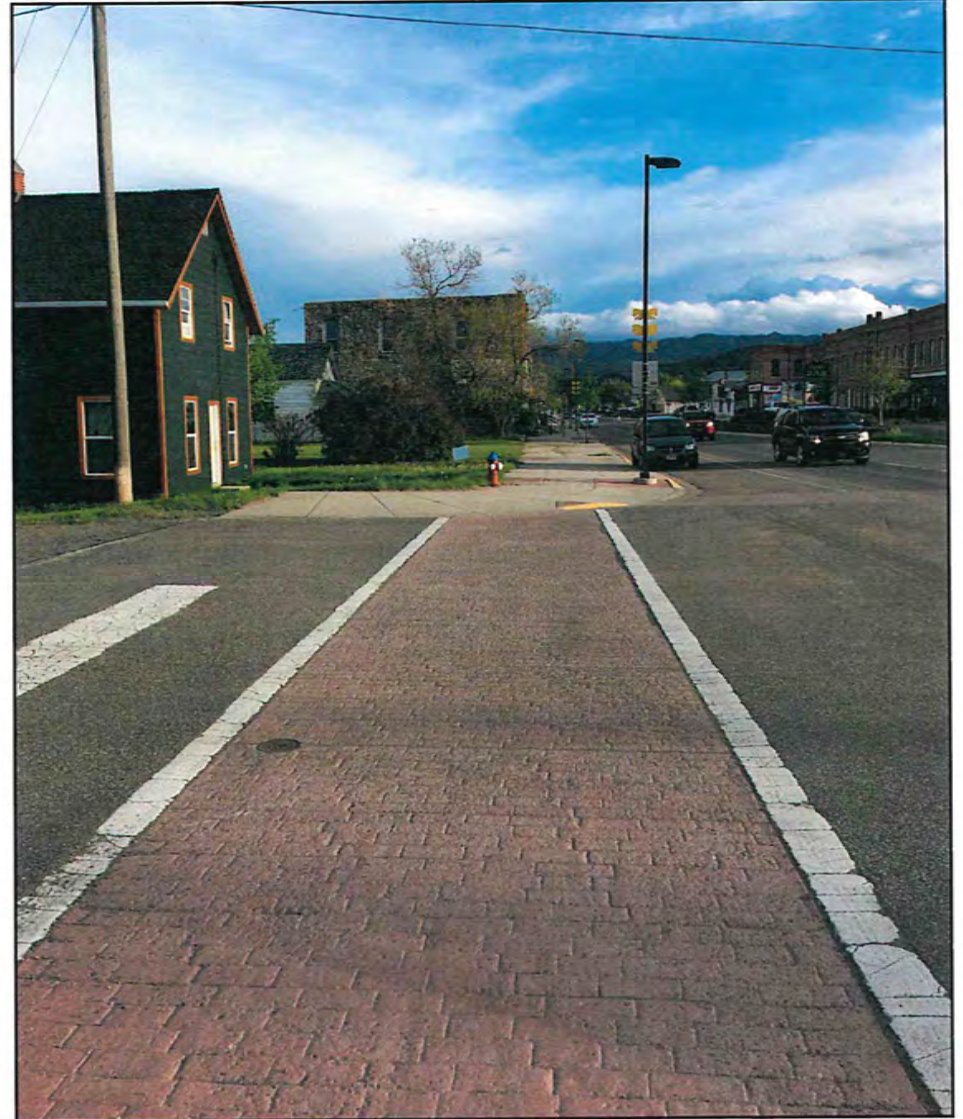
Objectives	Action Steps	Partner(s)	Timeline	Priority
21.2 Adequate number of volunteers and staff to assist with events and implementation efforts.	Action 21.2.1: Task event coordinator (see Action 20.1.1) with organizing volunteers and providing a central hub that posts volunteer opportunities and provides training and resources.	COB COC BTAC BDFB	Short-term	High
	Action 21.2.2: Coordinate with the high school to consider adding a graduation requirement for community service activities.	COB BTAC Jefferson High School	Short-term	High
	Action 21.2.3: Recruit volunteers through national networks such as AmeriCorps, American Conservation Experience, Rebuilding Together Inc., etc.	JLDC COB BTAC BDFB	Mid-term	Medium

**Goal 22: The City is equipped for new development through existing regulations and processes.**

22.1 Developers are led through a regulatory process that is consistent and streamlined.	Action 22.1.1: Create subdivision regulations for the City of Boulder that comply with MCA 76-3-504.	COB	Short-term	High
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*Note: Additional key issues, goals, objectives, and action steps specifically regarding the downtown area are included in the 2018 Downtown Boulder Master Plan.*

# IMPLEMENTATION



# IMPLEMENTATION

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## Growth Policy Review

Beginning one year from the date of adoption of this growth policy, the Planning Board should conduct an annual review of the plan's effectiveness and the status of implementation efforts. For the first four years, this review should consist of:

- Reviewing the implementation section and determining which action steps have been completed or are in progress, and the effectiveness of these actions in reaching the overall goals of the growth policy.
- Each review should result in a work plan for the coming year, which the Planning Board should submit to the City Council for the purpose of budgeting and allocation of staff resources.
- During the reviews, the Planning Board should invite the partners listed in the implementation plan to the review sessions to re-engage and rebuild momentum.

After five years, the Planning Board review should consist of:

- A review of the data within the Conditions, Trends, and Projections section, using the relevant updates from the most recent Census data. The new data should be analyzed to determine if the goals, objectives, and action steps of the growth policy are affected by the community's changing conditions.
- Indicate if any new issues have arisen in the community and recommend an appropriate process to address those issues.



Once the review is complete, the Planning Board shall submit a written report of its findings to the City Council, who will then determine if revisions are warranted. All reviews and updates shall be in accordance with applicable Montana law.

## Priority Plans and Projects

### I-15 Interchange:

According to the Montana Department of Transportation, there are 3,353 vehicles heading northbound, and 3,531 vehicles heading southbound on I-15 outside of Boulder per day (2016). Additionally, it is reported that there are 3,019 vehicles passing through Boulder's Main Street each day (2016). To help Boulder become more of a destination community, two strategies must be in place. First, the city should attempt to attract more attention from the high volume of traffic traveling along I-15, enticing more travelers to take the exit onto Boulder's Main Street. Second, once the vehicles are in Boulder, they should be drawn to stop and get gas, shop, dine, or tour Boulder's many attractions.

To address the first strategy, Boulder should consider the following concepts to attract more attention from traffic along I-15:

1. Billboards promoting "Historic Boulder" that is home to festivals, events, hot springs, health mines, river trails, and more.
2. Coordinate with MDT to install "service" related signs showing gas, food, and lodging availability.
3. Use signage to promote amenities that would be appealing to travelers such as shaded parks, public restrooms, dog parks, and walking tours.
4. Create a gateway feature that is visible from Town Pump that exemplifies the community's identity and assets, and entices people to continue driving into the downtown. An additional

gateway sign should be added at the south end of town as well.

It is also imperative that coordination between the City of Boulder and Town Pump occur for any potential expansion projects. Since the north end of town is an important visual corridor, there should be extra emphasis placed on screening of unsightly views and the creation of an inviting entrance into the community.

### Targeted Economic Development District (TEDD):

Recent efforts have included the discussion of a Targeted Economic Development District located to the north of the city and across I-15. While nothing has been formally proposed, efforts should be taken to coordinate with the county regarding these plans.

The general purpose of a TEDD is to provide planned industrial or commercial space to attract and retain businesses. Montana Code Annotated regulates the creation of a TEDD, which requires it will host a diversified tenant base of multiple, independent tenants.

Montana law allows local governments to use tax revenue in designated TEDDs for development and redevelopment activities and to pay for public infrastructure needs of projects.

It is recommended that a Comprehensive TEDD Development

# IMPLEMENTATION

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Plan be created to guide the development of the district. The plan should include information regarding market analysis, targeted industries, development, and implementation strategies.

While this effort will likely be directed by the Jefferson County Commissioners, it should be a collaborative effort between the county and City of Boulder to be the most effective in determining the direction for the future of the area surrounding the city.

## Montana Developmental Center Redevelopment and Reuse

The future of the MDC campus sites will have a big impact on the Boulder community. In order to determine the best future uses of the sites and create an effective transition plan, further studies should be done to provide more information and set up procedures for redevelopment.

The MDC closure impacts Boulder in the following ways:

1. Loss of jobs through MDC positions and contract support positions.
2. Reduction in Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) and other staff visitors to Boulder which reduces local expenditures for goods and services.
3. Workers relocating which will have a negative impact on school enrollments as families with children relocate.

