

# North Plains Area Plan

## Introduction

This Area Plan is an update of the 1989 North Plains Community Plan. It also includes land use recommendations for areas previously covered by the Northeast Comprehensive Development Plan (NECDP) and related Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with Westminster.

The previous North Plains plan was developed with the use of advisory groups that were appointed by the Jefferson County Board of County Commissioners. This update was drafted with a process of public input, whereby all interested parties were invited to comment on the policies and land use recommendations.

## History

The North Plains planning area consists of the unincorporated portions of Jefferson County that are located to the north of Clear Creek, south of the Jefferson County line, west of Sheridan Blvd, and east of the Mountains. The North Plains area is bounded by the cities of Golden to the south, Broomfield to the north and Arvada and Westminster to the east.

### Settlers

The North Plains area was first settled by the pioneers who stopped their western migration at the foot of the Rocky Mountains and staked out their claim to the land. These original North Plains settlements typically occurred near the area's rivers, streams and wagon trails. Ralston Creek, Coal Creek, Clear Creek and lesser streams provided water for the early settlements. Construction of irrigation ditch, canals, and reservoirs stimulated agriculture and ranching in the North Plains area. Through the first part of the 20th century, fruits, vegetables, cereal grains, poultry, and dairy products from the area were sold to markets in the mining towns and the Denver area. The geological formations along the foothills provided the North Plains businesses resources for industry. Clay pits near the hogback yield materials for Golden's brick making operations. Gravel pits served road construction beginning in the late 1900s. Coal mined from local deposits fueled industry and transportation locally and in Denver. The North Plains area helped to sustain the farming and ranching that served the Denver markets, and the mining districts in Gilpin and Clear Creek Counties.

### Railroads

Three rail lines run through the North Plains area. The Union Pacific (UP) railroad angles northwest through the City of Arvada and the Ralston Creek Valley. This railroad line crosses State Highway 93 north of Leyden, and is the same line that Amtrak uses through the Moffat Tunnel. The historic Colorado & Southern (C&S), which is now part of the Burlington Northern & Santa Fe (BN&SF) railroad runs roughly north-south through the northeast corner of the County, crossing Old Wadsworth Boulevard and entering southern Boulder County and travels up to Cheyenne Wyoming. The third line is the "Beer Run" that brings supplies to the Miller/Coors Brewery in Golden.

### **Church Ranch Area**

When looking at the North Plains area from the North to the South, the area just to the south of the county line, to the south of W. 120th Avenue and the City and County of Broomfield, consists of gently rolling terrain, creeks and creek bottoms, historic ditches, and unimproved farm land. Much of this land is within the annexation and development plans for the City of Arvada. The intersection of 120th and Old Wadsworth forms Broomfield's historic commercial district. Grain cultivated by Adolf Zang on his 4,000-acre farm was brought here for shipment to the Hungarian Flour Mill in Denver and it still retains features of its early 1900's agricultural crossroads.

High winds and stony soils hampered farming in the area, making cattle ranching an important industry in the area. Several large cattle ranches operated in the northeastern portion of the County. The Church Ranch was a 160 acre homestead near Old Wadsworth Boulevard and West 100th Avenue. In the mid 1860's this ranch served as a stage stop for the Denver to Cheyenne stage line. The Church family built irrigation ditches and reservoirs and eventually expanded their ranch to about 1,500 irrigated acres plus 6,500 acres of pastureland acres on and near Rocky Flats.

West Church Ranch and Rocky Flats Plain were historically occupied by large agricultural holdings. Standley Lake was built in the early 1900s by the Farmers Reservoir and Irrigation Company. This gently sloping basin contains several small reservoirs including Woman Creek Reservoir, Mower Reservoir, Twin Lake and Lower Church Lake. A vast network of irrigation ditches, some lined with cottonwoods run throughout this area.

### **Rocky Flats**

Rocky Flats was one of the primary plutonium fabrication plants operating in the United States during the Cold War. Construction of the plant began in 1951 and limited operations began in 1952. Throughout its history, the plant was owned by the Federal Government but operated by independent contractors. The plant was a major employer in Jefferson County, offering huge economic benefits to the community. However, Rocky Flats was not without controversy. There were numerous organized protests because of well documented industrial accidents on the site and concerns about the ongoing operational practices, creating environmental contamination.

On June 6, 1989, the FBI and EPA raided the facility based on their observations of the incinerators being used late at night, burning off waste, and reports from informers of the plant being a public health threat. Later the same month a Special Grand Jury was convened to investigate the alleged Rocky Flats environmental crimes.

In 1992, Rocky Flats stopped production and prepared to close the plant and begin the environmental cleanup. The Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge Act of 2001 allowed for the site to become a wildlife refuge after the plant was deemed cleaned up. The cleanup was declared completed in 2005. The US Fish and Wildlife Service established the Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge on approximately 4000 acres of the historical Rocky Flats area July 12, 2007. Today the only reminder of the plant is a large boulder with the following inscription --- *"Dedicated to the Rocky Flats Workers and Community in Commemoration for the Cleanup and Closure of the Rocky Flats Site and for the Critical Contributions Made to National Security."* Behind the boulder are a fence and a locked gate restricting access onto the pristine looking

expanse of rolling hills dotted with grazing deer and wildlife. There are no longer any visible remnants of Rocky Flats.

### **Ralston Valley**

The Ralston Creek Valley is probably most noted for the first gold discovered in the Rocky Mountain region. Gold was found in Ralston Creek at a site near West 56th Avenue and Fenton Street by the Lewis Ralston party in June, 1850. Ralston Creek, its tributaries, and irrigation ditches sustained the farming and ranching that contributed to the founding and development of the City of Arvada. Numerous horse properties are located along the western edge of Arvada in unincorporated Jefferson County. This area also contains commercial stables, pastures, riding and equestrian facilities and trails.

### **Leyden Creek**

The Leyden Creek Valley lies east-west, parallel to Leyden Road (West 82nd Avenue), between State Highway 93 and Indiana Street. This was the location of considerable coal mining activity in the area from the 1860s through 1950. The Denver and Northwestern railroad built tracks to Leyden via Arvada to ship coal to Denver to power the Denver Tramway Company. The company town of Leyden was developed as a residence for the coal miners. The town also had a saloon and a grocery store. At the time when the mine was operating, the company houses were painted red with white trim. About 24 of these historic houses are still standing and are occupied by residents.

