

**Mayor**

Aaron Brockett

**Council Members**

Taishya Adams

Matt Benjamin

Lauren Folkerts

Tina Marquis

Ryan Schuchard

Nicole Speer

Mark Wallach

Tara Winer



Council Chambers

1777 Broadway

Boulder, CO 80302

April 11, 2024

6:00 PM

**City Manager**

Nuria Rivera-Vandermyde

**City Attorney**

Teresa Taylor Tate

**City Clerk**

Elesha Johnson

## **AGENDA FOR THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOULDER CITY COUNCIL**

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**1. Call to Order and Roll Call**

- A. Space Science Month Declaration presented by Councilmember Benjamin** **5 Min**
- B. Debrief on City Power Outage on April 6th & 7th** **15 min**

**2. Consent Agenda**

- A. Consideration of a motion to accept the February 22, 2024 Special Council Meeting Minutes**
- B. Consideration of a motion to accept the March 7, 2024 Regular Council Meeting Minutes**
- C. Consideration of a motion to accept the Recommendation of the Council Employee Evaluation Committee (Council Recruitment Committee), to identify Jeffrey Cahn as the finalist for the position of Boulder Presiding Municipal Court Judge, to appoint Jeffrey Cahn as Boulder Presiding Municipal Court Judge and to authorize Mayor Brockett and the City Manager to Execute an Employee Contract with Mr. Cahn**
- D. Introduction, first reading and consideration of a motion to publish by title only Ordinance 8631, updating the streetlighting standards by amending the City of Boulder Design and Construction Standards (DCS), originally adopted pursuant to Ordinance 5985, and adding a new Section 4-20-77, "Streetlighting Fees," B.R.C. 1981, and setting forth related details**

**3. Public Hearings**

- A. Second reading and consideration of a motion to adopt Ordinance 8627 designating the area as shown in Exhibit A, to be known as the** **135 min -**

Civic Area Historic District, as a historic district under Chapter 9-11, "Historic Preservation," B.R.C. 1981; and setting forth related details

**30 min  
presentation  
/ 105  
min  
public  
hearing  
&  
council  
discussion**

**4. Matters from the City Manager**

**A. Vision Zero Action Plan Update**

**90 min**

**5. Discussion Items**

**6. Debrief**

**7. Adjournment**

**4:05 hrs**

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If you need Spanish interpretation or other language-related assistance for this meeting, please call (303) 441-1905 at least three business days prior to the meeting. Si usted necesita interpretacion o cualquier otra ayuda con relacion al idioma para esta junta, por favor comuniquese al (303) 441-1905 por lo menos 3 negocios dias antes de la junta.

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## **COVER SHEET**

### **MEETING DATE**

**April 11, 2024**

### **AGENDA ITEM**

Space Science Month Declaration presented by Councilmember Benjamin

### **PRIMARY STAFF CONTACT**

Megan Valliere, (720) 665-4594

### **ATTACHMENTS:**

#### **Description**

- ▣ **Space Science Month Declaration**

## Space Science Month

April 2024

In December 1968, the astronauts of Apollo 8 were attempting to be the first humans to ever leave low earth orbit and circle the Moon roughly a quarter of a million miles away. It was on the fourth lunar orbit that astronaut William Anders took a picture of the Earth rising as seen from the far-side of the moon. This is arguably one of the most famous pictures ever taken. Many historians attribute the galvanizing force of establishing Earth Day on April 22nd to this famous Earth Rise photo. It was truly the first time we saw our planet surrounded by the emptiness of space and perhaps more importantly we saw the fragility of our home as the atmosphere appeared as nothing more than the skin of an apple. The environmental movement as we know it today was in large part created by humanity's pursuit of the cosmos.

For over 60 years, our home of Boulder Colorado has carried on this legacy of space science and helped forge countless new discoveries, technologies, and industries. The University of Colorado Boulder (CU) often carries the distinction as being the number one NASA funded public University in the Country. CU Boulder has also prepared and graduated generations of students that go on to make lasting contributions to the combined fields of Space Science around the world. Ball Aerospace is Boulder's number one employer while building many of the instruments and technologies for the most well-known and consequential spacecraft and orbiting telescopes ever assembled, like the Hubble Space Telescope, the Kepler Space Telescope, WorldView 1 and 2 spacecraft, The Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter, and the James Webb Space Telescope, just to name a few. Accompanying Ball are numerous other aerospace and defense contractors that make huge contributions to our national security. Boulder hosts more than half of Colorado's 30 plus federally funded research labs including NOAA (the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration), LASP (Laboratory for Atmospheric Space Physics), NCAR (National Center for Atmospheric Research), and NIST (National Institute of Space Technology) and so many more. It is estimated that Boulder's space science community generates over a billion dollars for our state's economy.

Spanning unimaginable scales of space and time from that of quantum physics to the origins of the Universe and everything in between, Boulder is home to world renowned scientists, researchers, administrators, and staff that continue to expand the knowledge of new frontiers. As such, Boulder stands out as one of but a few cities around that world that lay host to so many of these industries and researchers. As is often joked, one can throw a rock in town and likely hit a scientist, which is a testament to the reputation of Boulder.



We, the City Council of the City of Boulder, Colorado declare April 2024 as

**Space Science Month**

And celebrate the people, institutions, and industries that have informed, inspired, and unleashed generations of imaginations to seek understanding of our place in the cosmos.



Aaron Brockett, Mayor





## **COVER SHEET**

### **MEETING DATE**

**April 11, 2024**

### **AGENDA ITEM**

Debrief on City Power Outage on April 6th & 7th

### **PRIMARY STAFF CONTACT**

NA

### **ATTACHMENTS:**

#### **Description**

No Attachments Available



## **COVER SHEET**

### **MEETING DATE**

**April 11, 2024**

### **AGENDA ITEM**

Consideration of a motion to accept the February 22, 2024 Special Council Meeting Minutes

### **PRIMARY STAFF CONTACT**

Elesha Johnson, City Clerk

### **REQUESTED ACTION OR MOTION LANGUAGE**

Motion to accept the February 22, 2024 Special Council Meeting Minutes

### **ATTACHMENTS:**

#### **Description**

- ▣ **Item 2A - DRAFT February 22, 2024 Special Council Meeting Minutes**



**CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL Joint Meeting of the  
Council with the Open Space Board of Trustees (OSBT)**

**Virtual Via Zoom**

**Thursday, February 22, 2024**

**MINUTES**

**1. Call to Order and Roll Call:**

Mayor Brockett called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Council Members present: Adams, Benjamin, Brockett, Folkerts, Marquis,  
Schuchard, Speer, Wallach, Winer

A. **Rare Disease Day Declaration** presented by Council Member Folkerts

B. **20th anniversary of the Boulder International Film Festival Declaration**  
presented by Council Member Schuchard

**2. Consent Agenda**

**3. Public Hearings**

Teresa Taylor-Tate informed Council that in accordance with the Boulder Revised Code Section 2-7-5(e), regarding "*no public official shall appear before or participate in the body where they served within 1 year of their service*", is relevant due to a former board member, Karen Hollweg is signed up to speak during the joint public hearing and 1 year has not passed since her service.

A motion was made by Councilmember Winer to waive the prohibition of Section 2-7-5(e) to allow Karen Hollweg to address City Council at the joint public hearing scheduled tonight which was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Speer. Motion carried 9:0.

Dave Kuntz, OSBT chair, conducted a role call for the Open Space Board of Trustees which resulted in a quorum. OSBT members present: Dave Kuntz, Jon Carroll, Harmon Zuckerman, and Michelle Estrella.

- A. Consideration of **a request from the City of Boulder's Utilities department to use and manage an approximately 2.2-acre portion of the Van Vleet Open Space property to construct, access, operate and maintain elements of the South Boulder Creek Flood Mitigation Project**, pursuant to the disposal procedures of Article XII, Section 177 of the City of Boulder Charter, and related matters - **(This item is a joint public hearing with the Open Space Board of Trustees and will include the staff presentation and public hearing, but no deliberations or decisions.)**

Dan Burke, Open Space and Mountain Parks Director and Joe Taddeucci, Public Utilities Director, provided introductory remarks and answered questions from Council.

Brandon Coleman, Civil Engineering Manager, Bethany Collins, Open Space Real Estate Services Senior Manager and Donald D'Amico, Resource Project Manager, provided a presentation and answered questions from Council.

The public hearing **opened** at 7:32 p.m. and the following spoke:

➤ **Virtual:**

1. Dan Johnson
2. Sam Weaver – **pooling with #3 Ryan & #9 Andy – 5 min**
3. ~~Ryan Bradley~~ – **pooling with #2 Sam**
4. Leslie Durgin
5. Elmar Dornberger
6. Margaret LeCompte
7. James Morris
8. Peter Dawson
9. ~~Andy Schwarz~~ – **pooling with #2 Sam**
10. Lynn Segal
11. Michael Browning
12. Frances Hartogh
13. Karen Hollweg
14. Ben Binder
15. Ken Beitel
16. Richard Harris
17. Steve Pomerance
18. Bev Baker
19. Harold Hallstein
20. Curt Brown

21. Harlin Savage
22. Kirk Vincent
23. Laura Tyler

The public hearing **closed** at 8:27 p.m.

Dave Kuntz, OSBT board chair, reiterated they will not be taking any further public testimony at their March 13<sup>th</sup> meeting. They will be deliberating and submitting their decisions to Council.

Michelle Estrella, OSBT board member, moved to continue the public hearing to the next regular Open Space Board and Trustees meeting on March 13<sup>th</sup>, 2024. John Carrol, OSBT board member, seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved by the OSBT board.

Motion	Made By/Seconded	Vote
Motion to <b>CONTINUE</b> the public hearing to the March 21, 2024 regular City Council meeting.	Benjamin / Folkerts	Carried 9:0

4. **Discussion Items**
5. **Debrief**
6. **Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before Council at this time, by motion regularly adopted, the meeting was **adjourned by Mayor Brockett at 9:05 p.m.**

Approved this 11<sup>th</sup> day of April 2024.

APPROVED BY:

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Aaron Brockett, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Elesha Johnson, City Clerk





## **COVER SHEET**

### **MEETING DATE**

**April 11, 2024**

### **AGENDA ITEM**

Consideration of a motion to accept the March 7, 2024 Regular Council Meeting Minutes

### **PRIMARY STAFF CONTACT**

Elesha Johnson, City Clerk

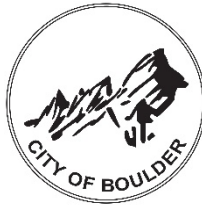
### **REQUESTED ACTION OR MOTION LANGUAGE**

Motion to accept the March 7, 2024 Regular Council Meeting Minutes

### **ATTACHMENTS:**

#### **Description**

- ▢ **Item 2B - DRAFT March 7, 2024 Regular Meeting Minutes**



## CITY COUNCIL MEETING

Virtual Via Zoom

Thursday, March 7, 2024

### MINUTES

1. **Call to Order and Roll Call:**

Mayor Brockett called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

Council Members present virtually: Adams, Brockett, Folkerts, Marquis,  
Schuchard, Speer, Wallach, Winer

Absent: Benjamin

A. **Boulder Medical Center 75th Anniversary Declaration** Presented by Mayor Pro  
Tem Speer

2. **Open Comment:**

(Public comments are a summary of actual testimony. Full testimony is available on the council web page at: <https://bouldercolorado.gov/city-council> > Watch Live or Archived Meetings.)

Open Comment **opened** at 6:10 p.m.

➤ **Virtual:**

1. Douglas Hamilton spoke on public comment engagement program
2. Sergio Atallah spoke on ceasefire
3. Randall Clarke spoke on ceasefire resolution
4. Stephen Bross spoke on support for ceasefire resolution
5. ~~Michele Rodriguez~~ - **withdrew**
6. Flanders Lorton spoke on ceasefire

7. Aram Bingham spoke on ceasefire resolution
8. Essrea Cherin spoke on international relations
9. Hep Ingham spoke on low and loud flights from Boulder airport
10. Mohamad Kuziez spoke on call for a cease fire in Gaza
11. Adal Raja spoke on Palestine
12. Laura Gonzalez spoke on local crisis
13. Gila Kaplan spoke on ceasefire in Gaza
14. Elliot Fladen spoke on Israel
15. Lynn Segal spoke on growth
16. Padi Fuster Anguilers spoke on ceasefire demand
17. Linsey Loberg spoke on ceasefire
18. ~~Jessica Hertzberg~~ – *moved to PH list*
19. Ronald Price spoke on airport closure
20. Morales Myrna spoke on ceasefire

Open Comment **closed** at 6:58 p.m.

### 3. **Consent Agenda**

- A. Consideration of a motion to **accept the February 8th Study Session Summary regarding Homelessness Strategy Updates**
- B. Consideration of a motion **authorizing the City Manager to convey the permanently affordable housing unit at 3250 Oneal Cir Unit #J35, Boulder, CO to eligible buyers and sign all associated agreements**
- C. Consideration of a motion to **authorize the city manager to execute Program Agreement documents to satisfy the historic preservation requirements** of the Colorado State Historic Preservation Office and the US Department of Housing and Urban Development
- D. Consideration of a motion to **approve a request by Public Service Company of Colorado (dba Xcel Energy) and on behalf of Comcast/Xfinity, CenturyLink/Lumen and the City of Boulder Innovation and Technology Department, to use certain City of Boulder open space lands to install and maintain subsurface electric and telecommunication utilities via open trenching or boring pursuant to the disposal procedures of Article XII, Section 177 of the City of Boulder Charter**
- E. **Introduction**, first reading, and consideration of a motion to order published by title only **Ordinance 8624 adopting wetlands mapping and functional evaluations for a property generally located on a 308.15-acre parcel and generally known as CU South at 4886 and 5278 Table Mesa Drive, 718**

**Marshall Road, 0 Hwy 36 (2 parcels) and 4745 W. Moorhead;** and setting forth related details

- F. **Second reading** and consideration of a motion to **adopt Ordinance 8620 amending Title 9, "Land Use Code,"** B.R.C. 1981 to fix errors, clarify existing code sections, update graphics, and improve the clarity of the code, and setting forth related details

Motion	Made By/Seconded	Vote
Motion to <b>APPROVE</b> the consent agenda items A-F	Wallach / Winer	Carried 8:0

4. **Call-Up Check-In**

- A. **Site Review Amendment including a Height Modification request to allow for up to seven feet six inches of additional height** with a pitched roof or alternatively, up to four feet of additional height with or without a pitched roof for each townhome building **within the approved Shining Mountain Waldorf School development at 0 Violet Ave. (LUR2023-00050)**

**NO ACTION**

- B. **Consideration of a Standard Stream, Wetland and Water Body Protection Permit for the proposed renovation of the Chapman Drive Trailhead** and construction of a pedestrian bridge over Boulder Creek **generally located at 38474 Boulder Canyon Drive in Boulder County (WET2023-00020)**

Edward Stafford, Civil Engineering Senior Manager, and Jeff Haley, Deputy Director of Open Space & Mountain Parks answered questions from Council.

**NO ACTION**

5. **Public Hearings**

- A. **Concept Review proposal to redevelop the 448,668 sq. ft. site at 2952 Baseline Rd. with a mixed-use development consisting of residential, commercial, hotel, and restaurant uses.** The existing buildings on site would be demolished and replaced with six new 4-5 story buildings containing retail, restaurant and hotel uses as well as approximately 610 new dwelling units, and a mix of structured and underground parking. The unit type mix would include market rate units and student housing units. **Reviewed under case number LUR2023-00038**

Chandler Van Shaack, City Principal Planner, provided a presentation and answered questions from Council.

Bill Holicky and Andy Bush, the project applicants, provided a presentation and answered questions from Council.

The public hearing **opened** at 8:15 p.m. and the following spoke:

➤ **Virtual:**

1. Lisa Harris
2. Lois LaCroix
3. Mike Marsh
4. Mitchell Block
5. David Batchelder
6. Eliza Grace
7. Shelby Bates
8. Ronald L. DePugh
9. Dorothy Cohen
10. Mike Duffy
11. Emily Ohara
12. Mark Stangl
13. Jan Trussell
14. Cecilia Girz
15. Jan Trussell
16. Lynn Segal
17. Mary Scott
18. Robert Porath – *did not show*
19. Brookie Gallagher
20. Daniel Howard
21. Joseph McCluskey
22. Paula Moseley
23. Jessica Hertzberg – *moved from OC*

The public hearing **closed** at 9:00 p.m.

<b>Motion</b>	<b>Made By/Seconded</b>	<b>Vote</b>
Consideration of a motion to <b>defer</b> this item to the <b>Transportation Advisory Board</b>	Schuchard / Marquis	Carried 8:0
Consideration of a motion to <b>defer</b> this item to the <b>Design Advisory Board</b>	Folkerts / Wallach	Carried 8:0

Consideration of a motion to <b>defer</b> this item to the <b>Environmental Advisory Board</b>	Adams / Speer	Carried 7:1
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***Mayor Brockett called a recess at 9:26 p.m. Council reconvened at 9:32 p.m.***

**6. Matters from the City Manager**

**A. Progress Update on the Implementation of the East Boulder Subcommunity Plan: Zoning Update**

Kathleen King, City Principal Planner, and Leslie Oberholtzer, of Codametrics, provided a presentation and answered questions from Council.

**7. Matters from the City Attorney**

**8. Matters from the Mayor and Members of Council**

**9. Discussion Items**

**10. Debrief**

**11. Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before Council at this time, by motion regularly adopted, the meeting was **adjourned by Mayor Brockett at 10:19 p.m.**

Approved this 11<sup>th</sup> day of April 2024.

APPROVED BY:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Aaron Brockett, Mayor

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Elesha Johnson, City Clerk



## **COVER SHEET**

### **MEETING DATE**

**April 11, 2024**

### **AGENDA ITEM**

Consideration of a motion to accept the Recommendation of the Council Employee Evaluation Committee (Council Recruitment Committee), to identify Jeffrey Cahn as the finalist for the position of Boulder Presiding Municipal Court Judge, to appoint Jeffrey Cahn as Boulder Presiding Municipal Court Judge and to authorize Mayor Brockett and the City Manager to Execute an Employee Contract with Mr. Cahn

### **PRIMARY STAFF CONTACT**

David Bell, Chief Human Resources Officer

### **REQUESTED ACTION OR MOTION LANGUAGE**

Consideration to motion to accept the recommendation of the Council Recruitment Committee, to identify Jeffrey Cahn as the finalist for the position of Boulder Presiding Municipal Court Judge, to appoint Jeffrey Cahn as municipal court judge and to authorize Mayor Weaver and City Manager Nuria Rivera-Vandermyde to execute an employment contract with Mr. Cahn including the terms set forth in the agenda memo

### **ATTACHMENTS:**

#### **Description**

- ▣ **Item 2C - Consideration of a motion to accept the recommendation for position of the Municipal Court Judge**
- ▣ **Item 2C - Addendum Memo**



**CITY OF BOULDER  
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM**

**MEETING DATE: April 11, 2024**

**AGENDA TITLE**

Consideration of a motion to Accept the Recommendation of the Council Employee Evaluation Committee (Council Recruitment Committee), to identify Jeffrey Cahn as the finalist for the position of Boulder Presiding Municipal Court Judge, to appoint Jeffrey Cahn as Boulder Presiding Municipal Court Judge and to Authorize the Mayor and the City Manager to Execute an Employee Contract with Mr. Cahn.

**PRESENTER(S)**

Nicole Speer, Mayor Pro Tem  
Ryan Schuchard, City Council Member  
David Bell, Chief Human Resources Officer

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The purpose of this agenda item is for the city council to consider the recommendation of the council recruitment committee, made of council members Speer and Schuchard. The council recommends that the city council appoint Jeffrey Cahn to be the next presiding municipal court judge. The committee recommends that the council authorize Mayor Brockett and City Manager Nuria Rivera-Vandermyde to enter into a contract with Mr. Cahn. Incorporating the items set forth below. The council has the option to accept or reject the recommendation.



## **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

### **Suggested Motion Language:**

The Committee recommends council consideration of this matter and action in the form of the following motion:

Motion to accept the recommendation of the Council Recruitment Committee, to identify Jeffrey Cahn as the finalist for the position of Boulder Presiding Municipal Court Judge, to appoint Jeffrey Cahn as municipal court judge and to authorize Mayor Weaver and City Manager Nuria Rivera-Vandermyde to execute an employment contract with Mr. Cahn including the terms set forth in the agenda memo.

## **BACKGROUND**

Section 12 of the Boulder Home Rule Charter, setting forth specific duties of the council provides that the council “shall choose and appoint . . . a municipal judge . . . .” Section 9 of the charter authorizes council to appoint a committee to screen applicants for the municipal judge. Council appointed Mayor Pro Tem Speer and Council Member Schuchard to serve as the committee authorized by section 9.

The committee conducted an extensive process to identify a candidate profile and recruit candidates for consideration. The city partnered with an external recruiter to screen candidates and present candidates to an interview committee, and to interview semi-finalists from the initial set of candidates. Two semi-finalists interviewed with each council member in groups of two, and with a recruitment team representative. After reviewing the feedback received through this process, the committee recommends that city council identify Jeffrey Cahn as the finalist for the municipal court judge and that council appoint Jeffrey Cahn as municipal court judge.

If council appoints Mr. Cahn the committee recommends that the council authorize Mayor Brockett and City Manager Nuria Rivera-Vandermyde to negotiate and sign an agreement with Mr. Cahn incorporating the following terms:

Salary: \$200,000 per year.

Start Date: April 15, 2024

Health Insurance: On the same terms as offered city employees.

Life Insurance: 1.5 times the annual salary, on the same terms offered city employees.

Vacation: On the same terms as offered city employees

Termination for Cause: All benefits and compensation cease upon termination.