4. Reduction in water/waste water service fees to the City of Boulder impacting budgets and ability to pay the existing infrastructure debt.
5. Impact to local business cash flows with the workforce reduction and loss of residents.
6. Loss of the MDC community recycling partner.
7. MDC campus special use buildings will be vacant and will need aggressive marketing efforts to accomplish reutilization.

While many of these impacts are negative, there are also some positives that may come from the MDC repurposing. Some potential opportunities are:

1. Creation of a new community identity: Many public comments were received that expressed interest in the creation of a new identity for the community, drawing on its past heritage, and a vision for a strong and sustainable future.
2. Attraction of several new community services or amenities: While the facilities at the MDC campus may be set up for a somewhat specific use, there are many possibilities for what the new buildings can be used for, some of which may be able to provide additional public amenities. Some potential ideas that have been noted are the Youth Challenge and a Veterans Center.

## MDC North Campus:

The north campus buildings are served by the city of Boulder's

# IMPLEMENTATION



municipal sewer and water system. The water system was upgraded in 2001 and the waste water system was upgraded in 2009. The site consists of public buildings, residential units, and offices. The north campus also includes “The Secure Unit” and inactive and vacant facilities. The State of Montana and DPHHS are responsible for marketing, vetting and contracting for

repurposing of the North Campus.

“The Secure Unit” which is the “place of last resort”, and a requirement of the State of Montana, provides a secure unit for clients that cannot be transitioned to community-based care settings. No other Montana communities have expressed an interest in having the secure unit and private providers have been unwilling to contract to serve this need. During public meetings, comments were received that supported this continued service in the Boulder community. The 2017 Montana Legislature passed House Bill 387, which provides for the continued use of a 12-bed secure facility in its current location on the North Campus, as part of the state’s overall continuum of care for people with developmental disabilities. However, as the population of Montana continues to grow, 12 beds may not be adequate.

To address the specific needs of the MDC north campus, the following actions are recommended, and included in the implementation table of this document. Many of these actions were recommended by the “Making Boulder’s Future Bright” Master Plan and supported through the public input process of the growth policy:

1. Recommend to the State of Montana that a secure facility be reestablished at the current site and consider the possibility for future expansion in the number of beds at the Secure Unit.
2. Support the State of Montana and DPHHS actions in

# IMPLEMENTATION

- repurposing and rehabilitating the North Campus within the deed restrictions to provide jobs in Boulder and the region.
3. Coordinate between the City of Boulder and the state for a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for payment of current monthly sewer rates for the life of the loans, until there are a sufficient number of rate payers to offset the burden on the City. Additionally, a MOU for continuation of law enforcement personnel should be considered.
  4. Coordinate with DPHHS to pursue Phase I and II EPA assessments of inactive facilities.



**MDC South Campus:** The south campus site is located adjacent to the Boulder River and was vacated by MDC in the late 1970s. Currently, Jefferson County owns the site, when JLDC having a lease-option on the campus since 2001. This property includes the Montana Training School Historic District, a 31- acre area within the South Campus, listed on the National Register of Historic Places. (Montana State Historic Preservation Office, 2014)

Currently, social and health services programs are located in several of the buildings on the campus. Youth Dynamics occupies two buildings, with Riverside Correctional Facility and the privately operated Elkhorn Treatment Center occupying other. The campus buildings are served by the city of Boulder's municipal sewer and water system which were upgraded at the same time as the north campus. The South Campus lies outside the city boundaries, and thereby is under the county's land use regulations.

In 2016, a preliminary architectural report for Building #6 was completed, along with EPA Phase I and II reports on several buildings to address the presence of asbestos, lead, PCBs, mercury, and mold. Since the south campus could feasibly be sold or leased to a developer, efforts should be taken to prepare the site for reuse and market it to potential investors.

To address the specific needs of the MDC south campus, the following actions are recommended, and included in the implementation table of this document. Many of these actions were recommended by the "Making Boulder's Future Bright" Master Plan and supported through the public input process of the



growth policy:

1. Hire a consultant to create a Master Plan and inventory the MDC south campus buildings, including: square footage, condition, life safety issues, permits required, property taxes, utility rates, eligibility for tax credits, and facilities associated maintenance and operations costs. Consideration should also be given to the campus site as a whole, including access, views, topography, and expansion potential.
2. Coordinate with the State Historic Preservation Office to determine eligibility for historic preservation tax credits, and pursue New Markets Tax Credits for certified Community Development Entities.
3. Hire a consultant to create a marketing plan and package that advertises the campus sites and strengths, and is used in a focused outreach effort to entice interested parties.

To allow the repurposing of the MDC campus facilities to proceed in an efficient and streamlined manner, it is additionally recommended that a committee is created, consisting of State of Montana representatives and Boulder representatives to establish communication and documentation regarding a transition plan, particularly with the process an interested developer would undergo if expressing interest. For more details regarding the recommendations in this section, such as timelines and potential partners, see the implementation table in this document.

*Source: Making Boulder's Future Bright Master Plan, 2017.*

# IMPLEMENTATION

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## Land Use Recommendations

### Future Land Use Map

The future land use map provides guidance for future land use decisions and development. The future land use map is not intended to regulate land use proposals, but instead to serve as a guide. As zone changes and development proposals are considered, each proposal's fit with the intention of the future land use map will be considered.

Land use designations noted on the future land use map are generalized to allow flexibility when updates to Boulder's zoning code occur. The following intentions of each of the designations found on the future land use map:

#### Commercial/Industrial

The areas designated as Commercial/Industrial are intended to encompass areas where those uses are existing currently, or define where future development may be likely and appropriate to occur. Examples of specific uses that are intended for this district are retail, professional services, offices, manufacturing, and other like industries. Residential uses should be secondary, and included as an accessory use. Any development should take careful consideration of adjacent land use compatibilities and should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. To encourage a vibrant and diverse economy, this district provides some flexibility and development proposals should be reviewed on a case-by-case basis to determine suitability.

#### Community Core

The Community Core of Boulder encompasses the historic downtown business district. The character of this area is important to preserve and celebrate, and new development should align with the rich existing character of the district. This area should support a variety of commercial, civic, and social service uses that are appropriate for the downtown, and that coordinate with the destination goals of the community. Residential development should occur on upper floors, and any new residential uses should be high density. Specific attention to the pedestrian scale, attractive design, and community gathering spaces should be highlighted with new development.

#### Mixed Use

This category includes areas that can be developed with multiple purposes including commercial, light industrial, cultural, compatible residential and others.

#### Public and Institutional

This category designates land under public ownership (local and state) with the exception of public parks and large areas owned by the BLM and State of Montana. This designation also includes land uses intended to serve public needs including schools, libraries, fire stations, and publicly operated utilities.

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# IMPLEMENTATION

## Residential

This category designates places where housing should be the primary focus. This includes single-family, multi-family, and mobile homes. Other complementary uses are also acceptable, such as neighborhood parks, churches, low-intensity offices, and other home occupations.

Residential densities should consider the adjacent properties to determine if higher or lower densities align with the character of the surrounding neighborhood. Higher density residential areas should occur in close proximity to commercial zones, while lower density residential areas should occur further away from commercial zones and closer to open space and agricultural areas. Some residential developments may require annexation to connect to city services.

## Parks and Recreation

This category includes land that is designated as parks, trails, and other open space amenities. The category can include both publicly and privately owned recreational lands, as some larger residential developments should include a percentage of open space in the development with this designation. These areas are open in nature and may or may not be developed with active recreational amenities.

## Open Space and Resources

Open space and resource land includes larger parcels and areas



owned by the State of Montana and BLM that may be used for mining, timber extraction, grazing and conservation. They contribute to the scenic valley and are not planned to be intensively developed.

## Agricultural

This designates land that is currently in agricultural use or land with little to no development and is only expected to support future development with low intensities, if at all. These lands include agricultural, farms, and ranches. Residential development on agricultural lands could include new low density dwellings on large lots or those associated with agricultural operations.

See the Future Land Use Map on the following page.