### **Fairmount**

The Fairmount area lies to the east of North Table Mountain, between Ward Road and the east and north face of North Table Mountain, from Clear Creek to West 60th Avenue. The Fairmount and Clear Creek Valley area were settled in the 1860's with homestead claims. To aid with the area farming and ranching efforts, the settlers organized irrigation companies to build canals and ditches. Parts of Fairmount were platted as agricultural subdivisions in the late 1800's. Because of the clay soil and stony terrain in the Fairmount area, farming was difficult. At one time there were many fruit orchards in this area. Remnants of apple orchards from the late 1800's are still visible throughout Fairmount. Today, the community of Fairmount possesses a semi-rural character with lower density residential development interspersed with agricultural uses. It retains a country feeling with remnants from early agriculture, including irrigation ditches, fence lines, tree rows, a few farmsteads, barns and grain silos. One of the distinctive characteristics of the farms and ranches in the North Plains Plan area are the silos constructed of hollow structural clay tile, typically used in the 1920's and 1930's.

## Demographics

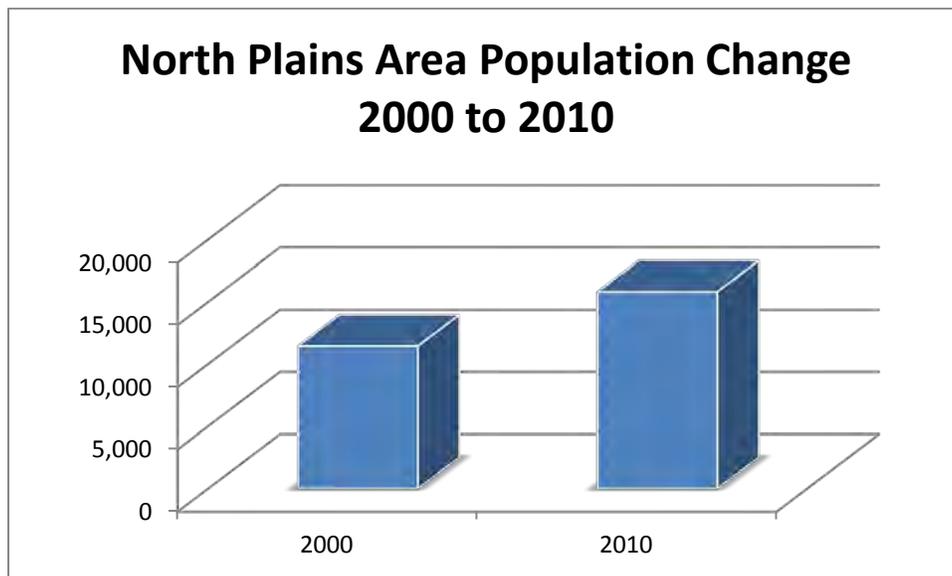
The North Plains Plan Demographic Profile is derived from the 2010 US Census, American Fact Finder II data. For the North Plains Area Plan, there were 42 Census Tracts within the Plan influence area. Many of these Census Tracts are completely within the municipal boundaries of Westminster, Arvada, Wheat Ridge or Golden and are not part of the North Plains Plan boundary. The population and household totals for the North Plains Area Plan were determined by using 2010 Census Block level data.

## Population

The 2010 US Census reported that Jefferson County had a total population of 534,543 people. The total North Plains influence area, including the municipalities, contained about 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the County's total population, or 167,088 people. As of April 1, 2010, the North Plains Area Plan had about 15,800 people living in 6,215 households.

Total Population	North Plains	All Jefferson County	Colorado
2000	11,440	527,056	4,301,261
2010	15,801	534,543	5,029,196
Change in Pop from 2000 to 2010	4,361	7,487	727,935
Rate of Change	3.81% annual	0.14% annual	1.69% annual

From 2000 to 2010, the North Plains Plan area continued to shrink in area but grow in population. The most significant residential developments occurred in the Ralston and North Table Mountain areas. The Table Rock, Parkview at Golden, and North Table Mountain Village subdivisions added an additional 501 houses.



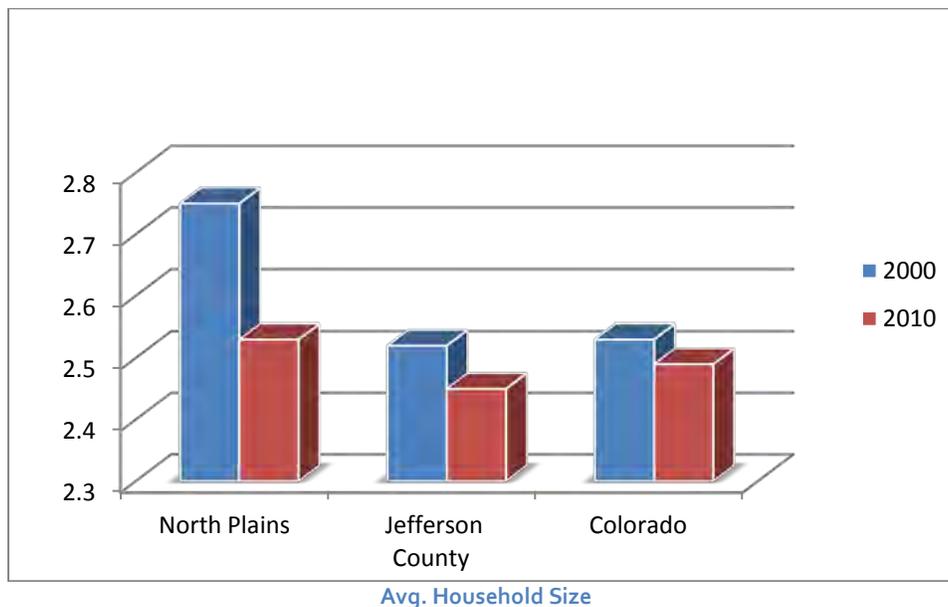
## Housing

As of April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2010, the North Plains Plan area had a total of 6,215 households. The entire North Plains influence area contained 67,476 Occupied Housing Units (households) or about 41% of the County's total housing stock. Out of these, about 456 housing units (5%) were considered vacant, which is consistent with the County's vacancy rate of 5.1% and less than half of the State's 10.8%.

