

North Plains Area Plan	COMMENTS	CMP COMPARISON
Visual Resources		
Views to the Flatirons, North and South Table Mountains, the Hogback, and the mountain front are important amenities to preserve. From higher elevations, views of the metropolitan area and, at night, the lights of the city are valued by many residents. Within the community, views along irrigation canals, drainageways, lakes, and across fields contribute to a feeling of openness. Preservation of these discernible visual qualities is essential to the protection of the North Plains' unique atmosphere.	Duplicative	<p>Vision Jefferson County: A place where visual resources are identified and protected in order to preserve or enhance the natural beauty and community character.</p> <p>Scenic views and natural features are some of the more perceptible elements of the quality of life in a community. Jefferson County is the "Gateway to the Rockies". Views of the hogback, North and South Table Mountains and the mountain backdrop/foreground are important amenities to protect. From higher elevations, views of the metropolitan area and, at night, lights of the city are valued by many residents. The area's beauty attracts people to the community and provides pleasure to its residents.</p> <p>Obscuring valued views or limiting access to viewing sites can reduce the level of satisfaction felt by residents. However, visual quality does not have to be destroyed by development. In fact, good design practices can enhance the visual quality of an area, particularly in some of the built-up areas of the County.</p> <p>Since 1995, the preservation of the Mountain Backdrop/Foreground has been an ongoing coordinated effort among five counties, from Fort Collins to Colorado Springs. (See Appendix C IV. a.) The preservation of these visual features should be a priority.</p>
GOAL The area's visual resources should be preserved.	Duplicative	<p>Goal: Protect the visual resources of the County. Goal: Protect scenic corridors and public views. Goal: Protect unique natural features and/or mitigate visual impacts to such features. Goal: Design structures, roads and utilities in a visually sensitive manner. Goal: Protect scenic corridors, public views and prominent features for quality of life and enjoyment of future generations.</p>
POLICIES A. General 1. Landscapes which have special qualities and are viewed by many people should be preserved.	Duplicative	<p>Visual Resources General Goal: Protect the visual resources of the County. Objective: Encourage protection of scenic resources using incentive, education, acquisition, and regulation. (See Appendix C IV. b.) Policy: Identify and prioritize the visual resources in the County.</p>
2. Development in visually sensitive areas should be allowed only if its visual impacts can be adequately mitigated. Visually sensitive areas include: a. view corridors, especially the visual foreground, along Colorado State Highways 93, 72 and 36, and along Old Wadsworth Boulevard; b. views across fields and along irrigation canals, drainageways, floodplain areas, and lakes, e.g., Van Bibber Creek, Hyatt Lake, Standley Lake, and Ralston Creek; c. the slopes of the mountain front, the top of North Table Mountain and the hogback formation; and d. significant rock outcrops.	<p>Keep highlighted in local plan.</p> <p>Modify CMP to include views "across drainageways, floodplains, and lakes."</p>	<p>Visual Resources General Policy: Site design of commercial and industrial uses shall enhance and protect the aesthetic quality of community gateways and other high visibility corridors, including I-70, US Highway 285, C-470, and Colorado Highways 93 and 74. Scenic Corridors Objective: Protect view corridors of the hogback, mountain backdrop/foreground, North and South Table Mountains, downtown Denver and other landmarks. Natural Features Policy: Protect views of significant natural features. Policy: Protect natural features in their natural state, as much as possible.</p> <p>Modify existing Objective A of the Visual Resources chapter, Scenic Corridors to say: Protect view corridors of the hogback, mountain backdrop/foreground, North and South Table Mountains, downtown Denver, other landmarks, and across drainageways, floodplains, and lakes.</p>
3. Visual impact concerns should be addressed at the time of zoning to identify the visual corridors and other visual amenities which should be protected. Building placement should not scar the slope. Techniques which could be used to mitigate visual impact include clustering of structures, graduated or reduced building heights, separations between structures, setbacks, etc.	Duplicative	<p>Visual Resources Site Design Objective: Promote site design and intensity that is compatible with visual resources and the natural environment. (See Appendix C IV. c.) Policy: Maximize use of existing and proposed topography and vegetation to screen development from view. New landscaping should emulate the mass and type of rocks and plants found in the area. Plant material should be native and drought resistant. Policy: Use building envelopes, clustering, building orientation and other site design techniques, where appropriate, to minimize visual impacts. (See Appendix C IV. d.)</p>

<p>4. Most development should be sited outside the visual foreground of visual corridors wherever possible. Views should be preserved by using existing vegetation and topography to screen development in a visual corridor. For areas with less than adequate landscape screening capacity, the visual diversity and landscape screening of the site should be enhanced.</p>	<p>Duplicative</p>	<p>Visual Resources Scenic Corridors Policy: Maintain key views to the mountains and other significant scenic vistas from such public areas as major roadways, parks and public buildings. Site Design Policy: Use building envelopes, clustering, building orientation and other site design techniques, where appropriate, to minimize visual impacts. (See Appendix C IV. d.) Policy: Maximize use of existing and proposed topography and vegetation to screen development from view. New landscaping should emulate the mass and type of rocks and plants found in the area. Plant material should be native and drought resistant.</p>
<p>5. When a site has been disturbed, its visual quality should be restored through landscaping which emphasizes the use of native and naturalized plant materials requiring minimal water to live.</p>	<p>Duplicative</p>	<p>Visual Resources Site Design Policy: Minimize the impacts of road cuts, building footprints, and other grading activities on their surroundings, by minimizing grading and including rounded slopes, erosion control, reseeding, and revegetation to return disturbed areas to their natural state.</p>
<p>6. Lighting, signs, outside storage areas, fencing, and manure and compost piles which are obtrusive to surrounding areas should be avoided.</p>	<p>Duplicative</p>	<p>Visual Resources Site Design Objective: Protect identified visual resources through site design details such as lighting, signage, and fencing. Policy: Minimize lighting impacts as identified in the Air, Light, Odor, and Noise chapter. Policy: Fencing and signs should blend with the natural landscape by using natural material or man-made materials which have a natural appearance. Policy: Signs and fencing should not be obtrusive in the Mountain Backdrop/Foreground area.</p>
<p>7. Where feasible, parking areas, roads and railroads should be screened to minimize the visual impact on adjacent development. Where safety is an issue, e.g., road and railroad intersections and grade crossings, the sight distance should not be obstructed.</p>	<p>Modify CMP</p>	<p>Visual Resources Add as Policy 5 to the Visual Resources chapter, Scenic Corridors, Objective B. The visual impact of roads, rail, other transportation infrastructure, and parking areas should be evaluated and mitigated, if necessary.</p>
<p>8. Minimize or mitigate the silhouette effect of structures on ridgelines.</p>	<p>Duplicative</p>	<p>Visual Resources Site Design Objective: Avoid or minimize development impacts on ridgelines and steep hillsides. Policy: Development, including utilities, on ridgelines and steep hillsides should be avoided wherever possible. Where no feasible alternative exists, locate and design structures so that the existing visual dominance of the natural landform, vegetation and topography is maintained. Policy: Minimize the need for grading, earth moving, vegetation removal and site disturbance related to development on ridgelines and steep hillsides. Policy: Grading or earth moving to create a flat building pad on a slope should be discouraged; instead, buildings should be stepped to fit with the natural terrain. Policy: Ridgelines may be protected by clustering development below ridgelines, using dark colors and using natural materials.</p>