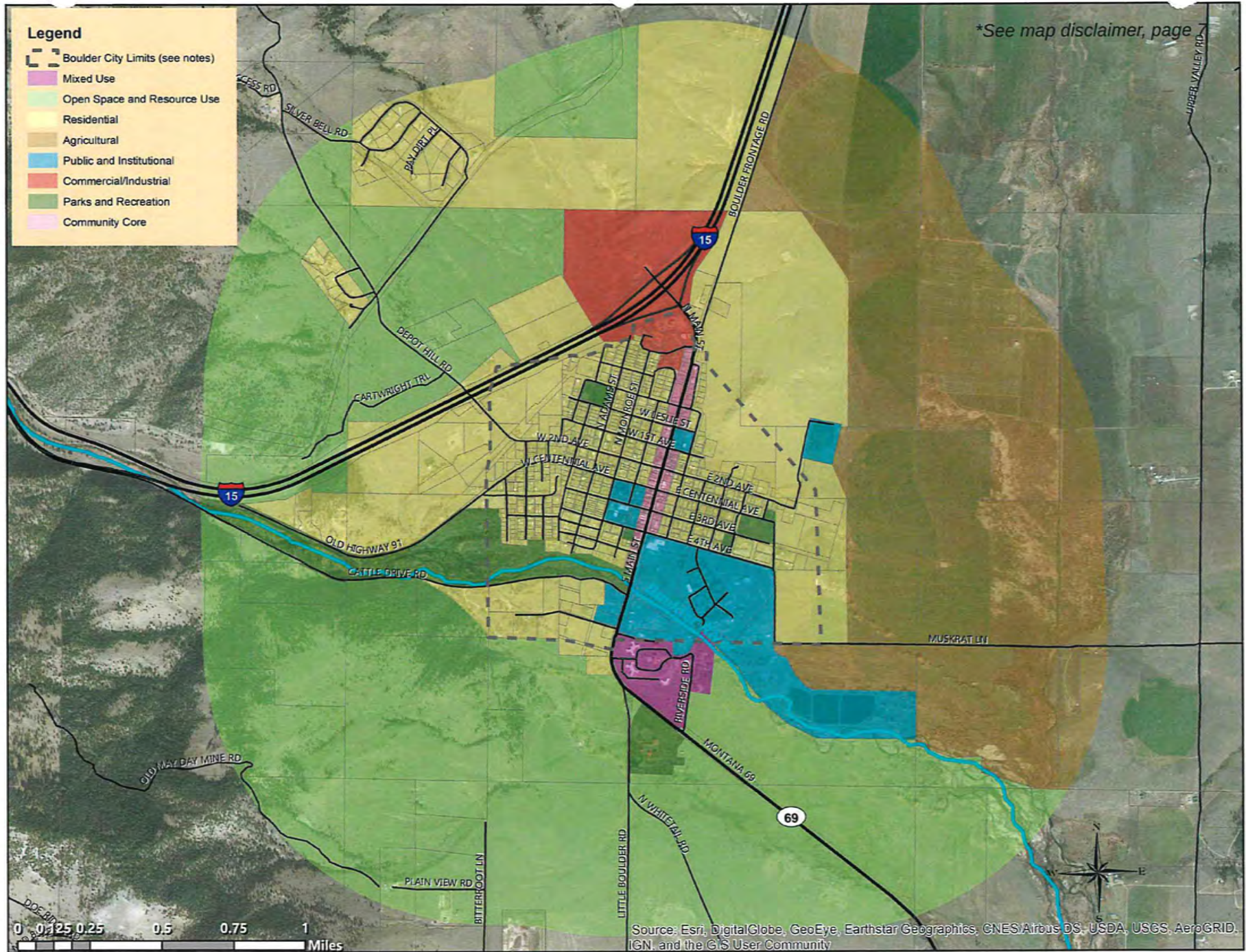
# IMPLEMENTATION

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## Future Land Use Map

The Future Land Use map on the following page shows the land use designations in appropriate areas. This map differentiates from a zoning map, in that it doesn't regulate development proposals, but instead intends to serve as a guide for future growth and development.

It is important to note that while the map shows a one-mile area around the current city limits, this does not depict extra-territorial zoning, but instead serves to guide development within the growth area around Boulder. Development proposals within this area should be reviewed collaboratively between the City and the County.



# IMPLEMENTATION

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## Policies for Annexation

For annexation to be successful, it needs to be done so that there is a mutually beneficial outcome for both the city and the landowners. Of critical importance is the need to verify that infrastructure (streets, sewer, water) and services (police, fire protection) are adequate to serve the new area, without straining those services for existing residents.

Montana's annexation laws are intended to provide for sound urban development, well planned provision of municipal services, and equitable sharing of community resources and financial responsibility by people deriving benefits from municipal infrastructure. Montana state law provides for annexation of land to a municipality through the following methods:

- Addition to Municipalities (MCA 7-2-42)
- Annexation of Contiguous Land (MCA 7-2-43)
- Annexation of Contiguous Government Land (MCA 7-2-44)
- Annexation of Wholly Surrounded Areas (MCA 7-2-45)
- Annexation by Petition (MCA 7-2-46)
- Annexation with Provision of Services (MCA 7-2-47)

Under state law, in order for annexation to occur, a municipality must have plan for extending services that shows anticipated development at least five years into the future and how the city or town will extend services and add sections to the city. Additionally, the city must be assured that any improvements to be built within the annexed lands will meet the standards set by the city for being incorporated into the city's infrastructure. This assures an orderly

and manageable connection from the existing city to the newly annexed area.

The two most common methods of annexation used by municipalities in Montana are annexation by petition (MCA 7-2-46) and annexation with provision of services (MCA 7-2-47). Both of these processes require a majority approval from landowners of the area proposed to be annexed. Upon landowner approval, each process then requires passing a resolution providing for the annexation and establishing a service plan for future annexations.

### Areas Considered for Annexation:

- Northeast and East: The areas to the northeast and east of the city limits are logical areas that should be considered for annexation as private development is initiated. While the city growth is limited to the south by the river, topography, and MDC campus site, the northeast and east areas would potentially provide some opportunity for expanded residential development. However, there may be some floodplain issues that would need to be addressed through the application process.
- North of I-15: The area north of the interstate off of the interchange has a potential for future annexation. Due to the proximity to the interstate, the likely appropriate use would be commercial or industrial. However, because this is an important visual gateway to the city, care would need to be taken to ensure that any proposed development aligns with the overall

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# IMPLEMENTATION

goals and vision of the community and its first impression to visitors. Residential development could potentially be feasible further north of the interstate, however, the large amount of BLM owned land and any access easements may be an issue for this type of development.



## Funding Opportunities

### General Obligation Bonds

The sale of general obligation bonds can be used to finance public improvements in city. State statutes limit the level of bonded indebtedness.

### Impact Fees

Impact fees are assessed to new development and are intended to finance the cost of new infrastructure in proportion to the impact of the new development. They cannot be used to maintain existing infrastructure or fix existing deficiencies.

### Tax Increment Financing

Tax increment financing (TIF) is a special district that allows a community to borrow against the area's future tax revenues. The money raised through a TIF district is invested in infrastructure projects that will encourage development within the district. Revenues created by the increased tax base in the district are used to pay off the debt.

### Business Improvement District

A business improvement district (BID) is a special district where an additional assessment is placed on commercial properties. The funds generated by the special assessment must be used to fund projects and programs that benefit the property owners within that district. In Montana, they are commonly used in downtowns and are referred to as downtown business improvement districts. The use of funds is governed by a board of property owners or their representatives from the district.

# IMPLEMENTATION

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## **Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)**

This grant program is administered through the Montana Department of Commerce, and assists communities with housing, public facilities, and neighborhood renewal projects. Communities must have matching funds for CDBG projects and the governing body must be the applicant.

## **Treasure State Endowment Program**

The Treasure State Endowment Program is administered by the Montana Department of Commerce and helps local governments with infrastructure planning as well as constructing or upgrading drinking water systems, wastewater treatment facilities, sanitary or storm sewer systems, solid waste disposal systems and bridges.

## **Big Sky Trust Fund**

The Big Sky Trust Fund provides funding to promote sustainable economic growth, with financial assistance for job creation and planning projects. Local governments are eligible for job creation project grants while planning project grants are only available to Certified Regional Development Corporations, Tribal Governments, and Local Development Corporations.

## **Transportation Alternatives**

The Transportation Alternatives program is a federal program administered by the Montana Department of Transportation which provides funding for non-motorized transportation projects.

## **Montana Office of Tourism Grant Programs**

This program awards funds to projects that strengthen Montana's economy through the development and enhancement of the state's tourism industry. The grant program offers funding in four categories.

## **Main Street Grants**

The Montana Main Street Program helps communities strengthen and preserve their historic downtown commercial districts by focusing on economic development, urban revitalization, and historic preservation through long-range planning, organization, design, and promotion.

## **Recreational Trails Program**

The Recreation Trails Program (RTP) is a federal program administered by Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks. RTP grants can be used for a variety of purposes including constructing and maintaining trails, and building infrastructure associated with recreational trails. West Yellowstone has successfully used RTP grants in the past to fund cross-country ski and snowmobile trail maintenance and grooming.

## **National Trust for Historic Preservation**

Funding is awarded to nonprofits and public agencies through the National Trust Preservation Funds (NTPF), and is intended to encourage preservation at the local level.