Total Households	North Plains	Jefferson County	Colorado
2000	4,160	206,067	1,658,238
2010	6,215	218,160	1,972,868
Change in households from 2000 to 2010	2,055	12,093	314,630
Average Household Size			
2000	2.75	2.52	2.53
2010	2.53	2.45	2.49
Vacancy Rate			
2010	3.85%	5.1%	10.8%

The North Plains influence area is a relatively stable community. As of April 1, 2010 the entire North Plains area had about 69,360 total housing units.

The average household size continued to decline from 2000 to 2010 in all three Plains Plan areas. This seems to be a consistent trend as the average size of families continues to decline.



## Age

Jefferson County has an older population compared to other counties in the State. For 2010, the median age of the typical North Plains area resident was at 40.0 years, the same age as in 2000. For the Central Plains area the median age was 43.3 years, the South Plains area was 40.5 years, the County was at 40.4 years, and the State at 36.8 years.

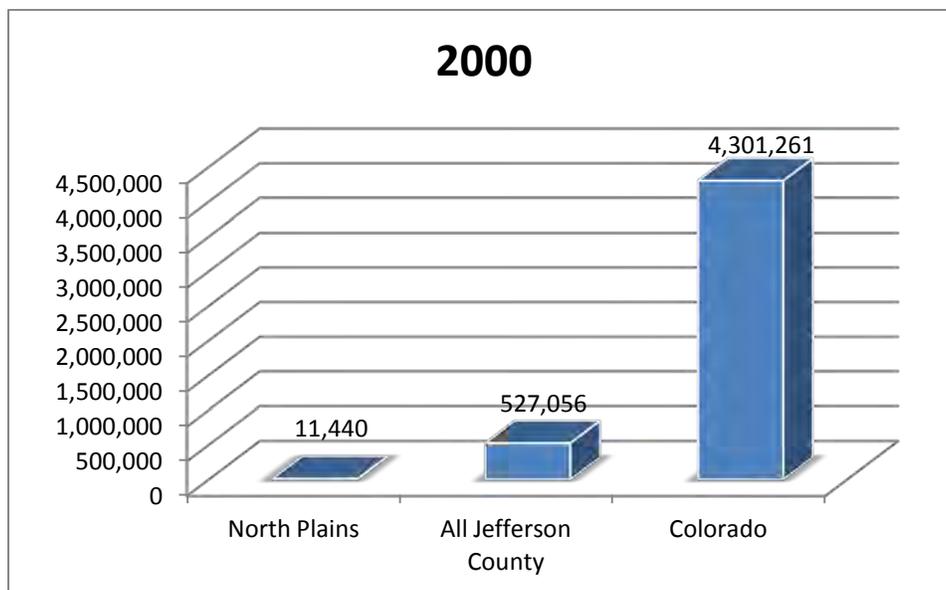
Approximately 73.9% of the total North Plains population was over 18 years of age in 2000. For 2010, 76.8% of the total population was over 18 years of age. This is a trend occurring throughout Jefferson County where people choose to live and work, raise their families, and age in place.

The 2010 US Census reported that 13.2% of the total North Plains population were 65 years of age or older. The percentage of senior citizens is projected to continue to grow well into the future as the area residents choose to age within their communities.

## Income

The 2010 US Census numbers for income have not been released at this time on a census tract level. For median household income, per capita income, families below poverty level, and employment data, the 2005 – 2009 US Census, American Community Survey data was used.

Indicators	North Plains	Jefferson County	Colorado
Median Household Income	\$71,095	\$57,339	\$47,203
Per capita Income	\$31,796	\$28,066	\$24,049
Income below poverty	4.2%	8.2%	11.9%



## General Land Use Recommendations

Specific land use recommendations are shown on the Plan Recommendations map. Some areas have additional policies that apply. Those policies are listed below.

### Community Use

*Community uses are a necessary part of a neighborhood. They provide places for people to gather, socialize, and recreate. General policies regarding Community Uses are covered in the Comprehensive Master Plan. However, there are specific schools, cemeteries, and parks noted in this Area Plan.*

#### 1. Use Recommendations:

- a. Area 1: Existing Community uses, including public and private schools, and museums.
- b. Area 2: Cemetery – These areas should remain a cemetery.
- c. Area 3: Existing Open Space or publicly-owned property.  
The property west of Hwy 93 that includes the Ralston Reservoir does not have any public access.
- d. Area 4: Existing water features.

### Residential Uses

*A variety of housing types currently exist in the plan area. This mix of housing is necessary to ensure economic and social diversity in the County. New housing or redevelopment of existing housing types should be compatible with surrounding land uses.*

1. The recommended housing densities should not be construed as guarantees of the number of residential units that may be built upon a site, but as the maximum number of housing units that could be built upon a site. The actual number of units is determined by applying all applicable recommendations in this Plan.
2. The County may not be able to enforce age restrictions for senior housing, therefore, the densities recommended are for both senior and non-restricted housing.
3. Residential development proposed within 4 miles of Rocky Flats should be evaluated to ensure that ambient levels of radiation existing in the soil will not present a hazard during the construction and full-time occupancy of residential dwellings.
4. Alternatives to curbs and gutters should be encouraged in the rural and semi-rural areas, to help maintain the established character of these areas.
5. New residential subdivisions should be allowed to provide a trail, in lieu of a sidewalk, across property frontage or along the perimeter of the subdivision if such a trail is consistent with the local Park & Recreation district's plans. Provisions for maintenance of the trails and /or recreation areas should be included on Official Development Plans.

