



# Parks & Open Space

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## BOCC PUBLIC HEARING

**TO:** Board of County Commissioners  
**FROM:** Heidi Wagner, Resource Planning Manager  
Jeff Moline, Senior Planner  
Whitney May Taylor, Planner II  
**FOR:** BOCC Public Hearing, 9:30 a.m., Thursday, January 25, 2024  
**RE:** East Boulder Creek Site Management Plan  
**MEMO DATE:** 1/22/2024

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### Summary

Boulder County Parks & Open Space (BCPOS) is excited to present the East Boulder Creek Site Management Plan for Prairie Run Open Space. Over the past 140 years, this site has been mined for gravel, overgrazed by previous owners, and the creek straightened for human use. Boulder County purchased the land and began restoring it over 25 years ago. BCPOS is now looking forward to enhancing this site for more wildlife, healthier creeks and wetlands, and a valuable place for our community to connect with nature. This plan outlines the department's land management strategies for the 1,377-acre site and proposes facilities to open the site to the public.

BCPOS conducted comprehensive public outreach with a focus on equity and tested new ways of obtaining public feedback as detailed below. The plan embodies the department's multifaceted mission of conservation and public use that reflects the community's values as manifested in the survey results.

The plan establishes that most of the site will restrict public use to on-trail activities only, aiming to protect crucial natural resources and agricultural uses on the property. The plan frequently references the southwest and northeast portions of the property due to its geography and boundaries.

In the northeast section, located north of Kenosha Road, the plan designates areas for environmental protection and restoration, continuation of agriculture, a loop trail, a trail accessing ponds with recreational potential, and restoring segments of Boulder Creek and Coal Creek. A proposed trailhead and parking lot off Kenosha Road will serve this area. The southwest portion is situated north of Jasper Road and primarily between US HWY 287 and 119th Street. With significant restoration along Boulder Creek already complete, this area will feature considerable areas for environmental and agricultural preservation.

A proposed trail through the site will provide almost 5 miles of scenic and accessible trails for the community, with connections to Erie's open space and trails to the east. Potential trail connections to the south include the Boulder to Erie Regional Trail (BERT) and Erie open space south of Jasper Road.

Since the release of the draft EBC Site Management Plan in October 2023, we've received over

1500 survey responses from the public. POSAC, the Town of Erie, and staff have also commented on the plan. BCPOS listened and incorporated public feedback to reach this final plan.

To clarify decision-making and respond to public comment, staff provided to POSAC at its December meeting an in-depth trail analysis with wildlife considerations that the planning team used to ensure the least impact on wildlife from public infrastructure. Through careful planning, 76% of riparian areas are preserved from trails, and raptor buffers and critical wildlife habitat are also preserved. Additionally, staff provided a comprehensive trailhead analysis for nine different locations considered before proposing the two locations in the plan.

During its December 14, 2023, meeting, POSAC unanimously recommended approval to the Board of County Commissioners, contingent on staff preparing an additional analysis of other trailhead options proposed by neighbors of the proposed 109<sup>th</sup> Street trailhead.

In response to POSAC's direction, staff conducted further analysis on four additional trailhead locations and surveyed 357 neighbors within 1500 ft of the EBC boundary. With this thorough analyses, the 109<sup>th</sup> Street location proposed in the plan is the most appropriate location due to multiple factors including impact to the surrounding area, safety of visitors and neighbors, neighbor feedback, and cost. However, to respond to concerned neighbors, staff made modifications to the plan modifying the trailhead size and ensuring appropriate access road modifications if warranted.

Staff is requesting BOCC approval of the plan. The department anticipates that design and permitting work for implementing the plan will begin this year, with the goal of opening the southwest portion of the site to the public in 2025 to coincide the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Boulder County Parks & Open Space.

### **East Boulder Creek Overview**

East Boulder Creek is a 1,377-acre site is composed of five properties that contain a dozen ponds and five miles of perennial stream along Boulder and Coal Creeks. The department purchased or acquired most of the properties (Alexander Dawson, Bailey-Kenosha Ponds, Doniphan, Wheeler Ranch, and Wise) in the late 1990s and has been managing them since, although Wise is owned jointly with the Town of Erie and Wheeler Ranch was acquired in 2017. The site is in East-Central Boulder County and shares a border with Weld County at East County Line Road. The area is also bounded by State Highway 52 on the north, US 287 generally on the west, and Jasper and Kenosha Roads on the south. The site includes a number of Boulder County Comprehensive Plan designations including a proposed county trail corridor, riparian habitat connectors, wetland occurrences, critical wildlife habitat, a zone for restoring Preble's Meadow Jumping Mice, and a portion of the East County Environmental Conservation Area.