## **Montana Department of Commerce Treasure State Endowment Program (TSEP)**

The Treasure State Endowment program provides funding



assistance for drinking water, wastewater, storm sewer or storm drain, solid waste, and bridge projects. It is designed to assist local governments in financing capital improvements to sewer and water facilities. Applicants must provide matching funds of at least dollar for dollar of the amount requested from the program.

### **Montana Board of Investments INTERCAP Loan Program**

The Montana INTERCAP Program is a low cost, variable-rate program that lends money to Montana local governments, state agencies and the university system for the purpose of financing or refinancing the acquisition and installation of equipment or personal and real property and infrastructure improvements.

### **U.S. EDA Public Works Grants**

This program empowers distressed communities to revitalize, expand, and upgrade their physical infrastructure to attract new industry, encourage business expansion, diversify local economies, and generate or retain long-term, private sector jobs and investment.

### **USDA Water and Waste Disposal Systems for Rural Communities**

Funds may be used for the installation, repair, improvement, or expansion of a rural water facility including distribution lines, well pumping facilities and costs related thereto, and the installation, repair, improvement, or expansion of a rural waste disposal facility including the collection, and treatment of sanitary, storm, and solid wastes.

### **Elkhorn Community Foundation**

Elkhorn Community Foundation began in June 2012 with the goal of establishing a permanent endowment in order to provide grants to non-profit working on projects or servicing the Jefferson High School District that covers an area from Elk Park to Montana City. Grant applications are advertised in April and granted in May with a year to complete and report on the project. Thus far 26 grants have been awarded totaling \$16,318.

# REQUIREMENTS

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## Requirements of State Law

### Coordination

Montana state law requires that a growth policy must provide direction on how the governing body plans to coordinate with other levels of government. In Boulder, this pertains to federal and state agencies including the US Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and MDT, as well as local government entities including Jefferson County. Many of the recommendations and action steps noted within the Growth Policy will require a level of coordination between different entities to be accomplished.

The City of Boulder does not have formalized agreements set up for intergovernmental coordination, yet lines of communication between the City and other levels of government are open, with the entities working together on local and regional issues.

With the closure of MDC, entities in the region have bound together to attempt to create solutions for Boulder's future. The Boulder Transition Advisory Committee (BTAC) is comprised of representatives of the City, County, and various other community organizations and nonprofits. The level of coordination between these entities is deep and involved, and assisted in part by the management and facilitation of the Jefferson Local Development Corporation (JLDC) that schedules and manages regular meetings.

It is intended that intergovernmental coordination will stay strong by maintaining open communication lines and meeting

to solve problems as needed. Additionally, for an added level of coordination with the State of Montana, it is recommended that a state representative become an integrated part of the already regularly scheduled meetings of either BTAC, BDFB, or attend the County Commission meetings, specifically during the transition of uses of the MDC campus sites. Additionally, regular communication from a BLM representative of either the Western Montana District Office or Butte Field Office would be advised for any issues pertaining to growth, development, or decisions in areas adjacent to land owned by BLM.

As an added level of coordination, it is recommended to create an interlocal agreement between the City and the County to address the land use policies of the area shown in the Future Land Use Map of the growth policy. While Jefferson County typically does not zone areas unless zoning is citizen initiated, the City could work with Jefferson County and property owners to encourage future citizen initiated zoning that is adjacent to City boundaries, to be consistent with Boulder municipal zoning. The interlocal agreement should also outline the proper application and communication procedures regarding development proposals that fall within this area.

### Strategy for Development, Maintenance and Replacement of Public Infrastructure

The term "public infrastructure" includes many things, including streets, sidewalks and trails, storm drainage, sewer, water, and

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# REQUIREMENTS

other facilities. Boulder's strategy for development, maintenance and replacement of public infrastructure includes creating a capital improvements plan that will help City officials to plan, budget and upgrade infrastructure in a systematic way. Several of the goals, objectives and actions in this growth policy also address infrastructure needed to help the community function and thrive. These statements, along with the capital improvements plan, describe how the City intends to address its infrastructure needs.

## Subdivision Review

Montana Code Annotated requires that growth policies include statements of how governing bodies will conduct subdivision reviews. Specifically, it is required to state how the subdivision primary review criteria will be defined and used in making decisions regarding proposed subdivisions, as well as how governing bodies will conduct public hearings on proposed subdivisions.

Each subdivision proposal shall be evaluated based on its effect on certain factors expressed in this Growth Policy and implemented through the City's subdivision regulations. The evaluation factors specify what effects should be considered at the time of subdivision review. The degree to which these effects play a role in subdivision approval and denial will be dependent on 1) whether the effects are allowed by existing laws and regulations, and 2) whether the effects can be reasonably

mitigated. Subdivision proposals must be evaluated for their impact on the following seven primary review criteria:

**Agriculture:** An impact on agriculture would be defined as having an effect on land for growing, raising, or marketing of plants or animals to produce food, feed, and fiber commodities. The definition of agricultural land also includes land considered by the Natural Resources Conservation Service to have a soil of agricultural importance and lands devoted to a soil conservation or rangeland management program. A proposed subdivision that impacts agriculture would affect an existing agricultural operation with an interference of its operations as a result of the subdivision. Agriculture does not include gardening for personal use, keeping of house pets, kenneling, or landscaping for aesthetic purposes.

## Evaluation Factors

1. The amount of agricultural land removed from production shall be considered.
2. The amount of agricultural land with soil considered prime or having statewide or local importance by the Natural Resources and Conservation Service shall be considered.
3. Subdivision review shall consider the potential conflicts between the proposed subdivision and adjacent agricultural operations, including:
  - a. Interference with the movement of livestock or farm machinery
  - b. Maintenance of fences
  - c. Proliferation of weeds

# REQUIREMENTS

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- d. Harassment of livestock by pets
  - e. Odors
  - f. Visual quality
4. It shall be determined whether the proposal is located within the area shown on the Future Land Use Map. It is recognized and accepted that if growth occurs to the east of Boulder, some farmland will be impacted.

**Agriculture water user facilities:** Agricultural water user facilities shall mean those facilities which provide water for agricultural land or provide water for the production of agricultural products. These facilities include, but are not limited to ditches, canals, pipes, head gates, tanks, drains, reservoirs, ponds and developed springs used for agricultural purposes.

## Evaluation Factors

1. The location and proximity of an agricultural water user facility shall be considered.
2. Potential conflicts between facility users and subdivision residents shall be evaluated.
3. The rights of all water right owners and users of the facility shall be considered.

**Local services:** Local services means any and all services provided to the public by local government entities or public utilities such as transportation systems, including non-motorized facilities, parking, law enforcement, fire protection, drainage structures, water supply, sanitary sewage disposal, solid waste

disposal, recreation, parks, libraries, or schools.

## Evaluation Factors

1. Subdivision review shall consider the goals and objectives of existing plans.
2. Subdivision review shall consider increased demand on services and need to expand services as a result of the proposal. Lack of adequate service capacity and capability of a local service may be grounds for denial if the situation cannot be mitigated by the applicant.
3. The cost of providing services shall be evaluated by determining the per capita or per lot cost of services and current and anticipated tax and fee revenue.

**The natural environment:** The natural environment means the physical, chemical, and biological factors that exist within or influence a geographic area or community. These factors include, but are not limited to, geology, soils, topography, climate, surface water, groundwater, floodplain, vegetation, and objects or places of cultural, historic, or aesthetic significance.

## Evaluation Factors

1. Review of the subdivision shall consider the degree of impact to the following environmental features:
  - a. Riparian or wetland areas
  - b. Vegetation cover or type
  - c. Noxious weeds
  - d. Important or sensitive natural habitats

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# REQUIREMENTS

- e. Surface and groundwater quality
  - f. Stream bank stability
  - g. Erodible soils
  - h. Cultural and historic landmarks
2. The amount of appropriate open space preserved for natural resource conservation shall be considered.
  3. Results of water and sanitary facility inspection for all lots shall be considered.
  4. Subdivision review shall also evaluate the amount of cuts and fill on slopes as a result of road or building construction.

**Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat:** Wildlife means animals that are not domesticated or tamed. Wildlife habitat means an area containing the complex of environmental conditions essential to wildlife for feeding and forage, cover, migration, breeding, rearing, nesting, or buffers from those areas. It also includes areas essential to the conservation of species protected by the Endangered Species Act or of special interest or concern to the State of Montana.

## Evaluation Factors

1. The presence and potential destruction of wildlife and wildlife habitat shall be considered in subdivision review.
2. Subdivision review shall consider the potential for human-wildlife conflicts or unhealthy encounters.
3. The amount of wildlife-friendly amenities, such as preserved open space, enhanced habitat or wildlife protection devices shall be considered in subdivision review.