6. Any development located on the slopes of North Table Mountain should:
  - a. protect the rims and the slopes;
  - b. be outside the hazard areas, i.e., rockfall and slide areas should be subject to review at the time development is proposed; mitigation of impacts should be considered on a site-by-site basis;
  - c. preserve the natural features, e.g., knolls, drainages, rock outcrops;
  - d. be clustered, if appropriate.
7. Agricultural and ranching land uses, if consistent with current zoning, should be allowed in all areas, in addition to the other land uses named.
8. Residential development should be allowed only on slopes of 30% or less.
9. Housing adjacent to the Van Bibber Creek 100-year floodplain should be on larger lots than the surrounding areas, to achieve a more open feeling next to the proposed Van Bibber Creek trail.
10. Livestock on Residential Lots:
  - a. Horses and other livestock should be permitted as follows: The minimum lot area should be 21,780 square feet (1/2 acre). In order to balance the needs of the animals with erosion control, each large animal should have a pen of at least 12' x 12', and access to a fenced turn-out area of at least 12' x 50'. Shade and/or cover should also be provided to protect the animals from both sun and inclement weather. The total number of such animals should not exceed 4 per acre, except that offspring of animals on the property may be kept until weaned.
  - b. Accessory buildings housing animals should be set back at least 100 feet from the front property line and should conform to side and rear setbacks for the dwelling.
  - c. Manure should not be allowed to accumulate so as to cause a hazard to the health, safety and welfare of humans and/or animals.
  - d. Odors associated with the keeping of large animals in residential areas should not be allowed to affect the community adversely. Owners of existing odor pollution sources should be encouraged to use effective technology to eliminate or mitigate the problem.
  - e. Stallions and bulls should not be permitted in residential subdivisions with lot sizes of less than 5 acres. Stallions and bulls shall be kept in a pen, corral, or run area enclosed by a 7 foot fence of sufficient strength to contain the animal(s), except when it is necessary to remove them for training, breeding, or other similar purposes.
  - f. In new Planned Developments, lots permitting horses and other livestock should be clearly identified on the plat. Livestock lots and non-livestock lots should be segregated within a development to prevent conflicts between livestock activities and non-livestock residential activities.

## 11. Use Recommendations:

- a. Area 5: Rural Residential.
  1. Properties in these areas should have lot sizes between 5 and 35 acres.
  2. Clustering of building sites is encouraged to minimize the visual disturbance and impacts to wildlife habitat.
  
- b. Area 6:
  1. Van Bibber Special Character Area.
    - A. This area's pattern of development has created an agricultural feeling in the middle of a suburban area. The area has open lands and also a historic grove of trees that have been registered with the Colorado Tree Society.
    - B. The overall density in this area should not exceed one dwelling unit per 2 acres. The minimum lot size in this area should be 1 acre. New development in this area should have the following characteristics:
      - Curb and Gutter should not be utilized on roads or driveways
      - Perimeter fencing should not create a visual screen. Fencing should be of an open style, such as split rail. Fencing for dog runs and the keeping of large animals should be designed to minimize visual impacts.
      - New developments adjacent to the Van Bibber Park should have larger lot sizes towards the park.
      - The area should keep a rural feeling with large separations between structures, where appropriate.
      - The keeping of livestock, and small-scale agricultural uses are encouraged.
  2. Leyden Special Character Area.
    - A. This area's rich history has resulted in a unique pattern of development and architectural elements. Any redevelopment in this area should be consistent with the existing character of the area in terms of uses, lots sizes, architecture, and site design.
  
- c. Area 7: 1 Dwelling Unit per 2 acres, minimum lot size should be 1 acre.
  
- d. Area 8: 1Du/Acre  
This area should have an average density of one dwelling unit per acre. The actual lot sizes should vary to maintain the character of the neighborhood. Structures should be set back 75 feet from McIntyre (as traveled) to maintain the open feeling along this corridor. Agricultural uses are encouraged to continue.
  
- e. Area 9: 2 Du/Acre
  
- f. Area 9\*: 2 Du/Acre  
These areas currently have a large percentage of lots with equestrian uses, and any new developments are encouraged to allow for the continuation of equestrian uses.
  
- g. Area 10: 2.5 Du/Acre

- h. Area 11: 3 Du/Acre
- i. Area 12: 3.5 Du/Acre
- j. Area 13: 4 Du/Acre
- k. Area 14: 5 – 12 Du/Acre
- l. Area 15: These areas appear to be fully platted at various lot sizes. Any redevelopment in these areas should be consistent with the character and typical lot sizes of the area.

### **Utility, Mineral Extraction and Unique Use Areas**

*There are several areas that have unique circumstances that do not allow for simple categorization of future uses, such as "residential", "commercial", etc. These are areas that have unique sets of existing uses, ownerships, configurations, or other factors that make development a challenge.*

#### **1. Use Recommendations:**

- a. Area 16: Existing Utilities. Any expansion of these utilities should follow the general policies in the Plan, especially those in the Air, Light, Odor and Noise chapter.
- b. Area 17: Existing Mineral Extraction. These areas appear to have several decades worth of resources remaining. Future land uses should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, as the resource is exhausted, or the operations cease.
- c. Area 18: Sanitary Landfill. This landfill recently was approved for expansion and has a long life remaining. Developments near the landfill should be aware of the potential for increased noise, dust and odor emissions from this site.
- d. Area 19: National Wind Technology Center research area. This area is owned and operated by the Federal Government as a research facility. A part of this research involves the construction of large wind turbines.
- e. Area 20: Section 16.  
Currently an IGA between Jefferson County, the City of Boulder and Boulder County is seeking the purchase of this property (and related mineral rights) for open space, and possible inclusion into the Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge. If these efforts fail, then a re-examination of the proposed land uses should be undertaken.
- f. Area 21: Although this area is owned by the County, it is not Open Space. Office, R&D and Light Industrial types of uses should be allowed when the following conditions are met:
  - 30% or more of the site is open space.
  - The overall site design helps transition from the open space to the industrial uses within the city of Golden.
- g. Area 22: This area is unlikely to develop to urban densities unless it secures water and wastewater services from the city of Golden. It is likely that annexation will be required

at that time. However, the types of land uses for this area could be Neighborhood Commercial and office uses, as well as residential development that is compatible in scale and character to the surrounding neighborhoods.

- h. Area 23: Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport
  - The airport is vital for the economic vitality of the area, and no land uses should be approved that may interfere with the operation of this airport.

