OPEN LANDS ADVISORY BOARD (OLAB)
Meeting Minutes

Thursday, May 28, 2015
5:00- 8:00 PM
Civic Center Municipal Bldg • Council Chambers • 500 E 3rd St., Loveland CO

The mission of the Larimer County Open Lands Program is to preserve and protect significant open space, natural areas, wildlife habitat, and develop parks and trails for present and future generations. These open lands provide opportunities for leisure, human renewal and protection of our natural and cultural resources.

Members Present	
Carl Sorrentino	At-large
Mary Banken	At-large
Peter Kast	At-large
Nancy Wallace	Planning Commission

Members Absent	
Suzan Fritchel	At-large
Trudy Haines	At-large
Gerry Horak	City of Fort Collins
Hugh McKean	City of Loveland
Paul Alaback	Town of Berthoud
Ward Nelson	Town of Estes Park
Ladonna Lee	At-large

Staff Present
Gary Buffington, Natural Resources Director
Kerri Rollins, Open Lands Program Manager
Charlie Johnson, Senior Land Agent
Meegan Flenniken, Resource Program Manager
Sandy Werkmeister, Department Specialist
Chris Fleming, Open Space Operations Manager
Teddy Parker-Renga, Community Relations Specialist
Charlie Gindler, Resource Specialist

1. CALL TO ORDER / INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS
   Peter Kast called the meeting to order at 5:15 PM, after waiting to see if we could establish a quorum.
2. PUBLIC COMMENT – no public comment.
3. AGENDA REVIEW – no changes.
4. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF LAST MEETING MINUTES – tabled. No Quorum.
5. INFORMATION & ANNOUNCEMENTS
   a. The 2014 Natural Resources Annual Report is complete. Copies were available to take.
   b. The Community Relations Specialist position has been filled. Kerri introduced Teddy Parker-Renga, who will start officially on June 1. Teddy told the Board a little about himself. He has a bachelor's in journalism from Indiana University (2002) and a master's in public communication and technology from Colorado State University (2013). Prior to joining Larimer County, he worked in communications for Bloomington Hospital, the Jackson Hole News&Guide, SPIE - The International Society for Optics and Photonics and Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory. Between jobs and semesters in school, he's worked as a noxious weed technician in Teton County, Wyo., and Larimer County as part of the Open Lands crew. In his free time, Teddy enjoys fly-fishing, hiking, skiing and spending time with his family.
   c. Kerri reported that staff attended the Colorado Parks & Wildlife "Partners in the Outdoors" conference. There were good topics and networking opportunities about things coming up with GOCO.
   d. Boulder County is offering farm and water tours on June 13 and 23 (as well as in July and August) for $20, including lunch. For more info and registration go to http://www.bouldercounty.org/os/events/pages/agtours.aspx
   e. The latest Big Thompson Canyon Conservation & Recreation Plan DRAFT has been posted to the website for public review. All feedback and comments are due by the end of May. Kerri encouraged

those that were not on the tour yesterday, to visit the draft before the end of the month. A survey is also available on the website for additional information.

f. The Board of County Commissioners recommended the Open Lands Master Plan to the Planning Commission, who adopted it as part of the County Comprehensive Plan, on Wednesday, May 20, 2015. We will have printed copies soon.

g. Get Outdoors Day is June 13 at Fort Collins City Park and has been added to your calendars. Larimer County is the lead again this year and Heather and Pam are doing a great job! Kerri encouraged the Board members to check it out. It is a very engaging event for families.

h. Rick Andersen, the Loveland Open Lands Manager has resigned his position. The new director of Loveland Parks and Recreation, Elizabeth Anderson, is looking at restructuring before hiring again, and Marilyn Hilgenberg has been appointed as interim. The position will likely not be filled until 2016.

i. SB206, the Colorado Coalition of Land Trust bill to reform the conservation easement tax credit passed the Senate and the House. The bill now heads to the Governor's desk for signature. It addresses some of the concerns from the State audit a couple of years ago.