Termination without Cause: All compensation to continue for 9 months.

## **ATTACHMENT(S)**

A - Contract template for municipal court judge

## EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT

This Employment Agreement (“Agreement”), made and entered into this (day) day of (month), 2024, by and between the City of Boulder, a Colorado home rule city (the “City”) and (name) (the “Employee”) both of whom agree as follows:

### RECITALS

- A. The City Council of the City of Boulder is authorized to employ the Employee as the Presiding Judge, pursuant to Section 86 of the City’s Charter; and
- B. The City has offered, and the Employee has accepted employment with the City as Presiding Judge on the terms and conditions set forth herein.

### AGREEMENT

**NOW THEREFORE**, in consideration of the promises and obligations set forth below, the parties agree as follows:

1. Term of Employment.

A. The Employee shall serve as the Presiding Judge beginning on (date), the effective date of this Agreement and thereafter on a year-to-year basis, as provided in paragraph 1.B below. As Presiding Judge, the Employee shall have those powers, duties, and responsibilities set forth in Section 2-6-4, B.R.C. 1981, as it may be amended, and as otherwise provided by law, during the term of this Agreement.

B. This Agreement shall automatically renew after (date), 2025, on a year-to-year basis unless written notice that this Agreement shall terminate is given by either the Employee or the City to the other of intent not to continue this Agreement. Any written notice provided by the Employee shall be delivered to the City Council. Any written notice by the City shall be signed by the mayor, upon the authority of the City Council, and delivered to the Employee.

2. Duties and Responsibilities of Employee.

A. The duties of the Employee shall be as described in the Boulder Revised Code 1981, which are incorporated herein by this reference. The Municipal Court Judge shall also be available to review warrants, issue probable cause findings and hold administrative hearings as needed.

B. The Employee is responsible to preside over sessions of the Boulder Municipal Court and utilize the services of associate judges only on a reasonable and necessary

basis when the Employee is not available or as needed to allow the Employee to fulfill other duties required by this Agreement.

C. The Employee shall at all times maintain the Employee's certification to practice law in and shall be a member in good standing of the Bar of the state of Colorado. The Employee shall comply with the Colorado Rules of Professional Responsibility and the Colorado Code of Judicial Conduct, as both are amended from time to time.

D. The Employee shall work collaboratively with the court administrator who is the department head of the Municipal Court

E. The Employee shall adhere to City policies and values as they may be amended.

F. The City Council shall fix any other terms and conditions of employment, as it may determine from time to time, relating to the performance of the Employee, provided such terms and conditions are not inconsistent with or in conflict with the provisions of this Agreement, City ordinances, City Charter, or any other law.

### 3. Compensation.

A. The City agrees to pay the Employee an annual base salary of \$(salary) payable in installments at the same time that the other management employees of the City of Boulder are paid.

B. The Employee, during the term of this Agreement, shall not receive a salary increase that is otherwise provided to City employees unless specifically authorized by the City Council. Any salary adjustments that are provided shall be consistent with the City's compensation policies and budget assumption on the same basis as applied to management employees.

### 4. Health, Disability, and Life Insurance Benefits.

A. The City agrees to contribute to and to pay the premiums for medical insurance for the Employee and the Employee's dependents, at a minimum, equal to that which is provided to all other employees of the City of Boulder.

B. The City agrees to put into force and to make required premium payments for short-term and long-term disability coverage for the Employee, equal to that which is provided to all other management employees of the City of Boulder.

C. The City shall pay the amount of premium due for term life insurance in the amount of one and one half (1.5) times the Employee's annual base salary up to a maximum of \$300,000 payout, including all increases in the base salary during the term of this Agreement, equal to that which is provided to all other management employees of the City of Boulder.

## 5. Vacation and Sick Leave.

- A. Beginning the first day of employment, the Employee shall accrue vacation based on the total years of service with the City.
- B. In addition, beginning on the first day of employment, the Employee shall accrue sick leave on an annual basis, at a minimum, at the rate provided to other management employees of the City of Boulder, under the same rules and provisions applicable.
- C. The Employee is entitled to accrue unused leave at the limits provided by the City's leave policies and in the event the Employee's employment is terminated, either voluntarily or involuntarily, Employee shall be compensated for accrued vacation leave to date.

## 6. Retirement.

The City agrees to enroll the Employee into a retirement plan offered by the City. The City will default the Employee to the Colorado Public Employees' Retirement Association (PERA) plan unless the Employee selects an alternate offering of the City within 60 days of employment. The City shall make all appropriate City contributions on the Employee's behalf.

## 7. Professional and Community Expenses.

The following expenses shall be paid for by the City provided the expenses are approved in the normal fashion by the City Council and included in the annual budget for the Presiding Judge:

- A. The City agrees to budget and to pay for professional dues and subscriptions of the Employee necessary for continuation and full participation in national, regional, state, and local associations and organizations necessary and desirable for the Employee's continued professional participation, growth, and advancement, and for the good of the City.
- B. The City agrees to budget and pay for travel and subsistence expenses of the Employee for professional and official travel, meetings, and occasions to adequately continue the professional development of the Employee and to pursue necessary official functions for the City, including, but not limited to, the Colorado Municipal Judges Association conferences, and such other national, regional, state, and local governmental groups and committees in which the Employee serves as a member.
- C. The City also agrees to budget and pay for travel and subsistence expenses of the Employee for short courses, institutes, and seminars that are necessary for the Employee's professional development, including legal education credits necessary for licensure in the state of Colorado, and for the good of the City.
- D. The City acknowledges the value of having the Employee participate and be directly involved in local civic clubs or organizations. Accordingly, the City shall pay

for the reasonable membership fees and/or dues to enable Employee to become an active member in local civic clubs or organizations.

E. Recognizing the importance of constant communication and maximum productivity, the City shall provide the Employee, for business use, a laptop computer and mobile phone for the Employee to perform their duties and to maintain communication with the City's staff and officials as well as other individuals who are doing business with the City. Upon termination of the Employee's employment, the equipment described herein shall be returned to the City.

## 8. Performance Evaluation.

A. The City shall annually conduct a performance review of the Employee for the performance period of July 1 through June 30. The performance review shall be completed each August/September following the performance period and be subject to a process, form, criteria, and format which shall be the City's performance policy for management employees of the City of Boulder. In no event shall the City perform a performance review of the Employee less than one time per performance period. The City may elect to perform additional performance reviews during the term of this Agreement and at any time the City, in its discretion, believes is appropriate.

B. The evaluation of the Employee shall be considered confidential to the extent permitted by City Charter. Nothing herein shall prohibit the City or the Employee from sharing the content of the Employee's review with respective legal counsel.

C. In the event the City deems the review instrument, format and/or procedure is to be modified and such modification(s) would require new or different performance expectations, the Employee shall be provided a reasonable period to demonstrate such expected performance before being evaluated.

## 9. Termination, Resignation, and Severance.

A. This Agreement shall not be terminated by either party during the term of this Agreement except pursuant to one of the following:

- i. Mutual agreement between the Employee and the City to terminate this Agreement; or
- ii. Unilateral termination for cause of the Employee's employment by the City; or
- iii. Unilateral termination without cause of the Employee's employment by the City; or
- iv. Death or physical or mental incapacity of the Employee preventing the Employee from continuing as Presiding Judge; or
- v. Unilateral termination by the Employee.

B. In the event the City desires to terminate the Employee for cause pursuant to Charter Section 86, pursuant to paragraph 9.A.ii. above, “cause” shall be limited to any of the following:

- i. Indictment or conviction of any felony, any crime involving moral turpitude, dishonesty or personal pecuniary gain, or any crime committed while acting in the course of the Employee’s official duties as Presiding Judge;
- ii. Addiction to the use of alcoholic beverages or to the use of controlled substances, which affect the performance of the position of Presiding Judge;
- iii. Partaking of non-prescribed controlled substances or being intoxicated during workdays between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.;
- iv. Damage to or negligence in the care and handling of City property;
- v. Improper or unauthorized use of City vehicles or equipment;
- vi. Claim of sick leave under false pretenses or misuse of sick leave;
- vii. Absence from duty without authorized leave (does not include normal and typical use of accrued leave for periods of less than three days);
- viii. Continued violation of the departmental or City-wide policies;
- ix. Willful giving of false information or withholding information with intent to deceive when making application;
- x. Willful violation of any rules adopted by the City Council;
- xi. Willful violations of the City’s policies or ordinances regarding conflicts of interest; or
- xii. The Employee has been disbarred or suspended from the practice of law, or has been subject to any professional discipline of any kind by the Colorado Supreme Court.

C. After a preliminary meeting with the mayor or the mayor’s designee (the “Loudermill meeting”), the mayor or designee may, in consultation with other council members, remove the presiding judge for “cause” pursuant to Charter Section 86. Thereafter, the presiding judge may, upon relinquishment of all contractual severance payment rights, demand a hearing under the procedures prescribed by Chapter 1-3, “Quasi-Judicial Hearings,” B.R.C. 1981, before a hearing officer appointed by the City Council, at which hearing the City shall have the burden of proof to show cause for removal pursuant to Charter Section 86.

In the event this Agreement is terminated, pursuant to paragraph 9.A.ii. above, the Employee shall receive no further compensation, other than what is provided by law, from the City, as of the effective date of termination. To affect a termination pursuant to 9.A.ii., the City shall give the Employee an enumeration of such cause in writing; a summary of the evidence, including the names of witnesses and copies of any documents supporting the alleged cause. At the Employee’s choice, and at the Employee’s sole expense, the Employee may be accompanied by legal counsel at any hearing.

D. In the event the Employee is terminated without cause pursuant to paragraph

9.A.iii. above, the City shall provide the Employee with not less than 60 days written notice of intent to terminate. During this 60-day notice period, the Employee shall remain a City employee and continue to receive the compensation provided for in this Agreement, but the City may modify the Employee's duties, responsibilities, and authority; assign special projects; direct the Employee to report to an alternate location for work; or take other similar actions as the City deems to be in the best interest of the City. At the time of the Employee's termination, pursuant to paragraph 9.A.iii., is effective the City shall pay nine month's compensation as severance pay. For the purposes of this paragraph, "compensation" includes salary, allowances, deferred compensation, and insurance costs.

E. In the event this Agreement is terminated pursuant to 9.A.iv. above (death or incapacity), all salary and benefits afforded the Employee herein shall continue to be provided to the Employee's beneficiaries for a period of 90 days following death or disability.

F. In the event the Employee elects to unilaterally terminate this Agreement pursuant to paragraph 9.A.v. above, the Employee shall make every conscientious and reasonable effort to provide the City with at least 60 days written notice.

#### 10. Bonding.

The City shall bear the full cost of any fidelity or other bond required of the Employee as Presiding Judge under any law or ordinance.

#### 11. Liability.

A. The City agrees that, to the extent permitted by law, it shall defend, hold harmless and indemnify the Employee from any and all demands, claims, suits, actions, and legal proceedings at law or in equity (specifically excluding, however, any demand, claims, suits, actions, or legal proceedings brought against the Employee by or on behalf of the City, and any criminal proceedings brought against the Employee), in the Employee's individual capacity or in the official capacity as agent and employee of the City of Boulder, provided the incident giving rise to the claim arose while the Employee was acting in good faith and within the scope of the Employee's employment and not willfully or wantonly.

B. The obligations of the City pursuant to this paragraph 11 shall be conditioned on prompt notification to the City by the Employee of any threatened or reasonably contemplated claim; full cooperation by the Employee with the City and its legal counsel in defending the claim; and the Employee not compromising, settling, negotiating or otherwise similarly dealing with the claim without the express consent of the City.

C. In the event the City has provided a defense pursuant to this paragraph 11, and a court or other decision making body having jurisdiction over the matter determines that

the act or omission of the Employee did not occur during the performance of duties hereunder and within the scope of employment or that the act or omission was willful or wanton or not in good faith, the Employee shall reimburse the City for all costs of such defense and indemnity actually incurred and paid on the Employee's behalf.

## 12. General Provisions.

A. **Alternate Dispute Resolution.** Except as otherwise provided for in paragraph 9 above, in the event of any dispute or claim arising under or related to this Agreement, the parties shall use all best efforts to settle such dispute or claim through good faith negotiations with each other. If such dispute or claim is not settled through negotiations within 30 days after the earliest date on which one party notifies the other party in writing of the desire to attempt to resolve such dispute or claim through negotiations, then the parties agree to attempt in good faith to settle such dispute or claim by mediation conducted under the auspices of a recognized established mediation service within the state of Colorado. Such mediation shall be conducted within 60 days following either party's written request. If such a dispute or claim is not settled through mediation, either party may initiate a civil action in the Boulder District Court.

B. **Entire Agreement.** It is expressly agreed and understood by both parties that the Employee, acting in the position of Presiding Judge, serves at the pleasure of the City Council. As such, the only rights of the Employee regarding the maintenance of the position as Presiding Judge are as set forth and agreed to by the parties herein. This Agreement supersedes any prior employment agreement between the City and the Employee, and any prior agreement shall be considered null and void as of the effective date of this Agreement.

C. **No Waiver.** No waiver of a breach hereof shall be deemed to constitute a waiver of a future breach, whether of a similar or dissimilar nature.

D. **Binding Effect.** This Agreement shall be binding upon and inure to the benefit of the heirs at law and executors of the Employee.

E. **Severability.** If any provision or any portion thereof, contained in this Agreement is held to be unconstitutional, invalid or unenforceable, the remainder of this Agreement, or portion thereof, shall be deemed severable, shall not be affected, and shall remain in full force and effect.

F. **Non-Assignment.** This Agreement is one for personal services to be provided by the Employee only and may not be assigned.

G. **Construction.** Each party has cooperated in the drafting and preparation of this Agreement. Hence, in any construction to be made of this Agreement, the same shall not be construed against any party on the basis of that party being the "drafter."

H. **Applicable Law.** This Agreement shall be governed as to its validity and effect



by the laws of the state of Colorado.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF** the parties have executed this Agreement on the date first written above.

**EMPLOYEE**

\_\_\_\_\_

**CITY OF BOULDER,  
a Colorado home rule city**

Approved by Boulder City Council

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Aaron Brockett, Mayor

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Attorney's Office

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



**CITY OF BOULDER  
CITY COUNCIL ITEM ADDENDUM**

**MEETING DATE: April 11, 2024**

**AGENDA ITEM 2C**

Consideration of a motion to Accept the Recommendation of the Council Employee Evaluation Committee to identify the finalist for the position of Boulder Presiding Municipal Court Judge

**PAGE NUMBER/S:**

Page 2 of Item 2C

**DESCRIPTION:**

The original 'Suggested Motion Language' of this item was to authorize Mayor Weaver and City Manager Nuria Rivera-Vandermyde to execute an employment contract with Mr. Cahn including the terms set forth in the agenda memo. The changed language is to authorize Mayor Brockett and City Manager Nuria Rivera-Vandermyde to execute an employment contract with Mr. Cahn including the terms set forth in the agenda memo.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

NA



## **COVER SHEET**

### **MEETING DATE**

**April 11, 2024**

### **AGENDA ITEM**

Introduction, first reading and consideration of a motion to publish by title only Ordinance 8631, updating the streetlighting standards by amending the City of Boulder Design and Construction Standards (DCS), originally adopted pursuant to Ordinance 5985, and adding a new Section 4-20-77, "Streetlighting Fees," B.R.C. 1981, and setting forth related details

### **PRIMARY STAFF CONTACT**

Edward Stafford, Civil Engineering Senior Manager

### **REQUESTED ACTION OR MOTION LANGUAGE**

Motion to introduce and order published by title only Ordinance 8631, updating the streetlighting standards by amending the City of Boulder Design and Construction Standards (DCS), originally adopted pursuant to Ordinance 5985, and adding a new Section 4-20-77, "Streetlighting Fees," B.R.C. 1981, and setting forth related details.

### **ATTACHMENTS:**

#### **Description**

- ▣ **Item 2D - DCS 2.12 - Streetlight Standards Update 1st rdg**



**CITY OF BOULDER  
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM**

**MEETING DATE: April 11, 2024**

**AGENDA TITLE**

Introduction, first reading and consideration of a motion to publish by title only Ordinance 8631, updating the streetlighting standards by amending the City of Boulder Design and Construction Standards (DCS), originally adopted pursuant to Ordinance 5985, and adding a new Section 4-20-77, "Streetlighting Fees," B.R.C. 1981, and setting forth related details.

**PRESENTER(S)**

Nuria Rivera-Vandermyde, City Manager  
Brad Mueller, Planning and Development Services Director  
Natalie Stiffler, Transportation and Mobility Director  
Hella Pannewig, Senior Counsel  
Veronique Van Gheem, Assistant City Attorney III  
Edward Stafford, Civil Engineering Senior Manager – P&DS  
Devin Joslin, Civil Engineering Senior Manager – T&M  
Merry Martin, Senior Project Manager

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The city is currently in the process of acquiring the street lighting system from Xcel Energy as a part of a 2023 budgeted project. The Design and Construction Standards (DCS) contain limited details about streetlights and currently provide that the Public Service Company of Colorado (PSCO) (now known as Xcel Energy) is responsible for providing streetlighting in Boulder. This standard reflects past practices consistent with PSCO ownership of streetlighting within Boulder. With the city's streetlight acquisition, the DCS must be updated to reflect the city's new responsibilities for streetlighting. This

proposed ordinance would repeal and re-enact Section 2.12, Streetlighting of the Design and Construction Standard, and would specify that the *city* acquires, owns, and installs streetlighting in public streets and alleys. The ordinance also adopts new streetlighting fees that would be paid by applicants for private developments for new installation, relocation, or removal of streetlighting.

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

#### **Suggested Motion Language:**

Staff requests council consideration of this matter and action in the form of the following motion:

Motion to introduce and order published by title only Ordinance 8631, updating the streetlighting standards by amending the City of Boulder Design and Construction Standards (DCS), originally adopted pursuant to Ordinance 5985, and adding a new Section 4-20-77, “Streetlighting Fees,” B.R.C. 1981, and setting forth related details.

### **COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENTS AND IMPACTS**

- **Economic** – Acquiring streetlighting will provide economic benefit to the City, and these updates will support on-going activities once the streetlights are acquired.
- **Environmental** – Acquiring streetlighting will allow the City to install fixtures that focus light where it is intended to go, minimizing upward glare and preserving the night sky for viewing. Dimming and color temperature selection will also provide benefit to local nightlife and sky visibility.
- **Social** – Quality lighting will provide social benefits to the community in providing properly lit right of way for safe travel.

### **OTHER IMPACTS**

- **Fiscal** - As previously approved by City Council as part of the 2023 budget approval process: acquisition, separation and conversion of the Xcel Energy streetlights will be funded from the CCRS (Community, Culture, Resilience and Safety Tax) tax fund. The new fees proposed in this ordinance would provide cost recovery for the city’s work on streetlighting related to private development projects.
- **Staff time** – This effort is part of the workplan for the Streetlight Acquisition Project.

## **RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS FROM COUNCIL AGENDA COMMITTEE**

None.

### **BOARD AND COMMISSION FEEDBACK**

The Planning Board and Transportation Advisory Board will be advised of these proposed changes at their April meetings. Any feedback received from them will be included in the second reading packet for this ordinance.

### **PUBLIC FEEDBACK**

The city engaged the public regarding the LED conversion project, but no specific public feedback was sought regarding this ordinance.

### **BACKGROUND**

For many years the city has been interested in converting the Xcel Energy streetlight system to LED luminaires for energy savings/GHG reduction, cost savings, reduced maintenance, better visual acuity, and the ability to remotely monitor and control the street lighting system. The city was constrained in effecting this change due to the existing regulatory structure that governs Xcel Energy's offerings and the limited technological solutions that Xcel Energy has available. Following the community vote to enter into a new franchise agreement with Xcel Energy, the city and Xcel Energy launched a project to explore solutions to achieving these goals. A formal project, staffed by city and Xcel Energy staff, was launched beginning in November 2020 to explore options that included:

- LED conversion through Xcel Energy's existing program with and without upfront investment from the city
- Developing an alternative program offering and rate design in coordination with Xcel Energy and other communities that could be presented to the Public Utility Commission (PUC)
- Acquisition of the streetlighting system by the city and subsequent retrofit

Based on the project team's analysis, the joint recommendation was that acquisition was the preferred pathway to proceed. City Council unanimously agreed with the staff recommended approach in July 2022 and the associated work program was incorporated into the 2023 budget.

There are two phases of the streetlight acquisition process that are now actively under way: (1) legal acquisition from Xcel Energy; and (2) contracting for the separation, conversion and on-going maintenance of the lights once purchased by the City of Boulder.

Please see the [study session memo from July 28, 2022](#) and the [information packet from August 17, 2023](#) for more background information, including staff's analysis of the

existing system condition, cost/benefit analysis of system acquisition, maps of the Xcel and City Streetlight system, acquisition and engagement details.

As part of the acquisition from Xcel, staff is working to update streetlighting standards by amending the City of Boulder Design and Construction Standards (DCS) and by adding a fee section to B.R.C. 1981.

The process to acquire Xcel's streetlights remains on track and within budget. The city and Xcel are nearing a successful completion of negotiations and expect that an application will be made to the Colorado Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) to approve the acquisition of the streetlight system in Q2 2024, with the potential for the acquisition to be completed in Q3 2024. Separation and conversion work is expected to begin in mid 2024 and take approximately 2 years to complete.

## **ANALYSIS**

The City is moving forward with finalizing the streetlight purchase from Xcel Energy, in which the city will acquire approximately 4500 streetlights.

The City of Boulder Design and Construction Standards (DCS) currently indicate that the Public Service Company (PSC) of Colorado is responsible for providing streetlighting as requested by the City. As part of the city's overall streetlight acquisition effort, this responsibility will be transferred to the city. To support this, staff is seeking City Council approval to repeal and re-enact Section 2.12, Streetlighting of the City of Boulder Design and Construction Standards.