### **Commercial / Industrial Areas**

*The North Plains Area offers a variety of jobs and services, with many more opportunities located within adjacent cities. The unincorporated portions of the County should concentrate on creating and maintaining an appropriate jobs-housing balance.*

1. Retail development that is ancillary to office/industrial land uses is acceptable throughout office/industrial areas.

2. Cottage industry should be allowed anywhere in the plan area when it meets all of the following criteria:

- a. it is located on or near road junctions, unless the traffic generation is low or can be mitigated;
- b. it is light assembly, repair, or manufacture;
- c. it does not have more than 3 employees;
- d. it is a limited, low volume activity other than retail;
- e. the traffic impacts are comparable to the surrounding residential traffic generation;
- f. the architectural quality and size of buildings is equivalent to residential quality;
- g. outside storage is limited and screened, with substantial setbacks from adjacent properties;
- h. the percentage of site coverage does not exceed that of neighboring residential development; and
- i. noise, smoke, glare, fumes, vibration, hazardous, and other adverse environmental impacts do not exceed those associated with a residential use.

3. Use Recommendations:

- a. Area 24: Industrial
- b. Area 25: Limited Commercial
- c. Area 26: Neighborhood Commercial/Office/Mixed-Use
- d. Area 27: Retail / Office / Research & Development / Light Industrial
- e. Area 28: Mineral Extraction:

This property is owned by the Federal Government, and may be included in the Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge when the mineral extraction operations cease. Currently an IGA between Jefferson County, the City of Boulder and Boulder County is seeking the purchase of the mineral rights for this property.

- f. Area 29: Restaurant. The historic Rocky Flats Lounge should be allowed to continue operations.
- g. Area 30: Activity Center.  
This area is one of the last remaining large contiguous properties that are not encumbered to a large degree by significant hazards in the plan area. The area is bounded by a state highway with two arterial intersections on its eastern edge. It also happens to be in an area that has significant visual resources and viewsheds of the foothills. However, the vast majority of this area is not within the Front Range Mountain Backdrop/Foreground, as adopted in the Jefferson County Open Space Master Plan. As such, the future land use in this area should support the creation of primary jobs. The entire area should, to the extent reasonable, be viewed as a single project, including supporting uses, such as residential and retail.
1. Office, R&D and Light Industrial types of uses should comprise the more intensive land uses of the development.
  2. Retail development that is ancillary to, and supports the Office/R&D/Light Industrial land uses, as well as the local community is encouraged to reduce Vehicle Miles Traveled.
  3. Ancillary Residential uses should be allowed when the following conditions are met.
    - The housing units are clustered
    - The site design and building layouts are carefully designed to minimize visual impacts and preserve important viewsheds as much as feasible.
  4. The Activity Center should have a cohesive architectural design/theme.
  5. The layout of the development should preserve the highly visible features as much as reasonable, and should use the natural topography to conceal intensive uses from public view.
  6. The Activity Center should provide trail connections, both east-west and north-south.

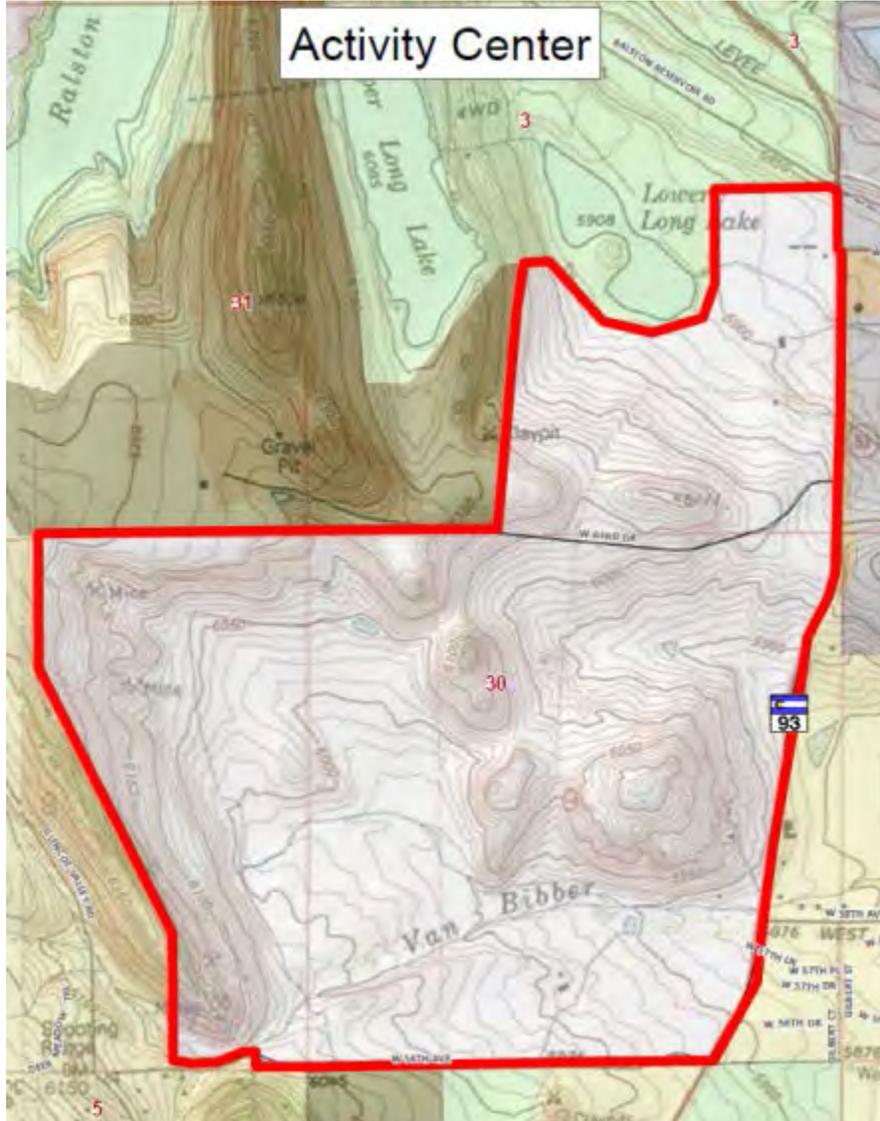
Areas around the intersections of Hwy 93 and 64<sup>th</sup> Ave and 58<sup>th</sup> Avenues should have a mixture of uses, with limited Retail, Office, R&D or similar uses comprising the bulk of this use area. Careful site design and building design should be used to minimize visual impacts and preserve viewsheds, as much as feasible.

The valley to the north of the un-named hill and just west of Hwy 93 could be used for office and R&D types of uses.