j. Reminder: June 12 OLAB visit with The Nature Conservancy (TNC) to the Green CE. Space is limited so please RSVP with Sandy via the calendar appointment.

k. Natural Resources reached an agreement with the Planning Department to monitor eight conservation easements that were accepted by the Rural Land Use Program in past years. This brings us into compliance with state certification requirements. As part of the agreement the Planning Dept will not accept any more conservation easements.

l. OLAB interviews will be June 1. There are 8 applicants for 3 vacancies. The new members will start at the July meeting.

m. Report from the Open Space Operations Managers – Chris Fleming highlighted that they are dealing with water issues everywhere. Portions of Hermit Park are closed due to springs popping up.

n. Mary Banken announced that the June breakfast for the Estes Valley Land Trust is going to be at Hermit Park Open Space at the newly remodeled pavilion on Friday, June 19 at 8:00 AM. She invited the Board to join them. It is $15 which covers a really nice breakfast and a presentation panel on Citizen Science. Heather Young is part of the panel.

o. Sales Tax Report from prior month

6. PRESENTATIONS

a. Boulder County Ag Program– Meaghan Huffman, Boulder County Open Space, presented about the Boulder Open Space Agriculture Resources Division. The presentation is attached to these minutes.

Q/A (answers):

- The program sets the price, eliminating high bidders who would win, but then quit.
- Very few actually live on the farms. They must live within 25 miles of the farm, any county.)
- In general, Boulder County takes care of below ground items and the farmer takes care of above ground items.
- Managing just the water – two full time employees. Two more since the flood, plus seasonals.
- Bus tours… started in 2010. That year had 200 on a tour. Now they run about 25 tours a season and always have 50-100 participants.
- Boulder County has an open land budget of about 28 million per year whereas Larimer County's portion of the open space tax is about 5 million per year. It is a wonderful model to review, but there are economies of scale to remember too.

b. "Nature in the City" Plan – Justin Scharton, with the City of Fort Collins Natural Areas Department presented on the "Nature in the City" project. The presentation is attached to these minutes and the Board received an Executive Summary of the project.

7. DISCUSSION ITEMS
   a. Rocky Mountain National Park (RMNP) Cascade Cottages project partnership – Larry Gamble, RMNP Chief of Planning, Vaughn Baker, RMNP Superintendent, and Charley Money Executive Director from Rocky Mountain Conservancy (RMC.)

      Larry and Vaughn presented information (provided in meeting packet) about the Cascade Cottages. The Park Service relies heavily on partners to acquire in holding property. The Trust for Public Land is involved, as is the Rocky Mountain Conservancy (RMC). RMC has launched a centennial campaign. Charley Money from RMC addressed the Board about the campaign. He told the Board about recent work of the RMC. Cascade Cottages is the largest in holding property and has not been for sale since the park opened in 1915. It is highest priority for RMNP right now, especially as it expected to come up for sale during the momentous 100 anniversary of RMNP. Given the special nature of the property, its unique situation in the Park as one of the last commercial operations, largest in holding and in celebrating RMNP's centennial anniversary, he asked the Board for a partnership-funding request of $100,000.

      - Q/A (answers): Commemorative license plate legislation funds (if it passes) would not be available for acquisition. Those funds go directly into improving and managing RMNP. Same for increases in fees.
      - They are open to designating funds from us to specific purposes of the project.

   b. Historic Assessment Report – Meegan presented phase 1 results (provided in packet) of a Historic Structures Assessment for structures located on our properties. Of the 21 structures, located at Red Mountain, Devil's Backbone, Horsetooth Mountain and Hermit Park, fifteen warrant further investigation. After a closer review of the results, she will come back next month with the dollar amount needed to move into phase 2 on some structures.