The site presents many opportunities to expand conservation and for our community to gather with family, friend and groups and experience nature. This portion of the Boulder Valley has been an important part of the region for its streamside riparian habitats, irrigated farmlands, open water bodies, scenic vistas, and agricultural community. Due to its relatively level topography and position on the western Great Plains, this site offers expansive views of the Front Range and

Indian Peaks. However, the area is not without constraints; it has been and remains a source of oil and gas operations and, coupled with aggregate mining, these extractive industries have left an impact of disturbed topsoil and weedy uplands. An additional challenge is the current lack of adequate water for pond augmentation along with Clean Water Act impairment ratings for the streams.

Since acquiring the properties, the county has been working to restore the area. The department started by developing the Lower Boulder Creek and Coal Creek Open Space Master Plan which was approved in 1998. Efforts to implement that plan began shortly thereafter with the development of a reclamation plan for the county's Kenosha gravel pit that ceased production in 2005. The department successfully met the state's reclamation standards in 2019 and continues to monitor and revegetate areas of the site. Due to the extent of past aggregate mining, the site continues to provide ongoing opportunities for restoration. In another example of restoration following the 1998 plan, the county partnered with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to fully restore a one-mile segment of the Boulder Creek floodplain east of US 287 before the 2013 flood. Following the flood, the partners were able to fund and complete the project, broadening the channel to build resilience into the landscape and offer a larger riparian habitat footprint. A more recent example of restoration includes a partnership with the Mile High Flood District and the City of Boulder to design a resilient repair and replacement of the Howell Ditch diversion on the Doniphan property, scheduled to start construction in 2024.

### **Site Management Planning Process and Equity Considerations**

The East Boulder Creek Site Management Plan process kicked off in November of 2022. Prior to starting EBC, the department had not completed a planning process to open a new property in over a decade. As such, EBC presented an opportunity to leverage the objectives in the [Examining Outdoor Recreation Barriers, Amenity Preferences, and Communication and Outreach Needs of the Latino/Hispanic Community in and around the Denver Metro Region, Colorado, 2020 Cultural Responsiveness & Inclusion Strategic Plan \(CRISP\)](#), feedback from [Five Year Visitor Study, 2021](#), feedback from [Use Preferences And Visitor Experiences Of People With Disabilities On Parks & Open Space 2020](#), and the [Latino and Hispanic Perceptions of Open Space in Boulder County](#) study.

Two primary ways staff attempted to increase equity were through the public outreach and in the proposed management actions.

To generate new ideas for more equitable public outreach, the planning team collaborated internally with Education & Outreach, Rangers, and the Public Information and Engagement team to craft outreach and communication based on the CRISP objectives of 1) Understand the Latinx community, 2) Develop Partnerships, 3) Targeted Communications to Specific Latinx audiences, 4) Transcreate messages; 5) Gather Latinx community feedback.

This collaboration and focus resulted in the following notable changes in outreach from past processes including:

1. Translating all planning materials into Spanish, including the project website, surveys, flyers, postcards, press releases, videos, and the draft planning product.
2. Sending customized emails from staff to equity-focused community groups.

3. Conducting one of two community open houses on EBC in Spanish language first, with English translation available.
4. Attempting to enhance the appeal of participating in the Spanish language Open House through a raffle, offering free tacos, and hosting children's activities.
5. Employing an alternative method of survey collection, including a physical voting dot board and recording in-person feedback.
6. The Bilingual Partnerships Specialist initiated discussions with specific equity-focused community groups, invited their participation, and recorded their feedback from visualization exercises (Longmont Youth Center) and verbally. Specific outreach was made to Thorne Nature Experience, Centro Amistad, I Have a Dream Foundation, and Environment for the Americas.

While staff feel positive about the overall public involvement, the department continues to acknowledge the need for improving outreach and engagement with the Spanish-speaking community. However, staff attempted to incorporate the feedback received, as well as that from prior surveys and research, to formulate management actions that could lead to EBC being an open space providing an equitable experience for all.