The relatively flat area just east of the hogback and north of the Van Bibber creek is nearly completely hidden from view from Hwy 93, so more intensive uses may be appropriate here. This site may be suitable for a corporate campus that does not need visibility from public Rights-of-way.

The slopes of the hills in this activity center are highly visible, so development on these slopes should be limited in scale, not include commercial uses, and be carefully sited to minimize visual intrusion.

Activity Center Map:



Area 31: Existing Mineral Extraction. This area appears to have several decades worth of resources remaining. Future land uses should be evaluated at a later date, as the resource is exhausted, or the operations cease. This area may be considered for inclusion in the activity center.

## General Policies

1. This section contains policies which apply throughout the North Plains area. Issues related to air quality, transportation, wildlife, open space, recreation, etc. require a consistent response to ensure that future land development proposals are compatible.
2. The recommended general intensities listed in this plan should not be construed as guarantees of the maximum intensities of uses that may be built upon a site, but as the

maximum intensity that could be built upon a site. The actual intensity of uses is determined by applying all applicable recommendations in this Plan.

## **Oil & Gas Exploration**

1. Oil and gas exploration, and possible extraction, should be completed before any major development of the property. Any such development should be compatible with surrounding development.

## **Enclaves**

Annexations have resulted in enclaves of Jefferson County which are scattered throughout this area. Cooperation of the cities and Jefferson County will be required to protect the viability of residential areas and to create redevelopment plans and programs for nonresidential areas.

## **Air, Odor & Noise**

1. Frequent high winds in the North Plains area make the control of dust pollution difficult. Due to this, the State's fugitive dust monitoring practices and standards should be reviewed to determine if more stringent standards are needed for high wind areas.

2. Jefferson County Public Health Department should continue to enforce regulations that prohibit trash burning and govern the issuance of burning permits for agricultural use and ditch maintenance.

## **Hazards**

1. Hazards not included in the Hazards list in appendix C, but which are present in the North Plains area include the Golden Fault. This should be addressed in the event it may exist in a proposed development area.

2. The Leyden Coal Mine subsidence hazard area was used to store natural gas. As such, the area near this hazard is known to have the potential for fugitive natural gas in the ground. Any proposed developments in the surrounding area should test for fugitive natural gas in the soil and underlying rock, and should be served by a centralized water service, not by local well water.

3. No development should be allowed in Geologic Hazard areas unless the hazard can be mitigated. Credit should be given and the density earned located on another portion of the site.

## **Historic & Archaeologic Resources**

1. New development in close proximity to existing historic buildings and districts should be compatible with the character of these sites.

2. The community should encourage the preservation of its historic sites and buildings when possible. The following list includes some of the historic sites and types of building materials:

- Stone and log homes
- Stagestops

- The railroad museum in Fairmount
- Monuments
- Cemeteries
- "Poor Farm" on Indiana Street
- Mandalay School at Old Wadsworth Boulevard & West 105th Avenue
- Farm-related structures, such as barns and homesteads
- Arapahoe City
- Tent City for Tuberculosis Cures.
- The old jail on 44<sup>th</sup> Ave.

## **Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport**

*The future viability of the Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport is vital to the economic health of the region. To that end, the County should ensure that new developments will be compatible with the operations of the airport.*

1. Ensure that land use within the Airport Influence Area will not result in increased demand for public expenditures to protect new development from hazards associated with aircraft.
2. Ensure that noise-sensitive land uses such as schools, homes, hospitals, etc., occur outside Approach and Departure Zones.
3. Ensure that the manufacturing, processing, or storing of explosive, toxic or radioactive materials does not occur in Approach and Departure Zones.
4. Residential development should not occur within the Airport Critical Zones.
5. Provide avigation easements within the Airport Influence Area.
6. Maintain the Runway Protection Zones, defined by the Airport Environs Land Use Plan in the 2010 Airport Master Plan, free of any structures.
7. Designate land uses within and immediately adjacent to Airport Influence Areas that are compatible with the associated hazards and noise of airports. Residential development should not occur in areas affected by 60db(A) or greater noise level.

## **Trails**

1. Areas of intensive development should have trail connections to areas of natural open space. Safe crossings of major roads should be provided. Equestrian tunnels and grade separated bike crossings at railroads are two techniques that are encouraged.
2. All of the public entities responsible for open space, parks, or trails should cooperate to develop a trails plan for the North Plains and adjacent areas.
3. Support the trail connections and property acquisitions outlined in the local park and recreation district master plans. Some of those trail connections include:

- A trail along the Croke Canal should be provided and the McIntyre Street frontage should be well landscaped.
- A multiple use path should be provided along West 44th Avenue.
- The multiple use path should be completed along West 50th Avenue from Easley Road to McIntyre Street.
- A multiple use path should be provided along West 64th Avenue with a connection to the Ralston trail complex north of West 64th Avenue.
- A multiple use path should be provided along the Jefferson Parkway, similar to the path along C-470.
- A multiple use trail should be provided along Hwy 93.
- The number of multiple use paths along residential streets should be increased, and off-street multiple use paths should be provided along arterials.
- Multiple use paths should be secured along West 64th and West 44th Avenues and along McIntyre Street. These paths should be buffered and, where possible, physically separated from the traffic lanes.
- Other multiple use paths are desired for along:
  - West 58th Avenue from Easley Road to Crestone Street
  - West 58th Avenue from Ward Road to Indiana Street
  - West 54th Avenue from Easley Road to McIntyre Street
  - West 50th Avenue from Easley Road to McIntyre Street
  - McIntyre Street from West 50th Avenue to West 64th Avenue

## Transportation

*A safe and efficient transportation system can increase mobility for residents in the North Plains area and provide a local road system that unites the community. The competing needs of local residents and travelers through the community should be resolved in a way that preserves the integrity of the community.*

### A. General

1. The transportation system should provide local road links that foster a sense of community, maintain the semi-rural character of the community, and provide the facilities needed to support alternatives to single occupancy vehicle travel.
2. Transportation improvements should be made in a way that strengthens the area's sense of community. While the County should plan to expand traffic-carrying capacities of streets as needed, improvements that would encourage an increase of through traffic on local streets within the community should be avoided.
3. Alternatives to curbs and gutters should be encouraged along roads within low density residential development and smaller campus-type business and industrial parks.
4. Pedestrian push-button crossing lights, at two levels, should be installed at equestrian and bike path intersections where justified. One level would serve mounted horseback riders, and the second level would serve pedestrians. Warning signs should be installed to alert drivers of these crossings.