8. DISCUSSION & ACTON ITEMS
   a. Open Lands Advisory Board By-laws update and adoption – tabled. No quorum.
   b. The Board discussed attending meetings by phone, and voting, which is allowed. Whether digital voting (email) can be allowed will be considered for the bylaws.
   c. Poudre River Trail construction along Three Bell Parkway. Charlie showed the area affected on the map. Kerri provided a Budget Information sheet to the Board and explained how a 6' wide trail was being poured rather than a 10' wide trail, and what is being done to correct the problem. Motion by Nancy Wallace that we allocate $40,000 toward the $80,000 cost (for Timnath) to correct the affected portion of the trail from six' to 10' and since this is not a large number or land acquisition, staff should contact the absent Board members for their vote. Second by Mary Banken. Motion carried unanimously with the four members present. Affirmative votes by email were received from Suzan Fritchel, Ward Nelson, Ladonna Lee and Trudy Haines.

      Q/A: What about during future repairs? Timnath has to manage the trail, and will have to deal with any future maintenance.

9. EXECUTIVE SESSION: Nancy Wallace: Pursuant to C.R.S. 24-6-402 (4)(a) for discussion regarding the purchase, acquisition, lease, transfer, or sale of any real, personal, or other property interest, the Board shall move into Executive Session.

10. ADJOURN – Regular meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

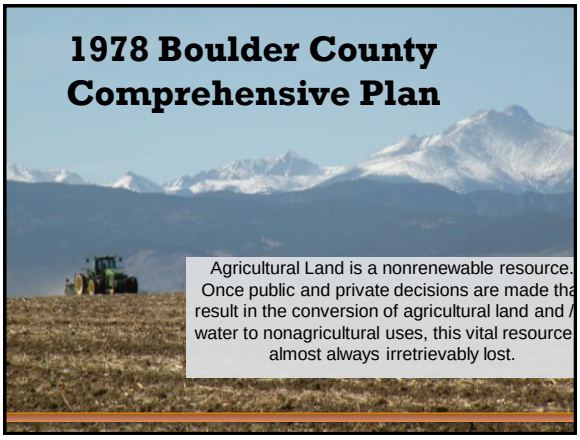
Boulder County
Parks & Open Space

Agricultural Resources

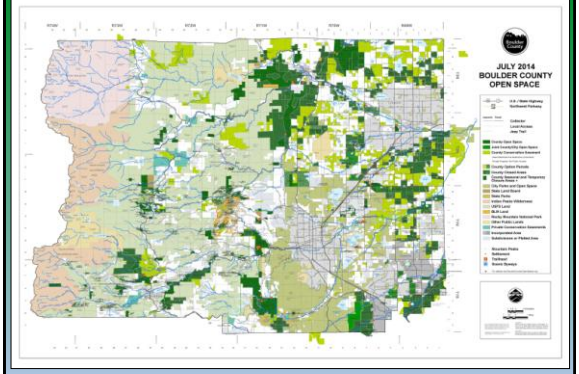
Meaghan Huffman
Agriculture Resource Specialist

Boulder County Parks & Open Space

1978 Boulder County Comprehensive Plan



Agricultural Land is a nonrenewable resource. Once public and private decisions are made tha result in the conversion of agricultural land and / water to nonagricultural uses, this vital resource almost always irretrievably lost.



Boulder County Parks & Open Space Mission

To conserve natural, cultural and agricultural resources and provide public uses that reflect sound resource management and community values.

Agricultural Resources Div.

Providing Agricultural Stewardship and Service through:

Collaboration, Initiative, Productivity

Boulder County Land

Land Under BCPOS Management	61,728 ac
County Conservation Easements	36,707 ac
Total Open Space	98,435 ac
POS Ag Lands	**25,000 ac**
Private Ag Lands with CE	27,000 ac
Non-encumbered private ag land	85,668 ac
Total Farm Lands in Boulder County	137,668 ac