The revised DCS would specify that the *city* acquires, owns, and installs streetlighting in public streets and alleys. The ordinance also amends the Boulder Revised Code to adopt new streetlighting fees that would be paid by applicants for private development that create a need for and are required to provide new installation, relocation, or removal of streetlighting. In such cases the city would install, relocate or remove the streetlighting, and the fee would cover the city's costs associated with providing that service. Previously, applicants worked directly with and paid Xcel Energy for these services.

The streetlighting standards include other revisions that render the language consistent with current city practices in locating and designing streetlighting and easement dedication requirements that ensure that the city has the necessary rights to install, access, maintain and repair streetlighting.

## **NEXT STEPS**

If City Council makes a motion to approve the first reading of the proposed updates on April 11, 2024, then a second reading is scheduled for the consent agenda at the May 2, 2024 council meeting.



Should the City Council adopt the proposed changes staff will update the published version of the Design and Construction Standards, and the changes will go into effect 30 days after their adoption.

**ATTACHMENT(S)**

Attachment A – Proposed Ordinance 8631

ORDINANCE 8631

AN ORDINANCE UPDATING STREETLIGHTING STANDARDS BY AMENDING THE CITY OF BOULDER DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION STANDARDS (DCS), ORIGINALLY ADOPTED PURSUANT TO ORDINANCE 5986, AND ADDING A NEW SECTION 4-20-77, "STREETLIGHTING FEES," B.R.C. 1981; AND SETTING FORTH RELATED DETAILS.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BOULDER, COLORADO:

Section 1. The city council hereby repeals and re-enacts Section 2.12, Streetlighting of the *City of Boulder Design and Construction Standards*, originally adopted by Ordinance 5986 (and amended by Ordinances 7088, 7400, 7688, 8006, 8324, 8370, 8561 and 8608), to read as shown in **Attachment A** attached to and hereby incorporated into this ordinance.

Section 2. Chapter, 4-20, "Fees," B.R.C. 1981, is amended to add as follows:

**4-20-77.- Streetlighting Fees.**

An applicant for a development including installation, relocation, or removal of streetlighting in a public street or alley shall pay the following fee for each streetlight, as applicable:

(a) For steel poles:

(1) New installation .....\$16,514

(2) Relocation where existing light had an aerial electrical service.....\$17,014

(3) Relocation where existing light had an underground electrical service.....\$9,874

(4) Removal.....\$1,910

(b) For wood poles:(1) New installation .....\$11,494(2) Relocation where existing light had an aerial electrical service.....\$11,494(3) Relocation where existing light had an underground electrical service.....\$4,354(4) Removal.....\$1,410(c) For post-top:(1) New installation .....\$12,374(2) Relocation.....\$5,234(3) Removal.....\$1,410

Section 3. The city council orders and directs the city manager to make any additional citation, reference, and formatting changes to the *City of Boulder Design and Construction Standards* not included in this ordinance that are necessary to properly implement these amendments to the *City of Boulder Design and Construction Standards*.

Section 4. This ordinance is necessary to protect the public health, safety, and welfare of the residents of the city and covers matters of local concern.

Section 5. The city council deems it appropriate that this ordinance be published by title only and orders that copies of this ordinance be made available in the office of the city clerk for public inspection and acquisition.

1 INTRODUCTION, READ ON FIRST READING, AND ORDERED PUBLISHED BY  
2 TITLE ONLY this 11th day of April 2024.

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6 Attest: Aaron Brockett,  
Mayor

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Elesha Johnson,  
City Clerk

READ ON SECOND READING, PASSED AND ADOPTED this 2nd day of May 2024.

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Attest: Aaron Brockett,  
Mayor

Elesha Johnson,  
City Clerk

## **2.12 Streetlighting**

### **(A) Scope**

The provisions of this section shall apply to streetlighting in public streets and alleys.

### **(B) Private Development.**

Installation, relocation, or removal of streetlighting may be proposed by an applicant or may be required by the Director as part of a development approval under Title 9, "Land Use Code," B.R.C. 1981.

### **(C) City Projects**

The Director decides whether and where streetlighting may be provided, relocated, or removed considering the standards in this Section 2.12.

### **(D) Street Types**

In determining whether streetlighting shall be installed or relocated in or removed from the public right-of-way, the Director shall consider the ANSI/IES RP-8-22, Illuminating Engineering Society Recommended Practice: Lighting Roadway and Parking Facilities (IES), as modified by the following standards:

- (1) Arterial Streets: Corridor lighting may be required or provided based on IES standard practices.
- (2) Collector Streets: Streetlighting may be required or provided only at intersections and identified pedestrian crossings.
- (3) Other Streets (Local): Streetlighting may be required or provided only at identified pedestrian crossings.
- (4) Alleys: Streetlighting may be required or provided in alleys in commercial areas with significant night-time pedestrian activity. Streetlighting is not provided in other alleys.

### **(E) Design Standards**

- (1) **Design:** Streetlighting shall have an LED light bulb within a full cut-off fixture that is installed in a horizontal position as designed. Streetlight poles shall be steel poles or wood poles. The pole material shall be determined by the Director and shall be generally consistent with the poles in the surrounding area. Relocation of a pole requires installation of a current pole design of the City.
- (2) **Location:** Poles shall be located so that the center of the pole is three feet behind the face of the curb. The Director may approve a different pole location that is between three feet and six feet behind the face of the curb where necessary to accommodate the needs of other public right-of-way uses in the sidewalk area. Streets with a detached multi-use path or sidewalk may have streetlighting between the curb and multi-use path or sidewalk provided there are two feet of horizontal clearance between the nearest face of the pole and the edge of the multi-use path or sidewalk. Where a multi-use path or sidewalk are attached to the street's curb and gutter,

streetlighting shall be placed with two feet of horizontal clearance between the nearest face of the pole and the edge of the multi-use path or sidewalk.

**(F) Installation**

The City will acquire, own, and install all streetlighting that is to be installed in public streets or alleys as part of a private development or a City project. The City also performs relocation and removal of streetlighting. An applicant shall coordinate any construction of improvements in the public street or alley with the City's installation, relocation, or removal of the streetlighting.

**(G) Easements**

Adequate rights-of-way, public access easements, or utility easements shall be dedicated to the City to allow the City to install, access, maintain, repair, and reinstall streetlighting and their associated facilities, such as cables, conduit, and pull boxes. The Director will determine the type and size of dedication based on the location of the streetlighting.

**(H) Fees**

An applicant for a private development including new installation, relocation, or removal of streetlighting in a public street or alley shall pay the applicable streetlighting fee prescribed by Section 4-20-77, "Streetlighting Fee," B.R.C. 1981, at the time of submittal of construction plans for approval under Section 1.03, "Submittal Requirements for Construction Approval" or, if no such submittal is required, prior to issuance of a building permit.



## **COVER SHEET**

### **MEETING DATE**

**April 11, 2024**

### **AGENDA ITEM**

Second reading and consideration of a motion to adopt Ordinance 8627 designating the area as shown in Exhibit A, to be known as the Civic Area Historic District, as a historic district under Chapter 9-11, "Historic Preservation," B.R.C. 1981; and setting forth related details

### **PRIMARY STAFF CONTACT**

Marcy Gerwing, Principal Planner

### **REQUESTED ACTION OR MOTION LANGUAGE**

Motion to adopt Ordinance 8627 designating the area as shown in Exhibit A, to be known as the Civic Area Historic District, as a historic district under Chapter 9-11, "Historic Preservation," B.R.C. 1981; and setting forth related details.

### **ATTACHMENTS:**

#### **Description**

- ▣ **Item 3A - 2nd Rdg Civic Area Historic District**



**CITY OF BOULDER  
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM**

**MEETING DATE: April 11, 2024**

**AGENDA TITLE**

Second reading and consideration of a motion to adopt Ordinance 8627 designating the area as shown in Exhibit A, to be known as the Civic Area Historic District, as a historic district under Chapter 9-11, "Historic Preservation," B.R.C. 1981; and setting forth related details.

Owner: City of Boulder

Applicant: Historic Boulder, Inc., Friends of the Teahouse, Friends of the Bandshell

**PRESENTERS**

Nuria Rivera-Vandermyde, City Manager

Brad Mueller, Director of Planning and Development Services

Kristofer Johnson, Comprehensive Planning Senior Manager

Chris Reynolds, Deputy City Attorney, City Attorney's Office

Marcy Gerwing, Principal Historic Preservation Planner

Clare Brandt, Historic Preservation Planner

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The purpose of this agenda item is for City Council to consider adopting an ordinance designating a portion of the area from 1777 Broadway to 14th Street and between Canyon Boulevard and Arapahoe Avenue (see Figure 1) as a historic district under the city's Historic Preservation Ordinance. The council must determine whether the proposed historic district designation meets the purposes and standards of the Historic Preservation Ordinance (*Sections 9-11-1 and 9-11-2, B.R.C. 1981*), in balance with the goals and policies of the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan.

If approved, this ordinance (see [Attachment A](#)), would result in the designation of the area as a local historic district. The findings are included in the ordinance. A second reading for this designation will be a quasi-judicial public hearing.

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## STAFF RECOMMENDATION

**Suggested Motion Language:**

Staff requests council consideration of this matter and action in the form of the following motion:

Motion to adopt Ordinance 8627 designating the area as shown in Exhibit A, to be known as the Civic Area Historic District, as a historic district under Chapter 9-11, “Historic Preservation,” B.R.C. 1981; and setting forth related details.

## COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENTS AND IMPACTS

- **Economic** – The designation process itself does not present any additional fiscal impacts to the city. The project management of the historic district application is within the existing staffing budget but did require re-prioritization of other historic preservation projects until a later date. The extended timeline negotiated between staff and applicants provided the time needed for department and agency coordination, research, community engagement, the draft design guideline framework and board and council review. More broadly, studies have found that historic preservation adds to economic vitality and tourism. Exterior changes within a historic district require a Landmark Alteration Certificate, issued by the Planning & Development Services Department at no charge. Most Landmark Alteration Certificates are reviewed and approved by staff within two weeks, however the additional review process for more complex changes may add time and design expense to a project.
- **Environmental** - The proposed designation does not present any additional environmental impacts to the city. The process offered staff the time needed to coordinate with other departments, including those related to the environment, i.e. water resources and transportation. The preservation of historic buildings is inherently sustainable. Owners of designated buildings are encouraged to reuse and repair as much of the original materials as possible when making exterior alterations, thereby reducing the amount of building material waste deposited in landfills. The General Design Guidelines also encourage increasing the energy-efficiency of existing buildings. The proposed historic district also includes public park lands in addition to buildings, and staff do not expect any significant environmental impacts, or an inability to mitigate environmental impacts, as a result of historic designation. If designated, future changes to the landscape will be reviewed for consistency with historic features alongside other city regulations related to environmental sustainability, appropriate water use, etc.
- **Social** – The designation process provided staff the time to coordinate with the Communication & Engagement department and prepare a strategy, use the Racial Equity Instrument, and meet with the Community Connectors-in-Residence. The historic district designation process further provided an opportunity to undertake new research to understand the layered history of the area more fully, including histories of under-represented residents. This broader history was shared through public walking tours and an interactive StoryMap. Additionally, the Historic Preservation Ordinance was adopted to “...enhance property values, stabilize neighborhoods, promote tourist trade and interest, and foster knowledge of the city’s living heritage.” Section 9-11-1 (a), B.R.C., 1981. Historic district designation contributes to Boulder’s unique sense of place by preserving historically significant places and guiding change over time. Designation increases the awareness of Boulder’s history and fosters a connection to the past. As one of Boulder’s oldest areas and as its municipal center, this district application uniquely provides an opportunity to tell multiple layers of Boulder’s history.

## OTHER IMPACTS

- **Fiscal** – This designation application was processed within the existing program funding. If designated, the city anticipates hiring a consultant to develop design guidelines due to limited staff capacity.
- **Staff Time** - The designation of individual landmarks is an anticipated and ongoing function of the Historic Preservation Program. Designation of historic districts take additional effort, and other historic preservation projects outside of standard program operations were postponed or reduced in scope to provide the necessary resources to manage this historic district application. In total, staff conservatively estimates 30% of the historic preservation program's staffing resources (approximately 1 FTE) were dedicated to the historic district designation application in 2023. Additionally, three staff members from Parks & Recreation (BPR), two staff members from Communications and Engagement and one member from the City Attorney's Office served on the project team. Historic preservation staff and BPR staff met bi-weekly to coordinate efforts on the development of the Cultural Landscape Assessment (CLA) and the overall project management of the historic district application. Facilities staff dedicated time to coordination with the ditch companies. Facilities, Utilities, Community Vitality, and other division staff within Planning & Development Services participated in the development of the Draft Design Guideline Framework. Staff across nine departments provided input and reviewed material at key points during the designation process. Reference *Department and Agency Coordination* (pg 8).

## DOWNTOWN PROJECTS

As Downtown Boulder evolves with the city's changing climate, economics and needs for social infrastructure, the city is committed to investing in public spaces and programs that enhance the journey and destinations in our community's downtown.

Over the next five years, the city will work cross departmentally to provide opportunities for community members to contribute their ideas for the future of downtown Boulder. Downtown Projects will work to combine efforts and reach community members in a more efficient, sustainable and further reaching way to preserve and enhance a truly special place - now and for future generations.

Learn more about what's coming to Downtown Boulder on the project website and stay tuned for updates and engagement opportunities.

## RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS FROM COUNCIL AGENDA COMMITTEE

### BOARD ACTIONS & FEEDBACK

#### *Planning Board*

On Feb. 20, 2024, the Planning Board reviewed the application and reported on the land use implications of the designation. The board does not have a responsibility to make a formal recommendation to City Council, but does review proposed historic district applications for any land use implications. Staff answered questions from Planning Board regarding the timing of the design guidelines, what design characteristics of the area may be included in the guidelines, the proposed boundary and implications of including or not including Block 11, and how 13th Street may be regulated in the future if the district were approved. Planning Board comments can be summarized as follows:

- Some members believed there are minor land use implications (one member stated the district poses significant land use implications). The underlying uses allowed by the BVCP or zoning are not affected, but new regulations, design review, etc. will influence future use of the area.
- Some members believe the benefits to the community provided by historic preservation and the ability to tell a more complete story outweigh the land use implications.
- Some members recommended including Block 11 and to actively recognize (not just acknowledge) the residents and businesses that existed before Central Park and the civic uses were established.
- One member was concerned that the district would limit the ability to implement substantial changes (e.g., new built structures) in the open grassy areas of Central Park. Another member recommended City Council be cautious when considering approval as district designation may make future changes more difficult.

#### *Landmarks Board*

On Feb. 7, 2024, the Landmarks Board voted **(4-1, Castellano dissenting)** to recommend that the City Council designate the area encompassing a portion of the area between 1777 Broadway to 14th Street and between Canyon Boulevard and Arapahoe Avenue, as shown in [Figure 1], to be known as the Civic Area Historic District, finding that it meets the standards for historic district designation in Sections 9-11-1 and 9-11-2, B.R.C. 1981, and adopted the staff memorandum dated Feb. 7, 2024, as the findings of the board.

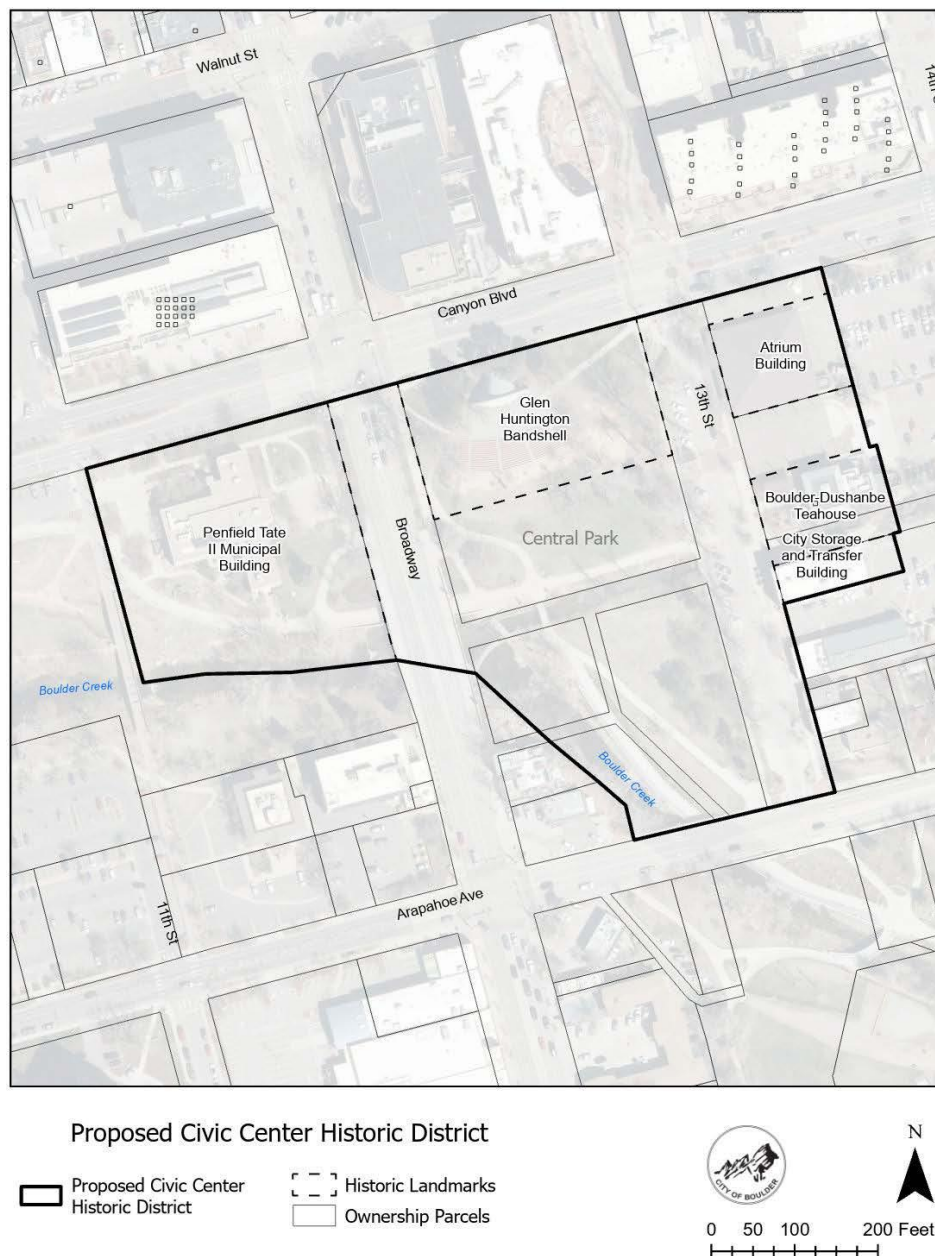


Figure 1. Exhibit A: Map of proposed historic district boundary recommended by the Landmarks Board.

Note that the Landmarks Board recommendation includes a revised boundary from that submitted by the applicant, and consistent with staff's analysis. Additionally, the Landmarks Board made the following recommendation for City Council to consider the district name, boundary, period of significance and integrity of park design.

On a motion by **C. Castellano**, seconded by **R. Pelusio**, the Landmarks Board voted (**5-0**) to recommend to the City Council that it consider naming the district to commemorate those who were displaced during the park's development and

other exclusionary actions and policies by the city, i.e. Water Street Historic District, Boulder Creek Historic District.

On a motion by **J. Decker**, seconded by **R. Pelusio**, the Landmarks Board voted **(5-0)** to recommend to the City Council that it consider expanding the boundary to include Block 11 to recognize the historical significance of the displaced residential area and its importance to the site of Boulder's first Black community.

On a motion by **R. Pelusio**, seconded by **R. Golobic**, the Landmarks Board voted **(5-0)** to recommend to the City Council that it consider expanding the boundary to include the southern and western banks of Boulder Creek.

On a motion by **C. Castellano**, seconded by **R. Golobic**, the Landmarks Board voted **(5-0)** to recommend to the City Council that it consider expanding the period of significance to a date that includes the residential period (1880).

On a motion by **R. Pelusio**, seconded by **A. Daniels**, the Landmarks Board voted **(5-0)** to recommend to the City Council that it consider recognizing Olmsted's plan as being intact, recognizable, and significant to the historic district.

The staff memorandum (link to [Feb. 7, 2024 Landmarks Board Memo](#)) and [video recording](#) (link) are available online. The discussion of the historic district (item 5B) begins at 1:11:32.

#### *Parks & Recreation Advisory Board*

On Jan. 22, 2024, the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board had a robust conversation to understand the potential benefits and impacts of the proposed Civic Area Historic District designation. At the end of the discussion, a board member requested an informal straw poll: The four members present all agreed that they do not support designation of a historic district. Their concerns can be summarized as following:

- *Lack of understanding of a unifying element or overarching theme that would explain creating a district.*
- *Lack of support for additional protection and outsized input by one city board, given that the buildings, bandshell and some areas of the park are already protected by designation.*
- *Disagreement that potential benefits of designation outweigh the added process, time and thus expense of a district.*

The staff memo (link to [Jan. 22, 2024 PRAB Packet](#), page 13-62), [video recording](#) (link) and [meeting minutes](#) (link) are available in the [Central Records](#) archive. The board chair's statement begins at 1:06:30 and the closing board remarks for the PRAB meeting begin at 1:18:35 of the video recording.

#### *Landmarks Board and Parks & Recreation Advisory Board Joint Study Session*

On December 18, 2023, the Landmarks Board and the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board held a joint study session to hear an update on the designation process, provide



feedback on the draft design guideline framework, and review the preliminary Cultural Landscape Assessment (CLA) findings for Central Park. The [Dec. 18, 2023 memo, minutes, and](#) audio recording are available in the [Central Records](#) archive (link) and the [video recording](#) (link) is available online.