5. Existing railroad rights-of-way should be protected.
6. The local community should work with RTD to provide public transit services for the interior of the Fairmount community. Smaller vehicles, i.e., vans, should be used to provide this service.
7. Improvements to West 44th Avenue should include an access management element which reduces the number of driveway accesses onto West 44th Avenue, reconfigures parking areas, and improves the streetscape with landscaping. Incentives for existing businesses along West 44th Avenue to improve landscaping and street appearance should be developed.
8. The County should seek input from the Fairmount Roads Committee when planning transportation improvements in the Fairmount area.

**B. Easley Road**

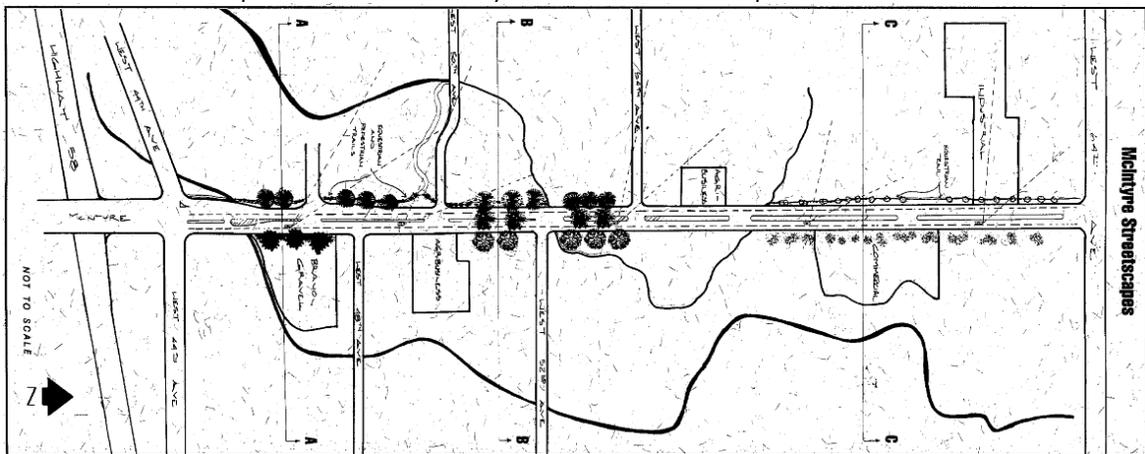
1. Easley Road should remain a 2-lane road.
2. Recommended safety improvements on Easley Road include, but are not limited to, installation of guard rails, cutting back knolls that obstruct sight distance, lengthening curves, etc.
3. The intersection of Easley Road and West 44th Avenue should be improved.
4. Access to developments from Easley Road should be designed with consideration for the physical constraints on road improvements.

**C. Indiana Street**

1. Safety improvements should be made at the intersections of West 52nd and West 58th Avenues and Indiana Street

**D. McIntyre Street**

1. The Jefferson County Transportation Engineering Division should involve the community in the planning of improvements to McIntyre Street. Examples of streetscapes that should be considered when improvements to McIntyre Street are contemplated are shown below.





### **E. West 44th Avenue to Golden**

1. Existing businesses along West 44th Avenue should be encouraged to participate in the development of an access management plan to explore ways to reduce the number of driveways onto the street.

### **F. 50<sup>th</sup> Ave, west of McIntyre**

1. Safety improvements should be made to accommodate the traffic demands of the schools.

### **G. 54<sup>th</sup> Ave**

1. Safety improvements, including multi-use trails should be made from Easley to McIntyre.

### **H. Railroad Crossings**

1. Railroad crossings at West 44th Avenue and Eldridge Street, and West 44th Avenue and Salvia Street should be marked and equipped with cross -arms, flashing lights and bells.

## **Visual Resources**

1. Development in visually sensitive areas should be allowed only if its visual impacts can be adequately mitigated. Visually sensitive areas include:
  - View corridors, especially the visual foreground, along Colorado State Highways 93 and 72;
  - Views across fields and along irrigation canals, drainageways, floodplain areas, and lakes, e.g., Van Bibber Creek, Hyatt Lake, Standley Lake, and Ralston Creek
2. The scenic corridor along Colorado State Highway 93 should be protected through appropriate setbacks, height limitations, building design and separations, and the preclusion of billboards.
3. New development and redevelopment should not result in a "tunnel effect". Techniques which should be considered include varied setbacks and building heights, separation between structures, landscaping, etc.

## **Ditches & Canals**

*The network of ditches and canals in the North Plains area is a distinctive characteristic of the community. They serve as trails, riparian habitat, view corridors, and a source of water for subscribers. However, the ditches and canals are privately owned channels for privately owned water.*

1. Drainage plans should address potential flooding of canals and ditches caused by the run-off from parking lots.

## **Wildlife & Native Vegetation**

*There are many ecosystems in the North Plains area which are vital to the survival of wildlife. The vegetation in these areas provides food, shelter and safe corridors for the movement of wildlife. These areas are particularly sensitive to development.*

1. All development in Maximum and High Quality wildlife areas should work with the CDOW and Fish & Wildlife Service to ensure that the native wildlife continues to flourish. A list of Maximum and High Quality wildlife areas (See Map for locations) found in the North Plains area includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Bald Eagle: Nest Sites; Roost Sites; Winter Range, Concentration, and Forage areas; and Summer Forage areas. (Maximum)
- Elk Production Area (Maximum)
- Preble's Meadow Jumping Mouse Occupied Range (Maximum)
- Preble's Meadow FEMA Buffer (Maximum)
- Riparian Areas (Maximum)
- Black Bear Concentration Areas (High)
- Elk Highway Crossings (High)
- Mule Deer Winter Concentration Area (High)
- Mule Deer Severe Winter Range (High)
- Mule Deer Critical Winter Range (High)
- Mule Deer Highway Crossing (High)
- Peregrine Falcon Nesting Areas (High)

# NECDP Area Land Use

## General Information

### Introduction

#### Intent

The intent of this subarea is to stabilize future land use in the enclaves. To achieve this purpose the following overarching guidelines apply:

1. Maintain the existing character of the community, specifically the larger lot development west of Old Wadsworth Boulevard.
2. Assure that ranching and agricultural uses are permitted in the future, unless specifically precluded.
3. Support the transition of areas where future non-residential development should occur, and protect adjacent residential areas from the adverse impacts of commercial and light industrial development.
4. Protect the economic viability of the Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport by allowing development within the Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport Critical Zone that is compatible with the function of this Critical Zone.