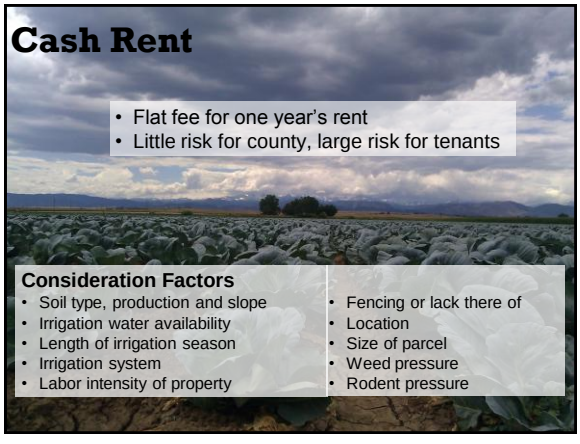
Approx. 38% of ag lands in Boulder County are protected through our Parks and Open Space program.

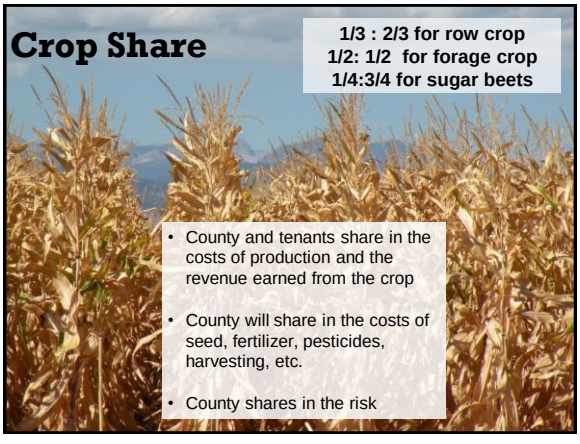
Total agricultural land owned by Boulder County: 25,000 acres
– Cropland: 16,000 acres
• Irrigated: 12,000 acres
• Dryland: 4,000 acres
– Rangeland: 7,000 acres
– Out of production: 2,000 acres

Partners in Conservation

Types of Agricultural Production
• Conventional crop and livestock
• Certified Organic crop and livestock
• Market Farms

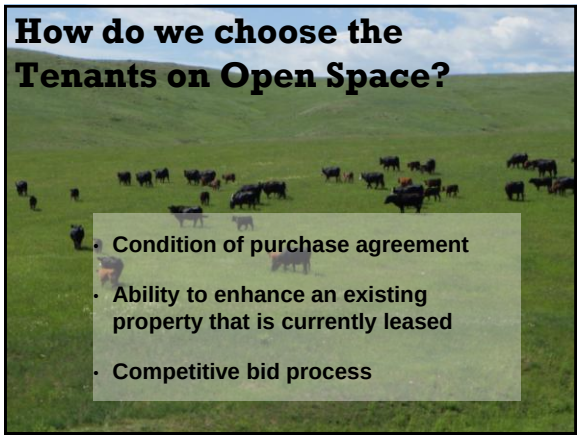
Leases
• Most commonly each lease is written for 1 year with 2- 1 year options
• In-depth review every third year


Cash Rent
• Flat fee for one year's rent
• Little risk for county, large risk for tenants
Consideration Factors
• Soil type, production and slope
• Irrigation water availability
• Length of irrigation season
• Irrigation system
• Labor intensity of property
• Fencing or lack there of
• Location
• Size of parcel
• Weed pressure
• Rodent pressure


Crop Share
1/3 : 2/3 for row crop
1/2: 1/2 for forage crop
1/4:3/4 for sugar beets
• County and tenants share in the costs of production and the revenue earned from the crop
• County will share in the costs of seed, fertilizer, pesticides, harvesting, etc.
• County shares in the risk

Growers Associations

- Association of individuals who want to do small parcel farming (usually less than 20 acres)
- Association a necessity to manage shared resources