**Public health and safety:** Allowable standards established by Federal, State and local policies, codes, and regulations shall be the primary means for defining the limits of acceptable public health and safety. Any variance from these standards shall be reasonably mitigated and approved by the governing body.

## Evaluation Factors

1. The subdivision review shall consider all potential hazards to residents of the subdivision from high voltage lines, high-pressure gas lines, highways, railroads or railroad crossing (if applicable), and nearby industrial or mining activity.
2. Any creation of public health or safety hazards by the subdivision, such as traffic or fire conditions, contamination or depletion of groundwater supplies, accelerated storm water runoff, widening or existing floodplain or flood hazard area, or existence within the Wildland-Urban Interface, must be considered in subdivision review.

Unless exempted under state law, when preparing a subdivision application, an applicant must identify the anticipated impacts on the primary criteria. In the event adverse impacts are anticipated, the applicant is required to present realistic measures to mitigate impacts. Each subdivision proposal is unique and as such there are no established guidelines for determining adverse impacts and appropriate mitigation measures. To determine if adverse impacts exist, and whether mitigation is needed, Boulder staff or a contract reviewer will evaluate each subdivision proposal to determine whether adverse impacts are likely, and will work

# REQUIREMENTS

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with developers to identify appropriate mitigation measures. In addition, Boulder will seek comment from public agencies, service providers, and other experts to determine whether adverse impacts are likely and whether mitigation should be required. In all cases, mitigation measures should be related and roughly proportional to the expected impact.

## Public Hearings

Public hearings provide the opportunity for individuals who have an interest in or may be impacted by a proposed subdivision to express their concerns to the City Council and Planning Board.

Montana's Subdivision and Platting Act requires public hearings for major and subsequent minor subdivisions. This section serves to outline how public hearings will be conducted by the Planning Board and City Council for proposed subdivisions in Boulder.

1. Notice of the public hearing will be published in a local newspaper at least 15 days prior to the hearing date.
2. At least 15 days prior to the hearing, notifications will be sent by certified mail to the applicant, each property owner of land adjoining the proposed subdivision, and each purchaser under contract for property adjoining the proposed subdivision.
3. A quorum, consisting of a majority of Planning Board members and City Councilpersons, is required for official action. When a quorum is not present, no action on the item will be taken and

the hearing will be rescheduled to the next available meeting date for which public notice requirements can be met.

4. At the hearing a staff member, or contract reviewer, will give a summary of the staff report pointing out key issues, findings and recommendations, followed by board or council members being given the opportunity to ask questions of staff.
5. The applicant and/or their representative will be given the opportunity to provide a summary of the subdivision proposal and address the key issues, findings and recommendations. In the case of a hearing before the City Council, the applicant may also discuss their preference for mitigation. Councilpersons will then be given the opportunity to ask questions of the applicant.
6. The presiding officer will ask for comments from the public in attendance, followed by the applicant being given the opportunity for rebuttal. In the interest of time, the presiding officer may encourage members of the public to be brief in their comments so that everyone desiring to speak has an opportunity to do so, while providing for a reasonable adjournment time.
7. The presiding officer will close the public hearing for board or council deliberation. During this time board or council members may ask questions of the applicant, staff, and any members of the public. Due to late hour or other extraordinary circumstances, a public hearing may be closed and continued

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# REQUIREMENTS

at a later date.

8. The board will deliberate and make a recommendation (Planning Board) or decision (City Council) on the application.
9. Prior to voting on the subdivision application, board or council members will review the subject matter contained in the public comments and discuss whether and how the comments impacted their decisions.
10. Planning Board recommendations and City Council decisions will be supported by written findings of fact and conclusions of law.

# NEXT STEPS

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After plan adoption, a work plan should be developed to address the action steps found within this document. Boulder already has established committees with members that are deeply integrated into Boulder's efforts to improve, and those committee members should continue to serve as leaders to implement the plan's actions.

In addition to this plan, the Downtown Master Plan includes a set of action steps directly related to the revitalization of Boulder's downtown. Those steps, and the recommendations within that plan should work concurrently with those found within this growth policy.

A separate effort that is being spearheaded by the Boulder Development Fund Board addresses the state funds that are currently available to the community to help offset the effects of the MDC closure. The money in that fund is to be used for projects that are directly tied to economic development activities in Boulder, and must be appropriated by June 30, 2019. Because of this opportunity, Boulder is in a fantastic position to leverage these funds with many of the projects outlined in the growth policy and downtown master plan.



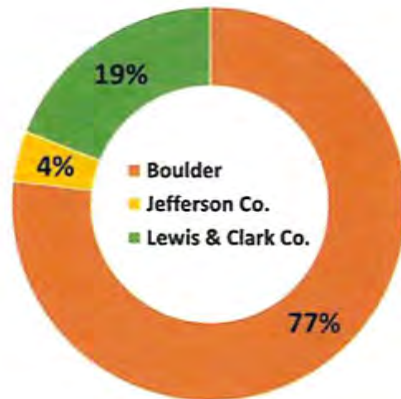
# NEXT STEPS



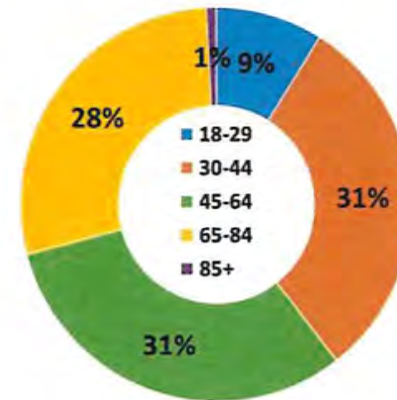
# APPENDIX A

## Community Survey Results

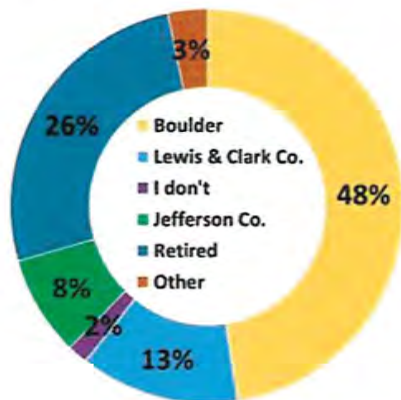
Q1: Where do you live?



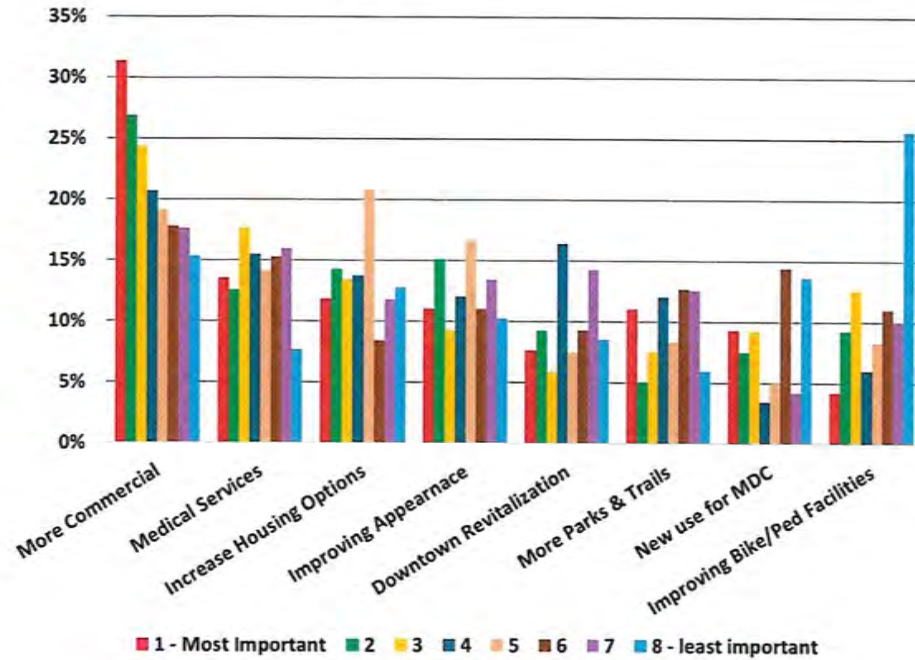
Q3: What is your age?



Q2: Where do you work?



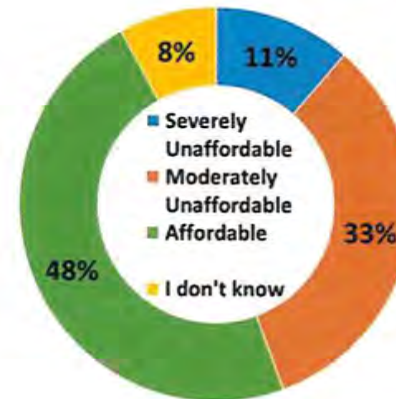
Q4: What issues are most important to you – 1 being most important and 8 being least?