#### Open Space Coordination & Implementation

1. Apex Park and Recreation District, Jefferson County and the City of Westminster should cooperate in the development of a comprehensive trails, open space, parks and recreation plan for this area. The community should be involved in the drafting and implementation of these plans.
2. The Nature Conservancy property should be protected as a wildlife habitat and should be a priority for acquisition by one or more of the appropriate jurisdictions if the Nature Conservancy offers the property for sale in the future.
3. Development of a multiple-use trail system should include the planning and transportation staffs of the city and the county. This group can coordinate the public works improvements and recreation facilities to identify and obtain the land and funding needed to build the trails and trailhead facilities.

#### Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport

*The Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport is not within this planning area, however portions of the airport's critical zone and the influence zone defined in the Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport Environs Master Plan, overlay the area and are a constraint on the type and intensity of land use that can occur.*

#### Land Uses

The permitted and prohibited land uses listed apply to future development proposals that would require a change in existing zoning.

#### Land Use Designation Area A

Land use designation area A is bounded on the north, east and south by the City of Westminster, and on the west by Old Wadsworth Boulevard, with the exception of one tract of

land east of Old Wadsworth Boulevard. Current land use is residential. As annexations have occurred, the number of residences per acre has increased. Recognition of this trend underlies the residential densities recommended by the land use designation area A group.

### **Recommended Land Uses**

1. Residential development south of West 96th Avenue may be up to 2.5 units per acre, with a minimum lot size of 12,500 square feet.
2. Residential development north of West 96th Avenue may be a minimum lot size of 7,000 square feet.
3. Home occupation.

### **Prohibited Land Uses**

Commercial, industrial, and institutional uses.

## **Land Use Designation Area B**

Area B extends from Church Ranch Blvd on the north to West 96th Avenue on the south, Wadsworth Boulevard on the east and the Westminster city limit on the west. Area B also includes an area of land east of Wadsworth Boulevard, along 94<sup>th</sup> Ave and Quay St. Current land use is large single family development, zoned A-1 and A-2, which permits livestock and other agricultural land use. Preservation of the rural character of this area is the underlying intent of this area.

### **Recommended Land Uses**

1. Residential development with a minimum lot size of 1 acre.
2. Home occupation.

### **Prohibited Land Uses**

Non-residential land uses.

### **Public Improvements**

Sidewalks, street lights, curb and gutter, and road widenings should not be required public improvements to local streets within this land use designation area, and the county should not provide them. The residents of this land use designation area will be responsible for providing these public improvements, if they are desired in the future.

### **Trails, Open Space, Parks & Recreation**

1. The planning and development of the Big Dry Creek Trail should continue to involve residents and property owners within this land use designation area.
2. Owners of property along Big Dry Creek are encouraged to maintain the natural vegetation and setting, and, if possible, provide further plantings to enhance the wildlife habitat.

## **Land Use Designation Area C**

Land use designation area C is bordered generally by the railroad tracks on the north and west, by the City of Westminster boundary on the east, and by 99th Place on the south. Another portion of land use designation area C exists west of Wadsworth Blvd and north of 92<sup>nd</sup> Ave.

New development or redevelopment in this area may be required to annex into the City of Westminster.

### **Recommended Land Uses**

1. Retail.
2. Office.
3. Mixed use retail/residential.
4. Other similar uses that are not specifically prohibited below.

### **Prohibited Land Uses**

1. Car dealerships
2. Warehousing
3. Mini storage
4. Outdoor storage
5. Pawn shops
6. Vehicular repair
7. Vehicle demolition
8. Heavy industrial/manufacturing
9. RV/boat storage
10. Kennels

## **Land Use Designation Area D**

Area D extends from West 108th Avenue on the north to Church Ranch Blvd on the south, the railroad tracks on the east and the Westminster city limit on the west. The Critical Zone of the Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport overlays a large portion of this land use designation area. Protection of the Rocky Mountain Airport Critical Zone is the principle goal of this area. Development in this area should also refer to the *Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport* portion of this plan.

### **Recommended Land Uses**

1. Outside the Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport Critical Zone, residential development with a minimum lot size of 1 acre is recommended.
2. Within the Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport Critical Zone:
  1. Residential development allowed by existing zoning may be developed. Units may be clustered to preserve larger open areas. The minimum lot size should be 1 acre.
  2. Home occupation
  3. Open Space, parks, golf courses, trails and community scale equestrian facilities.
  4. Commercial, industrial and agricultural uses in keeping with the policies of the Airport Environs Land Use Plan in the Airport Master Plan.

### **Prohibited Land Uses**

1. Outside the Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport Critical Zone, commercial and industrial land uses should not be allowed.
2. Within the Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport Critical Zone, the following uses should be prohibited:
  - a. Residential development in excess of the number of units allowed by existing zoning.

- b. Religious assemblies, event centers, schools, hospitals, and other noise-sensitive land uses or uses that would allow large numbers of people to gather in a concentrated area.
- c. Land uses which would generate smoke emissions, building heights, exterior lighting, electrical equipment, communication systems which interfere with airport instrumentation or communications systems, or create other impediments to safe movement of aircraft, as determined by the Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport Environs Land Use standards.
- d. Manufacturing, processing or storing of explosives, toxic or radioactive materials in the Primary Approach and Departure Zone of the Airport.
- e. Structures within the Runway Protection Zones, formerly called Clear Zones, defined by the Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport Environs Master Plan.

### **Land Use Designation Area E**

Land use designation area E is south and west of the railroad, south of 92<sup>nd</sup> Ave. Current land use is residential. This area is surrounded on three sides by multi-family development.

#### **Recommended Land Uses**

- 1. Multi-family residential.
- 2. Mixed use retail/residential.
- 3. Home occupation.

#### **Prohibited Land Uses**

Commercial, industrial, and institutional uses, with the exception of commercial/residential mixed use.