## **PUBLIC PROCESS AND ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY**

The historic district designation process is outlined in [Section 9-11-4 Public Process for Historic Districts, B.R.C. 1981](#). Once a historic district application is submitted, city staff are tasked with leading the community engagement process. While the code requires only three public meetings (Landmarks Board, Planning Board, and City Council) and one meeting with property owners, the city follows community engagement best practices in addition to the requirements of the code. In part due to city ownership and the civic focus of the area, additional community engagement was sought to ensure that the process was informed by a diversity of perspectives in our community beyond those traditionally associated with the field of historic preservation and impacted property owners. As a part of this project, staff coordinated across numerous city departments (as representatives of the public ownership), consulted with the Community Connectors-in-Residence, and sought general community input, including by leading walking tours and by providing an online Storymap and questionnaire. The following is a summary of efforts between July 2023 through March 2024.

### *Department and Agency Coordination*

In August, Planning & Development Services (P&DS) staff met individually with representatives from Transportation and Mobility, Parks & Recreation (BPR), Planning & Development Services, Public Works - Utilities, Community Vitality, Facilities & Fleet, City Manager's Office, City Attorney's Office and Communications and Engagement. The purpose of the meetings was to provide information about the process, discuss the effects of historic designation, answer questions and listen to concerns. P&DS staff also solicited interest from departments to participate in the Technical Advisory Group to develop draft design guidelines (see additional information below).

P&DS and BPR staff met bi-weekly to coordinate efforts on the development of the Cultural Landscape Assessment (CLA) and the overall project management of the historic district application.

Public Works – Utilities staff facilitated coordination with the Boulder and White Rock Ditch and Reservoir Company, North Boulder Farmers Ditch Company and Boulder and Left Hand Irrigation Company, as the proposed boundary includes a reach of the Boulder Slough, and Smith & Goss Ditch. Staff proposed utilizing the same approach as the landmark designation of the Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse, which includes language in the designation ordinance that acknowledges that use of the respective ditch easements will not require Landmark Alteration Certificate review.

P&DS staff spoke with representatives of the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT), as a portion of Broadway (Highway 93) is included in the proposed historic district boundary. Similar to the ditch companies, management of Broadway will not require Landmark Alteration Certificate Review if the area is designated.

### *Racial Equity Instrument*

This designation process is the first Historic Preservation project to use the Racial Equity Instrument. Given the proposal site's status as a civic area and therefore of broad community interest, the project team used the instrument to inform the approach to engagement and to identify the main opportunity to advance racial equity through this process. The project team shared the Racial Equity Instrument with the Community Connectors-in-Residences for feedback on the project's racial equity strategies. Use of the Racial Equity Instrument identified the opportunity to correct harmful narratives and to tell a more inclusive history. Staff also found evidence that harmful narratives were used to justify the displacement of residents and this finding was acknowledged in the history presented as part of the designation process.

### *Research*

The designation process provided an opportunity to fill research gaps in the history of the area, in particular the history of residents and businesses that were displaced. Historic Preservation staff were able to access recently digitized information from the Library of Congress and National Park Service, and other state and local sources. Staff focused on primary sources (first-hand accounts, period newspaper articles, maps and photographs) for research, but additionally consulted local experts and contemporary secondary sources.

### *Engagement Strategy*

The engagement levels for this project are *consult* for the general public; *and involve* for the key stakeholders, which include property owners and the applicants.

To date, the project team has used different methods to:

- share information about the area's historical significance,
- raise awareness and understanding of the designation proposal,
- gather feedback from historically excluded communities,
- facilitate discussions from key stakeholders on draft design guideline framework, and
- solicit feedback on whether the proposed area should be designated a historic district.

Consultation with Community Connectors-in-Residence (CC-in-R): The city's CC-in-R represent historically excluded communities. Staff consulted with CCs-in-R twice. The project team first met online with four CC-in-Rs representing Black, Latine, Indigenous and people living with a disability to answer questions about the designation process and to discuss the racial equity strategies for the project, including engagement. Following these consultations, the main opportunity identified by the project team to advance racial equity was to explore and build more comprehensive narratives of our city's development by researching, elevating and telling the stories of historically excluded populations.

The CC-in-R also agreed to participate in a 'dry run' of the walking tour to provide feedback on the script through a racial equity lens. Main feedback received by CCs-in-R include:

- (i) concerns that written history is 'white' history;
- (ii) that any educational materials should be developed with or at least reviewed by people from diverse background to ensure it is inclusive and not offensive or hurtful;



- (iii) that preservation should expand beyond the traditional purview of buildings; and
- (iv) that negative impacts should be acknowledged. CCs-in-R also had questions about how the proposed district benefits all members of our community and how it can help the unhoused in Boulder.

Based on this feedback, staff undertook additional research to elevate the stories of historically excluded or marginalized peoples in this process. Although not directly related to this project, the feedback of CCs-in-R has influenced the content of Landmark Board memos, which as of November 2023 now recognizes the pre-settler history when describing the area. Staff is also committed to further deepening the partnership with local people of color for the upcoming update of the Historic Preservation's 10-year Strategy in 2024.

Walking Tours: The project team and applicants collaborated over the course of six weeks to refine a walking tour script for the public. The project team's goal was to continue to tell the stories of Central Park and the five landmarked properties within the proposed district – while also telling a more complete and multi-dimensional history of the area. This included researching and telling the stories of people that once lived here. It included amplifying the message that the narrative about the area adjacent to the Boulder Creek, referred to as “The Jungle” from the 1920s, is dehumanizing and used to perpetuate dominant social structures.

- The three tours were advertised on the city's social media, the city calendar and website and by the applicant groups.
- Twenty-three people signed up in advance and only eight people attended. The tours were held on Saturday, Oct. 14 at 10 A.M., Wednesday, Oct. 18 at 12 P.M. and 5 P.M.
- The project team led a walking tour for city staff on Oct. 12 (about 20 attendees).
- The project team also led a walking tour with Community Connectors-in-Residence (CC-in-R) (5) on Sept. 21 to help identify white, privileged bias in the script that could be exclusionary and hurtful. The applicants participated in this walking tour with CC-in-R as observers. CC-in-R feedback was used to update the script.

Webpage, StoryMap<sup>1</sup> & online questionnaire: The project team developed a [webpage](#), that has been available online since Aug. 28. The webpage provides an overview of the project, background information, details of upcoming engagement opportunities and latest news, and an explanation of the timeline and process. Additionally, the webpage includes a [StoryMap](#) of the area's history that seeks to tell a more inclusive history of the area. It has been available online since Nov. 28 and viewed by 1,635 people as of Mar. 20, 2024.

The webpage also includes a questionnaire asking whether people support or do not support the designation. The questionnaire has remained open and the feedback received up to Mar. 20 is included later in the memo. It also provided the opportunity for people to share their own historic photos of the area.

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<sup>1</sup> ArcGIS StoryMaps is a story authoring web-based application that allows you to share your maps in the context of narrative text and other multimedia content.

Communications and Media Coverage: Media coverage of the project included an update in the Winter 2023 issue of the Boulder Community Newsletter (p10); a press release announcing the publication of the StoryMap was issued on Nov. 29; and project manager Marcy Gerwing was interviewed for a [Channel 8 segment](#) that aired Dec. 1, and Dec. 8, 2024. Social media posts include Nextdoor on Dec. 5 and Facebook on Dec. 7.

What's Up Boulder: The project team participated in the What's Up Boulder event at Foothills Community Park on Sept. 10. The project team was available to share information about the project and answer questions. The project team handed out coloring postcards of the landmarked buildings within the proposed district, along with an aerial view of the park and surrounding buildings.

Carnegie Library for Local History "Boulder Rewind" event. The project team participated in a celebration of 40 years of local history at the Carnegie Library on Oct. 1, 2023, with a presentation on some of the research completed on the history of the proposed district.

### ***Public Comment***

The project team delivered walking tours and an online [Storymap](#) (link) to raise awareness and understanding of the layered history of the area, including stories of historically excluded persons and communities that have not been part of the dominant narrative to date. The goal was to provide the public with background information that could help people make a more informed decision on whether they support the proposed historic district designation.

Staff provided two main channels for feedback from the community, in addition to mandatory hearings: (i) an online questionnaire and (ii) consultations with the Community Connectors-in-Residence (CC-in-R) as part of the project's deliberate racial equity strategies.

Public testimony at the Feb. 7, 2024 Landmarks Board public hearing can be found online: [video recording](#) (link)

### ***Online form***

The online form was added to the project website in mid-October. Seventy-four responses were received between Oct. 15 and April 3, with 49% of respondents supporting, 34% in opposition and 17% unsure of whether they support this historic designation. Staff recognizes that this is not a statistically valid survey and that the number of responses is relatively small, but that a diversity of viewpoints has been shared.

*Out of those respondents who support the designation, the justifications included: (i) it would be good for tourism and business; (ii) preservation is generally a valuable goal, (iii) this area represents the best of Boulder (besides the mountain backdrop), (iv) the designation could help improve public safety in this area; and (v) the history being told acknowledges impacts on historically excluded communities and supports the city's equity aspirations.*

*Out of those respondents who do not support the designation*, the justifications included: (i) that the district is not aligned with the city's equity and climate goals, (ii) a preference to focus on redevelopment and programming here instead of further preservation and restrictions; (iii) parking lots are not historic and should not be included; (iv) hope that parking lots could be used for community benefit such as affordable housing; (v) the need to ensure that our civic spaces meet the needs of our community today; (vi) insufficient benefit of a district, (vii) a desire for the city to focus on other priorities; and (viii) a need to effectively addresses issues related to public safety and the unhoused here before pursuing a district.

*Out of those who are unsure if they support the designation*, the justifications include: (i) needing more information and understanding of the impacts, (ii) concerns that public resources would be spent with little return, (iii) skeptical that the collection of disjointed buildings warrants a historic district designation, (iv) likely to be more supportive if the use of current buildings can be reimagined; (v) concerns that the designation glosses over the presence of unhoused in the area; and (vi) a desire for the city to focus on public safety first and foremost.

A more detailed overview and list of all feedback received through the online questionnaire is included as [Attachment B: Public Input Received between Oct. 16, 2023, and April 3, 2024](#).

### **Letters Addressed to Boards and Council**

Between July 12, 2023, and Feb. 7, 2024, the Landmarks Board received 15 letters from members of the public. All of the letters received within this time period were in support of the designation. After the Landmarks Board hearing, staff received one additional letter of support. Planning Board received one letter in opposition. Between Feb. 8 and April 3, the City Council received 23 letters, 18 in support, three in opposition of the designation, one clarifying the NAACP Boulder County's stance on reparations, and one not stating a position. See [Attachment C: Letters Received between July 12, 2023, and March 28, 2024](#) (link).

### **DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED HISTORIC DISTRICT**

The proposed boundary of the historic district as submitted in the application (Figures 1. and 7.) includes Central Park, the 13<sup>th</sup> Street and Sister Cities plazas, five individually designated landmarks, and portions of Broadway, 13<sup>th</sup> Street, the Boulder Slough and Smith and Goss Ditch, and Boulder Creek. The boundary extends from the west side of the Penfield Tate II Municipal Building (1777 Broadway) to 14th Street, and from Canyon Boulevard to Arapahoe Avenue. The privately owned parcels on the northeast corner of Arapahoe and Broadway (1201 Arapahoe Ave. and 1724 Broadway) are not included in the proposed boundary.

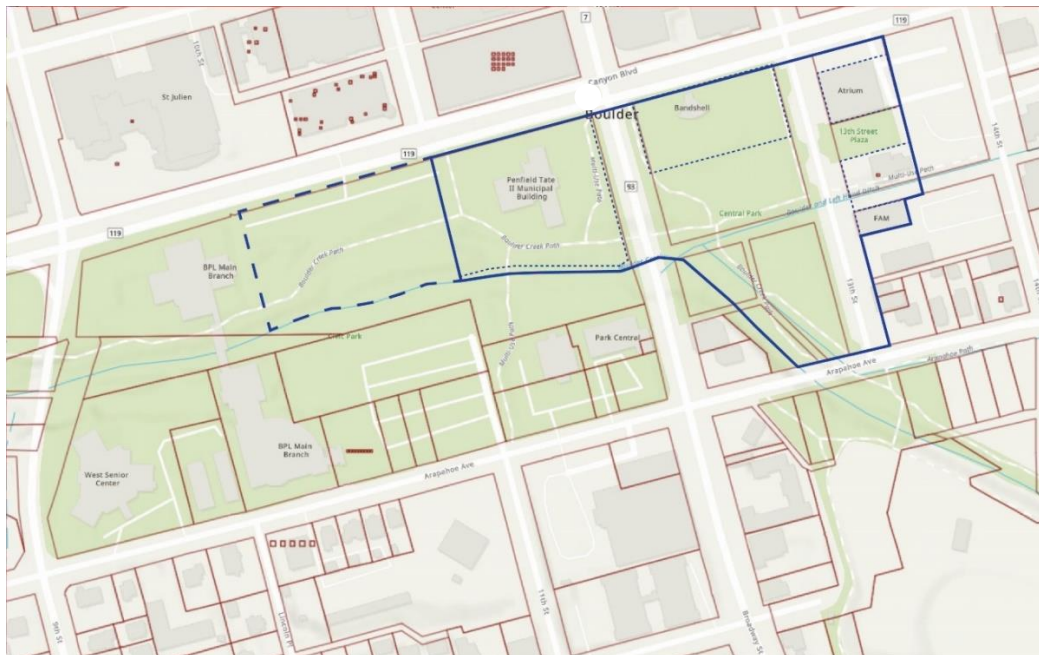


Figure 2. Map of proposed historic district area. Solid line shows the boundary recommended by the Landmarks Board; the dashed area shows the area Landmarks Board recommends Council consider including; and the dotted lines indicate currently designated individual landmarks.

## HISTORY OF PROPOSED DISTRICT

The following section summarizes the area's history. Explore the interactive [StoryMap](#) (link) to learn more.

The history of the area extends much beyond the earliest constructed feature that remains today, the 1859 Smith & Goss Ditch. The creek side land is a sacred and essential part of the ancestral homelands of Indigenous Peoples who have lived on and travelled through them since time immemorial. Boulder has an archival silence, or gap, in its historical record, for the Native American/Indigenous perspective of history. Staff acknowledges that a majority of archival materials focus on the perspective of the white and European settlers of the Boulder Valley. The City of Boulder has recently embarked on an ethnographic study in collaboration with tribal nations to better document the history of indigenous peoples in this area.

From the arrival of the train in about 1873, early industry in the area was predominately rail-based. The City Storage and Transfer Building (1906) was constructed during this period as a warehouse for moving goods in and out of the city.

### Blocks 11 and 12

Residences were clustered within a two-block area between 10<sup>th</sup> and Broadway with a few scattered outside that area. These residences along Water Street (Canyon Blvd.) between 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> (Broadway) Street were constructed starting in the late 1870s.<sup>2</sup> As part of the Original Town, these two blocks were platted as "Block 11" (between 10<sup>th</sup> and

<sup>2</sup> Mapped in 1874 ("Glover drawing of Boulder, dated 1874 map." 1874. Boulder Historical Society/Museum of Boulder); first photographed in 1887 ("Panoramic views of Boulder." 1887. Boulder Historical Society/Museum of Boulder.)

11<sup>th</sup> Streets) and “Block 12” (between 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Streets – renamed Broadway). They housed both Black and white working-class families. Many of the residences are notable as they were owned by single or divorced women, including Mollie Gordon, one of the first Black women to own property in Boulder.<sup>3</sup> By 1908, the Colorado & Southern (C&S) Railroad had constructed six rail lines along Water Street (Canyon Blvd.) and access to the residences was limited by the “road”.<sup>4</sup> A property owner on Block 12 sued the railroad, which resulted in the C&S purchasing the entire block and moving or demolishing the houses there.<sup>5</sup> Jennie Johnson, one of the displaced owners, moved to Block 11. She was one of seventeen Black residents on the block documented in the 1910 Federal Census.<sup>6</sup> According to the Census record, at this point in time all but one resident was Black.

Between 1910 and 1928, the establishment of Boulder’s municipal center included the removal of buildings between 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> streets and further displacement of the community. Agents for the City began buying lots where owners were delinquent on property taxes through “tax deed.” The *Daily Camera* supported the acquisitions by running articles using language that dehumanized the residents and justified the need for displacement.<sup>7</sup> By 1922, just nine residents remained at two houses: Jennie Johnson continued to own her property, and requested the city pay \$10,000 for it in 1921.<sup>8</sup> The three families living in a large brick building central to the block were renters, as the property had been purchased in 1920 for \$8 and payment of delinquent property taxes by an agent for the city.<sup>9</sup> They were evicted in 1925. Jennie Johnson sold her property to the City of Boulder in 1928<sup>10</sup> for \$750.<sup>11</sup> The buildings were all demolished by 1928.

### **Central Park and Boulder’s Municipal Center**

Land acquisition and development of Central Park and Boulder’s municipal center was guided by the Boulder City Improvement Association (BCIA), a community group whose state purpose was “the improvements of Boulder in health, growth, cleanliness, prosperity and attractiveness through individual effort as well as through cooperation with other organizations engaged in similar work” and the Park Commission Board (later the

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<sup>3</sup> Mollie Gordon official owned her property on Block 11 from 1890 when B. M. Williams deeded her lot 4. Boulder County Records. (July 2, 1890 80113421 QUIT CLAIM DEED for L4 B11 BOULDER.) She subsequently made an additional claim for homestead rights on this property, indicating that she had lived there for multiple years. (June 7, 1892 81113421 DECLARATION OF HOMESTEAD for L4 B11 BOULDER.)

<sup>4</sup> “Must Open 11<sup>th</sup> Street – Joseph Yellowlee gets judgement against Clorado [sic] & Southern for Blocking the Road to His Home.” September 2, 1908. Boulder Daily Camera, Volume 18, Number 145.

<sup>5</sup> “February 8, 1910” Boulder Daily Camera, Volume 19, Number 279.

<sup>6</sup> 1910 Federal Census page.

<sup>7</sup> “Purchase by the Park Board” and “City of Boulder Buys Property In Jungles To Clean Up and Beautify” Boulder Daily Camera, April 11, 1921 and “Jungle Section of the City of Boulder to Disappear.” Boulder Daily Camera, April 13, 1928.

<sup>8</sup> “Street Dirt Excavated: Will Level Up the Land” Boulder Daily Camera, April 11, 1921.

<sup>9</sup> Boulder County Records. May 5, 1925. 90217566 QUIT CLAIM DEED for SEC T R TR L 2 B 11 BOULDER

<sup>10</sup> Boulder County Records. April 20, 1928. 90251183 WARRANTY DEED for SEC T R TR L 4 B 11 BOULDER

<sup>11</sup> It is unlikely that the City paid Jennie Johnson full market rate for the property. By comparison, Ruby L Shaff (a white woman) sold neighboring the property to the City of Boulder the same year for \$1,000 (Boulder County Records. April 6, 1928. 90250725 WARRANTY DEED for SEC T R TR L 3 B 11 BOULDER). All other neighboring properties were sold for a percentage of their value due to delinquent property taxes. Johnson purchased the property in 1906 for \$500 (Boulder County Records. May 29, 1906. 90048533 WARRANTY DEED for SEC T R TR L 4 B 11 BOULDER).



Boulder Parks and Planning Commission), a City Council committee formed in 1918. The BCIA received advice from Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., in particular on flood control measures in the area, but also on plantings and general design.

The design for parkland along Boulder Creek was refined in plans developed by the Olmsted Brothers firm between 1917-1923 and published in 1923<sup>12</sup> in *The Improvement of Boulder Creek in Boulder, Colorado*.<sup>13</sup> A number of failed attempts at municipal funding resulted in reducing the scope of the “Improvements of Boulder Creek” to grading of the area between Broadway (12<sup>th</sup> Street) and 13<sup>th</sup> Street from Boulder Creek to Canyon Blvd. (Water Street), completed by 1925. BCIA volunteers attempted to complete additional improvements suggested by Olmsted, including planting trees and perimeter vegetation, and grading paths through the park. The park was used informally by city residents with a few formal events planned, including an annual picnic held by the Girl Reserves from 1934 to 1937 for incoming students to the Preparatory School.<sup>14</sup>

A second phase of municipal area and park planning began in 1938, influenced by Saco DeBoer. DeBoer suggested Central Park as “the only suitable location for a bandshell” (Glen Huntington Bandshell, constructed in 1938) and a new city hall (Penfield Tate II Municipal Building, constructed in 1951) as part of a “city building group with flood protection, parking areas and farmer’s market.” The intent was to create a focal point for municipal activity. The Boulder Lions Club funded the construction of the bandshell and gifted it to the city as the first permanent place for outdoor band concerts in Boulder. The bandshell was “dedicated to the enjoyment of citizens of Boulder and to the advancement of music.”<sup>15</sup> Between 1938 and 1974, the Municipal Building and Central Park were the sites of a variety of political events, musical concerts, cultural programs, educational presentations, and civic gatherings. Events in the park were organized by different Boulder clubs, including the Optimists, Elks, Woman’s Club, American Legion, Pow Wow and Rodeo, Soroptimists, Lions, Rotary and Kiwanas Club.<sup>16</sup> The Archuleta Family History recorded as part of the Boulder County Latino History Project provides an account of the daily use of the park: “A popular place to hang out was the band shell at Central Park. A group of kids would get together and put on shows and plays for each other. Exploring Mackey Auditory and Chautauqua Park were always options. Although off limits, per Mom, playing in Boulder Creek always seemed to happen. A chewing out by Mom was guaranteed after a day at the creek, but that didn’t stop the fun.”<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Olmsted Plans and Drawings Collection “Olmsted Job #3300 Boulder, Colorado Improvement Association Boulder, CO Plan #3300-63 City of Boulder Preliminary Plan of Proposed Park Improvements Along Boulder Creek OBLA, October 1923.” National Park Service, Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site.