Specifically, the draft plan includes management actions that facilitate opportunities for those who identify as Latinx, individuals with disabilities, the elderly, and children. The site will feature approximately 1 mile of accessible trail, granting access to a restored portion of East Boulder Creek. Individuals with mobility limitations will be able to reach the water's edge for fishing or enjoying the flowing water. A designated accessible fishing pier will be situated next to the stacked ponds, conveniently located a short distance from the Kenosha (northeast) trailhead and ADA parking. This trailhead will also leverage the availability of a water tap, piloting drinking water to visitors—a consistent top-five request in BCPOS visitor surveys. A large shelter house, accompanied by a nature play area, will be strategically placed near East Boulder Creek, offering opportunities for large gatherings and unstructured play, and key request of the Latinx community.

The southwest trailhead on 109th Street will provide nearby access to an RTD route and a potential future connection to BERT. Recognizing parking as a top-three consideration for those with disabilities when visiting a site, the southwest trailhead will offer an additional opportunity for ADA parking, granting individuals with mobility limitations access to the previously restored Lower Boulder Creek. Shade and resting spots will be dispersed throughout the site at various locations along the trail. EBC presents an opportunity to offer a diverse range of options for everyone to enjoy while still prioritizing and safeguarding conservation values.

Before the kick-off of EBC, BCPOS established an internal committee with a focus on creating a Land Commitment that prioritizes the inclusion of Indigenous and Native peoples' perspectives in land management. This committee has educated Parks staff on lessons learned throughout this process, and its influence is evident in the EBC plan in two primary ways: 1) If Native and Indigenous communities express interest, the department will collaborate with them to develop approaches for narrating the history and co-creating stewardship, use for cultural activities, and interpretive opportunities for the site; and 2) Upon opening, EBC will be named Prairie Run Open Space, an acknowledgment that honors the natural features of the site and deviates from

the tradition of naming an open space after the last landowner. Additional details can be found in Appendix 1.

### **Outreach Methods**

To raise awareness of the planning process and encourage public participation, the department implemented various outreach strategies, including:

1. Conducted two community surveys.
2. Created two YouTube videos.
3. Shared multiple social media posts, issued several press releases, displayed fliers on kiosks, placed fliers at community locations (Longmont Youth Center, Carniceria Cerrito in Longmont, Longmont Packing #, Erie Community Center, and the Erie Public Library), and published two ads (digital and paper).
4. Volunteers staffed informational tables at trailheads and 31 attended a “behind the scenes” hike.
5. Staffed informational tables at two community festivals and three Longmont Farmer’s Markets.
6. Town of Erie partners promoted the survey and open house through their email and social media channels.
7. Sent approximately 200 customized emails to community groups and personally contacted the school district.
8. Hosted two community open houses on EBC and served tacos.
9. Sent four different mailings to neighbors within 1500 feet of the EBC property boundary. This is the standard buffer distance for BCPOS notifications and Boulder County land use applications which uses the County Assessor’s office information to identify the landowner of record and their mailing address. Number of mailings will vary depending on the time the data was pulled from the Assessor.
  - a. 328 postcards mailed in January 2023.
  - b. 371 postcards mailed on May 25 and 19 trailhead kiosks had flyers posted regarding the second project survey.
  - c. 371 postcards mailed on June 15 regarding the new site visit dates.
  - d. 364 postcards mailed on October 23 regarding the final project survey and release of the draft plan.

As noted above, all outreach was conducted in English and Spanish.

Parks also invited more people to visit the site as the plan was developing. This initiative had the public, volunteers, POSAC, and elected officials out on the property. All those who attended a site visit provided widespread positive feedback. The department is committed to ensuring that both staff and the public continue to meet on the site as much as possible, prioritizing the landscape itself in discussions and deliberations about its management.


Lastly, additional outreach was conducted by the department in response to the concerns of the neighbors of the 109th St trailhead and is described in the section below “Neighbor Feedback Regarding the Location of the Proposed 109th St Trailhead and Parks Response.”

## **Community Survey 1 & 2 Results, and Parks Response**

Community engagement for this plan was robust. The website had 4,916 views, 60 views of the Spanish page. Video 1 had 1,400 views and Video 2 had 953 views. Respondents for the surveys totaled 1,041 for Phase I and 446 for Phase II surveys. In-person outreach netted a total of 187 attendees for both on-site open houses and 1097 contacts at markets and events.