Q6: How affordable do you feel residential RENTALS are in Boulder?

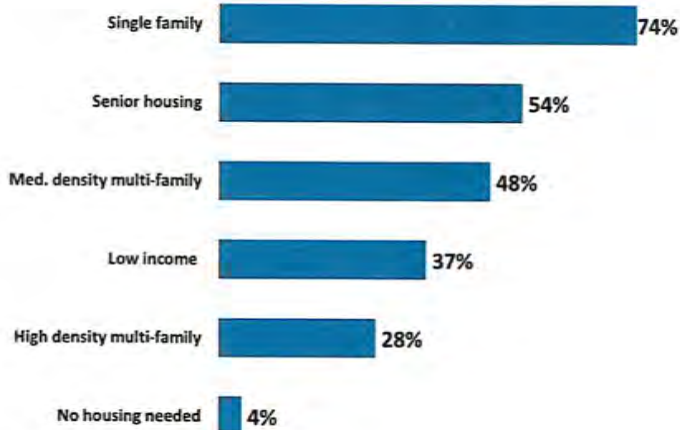


Q7: How affordable do you feel FOR SALE HOUSING is in Boulder?



# APPENDIX A

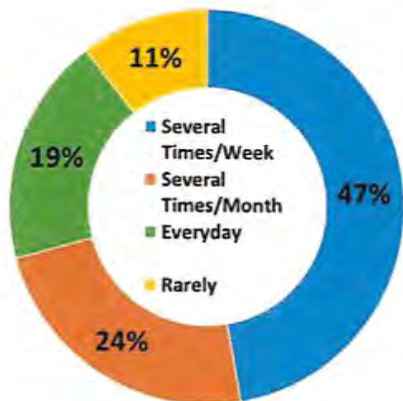
Q8: What type of house do you feel is need in Boulder – check all that apply?



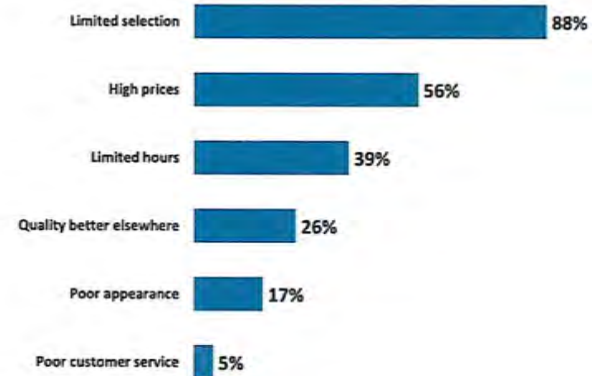
Q10: What do you see as the ADVANTAGES to shopping downtown – check all that apply?



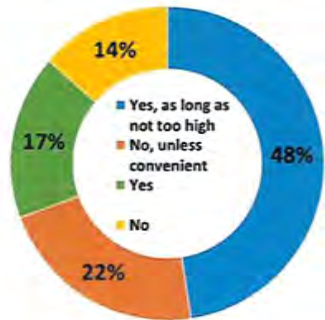
Q9: How often do you spend money in downtown Boulder businesses?



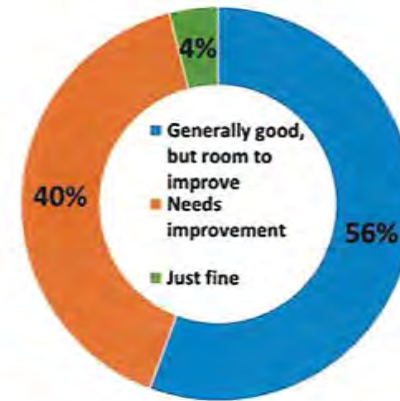
Q11: What do you see as the DISADVANTAGES to shopping downtown – check all that apply?



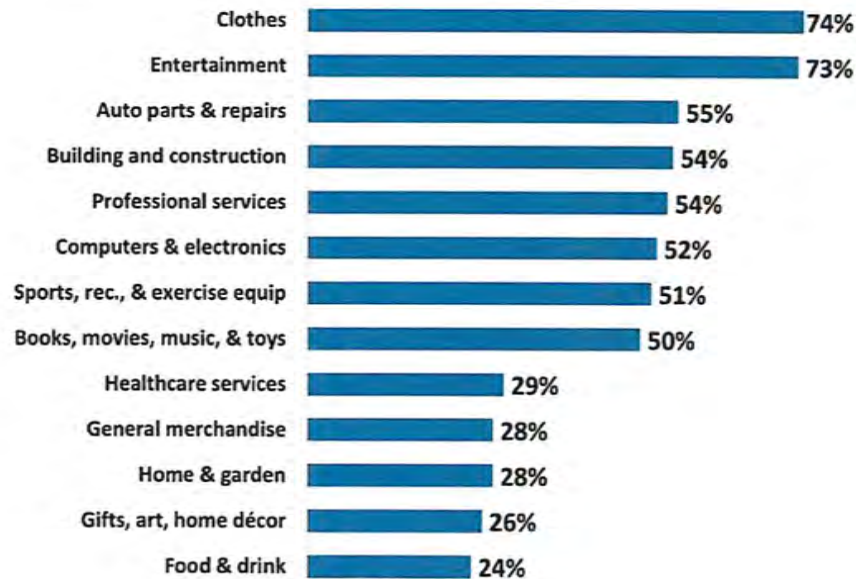
**Q12: Are you willing to spend more on a product in Boulder as opposed to online or elsewhere?**



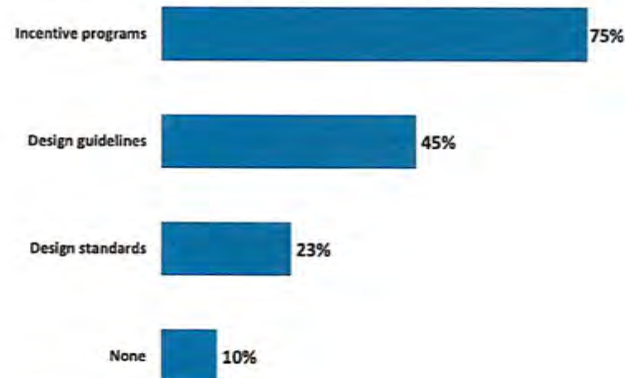
**Q14: How would you characterize the appearance of downtown Boulder?**