[https://www.flickr.com/photos/olmsted\\_archives/35378272173/in/album-72157683458369472/](https://www.flickr.com/photos/olmsted_archives/35378272173/in/album-72157683458369472/)

<sup>13</sup> Olmsted Brothers. *The Improvement of Boulder Creek in Boulder, Colorado*. Brookline, Mass., 1923. Files; 3302; Boulder Creek; Boulder, Colo., 1917-1924. Olmsted Associates Records: Job Files, 1863-1971. Library of Congress, Washington, DC. Page 76-86: [https://www.loc.gov/resource/mss52571.mss52571-02-186\\_0383\\_0484/?sp=76&st=image](https://www.loc.gov/resource/mss52571.mss52571-02-186_0383_0484/?sp=76&st=image)

<sup>14</sup> “One Hundred Girls At G.R. Big-Sister Picnic.” September 20, 1935. The Prep Owl - BHS, Volume 23.

<sup>15</sup> Front Range Research Associates, Inc. Boulder Bandshell Historical Study, p.6-9. 1995.

<sup>16</sup> Front Range Research Associates, Inc. Boulder Bandshell Historical Study, p.11. 1995.

<sup>17</sup> The Archuleta Family History, 1932-2012, p.5. <https://bocolatinohistory.colorado.edu/document/the-archuleta-family-history-1932-2012-p5>. Boulder County Latino History.

From 1961, the area was the center of municipal government with the construction of the public library near 9<sup>th</sup> Street (Boulder Public Library, 1961), an expansion of the Municipal Building and a “mall” designed to connect them. The construction of the Midland Federal Savings and Loan bank branch (Atrium Building, 1969) utilized a pavilion design compatible with its setting across from Central Park. As the downtown area “decayed” and counterculture advocates confronted “the establishment,” the municipal area was the site of political protests and civic discourse. In 1969, the large gatherings of people led the city to ban “Rock Concerts” in the park, which the police enforced as the use of any instrument. When that failed to disperse the groups of people, the city manager closed Central Park for two weeks due to sanitary concerns and passed laws to prevent camping and gathering in Central Park. The same year, Boulder Tomorrow hosted a design competition for the Civic Area.<sup>18</sup>

The connection between the public spaces and surrounding buildings continued into the 1970s with the adaptive reuse of the Larson Brother’s warehouse building (City Storage and Transfer Building, 1906) into a public arts center and future museum. In 1987, the city was gifted the Dushanbe Teahouse, which was constructed in Tajikistan and shipped in crates overseas. After a decade of deliberation, the Boulder–Dushanbe Teahouse was reconstructed south of the Civic Park Plaza and alongside the 13th Street Community Plaza. A public plaza dedicated to Boulder’s six sister cities was added east of the Penfield Tate II Municipal Building in 2007. The area continues its public function as the site of the farmers’ market, festivals, concerts, and other planned community activities, and spontaneous gatherings in response to local, state, and national events throughout the year.

## **PURPOSE AND CRITERIA FOR COUNCIL’S DECISION**

[Section 9-11-6 Council Ordinance Designating Landmark or Historic District](#), B.R.C. 1981, provides that City Council shall determine whether the proposed designation meets the purposes and standards in [Section 9-11-1\(a\), Purpose and Legislative Intent](#), and [Section 9-11-2, City Council May Designate or Amend Landmarks and Historic Districts](#), in balance with the goals and policies of the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan ([link](#)).

The Landmarks Board adopted the [Significance Criteria for Historic Districts](#) ([link](#)) in 1975 to [help evaluate each potential designation in a consistent and equitable manner](#). Additionally, staff utilized the National Park Service guidance, including [National Register Bulletin 16: Defining Boundaries for National Register Properties](#) ([link](#)) and [National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation](#) ([link](#)) to assess the area’s integrity and boundaries. As the proposed district includes Central Park, staff also utilized the research and analysis from the Cultural Landscape Assessment (CLA).

The designation ordinance may identify important aspects of the district. [Section 9-11-6 \(c\)](#) B.R.C. 1981 provides the following guidance on the designation ordinance:  
Ordinance Designating Landmark or District: In each ordinance designating a landmark or historic district, the city council shall include a description of

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<sup>18</sup> Taylor, Carol. “Design Competition in 1969 envisioned a Boulder Civic Center.” Oct. 12, 2014. <https://www.dailycamera.com/2014/10/12/design-competition-in-1969-envisioned-a-boulder-civic-center/>. *Daily Camera*.

characteristics of the landmark or district justifying its designation, a description of the particular features that should be preserved, and the location and boundaries of the landmark site or district. The council may also indicate alterations that would have a significant impact upon or be potentially detrimental to the landmark site or the district.

Section 9-11-6(c) Designating Ordinance specifies that the City Council shall include a description of characteristics of the landmark or district justifying its designation, a description of the particular features that should be preserved, and the location and boundaries of the landmark site or district. The council may also indicate alterations that would have a significant impact upon or be potentially detrimental to the landmark site or the district. See [Attachment A: Ordinance No. 8627](#)

The following sections provide analysis of the code criteria, relevant BVCP policies, Significance Criteria for District Landmarks, Cultural Landscape Assessment for Central Park (CLA), period of significance, name and boundary.

## STAFF ANALYSIS OF CRITERIA

*Staff Analysis of Code Criteria – Sections 9-11-1 and 9-11-2, B.R.C. 1981*

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***A. Would the designation protect, enhance, and perpetuate a property reminiscent of a past era(s), event(s), and person(s) important in local, state, or national history in Boulder or provide a significant example of architecture of the past?***

Historic district designation of this area would protect an area historically, architecturally and environmentally significant to Boulder's history. The proposed district includes an area with a history that precedes the 1871 founding<sup>19</sup> of Boulder; had documented residential and commercial uses from the 1870s until the 1920s; includes Central Park, an urban park formally established in 1924; and includes five surrounding municipal buildings constructed between 1906 and 1998 that represent a progression of architectural styles. Furthermore, as described in the analysis below, the area retains integrity to a 1938-1974 period of significance, extending from the DeBoer/Huntington period of park design and the construction of the Glen Huntington Bandshell, to a point 50 years in the past to recognize the historic significance of the area's social, cultural and political use.

The proposed district is **historically significant** for its continued public function as the symbolic, political and municipal center of Boulder's local government; as the site of numerous social, cultural and political events; for its significance in the history of Boulder's park system development; and its contribution to the social and cultural life of the city for over a century.

The proposed district possesses **architectural significance** for its notable examples of architectural styles of the past, including a 19th century commercial building, Art Deco bandshell, International style municipal building, a Rustic Modern bank building adaptively reused for city offices, and the Central Asian/Tajik teahouse. The

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<sup>19</sup> Boulder City Town Company was formed on Feb. 10, 1859 with sixty men as shareholders. Between 1861 and 1871, the area was governed by the County Commissioners. In November 1871, the first trustees were appointed to govern the municipality of Boulder. Source: Frink, Maurice. "The Boulder Story: Historical Portrait of a Colorado Town." 1965. Pruett Press, Inc. Boulder, Colorado.



district includes significant works by notable architects, landscape designers, builders, and urban planners representing a progression of styles.

The proposed district is **environmentally significant** for its location at the historic center of Boulder, as an established and prominent visual feature of the community at the intersection of major transportation routes and adjacent to Boulder Creek, and for its planned and natural site characteristics that have resulted in its distinct character as an open central urban park space surrounded by municipal buildings.

As a whole, this area represents an eclectic municipal character that is unique to Boulder's history, location and climate.

***B. Does the proposed application develop and maintain appropriate settings and environments for such buildings, sites, and areas to enhance property values, stabilize neighborhoods, promote tourist trade and interest, and foster knowledge of the City's living heritage?***

Designation of the area will maintain an appropriate setting and environment for the historic area, enhance property values, stabilize the neighborhood, promote tourist trade and interest, and foster knowledge of the city's living heritage.

Furthermore, if the proposed boundary is modified as recommended below to exclude the non-historic parking lots along 14<sup>th</sup> Street and expanded to include the length of 13<sup>th</sup> Street between Canyon Boulevard and Arapahoe Avenue, and the area between the Atrium Building and Canyon Boulevard, the district will maintain an appropriate setting and environment for the historic area. See Boundary Analysis section below. Colorado Preservation, Inc.'s report, "[Economic Benefits of Preservation 2017](#)" (link) studies the direct and indirect economic impacts of historic designation. Key findings related to this proposed designation include:

- Heritage tourism accounted for approximately half of tourist spending (\$7.2 billion of a total \$14.1 billion) spent in 2015.
- The report provides five case studies on the impact of local historic district designation on property values, summarizing "the results of the analysis show that, for the most part, the values of properties located within a local historic district increased a similar or higher rate than in the comparison areas. Moreover, there is no evidence that local historic district designation has had a negative effect on either property values or sales prices within the five case study areas. In all cases, property values increased following designation mirroring the results of similar studies from other states."<sup>20</sup>
- In a chapter on Effective Placemaking, the report states, "From small towns to big cities, preserving historic buildings provides a foundation for creating and sustaining memorable places."

[Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan \(BVCP\)](#) policy 5.09 Role of Tourism in the Economy states that, "the city recognizes the importance of tourism (e.g. heritage, cultural, sports and open space) to the Boulder economy." While less than 3% of

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<sup>20</sup> Colorado Preservation, Inc. Economic Benefits of Preservation 2017.  
[https://issuu.com/coloradopreservation/docs/final\\_-\\_econ\\_study\\_preservation](https://issuu.com/coloradopreservation/docs/final_-_econ_study_preservation).

properties in Boulder are locally designated, they are among the most iconic in the community. Seven out of the nine activities featured in the Boulder Convention & Visitors Bureau's [current list of must-see things to do in Boulder](#) (link) are in and around historic places, a majority of which are either in or near the proposed civic area historic district:

- Pearl Street Mall (located in the Downtown Historic District designated as a National Register historic district in 1980 and as a local historic district in 1999)
- The Flatirons from Chautauqua (designated as a local historic district in 1976, as a National Register historic district in 1978, and as a National Historic Landmark in 2006)
- Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse (designated as a local landmark in 2020)
- Boulder Theater (designated as a local landmark in 1980 and as part of the Downtown Historic District in 1980 and 1999)
- University of Colorado (Norlin Quadrangle designated as a National Register historic district in 1980)
- The Museum of Boulder (designed as a local landmark in 2013)

The list also includes the Boulder County Farmers' Market, which is located on 13<sup>th</sup> Street adjacent to four locally designated landmarks and within the proposed historic district.

The design review process stabilizes neighborhoods as physical changes are reviewed to ensure compatibility with the area's historic character. Historic district designation anticipates change over time, and if designated, an effort will be undertaken to further develop district-specific design guidelines that recognize the unique character and features of the area and facilitate the review of proposed improvements, as well as to support and guide future changes to the area. Use and function of a site is not regulated through historic district designation; only the physical, exterior changes related to use are reviewed. The proposed historic district highlights the value of urban parkland at the heart of the city, and its contribution to the social, environmental, and economic activity in the area. If designated, the district design guidelines will anticipate changes to the immediately surrounding land uses over time to yield new opportunities for the district to serve the community in novel ways, while still maintaining its historic value and role in the on-going story of Boulder's heritage.

Historic designation fosters knowledge of the city's living history through research and sharing stories of Boulder's history through virtual and in-person activities. This designation application process provided an opportunity to fill research gaps in the history of the area, in particular the history of displaced residents. Staff accessed recently digitized information from the Library of Congress and National Park Service, and other state and local sources. The research was shared with community members through in-person walking tours, events, and an [interactive StoryMap](#) (link). Historic Boulder, Inc. translated the walking tour script into a free app-based tour on PocketSights: [Proposed Civic Area Historic District - Boulder](#) (link). Community members and visitors learn about history of designated sites through the wayfinding

signs and plaques, interpretive panels (e.g. Pearl Street Mall, Chautauqua and the Penfield Tate II Municipal Building), the city’s website and engagement events, such as walking tours during Historic Preservation and Archeology Month in May.

#### *Staff Analysis of Relevant BVCP Policies*

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City Council will also be required to evaluate and consider whether this local historic district designation is “in balance with the goals and policies of the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan” (Subsection 9-11-6 (b), B.R.C. 1981). The [Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan \(BVCP\)](#) provides a general statement of the community’s desires for future development and preservation of the Boulder Valley. BVCP policies guide decisions about growth, development, preservation, environmental protection, economic development, affordable housing, culture and arts, urban design, neighborhood character and transportation. The following BVCP policies related to historic preservation are relevant to this application (**emphasis added**):

- 2.27 Preservation of Historic & Cultural Resources – **The city and county will identify, evaluate and protect buildings, structures, objects, districts, sites and natural features of historic, architectural, archaeological or cultural significance with input from the community.** The city and county will seek protection of significant historic and cultural resources through local designation when a proposal by the private sector is subject to discretionary development review.
- 2.30 Eligible Historic Districts & Landmarks – The city has identified areas that may have the potential to be designated as historic districts. The Designated and Identified Potentially Eligible Historic Districts map shows areas with designation potential as well as areas that are already designated as historic districts (see [BVCP](#) Figure 6-1 on page 136). These potential historic areas and historic survey information will continue to be assessed and updated. There are also many individual resources of landmark quality both within and outside of these eligible areas. **Additional historic district and landmark designations will be encouraged in accordance with the Plan for Boulder’s Historic Preservation Program. Such resources may contribute to cultural and heritage tourism values.**
- 2.28 Leadership in Preservation: City-& County Owned Resources – **The city and county will evaluate their publicly owned properties to determine their historic, architectural, archaeological or cultural significance.** Eligible resources will be protected through local designation, including secondary buildings or elements that are part of and convey the cultural significance of a site, such as a farm complex and alley buildings.
- 2.32 Preservation of Archaeological Sites & Cultural Landscapes – The city will develop a plan and processes for **identification, designation and protection of archaeological and cultural landscape resources, such as open ditches (where practicable and in coordination with the irrigation ditch company), street and alley-scapes, railroad rights-of-way and designed landscapes.**

Additionally, the following BVCP policies are relevant to the proposed designation of this specific area of Boulder.

- 2.14 Mix of Complementary Land Uses
- 2.15 Compatibility of Adjacent Land Uses
- 2.20 Role of the Central Area
- 2.33 Sensitive Infill & Redevelopment
- 2.41 Enhanced Design for All Projects
- 5.09 Role of Tourism in the Economy
- 5.10 Role of Arts, Cultural, Historic & Parks & Recreation Amenities

Several areas within the proposed historic district are likely to be redeveloped or adaptively reused in the future. Historic designation would provide additional opportunities to evaluate future changes in the context of existing historic features (both structures and landscape). Policies 2.14 and 2.15 speak directly to the importance of providing a mix of complementary uses in redevelopment and the incorporation of appropriate transitions between different uses. This will be particularly important in this location as referenced in Policy 2.20 which identifies the Central Area as the primary activity center of the Boulder Valley. Policy 2.33 identifies the need for infill development to be sensitive to its surrounding context, and for the city to consider using tools such as design guidelines. Policy 2.41 details the city's expectations for a high level of quality in architecture and urban design including the importance of context, relationship to the public realm, ditches, transportation connections, and art in public places. Policies 5.09 and 5.10 specifically reference the value of historic features and park amenities to the city's tourism, economic vitality, and community livability. On balance, staff considers the proposed historic district to be consistent with these additional policies and supports the community's vision as defined in the BVCP.

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### *Staff Analysis of Significance Criteria for District Landmarks*

#### *Significance – Local Criteria*

The Landmarks Board adopted the [Significance Criteria for District Landmarks](#) (link) in 1975 as additional specific criteria to be used in the review of historic district applications. This Significance Criteria should be used as an aid in applying the standards found in Sections 9-11-1 and 9-11-2, B.R.C. 1981. Three potential areas of significance are established by the Significance Criteria including (**emphasis added**):

- 1) Historical Significance: The district, as an entity, should **show character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage, or cultural characteristics of the community**, state, or nation; be the site of historic or prehistoric event(s) that had an effect upon society; or **exemplify the cultural, political, economic, or social heritage of the community**.
- 2) Architectural Significance: The district should **portray an environment in an era of history characterized by distinctive architectural period(s)/style(s)**; embody those distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type specimen, a good example of the common; **include the work of an architect or master builder, known nationally, state-wide, or locally**, and perhaps whose work has

materials or craftsmanship which represent a significant innovation; or include a fine example of the uncommon.

- 3) **Environmental Significance:** The district should **enhance the variety, interest, and sense of identity of the community by the protection of the unique natural and man-made environments.**

The following provides staff's analysis of the proposed district in relation to the Significance Criteria.

### ***HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE:***

*The district, as an entity, should show character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage, or cultural characteristics of the community, state, or nation; be the site of historic or prehistoric event(s) that had an effect upon society; or exemplify the cultural, political, economic, or social heritage of the community.*

**Summary:** The proposed historic district is historically significance for the public function of the area as the symbolic, political and municipal center of Boulder's local government, and as the site of numerous social, cultural and political events, for its significance in the history of Boulder's park system development and its contribution to the social and cultural life of the city for more than a century.

#### **1. Association with Historical Persons or Events:**

*This association could be national, state or local.*

**Summary:** The proposed historic district is associated with numerous individuals and events that are locally significant, including multiple individuals (both protagonists and antagonists) and organizations involved in the formation of the area. The early uses of the park area matched the religious and "moral" views of these individuals and organizations, which focused events on self-improvement. The general type of events changed over time, becoming more nostalgic of "pioneer" times during the 1950s. The late 1960s and early 1970s saw an overall decline in maintenance of the park, and events held during that time period reflected the political and social change of the era, culminating in rallies, demonstrations and protests.

**Elaboration:** The proposed historic district is associated with historical individuals and events.

Individuals that were instrumental in the early formation of the area include:

- Mollie Gordon (c. 1844-1904) was one of the first Black women in Boulder to own property. She lived Boulder from the early 1880s, likely on Water Street. A newspaper article of 1891<sup>21</sup> places her on Water Street near 10<sup>th</sup> Street and notes that she is "an artiste" for her violin playing.
- Jennie Johnson (c. 1866-unknown) owned two different properties in the area from 1900 until 1928. She owned a cleaning business, which she ran from her house near 11<sup>th</sup> Street north of Boulder Creek.<sup>22</sup> Johnson was the

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<sup>21</sup> "Locals." August 30, 1891. Boulder Daily Camera.

<sup>22</sup> "Cleaning Done." May 8, 1906. Boulder Daily Camera, Volume 16, Number 37.

last owner to sell her residence to the city for “park improvements,” refusing for many years to leave.<sup>23</sup>

- Maryette Kinglsey (c.1860-1902) owned four different properties in the area as early as the 1890s, and from which she ran thriving businesses.<sup>24</sup> Her brothels were viewed by “civic improvers” including members of the BCIA as unsightly for tourists and visitors arriving or departing by train.
- “Rocky Mountain” Joe Sturtevant (1851-1910) owned a studio at the approximate location of the Municipal Building from 1900 until Sturtevant’s death.<sup>25</sup> Sturtevant made many photographs of the area, some of which were used to promote “improvements.”<sup>26</sup>

The Boulder City Improvement Association (BCIA) was a volunteer organization originally established in 1898 by Ira M. DeLong, H. O. Dodge, Fred L. Williamson and Neil D. McKenzie, with the purpose of “encouraging the culture of lawns and trees; improving and ornamenting the public highways; opening public parks and drives; maintaining a high standard of public neatness; and cooperating with every available agency to increase the beauty and healthfulness of our city.”<sup>27</sup> They reincorporated in 1903 with a focus on “the improvements of Boulder in health, growth, cleanliness, prosperity and attractiveness through individual effort as well as through cooperation with other organizations engaged in similar work.”<sup>28</sup> The BCIA acted as a de facto planning commission, strongly focused on the downtown creek area, until 1934 when they dissolved, noting that “the Boulder Parks and Planning Commission has almost identically the same purpose for which our Association exists.”<sup>29</sup> Between 1903 and 1934, many business and civic leaders served as officers of the BCIA, including Junius Henderson, Eben G. Fine, Fred White, Herbert A. Shattuck, D. M. Andrews, Maud Gardiner O’Dell, and William J. Baird. Many of these members were particularly key to the development of the area as public space:

- Ira M. DeLong (1855-1942) was professor of mathematics at the University of Colorado - Boulder from 1888 to 1925. DeLong was one of

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<sup>23</sup> “City of Boulder Buys Property In Jungles To Clean Up and Beautify.” April 11, 1921. Boulder Daily Camera, Number 22.

<sup>24</sup> “Flood in Boulder.” Boulder Daily Camera, May 31, 1894.