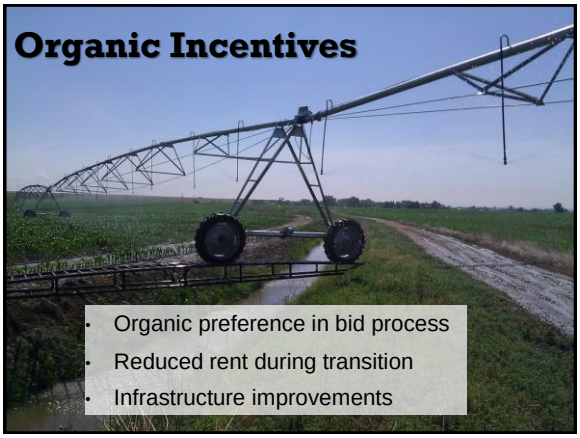


Competitive Bid Process

- RFP process including pre-bid meeting and field visit
- Send RFPs to our tenants and a Bid List that people can sign up for on our website (approx. 180 people currently on the list)
- Select from RFP proposals
  - Selection committee made up of county employees and CSU Extension

Tenant Selection

- Ability of prospective tenant to **provide the best stewardship of the property.**
- Proposed operation. Incorporation of farming and/or grazing management practices that **conserve soil, water, rangeland and other resources.**
- Flexibility of proposed operation
- Agricultural experience and past performance in agricultural endeavors.
- Ability to meet equipment requirements for the proposed operation.
- Ability to meet the financial demands of proposed operation.
- Not based on who bids the most.



Ag Program Revenues

AG Revenues	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Cropshare:	$358,319	$807,301	$953,921	$844,190	$908,293	$1,136,895	$1,198,438	$1,067,347	$967,017
Cash Leases:	$265,432	$302,033	$307,511	$320,282	$325,661	$343,021	$404,796	$400,579	$460,595
Gross Income	$623,751	$1,109,334	$1,261,432	$1,164,472	$1,233,954	$1,479,916	$1,603,234	$1,467,926	$1,427,612
Crop Share Expenses	($257,887)	($397,442)	($388,764)	($454,170)	($415,910)	($448,367)	($485,123)	($522,057)	($479,191)
Net Income	**$365,864**	**$711,892**	**$872,668**	**$710,302**	**$818,044**	**$1,031,549**	**$1,118,111**	**$945,870**	**$948,421**

Budget

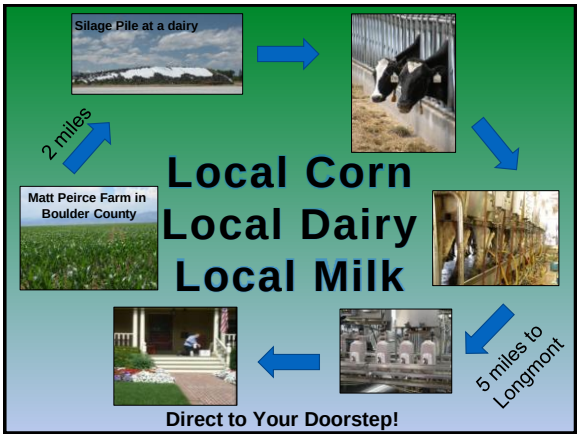
Operating & Maintenance	$199,000
Cropshare	$525,000
Water Assessments	$425,000
Capital Improvements Projects	$125,000
Total 2014 Budget	**=$1,274,000**

Water Portfolio

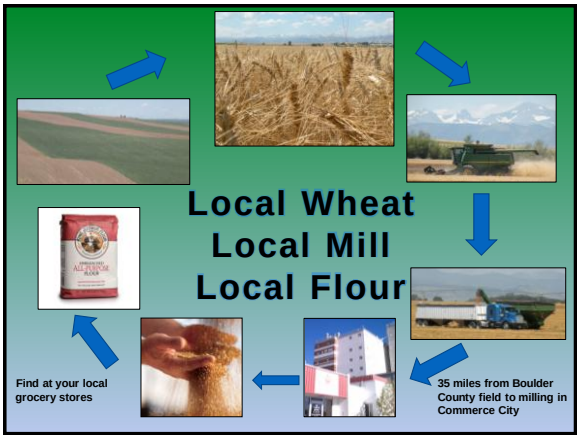
- Worth between $80 & $100 million
- Ownership or interests in 61 incorporated ditches, 31 unincorporated ditches & 7 reservoirs
- Ditch Assessment costs approx. $450,000 a year