The first survey focused on determining the public's priorities for conservation and visitor experiences, ideas for site names, and any other feedback respondents wanted to provide. Survey participants said their top conservation values for the site were conserving wildlife habitat, protecting land from development, preserving ponds and flowing water, and protecting native trees, wildflowers, and grasses. Most survey participants said the top visitor experiences they'd seek out are the opportunity for exercise, finding respite and quiet reflection, and easy access to water.

After using the results of Survey #1 to inform preliminary development of management priorities, the department released Survey #2 to gather public feedback on these priorities. Survey participants indicated a high level of support for closing certain areas to protect critical wildlife habitat and agricultural operations. Sixty (60) % of respondents strongly agreed with the potential closures. When asked about outdoor experiences, the desired recreational activities identified by respondents included hiking, appreciating wildlife, walking, biking, and water activities. Several open-ended responses were also submitted and analyzed by staff.

In the plan, an  symbol next to the management actions show where public input shaped the plan and reflected the voice of the community. For further information, see Appendix 1, Community Engagement Reports.

## **East Boulder Creek Management Actions and Plan Product**

The plan embodies the department's multifaceted mission of conservation and public use that reflects the community's values. With respect to conservation and stewardship, the plan includes protecting wildlife habitat, promoting sustainable agriculture, and restoring wetlands and portions of the Boulder and Coal Creeks' stream corridors. The planning team intentionally discarded several trail iterations that were adjacent to Boulder Creek to preserve the riparian corridor and reduce the stress on wildlife that depend on that ecosystem. There are roughly 5.5 miles of creek within EBC; approximately 1.2 miles of trail is proposed within 200 feet of a creek, keeping 76% of the creeks preserved.

Addressing community requests for access and recreation, the department's plan proposes a variety of recreational opportunities while also respecting the important natural features of the site. The public facilities will include water access, an accessible trail to Boulder Creek, two trailheads with restrooms and parking lots, and over five miles of trails that will connect to the existing network in Erie including the Coal Creek Regional Trail. Facilitating connectivity to neighborhoods and the future BERT was also a high priority of the planning team, and the proposed alignment reflects staff's attempt to provide access while prioritizing wildlife, habitat, and agricultural preservation. The Town of Erie Parks and Recreation Department supports the plan and will collaborate with the department to finalize these critical trail connections, integrating EBC into the regional trail network. See Appendix 1 for more information.

To increase accessibility and readability of the planning document, the department organized the plan to contain high interest content presented through images, maps, and pictures. It highlights the baseline conditions of the site, the vision for the future, and the management actions needed to reach those goals. The plan has several appendices, one of which contains all of the background information available for the site including its current conditions and the status of resources. Another appendix holds the summaries and data of the two online surveys.

### **Public Comments on Draft Plan and Parks Response**

During October, the department posted the draft plan on the EBC website and asked people to take a final survey which focused on the document itself. The survey received 229 total responses and it included questions using both a satisfaction scale as well as an open-ended format. Additionally, the department received letters from stakeholder groups and emails from residents with feedback. This feedback echoed earlier major themes. The online survey results showed that over half the respondents felt the plan reflected their open space values (54% agreed or strongly agreed). People that agreed with the plan stated their enthusiasm for the site to be open, thought it provided an appropriate balance of wildlife protection and recreation, and supported the trails and trail connections. Of the respondents that disagreed or strongly disagreed (31%) the major reasons were the perceived lack of wildlife protections, the impact of trails on wildlife, a preference that the property remain closed to the public, and concerns about the location of the trailhead on N. 109th Street. Fifteen % of respondents were neutral.

The plan document itself scored high in terms of its clarity for management actions (72% agreed or strongly agreed, while only 11% disagreed or strongly disagreed and 17% were neutral). Of those that agreed, most expressed that actions were well written and understandable. Of those that disagreed, the majority of the open-ended responses objected to the plan content itself (reflecting the disagreements above) rather than how the management actions were explained.

Lastly, respondents felt the look of the plan was effective (62% agreed or strongly agreed and 27% were neutral). Only 11% disagreed or strongly disagreed. Supporters thought the new document layout was effective, easy to read, and appreciated the use of pictures and graphics. Those that disagreed found some parts of the layout redundant or confusing, or restated their opposition to certain management actions.

Overall, the results show a mixed but overall supportive response for the plan itself, better support for the clarity of the management actions, and a positive reaction for the new look of the plan document.