<sup>25</sup> “View of the buildings on the west side of Broadway between numbers 1763 and 1777. In the foreground is Joseph Sturtevant’s photography studio with his wife, Anna Lyckman Sturtevant, standing in the doorway. A streetcar is visible in the distance (S-673).” 1900. BHS 207-3-54. Boulder Historical Society/Museum of Boulder. <https://localhistory.boulderlibrary.org/islandora/object/islandora%3A37675>

<sup>26</sup> “Views of what was known as Cigarette Park and is now Central Park.” 1870-1920. Call No. 207-3-48. Carnegie Library for Local History, Boulder, CO. <https://localhistory.boulderlibrary.org/islandora/object/islandora%3A40011>

<sup>27</sup> “Constitution of the Public Improvement Association of Boulder.” 1898. BHS 328-193-(7-8). Boulder Historical Society/Museum of Boulder. Carnegie Library for Local History, Boulder, CO. <https://localhistory.boulderlibrary.org/islandora/object/islandora%3A50763>

<sup>28</sup> “Records of Boulder City Improvement Association.” 1903-1914. BHS 300-1-10. Boulder Historical Society/Museum of Boulder. Carnegie Library for Local History, Boulder, CO. <https://localhistory.boulderlibrary.org/islandora/object/islandora:50763>  
<https://localhistory.boulderlibrary.org/islandora/object/islandora%3A7574>

<sup>29</sup> White, Fred. “Letter preceding Minutes of Meeting of Boulder Improvement Association.” Feb. 27<sup>th</sup> 1934. Carnegie Library for Local History, Boulder Colo.



the founders of the BCIA in 1898 and drew connections between aesthetics and morality.<sup>30</sup>

- Junius Henderson (1865-1937) Practiced law and was a county judge until 1902 when he became curator of the University Museum. He became a professor of natural history in 1908. He was president of the BCIA in 1910, when the organization commissioned Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. to propose improvements for the city.
- Herbert A. Shattuck was a civil engineer who briefly worked for Thomas Edison. He studied landscape design and designed “Shattuck’s Hillside Park” (now the Hillside Historic District). Shattuck was instrumental in promoting Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr.’s “plan for the city.”<sup>31</sup>
- William J. Baird (1861-1934) was a physician and surgeon. He corresponded with Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. between 1907 and 1934, mainly on the details for a creek-side park.<sup>32</sup> Baird additionally organized volunteers<sup>33</sup> and donations<sup>34</sup> for Central Park.

Penfield Tate II (1931-1993): The municipal building was named in honor of the former mayor in 2020, for his work advocating for civil rights and equality. Tate was the first, and to date, only, Black mayor of Boulder (1974-1976). He served on Boulder’s City Council from 1972-1976. Tate “sponsored an amendment to Boulder’s human rights ordinance that would ban discrimination based on sexual orientation. ... due to a backlash from conservative elements in Boulder, Tate and fellow Councilman Tim Fuller were targeted for a recall effort.”<sup>35</sup> While the recall of Tate failed, he did not win in the next election.

Following the construction of the bandshell in 1938, Central Park became a focal point for social activities, typically based around musical or religious activities that were seen by the organizers as morally appropriate. In 1939, Central Park hosted a “Flander’s Field” memorial that involved filling the park with memorial crucifix grave markers. During the 1930s and 1940s, the Boulder Rotary Club sponsored events like dance exhibitions, educational talks and musical performances. The Boulder Lions Club was chartered in 1918 as a volunteer organization. By mid-1938, the Lions Club had spent more than \$20,000 on the improvement of local parks, including the construction of shelter houses in Blue Bell Canyon and at the top of Flagstaff Mountain. In 1938, they donated the money to build the bandshell, and sponsored religious and musical events. The Lions Club donated picnic tables and a drinking fountain to Central Park in 1942.

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<sup>30</sup> DeLong, Ira B. “Aim of the Association - Public Improvement Association Papers.” 1898. BHS 328-193-(7-8). Boulder Historical Society/Museum of Boulder. Carnegie Library for Local History, Boulder, CO.

<https://localhistory.boulderlibrary.org/islandora/object/islandora%3A50763>

<sup>31</sup> Carrigan, Beverly Halpin. “Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. Maker of Parks-Planner of Cities: Visits-Plans-Suggestions-Goals for Boulder, Colorado 1907-1927.” Carnegie Library for Local History. Call Number 998-11-9.

<https://localhistory.boulderlibrary.org/islandora/object/islandora%3A100249>

<sup>32</sup> Files; 3300; City of Boulder Improvement Association; Boulder, Colo.; 1907-1909. Olmsted Associates Records: Job Files, 1863-1971. Library of Congress, Washington, DC.: [https://www.loc.gov/resource/mss52571.mss52571-02-185\\_0146\\_0316/?sp=6&st=image&r=0.014,0.392,0.684,0.336,0](https://www.loc.gov/resource/mss52571.mss52571-02-185_0146_0316/?sp=6&st=image&r=0.014,0.392,0.684,0.336,0)

<sup>33</sup> “Local Personal News.” May 10, 1924. Boulder Daily Camera, Number 48.

<sup>34</sup> “DR. O. M. GILBERT GIVES \$100 FOR NEW PARK” May 22, 1924. Boulder Daily Camera, Number 58.

<sup>35</sup> Museum of Boulder. “Proclaiming Colorado’s Black History.” 2023.

During the 1950s and early 1960s, the events became more nostalgic. “Singalong” concerts where “citizens of Boulder with any music ability” were invited to participate were popular.<sup>36</sup> In 1952, the community raised \$5,095 in 1952 to purchase an engine, passenger car, and caboose as a “monument to the pioneers of Boulder” and the Daughters of the American Revolution sponsored a commemorative plaque. In 1953, members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) sponsored the first “Huck Finn Day” fishing contest and pageant that included a march between the fishing pond and the bandshell. The annual event continued for most of the 1950s. “Santa Claus” events for children included crowning a “yule queen” or “Miss Noel”<sup>37</sup> and the “lots” west of the Municipal Building were used for community bonfires celebrating Twelfth Night.<sup>38</sup>

The late 1960s and early 1970s saw a decline in the maintenance of the park, and multiple areas were fenced off, and the park closed for periods of time due to clashes between park users and the police. During the summer of 1969, Sunday concerts in Central Park welcomed “straights, hippies and unclassified” to “truck on down to the park.”<sup>39</sup> Theatre in the Park formed in the 1970s specifically to present live performances in the bandshell that incorporated ambient and spontaneous noises of Central Park and surrounding streets.<sup>40</sup> The 1970s also saw rallies and protests including a Chicano rally protesting police brutality and racism in 1969;<sup>41</sup> Martin Luther King Memorial Vigil in 1971;<sup>42</sup> a candle-lit march commemorating the 17<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the atomic bombing of Nagasaki, Japan in 1972;<sup>43</sup> and bicycle rallies to demand safer bicycling.<sup>44</sup> In 1972, Mahatma Krishnasukanand used “inspiring words” to “raise the vibration of Central Park.”<sup>45</sup> A few months later, The World Family Church sponsored a community fair that spanned the length of the creek park from the public library to Central Park.<sup>46</sup>

## **2. Distinction in the Development of the Community of Boulder:**

*This is the most applicable to institutions (religious, educational, civic, etc.) or business area, though in some cases residential areas might qualify. It stresses the importance of preserving those places which demonstrate the growth during*

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<sup>36</sup> “Boulder Summer Recreation Plans Include Swimming, Tennis Lessons.” May 14, 1948. The Owl - BHS, Volume 34, Number 26.

<sup>37</sup> “Jingle Bell Miss Merry Christmas To Maintain Festive Tradition of Yuletide Season.” November 30, 1962. The Owl - BHS, Volume 49, Number 10.

<sup>38</sup> “Tonight’s Rally Features Bonfire and Snake Dance Cheerleaders to Lead Yells This Evening Directly West of the Municipal Building.” March 5, 1954. The Owl - BHS, Volume 40, Number 21.

<sup>39</sup> “Sunday In The Park.” March 26, 1969. Colorado Daily - University of Colorado Boulder, Volume 17, Number 108.

<sup>40</sup> Kaiser, Kathy. “Free plays held in Central Park.” June 17, 1974. Colorado Daily - University of Colorado Boulder, Volume 23, Number 8.

<sup>41</sup> “Chicanos Rally at Fountain March to Police Station.” September 8, 1969. Colorado Daily - University of Colorado Boulder, Volume 18, Number 6.

<sup>42</sup> “Storm chills King vigil, cuts turnout.” April 5, 1971. Colorado Daily - University of Colorado Boulder, Volume 19, Number 124.

<sup>43</sup> “Nagasaki memorial plans” August 9, 1972. Colorado Daily - University of Colorado Boulder, Volume 20, Number 172.

<sup>44</sup> Ham, Richard G. “Bikeways.” April 23, 1971. Colorado Daily - University of Colorado Boulder, Volume 19, Number 138.

<sup>45</sup> “Go Beyond Your Mind.” September 6, 1972. Colorado Daily - University of Colorado Boulder, Volume 21, Number 4.

<sup>46</sup> Photo caption. September 26, 1972. Colorado Daily - University of Colorado Boulder, Volume 21, Number 18.



*different time spans in the history of Boulder, in order to maintain an awareness of our cultural, economic, social or political heritage.*

**Summary:** The proposed district has significance as the geographic focus of the community-led movement to eliminate the mining-centric industry and direct Boulder toward a health, education and tourist-based economy. Through the 1950s, Central Park was the location for events that civic leaders of the time considered physically and “morally” healthful and would develop a desirable community. The placement of the municipal resources after 1951 demonstrates the growth of the municipal identity of Boulder. A boom in population created conflict between those nostalgic for the “pioneer days” and counterculture advocates wanting to confront “the establishment” embodied in the municipal area.

**Elaboration:** Prior to the formation of Boulder, Colorado’s First Peoples relied on the natural environment of the creek and creek-side land. Indigenous knowledge, oral histories, and languages handed down through generations shaped profound cultural and spiritual connections. These connections are sustained and celebrated to this day. Land within the proposed district is considered sacred to the First Peoples and is associated with cultural beliefs, customs, and practices rooted in the community’s history and collective historic identity.

After the formation of Boulder in 1859, distinct areas of residences and commercial interests developed adjacent to Boulder Creek. As the city grew, this area was the focus of the community-led movement to eliminate the mining-centric industry and direct Boulder toward a health, education and tourist-based economy: It uniquely demonstrates the growth of the municipal identity of Boulder.

The working-class residents that lived in the area and much of the industry were considered counter to the health, education and tourist-based image that the “civic improvers,” including the Boulder City Improvement Association (BCIA), promoted. The BCIA hired Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. in 1910 to write a report on *The Improvement of Boulder*.<sup>47</sup> The report proposed a park along Boulder Creek and to “group together main public buildings of a city.” Using the Olmsted report to validate and justify the displacement, residences and commercial interests were systematically removed by the city.

The proposal for parkland along Boulder Creek was refined in Olmsted Brothers plans developed 1917-1923 and published in 1923<sup>48</sup> in *The Improvement of Boulder Creek in Boulder, Colorado*.<sup>49</sup> By 1925 much of the land to create the park had been purchased by the city, but when a funding proposal failed to win community support the park itself was never formally created. Instead, BCIA volunteers, led by William Baird, planted trees and shrubs and graded the paths to

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<sup>47</sup> Olmsted, Jr. Frederick Law. *The Improvement of Boulder, Colorado*. Brookline, Mass., 1910. Google Books: [https://www.google.com/books/edition/The\\_Improvement\\_of\\_Boulder\\_Colorado/Ox4UMxP33pUC?hl=en&gbpv=1&pg=PP9&printsec=frontcover](https://www.google.com/books/edition/The_Improvement_of_Boulder_Colorado/Ox4UMxP33pUC?hl=en&gbpv=1&pg=PP9&printsec=frontcover)

<sup>48</sup> Olmsted Plans and Drawings Collection “Olmsted Job #3300 Boulder, Colorado Improvement Association Boulder, CO Plan #3300-63 City of Boulder Preliminary Plan of Proposed Park Improvements Along Boulder Creek OBLA, October 1923.” National Park Service, Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site. [https://www.flickr.com/photos/olmsted\\_archives/35378272173/in/album-72157683458369472/](https://www.flickr.com/photos/olmsted_archives/35378272173/in/album-72157683458369472/)

<sup>49</sup> Olmsted Brothers. *The Improvement of Boulder Creek in Boulder, Colorado*. Brookline, Mass., 1923. Files; 3302; Boulder Creek; Boulder, Colo., 1917-1924. Olmsted Associates Records: Job Files, 1863-1971. Library of Congress, Washington, DC. Page 76-86: [https://www.loc.gov/resource/mss52571.mss52571-02-186\\_0383\\_0484/?sp=76&st=image](https://www.loc.gov/resource/mss52571.mss52571-02-186_0383_0484/?sp=76&st=image)

create the park they considered worthy of Boulder's new health, education and tourist-based image.

The area was modified by 1932, and the "improvements" identified on a map created by George Hubbard (city surveyor and building inspector) for a *Daily Camera* article on Dec. 31, 1937. These amenities illustrate the slight shift in public sentiment and community needs: in addition to open lawns and gardens around which to promenade, the park included active recreation spaces like tennis courts and a softball field.<sup>50</sup> Through the 1950s, the area was used for recreation to keep both mind and body healthful.

The post WWII years in Boulder saw huge population growth. The general shift in the type of events held in the park and the proposed addition of monuments and memorials show a community nostalgic for "pioneer days" and simpler times. The construction of municipal resources including the "city hall" in 1952, which housed the police station and jail, newly centered the municipal identity of Boulder in the area. Through the 1950s and 1960s, counterculture advocates wanting to confront "the establishment" clashed with the nostalgia of the area, culminating in the vandalism of Central Park's train "Memorial to Boulder's Railroad and Mining Pioneers" in 1958.

By the late 1960s, the area was firmly established as the municipal center of Boulder. As downtown was termed "decaying" and complaints about "hippies" living in Central Park rose, Boulder's voters were asked to decide whether to redevelop Central Park with a second municipal building, exhibition hall, conference center, auditorium, science museum, and theater. The bond issue failed and Boulder retained the institution of a public gathering space anchored by municipal buildings.

### **3. Recognition by Authorities:**

*If a number of structures are recognized by Historic Boulder, Inc., the Boulder Historical Society, local historians (Barker, Crossen, Frink, Gladden, Paddock, Schoolland, etc.) F.L. Olmsted, or others in published form, as having historical interest or value.*

The proposed district includes five structures that have been previously designated as individual landmarks, recognizing their historic, architectural and environmental significance. In addition, the area has previously been considered potentially eligible for designation as a historic district.

Previous determinations include: Glen Huntington Bandshell (eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (1995, 2016, 2022); Atrium Building (Eligible for the State Register, 2000), Penfield Tate II Municipal Building (eligible for the State Register, 2000; recognized in the December 1953 issue of *Progressive Architecture*), the Boulder–Dushanbe Teahouse (eligible for the National Register, 2005).

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<sup>50</sup> "Photo 4 - Boulder from Flagstaff Mountain taken 1937 or early 1938. 1933 courthouse at left center, Valmont Power Plant visible in the distance. Identified buildings are listed on the reverse of the photo." C. 1937. Boulder Historical Society/Museum of Boulder. <https://localhistory.boulderlibrary.org/islandora/object/islandora%3A67946>

Additionally, the [Greenways Plan \(2011\)](#) identifies Central Park as potentially eligible for listing in the State and National Registers, with the statement “possibly eligible as component of a historic district.”<sup>51</sup> A 2001 Historic Resources Survey Report prepared for the State Historic Preservation Office identified Central Park as a “cultural landscape.”<sup>52</sup>

#### 4. Date of Construction:

*This area of consideration places particular importance on the age of the structure.*

**Summary:** While the history of the site extends beyond the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, key dates within the proposed district include 1859 (construction of the Smith and Goss Ditch), 1862 (construction of the Boulder Slough), 1906 (construction of the Storage & Transfer Building), 1925 (design and initial grading of Central Park), 1938 (construction of the Bandshell), 1950 (Amphitheater seating), 1951 (construction of the Municipal Building), 1969 (construction of the Atrium Building) and 1998 (placement and dedication of the Dushanbe Teahouse).

**Elaboration:** Grading of Central Park began in late summer, 1924<sup>53</sup> and the park’s paths creating diagonal circulation patterns laid down by 1925.<sup>54</sup> Between 1925 and 1938 the area developed informally as the city acquired additional land. Volunteers planted trees that included elm, oak, mountain ash, hawthorn, crab-apple, and pine.<sup>55</sup> William Baird donated a white oak, and Mrs. Cheney and Eben G. Fine each donated red oaks.<sup>56</sup>

The bandshell was added to Central Park in 1938, and the area re-landscaped the following year, removing the perimeter hedges and adding a small lawn for seating in front of the bandshell. By 1940, 13<sup>th</sup> St. and the northeast side of Broadway included a sidewalk and boulevard of trees. Volunteers continued to modify Central Park, adding picnic benches and a water fountain in 1942 (no longer extant).

A multi-year plan for relocating the municipal seat to the area was developed by Saco R. DeBoer and adopted by City Council in 1945. Implementation of the plan began in 1950 with the installation of an amphitheater seating at the bandshell. Construction on the new city hall (called the Municipal Building after 1952) began the following year after delays due to costs. The “master plan” included new circulation paths from the recreation areas west of the Municipal Building through Central Park. The City placed the train car monument next to the Boulder Slough in 1953. A honey locust tree was donated by Boulder High Students to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the United Nations and planted in the lawn

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<sup>51</sup> City of Boulder. Greenways Plan, 2011. <https://bouldercolorado.gov/media/407/download?inline>. Pg 116.

<sup>52</sup> Hermesen Consultants. “Historic Resources Survey Report: Broadway Reconstruction, Boulder, Colorado.” October 2001. Prepared for State Historic Preservation Office.

<sup>53</sup> “Local News.” July 28, 1924. Boulder Daily Camera, Number 114.

<sup>54</sup> “Boulder City Park from 12th Street bridge.” 1925. Call number BHS 141-2-48. Boulder Historical Society/Museum of Boulder. <https://localhistory.boulderlibrary.org/islandora/object/islandora%3A30084>

<sup>55</sup> “Field Trip Is Made By Geography Class.” April 5, 1937. The Prep Owl - BHS, Volume 24.

<sup>56</sup> “Local Personal News.” May 10, 1924. Boulder Daily Camera, Number 48.

in front of the Municipal Building in 1955.<sup>57</sup> The lawn area was re-landscaped in 1958.<sup>58</sup>

In 1961, the tennis courts, softball lots, and remaining building to the west of the Municipal Building were removed to create the municipal mall (no longer extant) and parking lot to connect the Municipal Building to the public library (constructed 1961). The City broke ground on an addition to the west side of the municipal building in 1962.

The construction of the Midland Federal Savings and Loan bank branch (Atrium Building) in 1969 further established the streetscape character along 13<sup>th</sup> Street.

## **ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE:**

*The district should portray an environment in an era of history characterized by distinctive architectural periods or styles; embody those distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type specimen, a good example of the common; include the work of an architect or master builder, known nationally, state-wide, or locally, and perhaps whose work has materials or craftsmanship which represent a significant innovation; or include a fine example of the uncommon.*

**Summary:** The proposed historic district's architectural significance includes multiple significant works by notable architects, landscape designers, builders, and urban planners representing a progression of styles.

### **1. Architectural Identity:**

*The area should display common characteristics or continuity, and represent a distinguished entity that possesses integrity of appearance, and/or feeling (mood).*

The area is unique for its inclusion of a variety of distinct architectural styles spanning the twentieth century. The district's architectural identity is unified by its setting, mass, scale and use of simplified geometric forms. The five individually landmarked buildings retain a high degree of integrity.

Its character is defined by an urban park along the banks of Boulder Creek and bounded by major thoroughfares, with municipal buildings situated along the park edge. The Atrium Building, completed in 1969 and used as city offices for nearly 40 years, and the construction of the Boulder–Dushanbe Teahouse in 1998 contribute to the area's historic character.

### **2. Recognized Period(s)/Style(s):**

*It should exemplify specific elements of an architectural period/style, or contain good examples of more than one period/style, thereby preserving a progression of styles; i.e.: Victorian Revival styles, such as described by Historic American Building Survey Criteria, Gingerbread Age (Maass), 76 Boulder Homes (Barker), The History of Architectural Style (Marcus/Tiffin), Architecture in San Francisco (Gebhard et al), History of Architecture (Fletcher), Architecture/Colorado*

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<sup>57</sup> "BHS Students Give Donations for Tree." December 9, 1955. The Owl - BHS, Volume 42, Number 12.

<sup>58</sup> Photo caption. Aug. 1, 1958. Daily Camera, Boulder.

*(Thorsen et al) and any other published source of universal or local analysis of “style”.*

The district uniquely exemplifies distinct architectural and landscape styles spanning the twentieth century.

- The Storage & Transfer Building, constructed in 1906, is an example of the 19<sup>th</sup> century commercial style.
- Central Park, designed by Frederick Law Olmsted Jr. in 1924 and modified by Saco DeBoer’s 1938 design, including the construction of the Bandshell, reflects planned and natural site characteristics representative of the 1938-1974 era.
- The Bandshell, designed by Glen Huntington and completed in 1938, is a rare example of the Art Deco style in Boulder.
- The Penfield Tate II Municipal Building, designed by James Hunter and completed in 1952, is an example of the International Style. Hobart Wagener’s 1962 addition was designed in the Formalist style.
- The Atrium Building, designed by Hobart Wagener in 1969, is an example of the Rustic Modern style.
- The Boulder–Dushanbe Teahouse is an exceptional example of a Central Asian (Tajik) Teahouse and reflects the political climate at the time.

The Bandshell, Municipal Building, and Atrium Building reflect progressive and forward-looking styles and are significant for their association with the development of the Modern movement in architecture in Boulder. As a whole, this area represents an eclectic municipal character that is unique to Boulder’s history, location and climate.

### **3. Architect(s) or Builder(s) of Prominence:**

*A good example of the work of architect(s) or builder(s) recognized for expertise nationally, state-wide or locally.*

The district includes works by the following notable architects and designers:

- Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., considered the forefather of the procession of landscape architecture in the United States,<sup>59</sup> authored the 1910 report, “Improvement of the Boulder, Colorado,” which shaped not only this area in Central Boulder, but also influenced the broader development of the community related to flood mitigation, city planning and zoning. In 1924, his firm, Olmsted Brothers, designed plans for Central Park, followed by a grading plan and planting plan.
- Saco R. DeBoer, Denver landscape architect and city planner, was commissioned in 1937 to select a site for the bandshell and design the landscaping around it. His designs for the amphitheater seating were realized in 1950.