**Q13: What types of goods or services are missing in Boulder that require you to sit town - check all that apply?**

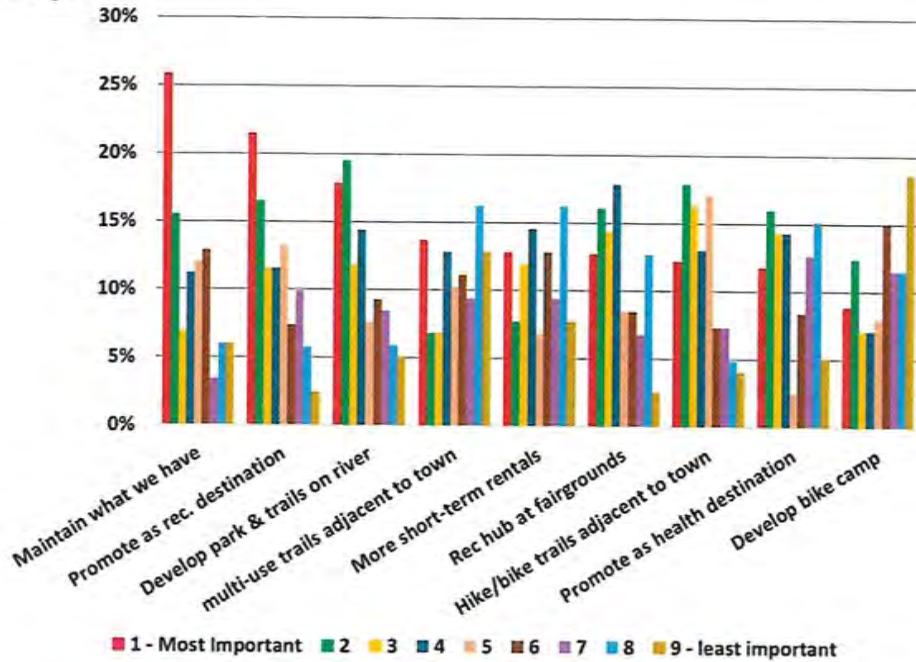


**Q16: Which of the following downtown appearance actions would you support - check all that apply?**

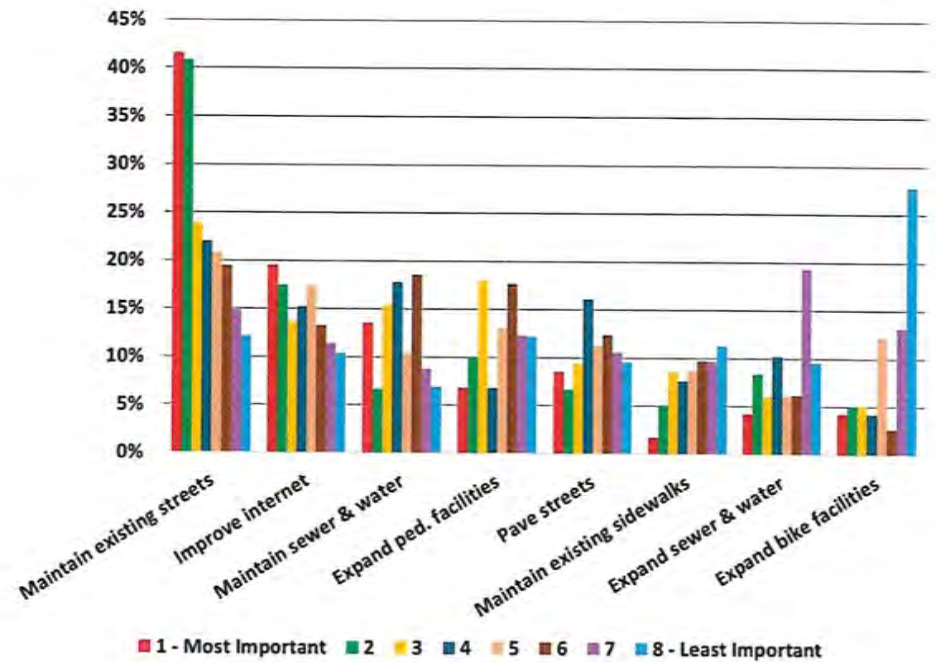


# APPENDIX A

**Q17: What recreation/tourism actions are most important to you – 1 being most important and 9 being least?**



**Q18: What infrastructure issues are most important to you – 1 being most important and 8 being least?**



Community Survey Note:  
Open-ended responses not included in this document.

## Public Meeting Summary

### Priority Actions

Goal #1: Boulder as a lively, attractive, and functional downtown that is unique and emphasizes the town's heritage.

1. Refresh buildings.
2. Get commitment from downtown property & business owners.
3. Flowers to Main Street
4. New dance floor in town.
5. More parking downtown.
6. Façade improvement grants.
7. More events on Main Street.
8. More sidewalk seating.
9. Maintain center median landscaping.
10. Apartments in 2nd stories of Main Street buildings.
11. Create more visible signage.
12. Create a pocket park and places to sit and socialize.
13. Preserve historic buildings.
14. Create more sidewalk amenities.
15. Repaint ghost signs on buildings.
16. Highlight and improve the farmer's market.
17. Add flags and banners on Main Street.
18. Create a sidewalk sale for downtown.

Goal #2: Boulder has a diversified economy with new companies that align with the vision of the community, as well as long-time businesses the community supports.

1. Attract a brewery or cidery.

2. Improve broadband internet.
3. More accommodations.
4. Tax Increment Financing/ TEDD
5. Signage
6. Coordinate with county parks plan
7. Improve appearance of town
8. Improve stores advertisements
9. Maintain Boulder's identity
10. Buy local campaign
11. Create more housing
12. Market local agriculture
13. Ag Tourism
14. RV parking
15. Address Main Street parking capacity
16. Public policies to support development.
17. Support family amenities
18. Marketing – capitalize on assets.
19. Family transfer of agriculture
20. Family Oriented Businesses
21. Highlight local airport

Goal #3: Boulder is known as an outdoor recreation hub between Glacier and Yellowstone National Parks, attracting tourists from all over the region.

1. Promote MT Cowboy Hall of Fame
2. Get city/visitor website
3. Promote trails

# APPENDIX B

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4. Signage (seasonal banners, highway signs)
5. Promote health mines.
6. More public restrooms and maintenance.
7. Promote Boulder as a place to unplug and find peace.
8. Advertise hunting and fishing opportunities
9. Advertise hot springs.
10. Market Boulder as an active community: walkable, access to recreation
11. Promote ATV trails and add safety signage
12. Promote area ghost towns.
13. Add more parking.
14. Create a unified brand identity.
15. Promote biking and advertise bike barn
16. Create maps and brochures of trails
17. Promote the walking tour
18. Create more accommodation options
19. Incentivize developers
20. Extend city services.

Goal #4: Boulder serves as an appealing place to live for residents commuting to Helena or Butte for work.

1. Movie theater
2. More affordable housing
3. Maintain quality schools
4. Focus on people commuting to Boulder
5. Get people to spend money here
6. Ride share transportation
7. Maintain low cost community
8. Host more weekend activities
9. Develop attractions to keep people in Boulder

10. Promote on local radio

Goal#5: Boulder is known as a health-oriented community with an abundance of trails, parks, recreation opportunities and health facilities.

1. Website development (tourism, health and recreation)
  2. Link town to recreation park and hot springs
  3. Map existing trails
  4. Promote bicycle tourism and use bike barn
  5. Rails-to-trails
  6. Add wayfinding signage for parks, trails, & health facilities
  7. Park on Boulder River
  8. Promote health mines
  9. Prescription trails
  10. Accommodations
  11. Updated or newer pool
  12. Promote existing pool
  13. Covert bike trails to cross country ski trails in winter
  14. Flyers
  15. Biking/walking events – folks march, geocaching, rides, runs, 5ks
  16. Promote hot springs
  17. Birding
  18. Renovate sports facilities
  19. Group activities (hiking, etc.)
  20. Create and maintain cross country ski trails
  21. Snowshoeing
- Not supported:
1. Hockey rink/pond hockey
  2. Water park (in downtown?)



Goal #6: Boulder has a consistent marketing strategy that is successful at highlighting the community's assets and drawings in new residents and visitors.

1. More hotels
2. Improve signage
3. Coordinate with tourism website
4. Create a City of Boulder website.
5. "Quality of Life" brand
6. Partner with County, Whitehall, and MSU on developing marketing plan
7. Identify community assets
8. Take advantage of existing marketing opportunities
9. Create a unified identity
10. Emphasize outdoor recreation
11. Utilize social media
12. Create one coordinating entity for marketing.
13. Emphasize schools, low cost of living, central location, access to outdoors, small town character
14. Don't get ahead of ourselves – amenities/infrastructure first, then market

Goal #7: Boulder has a sufficient personnel resources, is adept at acquiring funding for important projects, and is achieving its strategic planning goals.

1. Get paid staff to work on implementing the plan(s)
2. Getting chamber more involved
3. Supplement chamber capacity with additional staffing/volunteers
4. Coordinating entity for volunteers
5. Require community service to graduate or stay on the

honor roll

6. Organized training for volunteers
7. Grant writer coordinator
8. Organize Main Street committee/tie in with chamber
9. Continue getting grants
10. Promote youth volunteers
11. Getting youth involved – connect youth with civic engagement
12. Recruit Avista (or other) volunteers
13. Credit for public service for youth

Goal #8: Boulder has an attractive and connected street network with safe and convenient pedestrian accessibility.

1. Parking
2. Curbs, gutters, sidewalks, "stop for pedestrians" signs
3. Safety audit for Main Street
4. Signage, landscaping
5. Seating, benches
6. Visibility
7. Trailer parking
8. Maintain sidewalks in winter
9. Clearly marked crosswalks
10. Flowers
11. Trash cans
12. Bike racks
13. Snow removal plan
14. Address divider issues
15. Center median safety concerns
16. School access improvements

Not Supported:

# APPENDIX B

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1. Truck bypass
2. Decrease speed limit
3. Pedestrian activated lights
4. Add spot light (Centennial)

Goal #9: Boulder has adequate housing supply to meet demands, with a range of style options and affordability.

1. Focus on affordable housing
2. More rentals
3. Address floodplain issues within zoning
4. More apartments
5. Senior housing
6. Improve roads with bike lanes
7. Establish city limit lines
8. Clean-up existing housing stock
9. Build up and create second-stories
10. Lots and subdivisions

Not Supported:

1. Increase density
2. Subdivision regulations for curb, gutter, and sidewalks

Goal #10: Boulder supports creative redevelopment and re-use of MDC, including the continuation of services for the developmentally disabled and group homes.

1. Veterans home
2. Walking trails that connect MDC/City/Fairgrounds/Hot Springs
3. Youth challenge
4. Cowboy Hall of Fame
5. Animal shelter

6. Adult education classes
7. Continue servicing developmentally disabled – even if it's just a portion of the site
8. Mixed use entertainment facility
9. Improve partnership with state
10. Identify/inventory MDC site

Not Supported:

1. Repurpose gym for recreation center

Goal #11: Boulder has adequate healthcare, housing, and amenities for the senior population and families.