### *Support*

In addition to the major themes described above, staff heard many other voices in support of the plan. People appreciated that the plan is going to allow them to visit this publicly owned site and its beautiful features and views. They are excited that the trail alignments course through the properties and provide connections to Erie's system. In particular, some mentioned that they will appreciate visiting the area safely via trails instead of driving, walking, or biking on roads to reach it. They liked that trails will be along streams in places as well and that open water will be accessible and that the area will preserve the environmental features. There were respondents

who supported the plan because it balanced the variety of values and others who like the opportunity for exercise and chances to be outdoors for mental and physical wellness. People also liked that the plan supported agricultural producers.

### *Do Not Support*

Respondents to public comment and at the October and November 2023 POSAC meetings detailed three primary areas of concern that warranted detailed discussion and explanation: 1) the trailhead location on N. 109th Street; 2) non-motorized use of the stacked ponds; 3) the trail north of Kenosha Wetlands (Critical Wildlife Habitat #65); and 4) BCPOS approach to addressing aquatic nuisance species.

In response to public comment and POSAC questions, staff made numerous updates and clarifications to the plan. See Appendix 2 for changes that were made in response.

Additionally, staff provided analysis to POSAC regarding the trail alignment and wildlife considerations and the nine options originally considered for trailhead locations (two of which were proposed in the plan: Kenosha Rd and 109th Street). See Appendix 3 for this information and analysis.

### **Neighbor Feedback Regarding the Location of the Proposed 109<sup>th</sup> Street Trailhead and Parks Response**

Neighbors provided extensive comment on the East Boulder Creek Site Management Plan after it was posted on the web in October regarding the location of the 109th Street trailhead. Residents worry that the trailhead will add traffic to their public street and compromise their sense of community and safety. Additionally, residents feel the parking lot will bring added visitor and visual impacts to the neighborhood. Input from emails and POSAC testimony have questioned the siting of the trailhead and parking lot and suggested alternatives. POSAC echoed those concerns and requested at its November 2023 meeting that staff provide an explanation of the analysis performed for recommending the current proposal.

In response, staff hosted a December site visit for all those interested in the southwest trailhead location. Approximately 41 people attended and gave both verbal and written comment regarding the location. Attendees were given the opportunity to walk a portion of the site and observe the proposed location of the 109th Street trailhead. Neighbors had requested staff collaboration in determining the trailhead location, prompting staff to ask attendees to mark suggested locations with dots. In addition to the 109th Street location, attendees identified four additional locations they considered appropriate.

At the December 14, 2023, POSAC meeting, staff presented the results of the trailhead site visit along with the original analysis conducted to identify the trailhead locations proposed in the plan. Satisfied with the additional analysis and the results of the trailhead site visit, POSAC unanimously recommended approval of the plan to the BOCC with the following condition:

*Staff will research the alternative locations suggested by attendees at the 12/13/2023 Neighborhood meeting for the 109th St. Trailhead. Staff will present the results of that analysis at the BOCC hearing on 1/25/2024. The locations are:*

- *Wise Alfalfa Field*



- *Wise Open Space (Town of Erie)*
- *Off Hwy 287 (FEMA 100-year floodplain)*
- *West side of 119th St*

See Appendix 3 and 4.

Recognizing that a shift in the proposed trailhead location in the plan could raise concerns among other neighbors in the EBC area, staff initiated an additional survey of the neighbors. Staff priority-mailed 357 surveys to households within 1500 feet of EBC. Each survey included a unique code for every household to respond, starting on January 8, 2024. Households had the flexibility to modify their answers using their unique code until the survey concluded at 11:59 p.m. on January 21, 2024. The survey was promoted through a press release, updates to the EBC project page, real estate signs positioned around the perimeter of the property, and the placement of a variable message board along eastbound Jasper Road off HWY 287. The survey generated 105 responses, representing approximately 30% of neighbors.

Additionally, staff hosted an open house regarding the alternative locations for the southwest trailhead on January 18, 2024, at the Town of Erie Community Center. Approximately 60 people attended to ask questions about the trailhead options and learn more about the plan. Staff was available to help neighbors with the survey and non-neighbors were encouraged to email their comments to the email address given in the notice for the BOCC January 25, 2025, hearing for the plan.