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<sup>59</sup> Kluas, Susan. Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. <https://olmsted.org/colleagues-firm/frederick-law-olmsted-jr/>

- Glen Huntington, locally prominent architect responsible for numerous historic buildings, including the Boulder County Courthouse and the Huntington Arms.
- James Hunter, locally prominent architect who worked in Boulder between 1940 and 1973 and designed the Municipal Building (1777 Broadway; 1951), the Boulder Public Library (1001 Canyon; 1961) and the Masonic Lodge (2205 Broadway, 1948);
- Hobart Wagener, locally prominent architect active in Boulder in the 1950s to the 1980s. Notable works include the Atrium Building (1300 Canyon; 1969), Fire Station No. 2 (2225 Baseline Rd; 1958); the Green Shield Office Building (900 28<sup>th</sup> St.; 1959), the Labrot House (816 6<sup>th</sup> St.; 1954) and the Methodist Student Center (1290 Folsom; 1957).
- Teahouse architect Lado Shanidze, master woodcarvers Manon Khaidarov and Mirpulat Mirakhmatov along with plaster carver and painter Abdoukodir (Kodir) Rakhimov and a team of artisans, including five woodworkers and seven painters, worked for nearly four years to create the Boulder–Dushanbe Teahouse (1770 13th St.), which was gifted to the City of Boulder in 1987; local architect Vern Seieroe designed the rear addition to the Teahouse, and worked with Lado Shanidze to enclose the building and design the site (1988-1999).

#### **4. Artistic Merit:**

*A skillful integration of design, detail, material, and color which is of excellent visual quality and/or demonstrates superior craftsmanship.*

Central Park, including the Bandshell and its amphitheater seating, the Dushanbe Teahouse displays high artistic value as seen in its intricately hand-carved and brilliantly painted wood trim and decorative exterior “faïence” tile panels. The Atrium and the Municipal Building are significant for the high quality of stone work.

#### **5. Example of the Uncommon:**

*Elements of architectural design, detail, material, or craftsmanship that are representation of a significance innovation.*

Dushanbe Teahouse: The Teahouse ceiling was constructed using only traditional hand tools and without any electric tools. The Teahouse is significant as the only “chaikhona” (Central Asian/Tajik Teahouse) in the Western Hemisphere. The Bandshell is a rare example of the Art Deco style in Boulder and one of only two in Colorado.

#### **6. Indigenous Qualities:**

*A style or material that is particularly associated with the Boulder area.*

Local stone is utilized in the design of the Penfield Tate II Municipal Building, Atrium Building, and landscaping walls within Central Park.



## **ENVIRONMENTAL SIGNIFICANCE:**

*The district should enhance the variety, interest, and sense of identity of the community by the protection of the unique natural and man-made environments.*

**Summary:** Its environmental significance for its planned and natural site characteristics, its distinct character, and its prominence as an established and visual feature of the community.

### **1. Site Characteristics:**

*The site should be of high quality in terms of planned or natural vegetation, and streetscape objects, i.e.: lighting, fences, sidewalks, etc.*

The proposed district has environmental significance for its planned and natural site characteristics, including:

- Spatial relationship of the civic buildings and Central Park
- Boulder Creek and the Boulder Slough
- Circulation Paths with the park creating a relatively flat central green
- Mature trees planted in groves and lining the perimeter of the park
- Views toward the Flatirons
- The Teahouse was sited as part of the City of Boulder's 1993 Civic Park Master Plan, a comprehensive plan of the civic use and public buildings in the downtown campus area. Plans for the area placed the Teahouse at the center of the Civic Park Plaza which included the Civic Plaza (north of the Teahouse site) used for Farmers Market exhibits and performances and the 13th Street Community Plaza (the street west of the Teahouse site) used for public events such as the Boulder Creek Festival and the Farmers Market.

Changes within the proposed boundary, including the replacement of the Broadway Bridge (c. 2002), the addition of the Boulder Creek Path (1980s), tree and vegetation planting and removal, removal of commemorative train cars, the establishment of the Sister Cities and 13th Street plazas, and the addition of small scale features including decorative boulders, artwork and light fixtures, do not detract from the overall historic character of the area.

### **2. Compatibility with Site:**

*Consideration will be given to scale, massing, placement, or other qualities design with respect to its site.*

The scale, massing and placement of structures in the proposed district is generally defined by one and two-story buildings surrounding a central urban park with mature trees and a green lawn. The Municipal Building is a prominent visual feature, sited appropriately for an important civic structure. The park surroundings provide an appropriate setting for the public use of the buildings, and area complementary to their functions.

### **3. Geographic Importance:**

*As an entity it represents an established and familiar visual feature of the community, having unique and irreplaceable assets to the city or neighborhood.*

The area is an established, familiar and prominent visual feature of the community, its location near major thoroughfares. Situated prominently along Broadway, Canyon and Arapahoe, major thoroughfares in Boulder, as well as 13th Street, a dedicated bike route (named for advocate Al Bartlett).

## **CULTURAL LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT FOR CENTRAL PARK**

A Cultural Landscape Assessment (CLA) is a tool to assist in the analysis of the potential creation of a district, particularly regarding the considerations of historic significance and integrity of a designed landscape. A CLA was developed for this site using the [1998 National Parks Service Guide to Cultural Landscape Reports](#) (link) and the full report is included in the [Jan. 22, 2024 PRAB Packet](#), page 76-137 (link).

The CLA found Central Park to have four periods of physical development:

- Historic Period 1: 1903-1922 Acquiring Land for Central Park
- Historic Period 2: 1923-1936 Olmsted Jr. Design for Central Park
- Historic Period 3: 1937-1973 Huntington and DeBoer Designs for Bandshell Seating
- Historic Period 4: 1970-2023 Modern Updates

To evaluate the significance of these periods of development, the CLA utilized the National Register Significance Criteria:<sup>60</sup>

- A) Association with historic events or activities,
- B) Association with important persons,
- C) Distinctive design or physical characteristics, or
- D) Potential to provide important information about prehistory or history.

### *Significance – Cultural Landscape Assessment*

The CLA determined two of the periods to be historically significant based on these criteria: the 1923-1936 Olmsted Jr. design for Central Park and the 1937-1973 Huntington and DeBoer designs for the bandshell seating. The CLA found the Olmsted, Jr. period to be significant under Criterion C (design), “as the work of a recognized master, landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted Jr.” The CLA acknowledges the previous determination in the [1995 Bandshell study](#)<sup>61</sup> (link), and concurred the Huntington and DeBoer period is significant under “Criteria A (Events) and C (Design) for its role in the social and cultural life of Boulder and the design improvements implemented between 1938 and 1950 by Glen Huntington and Saco Rienk DeBoer, including the bandshell, the amphitheater, and the associated vegetation and grading. Staff agree that the park has significance for its design and association with prominent designers, and for its role in the social and cultural life of Boulder. P&DS staff also believe the period of development prior to 1924 has historic significance, including its potential to provide important information about prehistory or history. The CLA focused on the development of the park, and research prior to 1903 was out of scope of the assessment.

<sup>60</sup> PART 60—NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES, Fed. Reg. (Nov. 16, 1981) (to be codified at 36 C.F.R. pt. 60). <https://www.law.cornell.edu/cfr/text/36/part-60>

<sup>61</sup> Front Range Research Associates, Inc. [Boulder Bandshell Historical Study](#). Prepared for the City of Boulder. 14 July 1995.



### *Integrity - Cultural Landscape Assessment*

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The proposed district may be eligible for landmark designation if it meets the criteria outlined in the [Significance Criteria for Historic Districts](#) (link). However, the proposed district must also retain physical features that allow it to convey that significance. The National Park Service provides standards<sup>62</sup> in the “aspects of integrity” that can be used to define whether a site retains enough integrity to convey appropriate historical associations or attributes.

The historic integrity of an area relates to the ability of the landscape, buildings, sites and features to convey their historical significance. Where the CLA and city’s local historic preservation code differ on the criteria used to identify significance, both utilize the National Park Service Seven Aspects of Integrity<sup>63</sup> in its assessment:

1. Location
2. Design
3. Setting
4. Materials
5. Workmanship
6. Feeling
7. Association

The CLA additionally evaluated Central Park’s landscape characteristics, including:

- Topography
- Vegetation
- Circulation
- Buildings and Structures
- Views and Viewsheds
- Land Use
- Spatial Organization
- Small-Scale Features (for the Huntington/DeBoer Period only)

The CLA summary of findings related to integrity includes:

“Over the past century the Central Park landscape has experienced changes that include:

- Physical changes to the landscape, such as the realignment and redesign of the vegetation and circulation systems, and substantial regrading of the topography.
- A change in use through the construction of the bandshell and its evolution as an activated space for entertainment and performance.

These changes have resulted in a lack of historical integrity of design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, which are needed for Central Park to convey its 1923-1924 design and association with Olmsted Jr. The character of

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<sup>62</sup> U.S. Dept. of the Interior. “National Historic Landmarks Glossary of Terms.” National Park Service. Accessed November 2022. <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalhistoriclandmarks/glossary.htm>

<sup>63</sup> How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation. U.S. Department of the Interior National Park Service. [https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister/upload/NRB-15\\_web508.pdf](https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister/upload/NRB-15_web508.pdf)

Central Park relating to the Olmsted Jr.-era has been altered to the point where it is no longer visible in the landscape.

Both historic significance *and* historical integrity are required to meet eligibility thresholds for listing in the National Register. While Central Park has its origins in the 1920s and the Olmsted Brothers' recommendations and designs for a park system in Boulder, it is no longer able to tell that story through the existing landscape. As such, while the park's history is significant the lack of integrity in the landscape disqualifies the park as a whole for listing in the National Register as the work of master landscape architect Olmsted Jr.

However, the northern portion of park is still able to convey its historic significance and association with the 1938-1950 era of park development associated with Huntington and DeBoer. Therefore, Central Park remains eligible for the National Register under Criteria A and C for the period in which the bandshell and associated amphitheater seating were designed and built (1938-1950). The area associated with these improvements is roughly outlined in yellow in the graphic on page 3 of this memo; it does not constitute the full park boundary as no evidence exists linking the southern portion of the park to the Huntington-DeBoer improvements."

#### *Boundary - Cultural Landscape Assessment*

As described above, the CLA finds Central Park is significant for two periods (1923-1936 Olmsted Jr. Design for Central Park and 1937-1973 Huntington DeBoer Design) but that only the northern portion of the site (currently designated as a local landmark), retains integrity. The Peer Review Draft Central Park CLA Report, states the area associated with the 1938-1950 improvements "does not constitute the full park boundary as no evidence exists linking the southern portion of the park to the Huntington-DeBoer improvements. Therefore, a boundary encompassing only the northern 170 feet of Central Park is recommended to be included as part of a historic district.



Figure 3. Boundary related to Central Park recommended in the Cultural Landscape Assessment (CLA) outlined as a dashed red line on an aerial image; contemporary property lines are shown in thinner solid red lines. The CLA recommended boundary includes the Bandshell, amphitheater seating and northernmost 170 ft of Central Park.

## STAFF ANALYSIS OF INTEGRITY

### *Methodology to Assessing Integrity of the Proposed Historic District*

P&DS staff's approach to the integrity analysis included:

- Researching the history of the area and assessing its historic, architectural and environmental significance;
- Review of the CLA findings;
- Multiple site visits;
- Comparison of historic and current aerials, plans and photographs;
- Use of [NPS guidance](#) to assess the area's integrity, based on its local historic, architectural and environmental significance.
- Consultation with the State and National Register Historians at History Colorado to review application of the guidance for determining integrity and boundary.

### *Integrity Assessment – Proposed Historic District (1924-1937 Period)*

P&DS staff agree with the CLA findings that the Olmsted, Jr. design of the park (1924-1937) does not retain historic integrity due to the extent of changes over time. The following is an assessment utilizing the National Park Service's Seven Aspects of Integrity:

The **location** of Central Park has not changed.

The **design** of the park was substantially changed by the introduction of the bandshell in 1938 and its seating in 1950, which interrupted the distinctive circulation pattern of diagonal walks that form a central green. The paths no longer cross at the northern end of the park and the interior paths curving from the northwest corner to the southeast corner of the park no longer exist. The Boulder Creek path introduced pavement north of the Boulder Slough that reinforces the bisected condition of the park and altered the paths along Boulder Creek at the southern end of the park to create the Arapahoe Avenue underpass. While many mature trees date to this period, and the overall vegetation pattern remains with mature trees along the perimeter and concentrated on the northeast, north and eastern boundaries of the site, some of the trees have been removed or replaced with trees of a different species. Shrub plantings have been planted around the Bandshell and its seating to help define the space and create screening from outside of the park looking into the event venue. While viewsheds toward the Flatirons are visible across the park green and along the perimeter of the park, the Bandshell is a prominent visual feature constructed outside of the 1924-1937 period. Trees along the Boulder Slough partially obstruct the view between the northern and southern portions of the park.

Little **material** remains from the 1924-1937 period, except for the Boulder Slough infrastructure and the light pilasters (reportedly part of the 1920s Broadway Bridge repurposed as park light fixtures when the bridge was replaced in the early 2000s). The

date of construction of the stone walls on the western edge of the park along Boulder Creek is unknown and may date to the 1924-1937 period. The paths have been repaved. Little remains related to the **workmanship** of Central Park dating to the 1924-1937 period.

The Art Deco Bandshell has significantly altered the **feeling** of Central Park, as it is a prominent feature visible both within the park and from the surrounding area. Its distinct 1930s design, combined with the alteration of the original pattern of pathways, convey the sense of a later period of time.

Central Park's 1924 design is significant for its association with prominent landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., however, as described above, the park today does not retain the physical features to convey retain the integrity of **association**.



Figure 4. Side-by-side images showing the planting plan for Central Park drawn by F.L. Olmsted, March 1924<sup>64</sup> (left); an enlarged aerial photograph from 1938<sup>65</sup> (middle) of Central Park, 12<sup>th</sup> Street (Broadway) on the left of the image and 13<sup>th</sup> Street on the right; and an image from 2023 (right) of Central Park and surrounding thoroughfares.

### ***Integrity Assessment – Proposed Historic District (1938-1974 Period)***

Planning & Development Services staff agree with the CLA finding that Central Park is significant under National Register criterion A (events) and C (design) for the 1938-1973 period of development. In addition, based on consideration of the local criteria above, the area as a whole meets local designation criteria for its architectural, historic and environmental significance. Staff considers that historic integrity is represented across the entire park, and not only the northernmost portion, for this period, for the following reasons:

<sup>64</sup> Courtesy of the United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site. [https://www.flickr.com/photos/olmsted\\_archives/29558307807/in/album-72157683458369472/](https://www.flickr.com/photos/olmsted_archives/29558307807/in/album-72157683458369472/)

<sup>65</sup> United States Forest Service. Aerial Photographs of Colorado. Boulder. May 8, 1938. Photograph. <https://cudl.colorado.edu/luna/servlet/detail/UCBOULDERCB1~17~17~33252~102550>



- DeBoer was commissioned to recommend the site of the bandshell and planned its landscaping. In April 1937, he wrote “This is in regard to the matter of the location of a band stand. I have checked over every possible site in the city, and I believe that Central Park is the only location at the present time. With the location of the proposed City Hall in the [east] end of the park, I would suggest that the band stand be located on the north line against the railroad right of way, approximately in the middle of the park. If this site meets with your approval, I shall draw up a sketch showing my ideas in regard to the treatment of the band stand and the grounds around it.”
- As described in the 1995 Bandshell Historical Study<sup>66</sup> prepared by Front Range Research, Associates, the bandshell was “specifically designed to be compatible with its site. As a component of the central urban park, the Band Shell was situated to provide passersby with a glimpse of the intriguing figures to be found within the park and encourage them to park their cars and walk into the site. The Band Shell faces south toward Boulder Creek and away from traffic on the thoroughfare on the northern edge of the park. The scope of the Band Shell and its associated seating area is in keeping with the size of the park and provides a comfortable gathering space for concerts and other cultural entertainment and is an open air amenity allowing users to enjoy the natural beauty of the park while attending the Band Shell programs.”
- Central Park maintains its original boundary from its formal establishment in 1924 to encompass a roughly four-acre area bound by Canyon Boulevard, Arapahoe Avenue, Broadway and 13<sup>th</sup> Street. The bandshell was designed for its setting within Central Park, and features of the full park in DeBoer’s sketches have similar characteristics to the Olmsted Jr. 1924 plan with perimeter trees, contiguous circulation located on the outside of the park and open lawn.
- The public function of Central Park and the surrounding municipal buildings and public spaces is historically significant and reflects the changing social, cultural and political activities of the Boulder community. Following the construction of the bandshell in 1938, Central Park became a focal point for social activities, typically based around musical or religious activities. During the 1950s and early 1960s, events in Central Park became more nostalgic, including singalongs, the community-funded purchase of railcars as a memorial to “Boulder Pioneers”, an annual “Huck Finn Day,” and Christmas programs. Events in the late 1960s and early 1970s included experimental theater groups that presented live performances in the bandshell that incorporated ambient and spontaneous noises of Central Park and surrounding streets<sup>67</sup>, protests and vigils including a Chicano rally protesting police brutality and racism in 1969;<sup>68</sup> Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Vigil in 1971;<sup>69</sup> a candle-light march commemorating the 17<sup>th</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> Front Range Research Associates, Inc. [Boulder Bandshell Historical Study](#). Prepared for the City of Boulder. 14 July 1995.

<sup>67</sup> Kaiser, Kathy. “Free plays held in Central Park.” June 17, 1974. Colorado Daily - University of Colorado Boulder, Volume 23, Number 8.

<sup>68</sup> “Chicanos Rally at Fountain March to Police Station.” September 8, 1969. Colorado Daily - University of Colorado Boulder, Volume 18, Number 6.

<sup>69</sup> “Storm chills King vigil, cuts turnout.” April 5, 1971. Colorado Daily - University of Colorado Boulder, Volume 19, Number 124.

Anniversary of the atomic bombing of Nagasaki, Japan in 1972;<sup>70</sup> and bicycle rallies to demand safer bicycling.<sup>71</sup>

Consideration of the area's eligibility for designation as a local historic district, the assessment of its integrity is based on its historic, architectural and environmental significance. The proposed historic district retains integrity to the 1938-1974 period of development as described below:

The location of Central Park and the five landmarked structures has not moved since their establishment and therefore retains excellent integrity of **location**.

The setting of the Civic Area is integral to its significance. Located at the prominent intersections of Broadway, Canyon, 13<sup>th</sup> and Arapahoe, the area is centrally located and is a prominent and visual feature of the community. The view of the Flatirons directly influenced its landscape and architectural designs and provides a mountain backdrop to the urban park, municipal structures, and the public spaces in between. Two waterways remain prominent features of the area: Boulder Creek creates the southwesterly edge of the park and runs south of the Penfield Tate II Municipal Building, and the Boulder Slough bisects the central green of the park and runs north of the Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse. Additionally, the integrity of the five landmarked structures within the proposed boundary remain high and contributes to the area's integrity of **setting**. Staff considers the changes to the park and public spaces, including the introduction of and improvements to the Boulder Creek Path and the realignment of paths within Central Park do not detract from the overall setting and feeling associated with the district's historic significance.

The spatial relationship between Central Park and the surrounding municipal buildings retains a high degree of integrity of **design**. Defining design characteristics of the district include but are not limited to the urban street grid of Broadway, Canyon Boulevard, Arapahoe Avenue and 13<sup>th</sup> Street; the park with its central green with trees planted in groves and along the perimeter of the park; Boulder Creek and Boulder Slough as prominent water features; five architecturally distinct structures in and adjacent to the park, many of which were designed and sited in relation to their park setting.

The district's historic **workmanship** is evident in the integration of art and architecture in the Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse, the high quality of masonry in the construction of the Atrium Building and the Penfield Tate II Municipal Building, and the construction of the bandshell and its seating.

The district retains its integrity of **materials**. The five existing landmarks retain their historic material, with the exception of the Bandshell, which was rebuilt in 1995 using the same materials. However, that alteration does not diminish the structure's historic integrity.

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<sup>70</sup> "Nagasaki memorial plans" August 9, 1972. Colorado Daily - University of Colorado Boulder, Volume 20, Number 172.

<sup>71</sup> Ham, Richard G. "Bikeways." April 23, 1971. Colorado Daily - University of Colorado Boulder, Volume 19, Number 138.

The district retains sufficient integrity to convey its **feeling** of a historic urban park surrounded by unique structures representing distinct architectural styles and periods. As a result of the area's historic physical features described above, the district retains historic integrity to convey its **association** with the design of the park during the 1937-1974 period, and the numerous social, cultural and political activities that occurred within the park and the surrounding public spaces.



Figure 5. Aerial photograph from 1958 showing Central Park with the Bandshell and seating (top center of image), Broadway and the Municipal Building (left side), 13<sup>th</sup> Street and buildings on east side of 13<sup>th</sup> Street (right side of image). City of Boulder.



Figure 6. Aerial photographs from 1972 (top) and corresponding image from 2023 (below) showing Central Park with the Bandshell and seating at the center of the images, Broadway and the Municipal Building with west addition (left side), 13<sup>th</sup> Street and the Atrium building (top right) on east side of 13<sup>th</sup> Street. City of Boulder.

### ***Summary of Integrity Assessment – Local Criteria***

In conclusion, P&DS staff agree with the CLA findings that the Olmsted, Jr. design of the park (1924-1937) does not retain historic integrity due to the extent of changes over time. P&DS staff considers the proposed historic district retains its historic integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association from the 1938-1974 period of development.