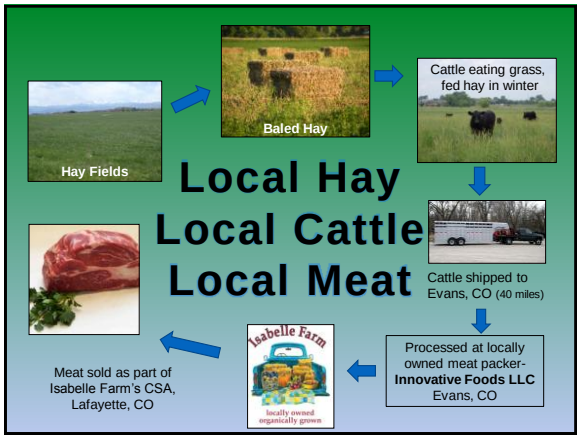
Farmer's Story

Local Food Loops



Harvest Time
Truck to sugar beet dump
Local Farms
Local Sugar Beets
Local Sugar
Truck from dump to Western Sugar Cooperative- Ft. Morgan
Photo Courtesy of Western Sugar
Photo Courtesy of Western Sugar
Photo Courtesy of Western Sugar
Find at your local grocery stores
80 miles to Ft. Morgan


Local Wheat
Local Mill
Local Flour
Find at your local grocery stores
35 miles from Boulder County field to milling in Commerce City


Hay Fields
Baled Hay
Cattle eating grass, fed hay in winter
Local Hay
Local Cattle
Local Meat
Cattle shipped to Evans, CO (40 miles)
Processed at locally owned meat packer- Innovative Foods LLC Evans, CO
Isabelle Farm
locally owned organically grown
Meat sold as part of Isabelle Farm's CSA, Lafayette, CO

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Boulder County
Parks & Open Space

NATURE IN THE CITY

Open Lands Advisory Board
Justin Scharton, Lindsay Ex
May 28, 2015

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GOALS FOR TONIGHT

1. **Why Nature in the City?**
2. Three Project Phases
   - Inventory and Assessment
   - Strategic Plan
   - Implementation
3. Q & A

Photo: Molly Rosey

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WHAT IS DRIVING THIS PROJECT?

Community Perspective:
- Rapidly changing development patterns
- Concerns about access to nature
- Concerns about preserving quality of life for people and wildlife

Administratively:
- Council Work Plan (2014-2015)
- City's 2015-2016 Strategic Plan

Max Flats (Oz Architecture)

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WHAT IS THIS PROJECT'S FOCUS?

- Complement existing programs by **identifying linkages** between **public and private lands.**
- **Ensuring access to nature in the urban environment;**
- **Enhance or restore places** throughout the City;
- Seeking a **variety of experiences at all scales**; and
- Illustrate how to incorporate nature into the urban environment

Nashville Naturally Plan for Downtown (The Conservation Fund)

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GOALS FOR TODAY

1. Why Nature in the City?
2. **Three Project Phases**
   - **Inventory and Assessment**
   - **Strategic Plan**
   - **Implementation**
3. Q & A

Photo: Molly Rosey

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PHASE 1: INVENTORY AND ASSESSMENT

- **Overall:** Triple Bottom Line approach is driving the project
- **Environmental:** Strong biodiversity throughout the City is dependent on land use
- **Social:** Priorities should emphasize (1) findings ways to escape from the urban environment; (2) wildlife, plants and trees, and (3) recreation opportunities;
- **Economic:** Strategies should emphasize connectivity and be cautious about overall costs

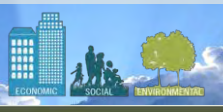

Photo: Julia Solveight Lagunes

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PHASE 2: STRATEGIC PLAN

Vision:
A connected open space network accessible to the entire community that provides a variety of experiences and functional habitat for people, plants, and wildlife

Goals:
- **Easy Access to Nature:** Ensure every resident is within a 10-minute walk to nature from their home or workplace.
- **High Quality Natural Spaces**: Conserve, create and enhance natural spaces to provide diverse social and ecological opportunities.
- **Land Stewardship**: Shift the landscape aesthetic to more diverse forms that support healthy environments for people and wildlife.