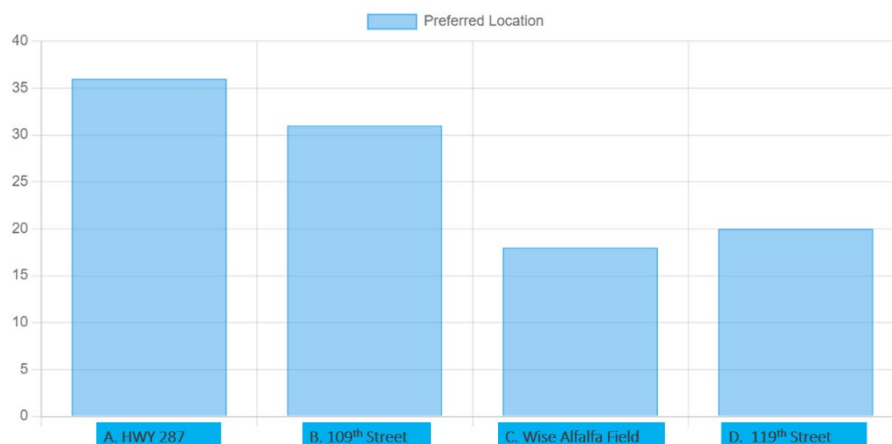
### *Neighbor Survey Questions and Results*

The survey detailed basic information regarding the southwest trailhead options as suggested by the attendees of the December 13, 2023, site visit, provided a map, and asked two questions: 1) What is your preferred location for the southwest EBC trailhead? 2) What is your least preferred location for the southwest EBC trailhead? For those wanting the detailed analysis of the alternative locations staff posted the information on the EBC project page on January 18, 2024, and provided copies to attendees of the open house. See Appendix 5.

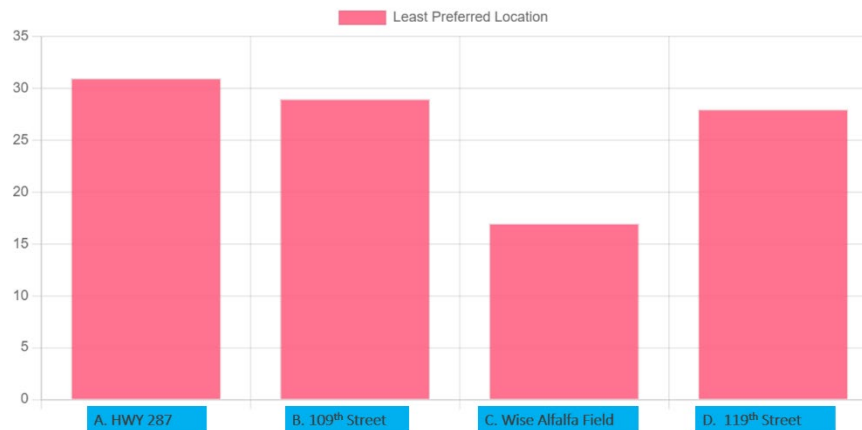
### *Results*

Results of the neighborhood survey were as follows:

#### **What is your most preferred location for the southwest trailhead?**



## What is your least preferred location for the southwest trailhead?



### Additional Trailhead Analysis

The broader neighbors' engagement revealed that no matter where you site a trailhead, there will be neighbors opposed to it. Cost, safety, and accessibility are all values the community respects. The additional southwest trailhead analysis and neighbor survey results confirmed that the proposed 109th Street location is the most appropriate. See Appendix 6. The 109th Street location is:

- 1) Safest for visitors.
- 2) Safest for the surrounding neighborhood and traffic management.
- 3) Best for those with disabilities and mobility limitations to access the site.
- 4) Accessible to RTD and the future BERT.
- 5) The most cost-effective (\$276K).
- 6) Requires the least infrastructure.
- 7) Low impact on agriculture.

However, due to the many concerns expressed by neighbors, staff is proposing alternations to the trailhead as originally proposed in the draft plan by limiting the size to 30 cars, 2 ADA spaces, and 2 trailer spaces (see Staff Modification) which will reduce the 164 Average Daily Traffic (ADT) projected at the 50 car build out to approximately 115 ADT.