1. Encourage all types of housing to be developed
2. Work with internet providers to expand capacity
3. Purpose public transportation services
4. Fishing pond
5. Extend sidewalks and curb ramps
6. Trail system for all uses
7. Maintain clinic and make open full time
8. Affordable housing
9. Expand service across interstate
10. Encourage expansion of city boundaries (west of cemetery)
11. Encourage ambulance volunteers and volunteer firefighters
12. Facilitate creation of developable lots
13. Activities for seniors and families
14. More vibrant community center – old administration building at MDC
15. More dentist availability
16. Expand services along interstate
17. Indoor recreation center

## Boulder Open House Feedback – Downtown Plan Actions 5/23/18

### Actions Feedback:

Community Identity Actions	Dots	Comments
Create and implement a Parks, Trails, and Recreation Master Plan to enhance Boulder's outdoor image and address the ongoing maintenance and operation of existing facilities and plan for new ones.	11	Include fairgrounds, walking trail; Enclosed dog park with walking path; Jefferson Co. now has Parks, Rec, and Trails Committee
Develop signage throughout town, including seasonal banners, highway signs, sculptures, murals, and other elements.	6	
Create a branding steering committee to guide the creation of a new community brand, including local hot springs, health mines, outdoor recreation, active and walkable community, peaceful small town atmosphere, and low cost of living.	1	
Coordinate with Jefferson County's efforts to create a website that offers maps and information on opportunities such as hunting, fishing, health mines, hot springs, ghost towns, walking tour, ATVs, hiking, outdoor sports, biking, and other recreation.	0	
Hire a consultant to create a full identity branding package for Boulder, including a logo, typeface, tagline/slogan, and color palette.	0	
Quality of Life Actions	Dots	Comments
Coordinate with the Chamber of Commerce for scheduling, promoting, and managing local events year-round.	0	Not a chamber activity; hire a paid admin.; volunteers are burnt out
Marketing and Promotions Actions	Dots	Comments
Create a City of Boulder website that includes a calendar of events, information about housing, and developer incentives for business and residential construction.	7	
Work with Jefferson County to expand RV facilities at the fairgrounds and/or encourage the creation of an RV park in Boulder.	5	
Allow short term vacation rentals within the city's zoning ordinance.	0	Already allowed

Create a partnership with the County, surrounding communities, MSU, Chamber of Commerce, etc. to collaborate on Boulder's marketing efforts.	0	
Utilize a social media strategy to increase community engagement.	0	
Public Infrastructure and Local Services Actions	Dots	Comments
Instigate a Community Health Improvement Plan that addresses policies, projects, programs, and partnerships that will improve the health of those living in Boulder. Include the consideration of a public transportation service.	9	Include prevention services
Include provisions in development regulations that require developers to construct curb, gutters, sidewalks, and crosswalks along adjacent roadways.	5	
Create a Capital Improvement Plan to assign funds to infrastructure expansion projects as they become available.	3	
Replace plant material in the Main Street medians that is unattractive and/or causes a site visibility issue with new plants utilizing appropriate site-visibility standards and vegetation that is native, drought-tolerant, and provides color and seasonal interest.	3	
Pursue funding opportunities for the volunteer fire department to acquire additional equipment and promote volunteer efforts region-wide.	3	
Contact internet providers and determine the feasibility and timeline of expanding internet capacity throughout the community. (Note: As of spring of 2018, efforts for this action are underway and should be further pursued.)	2	
Create a city Stormwater Master Plan to plan for future development and remedy current stormwater functionality issues.	1	
Create a snow mitigation plan for streets and sidewalks in coordination with efforts from MDT, City of Boulder, and private business owners with adjacent sidewalks.	0	
Health and Recreation Actions	Dots	Comments
Create a pool facility update plan that addresses expansion options and long-term maintenance costs associated with the pool.	6	Our city parks need upgrades; need fairgrounds to city trail complete

# APPENDIX B

Support the development of the County's new recreation website.	4	Add the rules of conduct
Support the development of trail mapping to be available on the website.	3	
Create a park and trail system with public access along the Boulder River. (Note: Coordinate with Parks, Trails, and Recreation Master Plan)	2	
Work with the BTAC recreation committee to expand passive recreation opportunities such as birding, sightseeing, fishing ponds, art in the park, etc.	2	
Within planning efforts, include ongoing trail maintenance and consider converting some trail segments to cross-country ski trails in the winter.	1	
Create an all-access trail system that is designed for walking, running, wheelchairs, bicycling, and includes workout stations.	1	Does not include horses or ATVs
Work with the BTAC recreation committee to organize group activities such as hikes, walks, bird watching tours, etc.	1	BTAC committee gone now a county rec and trails committee
Coordinate with the Chamber of Commerce and ensure recreational events are scheduled, such as 5k runs, dog walks, hikes, fishing days, etc.	0	
Housing Actions	Dots	Comments
Allow density bonuses for developers who construct affordable housing or senior units.	6	Incentives for seniors and low income, not developers
Reduce sewer and water connection fees for developers who construct affordable housing or senior units.	3	
Develop new regulations that require a minimum level of upkeep to rental units and provides an enforcement system.	3	Not just for rentals
Coordinate with Habitat for Humanity of Southwest Montana and other non-profits to build affordable housing units, while holding educational courses and home ownership classes in Boulder.	2	Should we limit this to Habitat for Humanity?
Review the code enforcement standards and procedures and update to reflect this to a high priority need.	2	

Coordinate with Habitat for Humanity or Rebuilding America to host local home improvement days where volunteers help with small household improvement projects.	2	
Add mixed-use zoning updates to the zoning code to allow and incentivize second-story residential units in properties along Main Street.	1	
Add multi-family zoning to appropriate areas throughout town.	1	
Resources and Operations Actions	Dots	Comments
Pursue funding to form an organization with paid staff or a consultant tasked with achieving goals and implementing the efforts of BTAC, BDFB, and other groups and organizations.	5	We need city planner and economic development coordinator
Coordinate with the high school to consider adding a graduation requirement for community service activities.	3	
Work with a grant writing coordinator to maximize grant funding opportunities and assist with applications and requirements.	2	
Recruit volunteers through national networks such as AmeriCorps, American Conservation Experience, Rebuilding Together Inc., etc.	1	
Task coordinating entity with organizing volunteers and providing a central hub that posts volunteer opportunities and provides training and resources.	0	
Montana Developmental Center Actions	Dots	Comments
Support the State of Montana and DPHHS actions in repurposing and rehabilitating the North Campus within the deed restrictions to provide jobs in Boulder and the region.	13	Agree, relocate Helena Industries here
Create a marketing plan and package specific to the south campus site that advertises the strengths and opportunities, and is used in a focused outreach effort to entice interested parties.	4	

Develop a transition plan that allows a clear and understandable process to undergo when interested organizations or developers are interested in the properties.	3	
Coordinate between the City and the State for a Memorandum of Understanding for payment of current monthly sewer rates until there are a sufficient number of rate payers to offset the burden on the City. Additionally, an MOU for continuation of law enforcement personnel should be considered.	2	
Create a Master Plan and inventory the MDC south campus, including: square footage, condition, life safety issues, permits required, property taxes, utility rates, eligibility for tax credits, and facilities associated maintenance and operations costs.	0	
Coordinate with the State Historic Preservation Office to determine eligibility for historic preservation tax credits, and pursue New Markets Tax Credits for certified Community Development Entities.	0	
Create a committee of State of Montana representatives and Boulder representatives to establish communication and documentation regarding a transition plan.	0	Relocate Helena Industries to MDC
Recommend to the State that a secure facility be reestablished at the current site and consider the possibility for future expansion in the number of beds at the Secure Unit.	0	Secure facility is secure through the gov't, does not need to be reestablished, but expanded
Coordinate with DPHHS to pursue EPA assessments of inactive facilities.	0	

## General Comments:

- There are currently no subdivision regulations, which are needed as there may be a new subdivision application in the near future.
- The Chamber is in place to support and promote businesses, not to organize activities and volunteer efforts.
- Currently, there are no standard inspections for building other than that which is required for electrical permits through NWE. This poses health and safety issues for new and renovated construction.
- Town Pump is likely expanding their facility by creating a new building, parking, and pumps. This effort may be coordinated with the development of a new retention pond to aid with water runoff issues.

## Trail Related Recommendations

The map at right is a representation of the April 2018 Boulder Trail-Related Recommendations and Potential Trail Projects of the BTAC Recreation Committee. This map and the conceptual trails shown should be used for any trail and recreation related future projects.

# APPENDIX C