Photo: John Bartholow

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FIVE POLICY AREAS

- Connectivity
- Land Use and Development
- City Practices and Policy Coordination
- Long-term Monitoring
- Funding and Incentives

Photo: Rosemarie Russo

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CONNECTIVITY

Key Outcomes:
- **A connected system of nature for people and wildlife**
- **Access to nature via public transportation**
- Innovative wayfinding and interpretation information
- A vibrant, connected Poudre River

Photo: bextradorinary

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LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT

Key Outcomes:
- **Flexible Land Use Code requirements** for open space and vegetation structure and composition
- **Design guidelines** and training resources to install and maintain natural spaces
- **Neighborhood-scale projects** to create or enhance natural spaces
- An intact, daylighted ditch system
- Stormwater basin guidelines that compliment Nature in the City principles
- Sustainable urban agricultural operations

Photo: Michelle Finchum

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CITY PRACTICES AND POLICY COORDINATION

Key Outcomes:
- City mowing and spraying operations **aligned with best management practices**, ensure habitat protection, and meet public safety and aesthetic requirements
- **A darker night sky**
- **Naturalistic streetscapes** where appropriate
- Quieter community for people and wildlife
- Updated stormwater practices aligned with Nature in the City
- Celebration of nature

Photo: bextradorinary

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LONG TERM MONITORING

Key Outcomes:
- Long-term monitoring program that tracks **key indicator species**
- Comprehensive **biodiversity goal** for public and private land
- Community or regional standards for economic valuation of ecosystems services
- Projects that support greenhouse gas emissions reductions detailed in the **City Climate Action Plan**

Photo: Carol Evans

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FUNDING AND INCENTIVES

Key Outcomes:

- Ongoing funding for **program support** and project-specific capital improvements
- A variety of **Incentives** that help landowners, business owners and others implement Nature in the City projects

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IMPLEMENTATION

Short-term Actions: 2015-2018

Short-Term Action Item	Description	Related Policies	Responsibility	Estimated Cost
City Code Amendments				
Land Use Code Amendments *(PRIORITY)*	*Open Spaces* • Develop clarification on open space requirements; ensure standards allow for site-specific solutions based on context, scale, and objectives *Alternative Vegetation Sizes and Composition* • Develop standards to allow for a diversity of tree, shrub, and grass sizes and species to be installed with the goal of creating more diverse, natural landscapes *Ditches* • Craft standards that encourage ditch corridors, which contribute to important ecological functions, to continue to remain daylighted, i.e., retain surface conveyance	• LU1 • LU2 • LU6	Planning, City Attorney's Office, Forestry, Park Planning, Natural Areas, Utilities, e.g., Stormwater	Existing staff resources Estimated costs to the development community will be calculated during the code amendment process.
Climate Action Plan *(PRIORITY)*	Incorporate Nature in the City principles into the Climate Action Plan update, including carbon sequestration goals (Scheduled for adoption in February 2015)	• CP7 • IT4	Environmental Services, Planning	Existing staff resources (Currently underway)

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PHASE 3: IMPLEMENTATION

Key Outcomes:

- Design guidelines
- Demonstration Project(s)
  - Living Wall (Fall 2015)
- Connectivity analysis for people and for wildlife
- Dark Sky projects
- Incentives for restoring existing sites
- Acquisition to meet connectivity needs
- Land Use Code changes

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QUESTIONS?

THANK YOU!

To review the plan: *www.fcgov.com/natureinthecity*

Photo: Ava Diamond

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