Although the three other alternative locations share some positive aspects, the associated negatives diminish their feasibility. For instance, the location off HWY 287 would require major road construction costing approximately \$1.6 million to address major safety concerns and would still place visitors next to a major highway. It is also unknown if CDOT would permit another egress cut on the highway in this area. The Wise Alfalfa field location, due to its high-water table and soils, could cost between \$767K-857K or \$1.84M – 1.94M (increased cost if the Town of Erie requires road widening) and would require the Town of Erie to support changing the conservation easement they hold designating the area as a historically important agricultural area that prohibits construction of a trailhead. In response, the Town of Erie has stated *“The Town of Erie is not in support of a recent conceptual parking lot proposal that has the lot placed immediately north of Jasper Road near the Wise Museum. This parcel maintains a shared conservation easement between the Town of Erie and Boulder County and is currently zoned as Agricultural/Open Space. The Town of Erie does not support amending this conservation*

*easement or altering the zoning.”* (See Appendix 7) Lastly, the West side of 119th Street location would affect more residents than the other locations and cost 744K-794K or \$1.81M-1.86M (increased cost if the Town of Erie requires road widening).

Finally, the Town of Erie's Wise Homestead Open Space on the south side of Jasper Road was not subject to the same analysis as the other locations. Because BCPOS does not own the property, it was inappropriate to incorporate the location into the neighbor survey, and staff did not have access to the same level of property information. Nevertheless, to fulfil the POSAC condition, staff engaged with the Town of Erie to discuss the feasibility of siting the trailhead on their property. They state they are not ready to plan for Wise Homestead until BERT is developed and do not support sitting a trailhead there at this time.

Although staff analysis supports that 109th Street is the most appropriate and safest location for the trailhead (for visitors and the neighborhood), some neighbors of this area still expressed extreme concern for their safety and that of their children at the January 18, 2024, Open House when using 109th Street as pedestrians or equestrians. Staff conducted additional research in response to neighbor insistence that the intersection of Jasper Road and 109<sup>th</sup> Street is unsafe with a history of crashes. In the past 22 years, there have been 5 crashes in the area. According to Public Works, they find no significance in the crash history that indicates that the intersection is unsafe. See Appendix 6. However, since the trailhead, even at a reduced size, will increase traffic on 109<sup>th</sup> Street compared to current volumes, staff made additional modifications to the plan in response.

### **Staff Modifications to Plan**

Due to POSAC and public feedback, staff has modified the plan since the December POSAC meeting (PG 35, Provide Visitor Amenities) with the following:

- Limiting the maximum size of the 109th Street (southwest) trailhead to 30 parking spots 2 ADA parking spots, and 2 trailer spaces. If staff wishes to increase parking capacity in the future, an amendment to the management plan will be required.
- Added language to the plan that commits Parks to improving access road conditions if needed, stated as follows “Parks will improve access road conditions, including potential signs or other modifications if warranted based on an in-depth traffic study.”

### **Conclusion**

BCPOS has appreciated the involvement of partners, stakeholders, and the community in the process of creating the site management plan and hopes that the document reflects the mission of the department and input from the community. In an effort to hear and co-create the EBC plan with the community, the department conducted three rounds of public feedback and provided multiple opportunities for the public to visit EBC and share their ideas. Upon hearing the concerns of the neighbors, staff offered two additional opportunities for engagement and conducted extensive additional analysis to explore all other options for the southwest trailhead location. Additionally, staff made changes to the plan based on comments received during the draft release and has clarified reasoning and justification for complex management actions that are not universally supported by community members. BCPOS believes the plan reflects a balance of values expressed by the community, and the proposed management actions in the plan successfully meet each goal in the department’s mission.

## **BOCC Action Requested**

Staff recommends approval of the East Boulder Creek Site Management Plan for Prairie Run Open Space.

## **Appendix**

### Attachments and Links

1. (Link) [EBC Project Page](#): This page includes links to the draft East Boulder Creek Management Plan, the Appendix of Baseline Conditions, Community Survey 1, and Community Survey 2.
2. (Link) [November 16, 2023, POSAC Memo and Attachment](#): This memo details the results of public feedback to the draft plan, themes identified, and Parks changes and/or response.
3. (Link) [December 14, 2023 POSAC Staff Memo and Attachment](#): This memo and attachment details the trail alignment and wildlife considerations that was analyzed by staff to craft the trail alignment proposed in the plan; and the analysis of the nine original trailhead locations considered for the entire site (2 were selected, Kenosha Road and 109<sup>th</sup> Street).
4. (Attachment) December 14, 2023, DRAFT POSAC Meeting Minutes
5. (Attachment) January Neighbor Survey for southwest trailhead options and results.
6. (Attachment) Southwest Trailhead Analysis (POSAC condition of approval to the BOCC)
7. (Attachment) Town of Erie's Letter of Position on the East Boulder Creek plan.