On Feb, 7, 2024, the Landmarks Board voted to recommend to the City Council that it consider recognizing Olmsted's plan as being intact, recognizable, and significant to the historic district. However, as described above, staff agree with the CLA findings that the Olmsted, Jr. design of the park (1924-1937) does not retain historic integrity due to the extent of changes over time.

### **PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE**

Period of significance is the length of time when a property was associated with important events, activities or persons, or attained the characteristics which qualify it for National Register listing.<sup>72</sup> National Register Bulletin 16 provides the following guidance on determining the period of significance for a historic district: Usually begins with the

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<sup>72</sup> NPS Bulletin 16. <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister/upload/NRB16A-Complete.pdf>, Pg 42.



date when significant activities or events began giving the property historic significance; this is often a date of construction.

- For properties associated with historic trends, such as commercial development, the period of significance is the span of time when the property actively contributed to the trend.
- The property must possess historic integrity for all periods of significance entered.
- Continued use or activity does not necessarily justify continuing the period of significance. The period of significance is based upon the time when the property made the contributions or achieved the character on which significance is based.
- Fifty years ago is used as the closing date for periods of significance where activities begun historically continued to have importance and no more specific date can be defined to end the historic period. (Events and activities occurring within the last 50 years must be exceptionally important to be recognized as "historic" and to justify extending a period of significance beyond the limit of 50 years ago.)

On Feb. 7, 2024, the Landmarks Board voted to recommend to the City Council that it consider expanding the period of significance to a date that includes the residential period. In the Landmarks Board memo, staff recommended a period of significance beginning in 1938, to align with the historic integrity tied to the existing historic character of Central Park established through designs by Saco DeBoer and Glen Huntington. However, expanding the period of significance to the earliest date of construction of the extant historic buildings would also be appropriate and would be consistent with other local historic district designations.

Therefore, staff recommends the period of significance for the district extend from 1906 (when the earliest surviving building, the City Storage & Transfer Building was constructed) to 1974, a date fifty years in the past. The extended period of significance represents both the earlier commercial and residential period and the period when city leadership intentionally developed the area as a municipal center, physically anchoring it with modern architectural structures which, in turn influenced the civic use of the park and spaces between the buildings.

While some other periods are historically significant, including the earlier park planning and design (1903-1923; 1924-1937), the residential, commercial and industrial period (1870s-1928); and the Indigenous history since time immemorial, the area no longer retains its historic integrity (physical features to convey that time) to justify an even earlier period of significance.

Opportunities to represent the area's earlier history is encouraged by Draft Guiding Principle #4 (see [Attachment D: Draft Design Guideline Framework](#)): "The area is significant for its association with Boulder's municipal, social and political history. As part of Boulder's Civic Area, this district continues to have a symbolic, geographic, and functional importance and therefore should serve as an inclusive place where all feel welcome. Celebrate the diversity of our community and enrich our collective understanding of different periods of Boulder's history by acknowledging stories of historically excluded populations."

Additionally, the Park Plan for the Civic Area ([link](#)) includes celebrating history as a guiding principle and the recognition of the area's earlier history can appropriately be considered and implemented with Civic Area Phase 2.

## **HISTORIC DISTRICT NAME**

The application received on May 30, 2023 proposed the historic district be named the Civic Center/City Park Historic District. Staff and the Landmarks Board recommend the historic district be known as the **Civic Area Historic District**, to reflect the commonly known name of the area, and encompass a broad history and significance.

On Feb. 7, 2024, the Landmarks Board voted to recommend that City Council consider naming the district to commemorate those who were displaced during the park's development and other exclusionary actions and policies by the city, e.g. Water Street Historic District, Boulder Creek Historic District.

The [Guidelines for Names of Landmarked Structures and Sites](#) ([link](#)), recommends basing the name on an original or later use, unusual architectural characteristics or a commonly accepted name. Staff considers appropriate names for the proposed district include the Water Street Historic District, Boulder Creek Historic District, Central Boulder Historic District or the Civic Area Historic District. Note that the ordinance could be amended at a later time to change the name of the district.

## **HISTORIC DISTRICT BOUNDARY**

The Boulder Revised Code describes a contiguous historic district as an "area containing a number of sites, buildings, structures or features having a special character and historical, architectural or aesthetic interest or value and constituting a distinct section of the city." [Section 9-11-2\(a\)\(2\) B.R.C. 1981](#). P&DS staff additionally utilize the guidance in [National Register Bulletin 16: Defining Boundaries for National Register Properties](#) ([link](#)) in the analysis for determining historic district boundaries. The bulletin provides the following summary:

Select boundaries that encompass the single area of land containing **the significant concentration of buildings, sites, structures, or objects making up the district**. The district's significance and historic integrity should help determine the boundaries. Consider the following factors:

- **Visual barriers** that mark a change in the historic character of the area or that break the continuity of the district, such as new construction, highways, or development of a different character.
- **Visual changes** in the character of the area due to different architectural styles, types or periods, or to a decline in the concentration of contributing resources.
- **Boundaries at a specific time in history**, such as the original city limits or the legally recorded boundaries of a housing subdivision, estate, or ranch.
- **Clearly differentiated patterns of historic development**, such as commercial versus residential or industrial.

### ***Boundary Proposed by Applicants***

The [application received on May 30, 2023](#) (link) requested the designation boundary encompass the area west of the Penfield Tate II Municipal Building (1777 Broadway) to the west side of 14<sup>th</sup> Street, and from the south side of Canyon Blvd. to the north side of Arapahoe Avenue, excluding the privately owned buildings at 1201 Arapahoe Ave. and 1724 Broadway (Yocom Building); and the buildings on 13<sup>th</sup> Street south of the City Storage and Transfer Building (a combination of city-owned and privately-owned parcels).

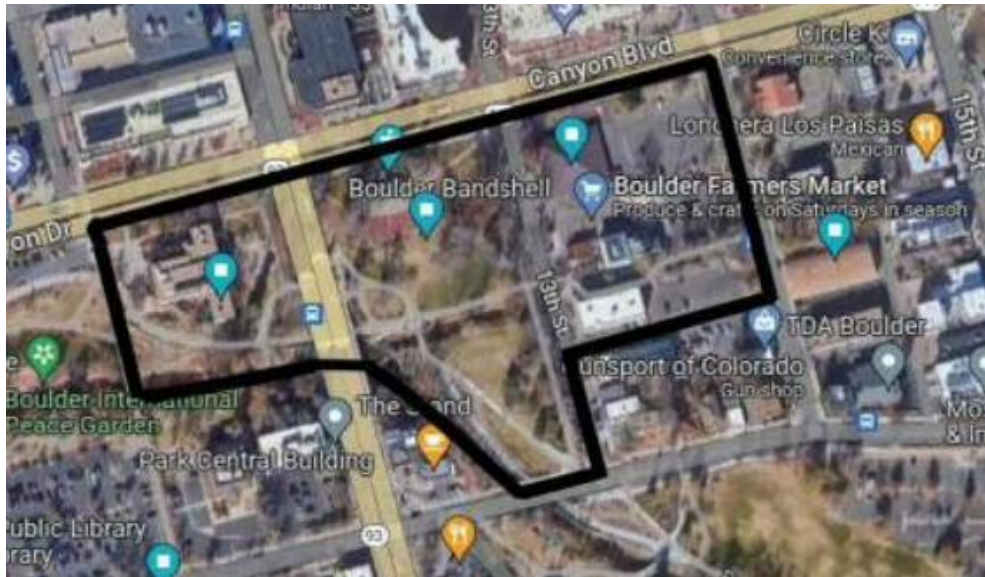


Figure 7. Historic district boundary proposed by the applicants outline in black on a Google Map image that identifies contemporary features and businesses in the area.

The applicants provided the following boundary justification in their application:

“This boundary incorporates five landmarked city-owned properties, the full extent of the historic Central Park, and the plaza between the Teahouse and the Atrium Building. The proposed historic district provides area integrity by combining these significant properties in a cohesive whole and celebrates the sense of place. The proposed boundary intentionally includes the parking lots to the east of the Atrium Building, Teahouse, and the City Storage and Transfer buildings. Proposed development on these properties should be reviewed for potential impact on the historic structures and features. The applicants do support change here that is sympathetic and respectful to the adjacent historic buildings, especially as the city begins to repurpose their buildings.”

Note, the three applicant groups also support the two boundaries described below.

### ***Boundary Recommended by Staff and the Landmarks Board***

Staff and the Landmarks Board recommend the historic district boundary encompass the area west of the Penfield Tate II Municipal Building (1777 Broadway) to the east edge of the landmark boundaries for the Atrium Building (1300 Canyon Blvd.), Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse (1770 13<sup>th</sup> St.) and the Storage & Transfer Building (1750 13<sup>th</sup> St.), including the 13<sup>th</sup> Street Plaza, and from the south side of Canyon Blvd. to the north side of Arapahoe Avenue, excluding the privately owned buildings at 1201 Arapahoe Ave.

and 1724 Broadway (Yocom Building) and the buildings on the east side of 13<sup>th</sup> Street south of the City Storage and Transfer Building (a combination of city-owned and privately-owned parcels). The recommended boundary includes the extent of 13<sup>th</sup> Street between Canyon and Arapahoe Avenue, and the parking area between the Atrium Building and Canyon Boulevard. The proposed boundary would follow the midline of Boulder Creek. Staff considers this boundary to meet the NPS guidance, in that it:

- Contains the significant concentration of contributing buildings and sites: the five designated landmarks and Central Park.
- Central Park retains its original boundary from its formal establishment in 1924, and the full extent of the park is historically significant for its social, cultural and political use within the 1938-1974 period of significance.
- Utilizes Canyon and Arapahoe as visual barriers that break the continuity of the district (note, Broadway has historically bisected Boulder's civic center);
  - Includes portion of 13<sup>th</sup> Street
  - Includes the parking area between the Atrium and Canyon
- Follows the rear of the existing landmark boundaries of the contributing buildings along 13<sup>th</sup> to recognize the decline of concentration in the contributing resources.
  - No buildings or features within the period of significance exist today, and the parking lot itself is not historic. Inclusion of the parking lot as a "buffer" is discouraged by NPS guidance.
- The southern boundary follows the midline of Boulder Creek, a contributing feature and visual barrier.

While this boundary includes areas, such as parts of Central Park, Broadway and 13<sup>th</sup> Street that are non-contributing, the grouping as a whole achieves significance within its historic context and the majority of the components that add to the district's historic character possess integrity.



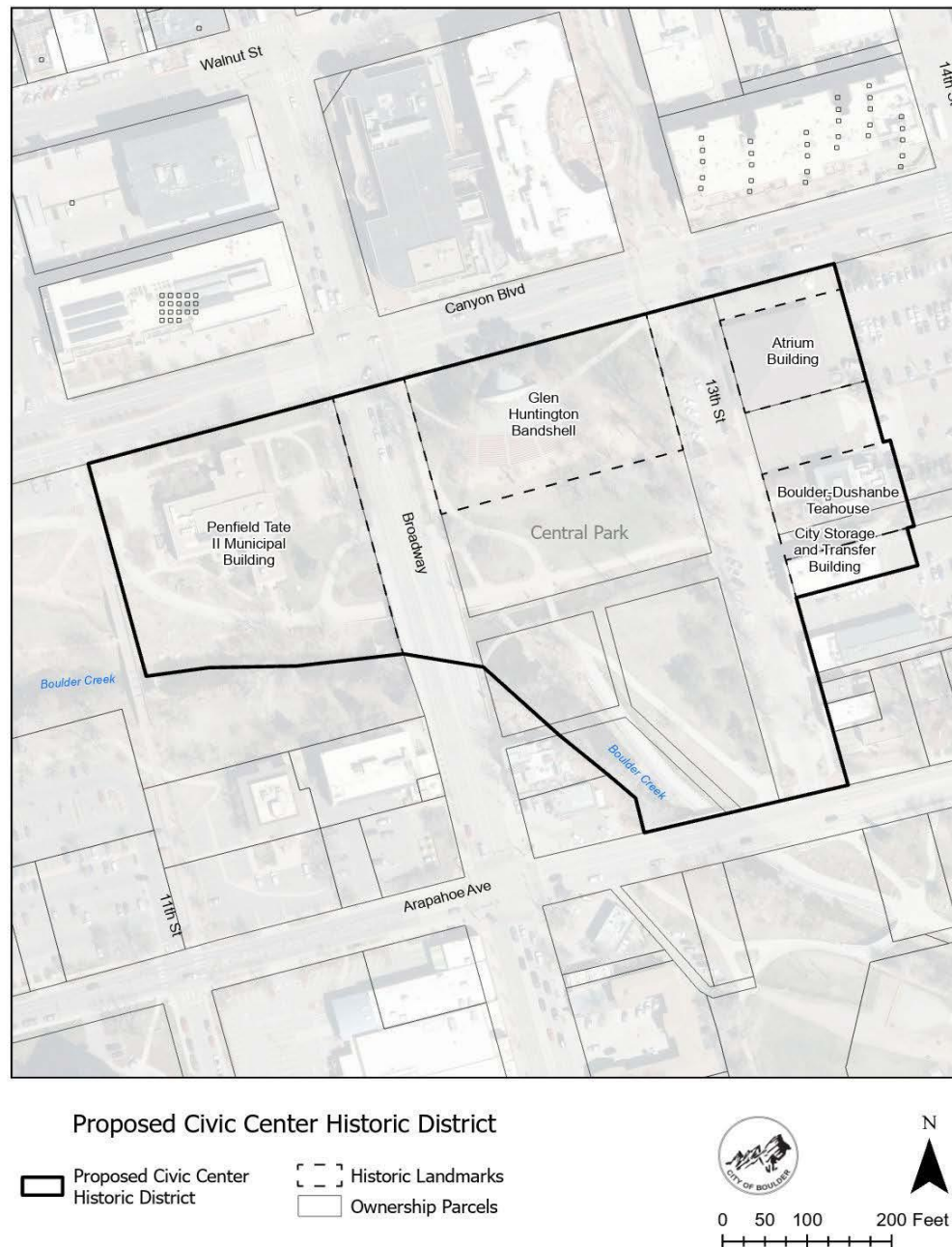


Figure 8. *Proposed historic district boundary recommended by staff and the Landmarks Board.*

***Boundary Recommended for Consideration by the Landmarks Board***

On Feb. 7, 2024, the Landmarks Board recommended that City Council consider expanding the boundary to include Block 11 (the area west of the 11<sup>th</sup> Street pedestrian

bridge to the Boulder Public Library plaza) to recognize the historical significance of the displaced residential area and its importance to the site of Boulder's first Black community. Additionally, the Landmarks Board voted to recommend to the City Council that it consider expanding the boundary to include the southern and western banks of Boulder Creek (see Figure 9).



Figure 9. *Proposed historic district boundary recommended by the Landmarks Board for consideration by City Council shown as a dashed and solid yellow line.*

The area of Block 11 suggested for inclusion in the expanded boundary was outside of the original application, and therefore did not receive the full research and analysis for historical significance, integrity, and boundary determination. Staff does not recommend expanding the boundary at this time as additional study would be required to fully evaluate Block 11. Staff recommends maintaining the proposed boundary described above in the previous section. Note that the ordinance could be amended at a later time to change the boundary of the district, as was done for the Downtown and Mapleton Hill historic districts.

The opportunity to recognize the Water Street neighborhood already exists as a portion of the area is included in the recommended boundary on what is currently the site of the Penfield Tate II Municipal Building. The history of the community that was displaced in the establishment of the park and municipal center is included in the documentation of the historic district.

In addition, the [Park Plan for the Civic Area](#) guiding principle, “Celebration of History & Assets” includes “Inclusive History: Preserve, reflect and celebrate the area's fully inclusive history (e.g., indigenous populations, mining, the railroad, Olmsted's linear park and landmarked structures)” and “Integration of History: Integrate history with arts, culture, local food, and any new structures or designs.” Recognizing the residents who lived here prior to the establishment of the municipal center and park can appropriately be considered and implemented with the Civic Area Phase 2 project.

## **DRAFT DESIGN GUIDELINE FRAMEWORK**

The Landmarks Board adopts design guidelines as administrative regulations to help facilitate the review of proposed changes within a district. While the guidelines allow for flexibility and interpretation, all approvals must be consistent with the standards found in [Section 9-11-18, B.R.C., 1981](#). If the Civic Area Historic District is designated, specific design guidelines would be developed to recognize the unique character of the area. These guidelines can be different for different parts of the district based on contributing and non-contributing features.

Staff formed a technical advisory group to involve the application group and city departments in the development of a framework for the draft design guidelines. Comprising representatives from Community Vitality, Facilities & Fleet, Parks & Recreation, Planning & Development Services and Public Works – Utilities, and representatives from the three applicant groups, the Technical Advisory Group met over the course of three meetings to create a draft design guideline framework. Representatives from other city departments, City Manager's Office, City Attorney's Office, Community & Engagement, Transportation & Mobility, chose to review the draft design guideline framework once complete rather than participate in the technical advisory group.

The framework (see [Attachment D: Draft Design Guideline Framework](#)) includes the intent and scope of the design guidelines, preliminary Table of Contents, and guiding principles. Staff chose to postpone the development of full design guidelines until after a final decision was made on the designation. The intent of the framework is to provide direction for reviewing alterations and for the development of district-specific design guidelines, should the district be designated.

The framework for the proposed historic district is attached for review. If the City Council designates the historic district, a separate project will commence to develop district-specific design guidelines with additional opportunities to provide input on and refine those guidelines prior to adoption, per [Chapter 1-4 "Rulemaking"](#) and [Chapter 9-11-24 "Landmarks Board and City Manager Authorized to Adopt Rules"](#).

## **PRELIMINARY CHARACTER-DEFINING FEATURES**

Character-defining features of the historic district will be determined through the development of the design guidelines. Preliminary contributing features to be further evaluated include the open and natural character of Boulder Creek, the Boulder Slough (note changes within the easement do not require historic preservation review), the urban street grid, each of the five individually landmarked structures and their settings, Central Park's open green with trees planted in groves and along the perimeter of the park, and the two State Champion Trees.

Preliminary non-contributing features may include the Sister Cities and 13<sup>th</sup> Street Plaza (including paving, artwork and stone walls), the Boulder Creek Path and associated bridge and railings, Broadway Bridge (reconstructed c. 2003), light fixtures and engraved boulders, the Gilbert White Flood Memorial, and the B-Cycle stations.

## **FINDINGS**

The Landmarks Board finds, based upon the application and evidence presented, that the proposed historic district designation is consistent with the purposes and standards of the Historic Preservation Ordinances Sections 9-11-1 and 9-11-2, B.R.C. 1981, in that:

1. The designation of the Civic Area Historic District will protect, enhance, and perpetuate an area reminiscent of a past era of history and preserve important examples of Boulder's historic architecture and site of historical interest.
2. The proposed designation will maintain an appropriate setting and environment for the site, and enhance property values, stabilize the neighborhood, promote tourist trade and interest, and foster knowledge of the city's living heritage.

## **ALTERNATIVES**

**Modify the Application:** The City Council may modify the historic district boundary and name.

**Deny the Application:** If the City Council finds the application does not meet the criteria for historic district designation, it would vote to deny the application. Should an application be disapproved, the same application may not be submitted for a period of one year.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment A – Ordinance 8627

Attachment B -- Public Input Received between October 16, 2023 and **March 6, 2024**

Attachment C -- [Letters Received between July 12, 2023 and \*\*March 6, 2024\*\*](#) (link)

Attachment D -- Draft Design Guideline Framework



ORDINANCE 8627

AN ORDINANCE DESIGNATING THE AREA AS SHOWN IN  
**EXHIBIT A**, TO BE KNOWN AS THE CIVIC AREA  
HISTORIC DISTRICT, AS A HISTORIC DISTRICT UNDER  
CHAPTER 9-11, "HISTORIC PRESERVATION," B.R.C. 1981;  
AND SETTING FORTH RELATED DETAILS

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BOULDER,  
COLORADO:

Section 1. The City Council enacts this Ordinance pursuant to its authority under Chapter 9-11, "Historic Preservation," B.R.C. 1981, to designate, as a historic district, an area, as depicted on **Exhibit A**, containing a number of buildings and sites having special character and historical, architectural, or aesthetic interest or value and constituting a distinct section of the city.

Section 2. The City Council finds that: a) on May 30, 2023, Historic Boulder, Inc., Friends of the Bandshell and Friends of the Teahouse submitted a historic district application for a portion of the Civic Area; b) on July 12, 2023, the Landmarks Board held a public hearing and adopted a resolution initiating the historic district designation process; c) on February 7, 2024, the Landmarks Board held a public hearing on the proposed designation and recommended that the City Council approve the proposed designation.

Section 3. The City Council also finds that upon public notice required by law, the City Council held a public hearing on the proposed designation on April 11, 2024, and upon the basis of the presentations at that hearing finds that the area does constitute a distinct section of the city

1 and possesses a special historical, architectural, and aesthetic interest or value warranting its  
2 designation as a historic district.

3       Section 4. The characteristics of the area that justify its designation as a historic district  
4 are: a) its historic significance for its association with numerous individuals of local significance,  
5 including Mollie Gordon, Jennie Johnson, Maryette Kinglsey, “Rocky Mountain” Joe Sturtevant,  
6 the Boulder City Improvement Association, and Penfield Tate II; the public function of the area as  
7 the symbolic, political, and municipal center of Boulder’s local government, and as the site of  
8 numerous social, cultural, and political events; for its significance in the history of Boulder’s park  
9 system development and its contribution to the social and cultural life of the city for more than a  
10 century; b) its architectural significance for its unique variety of distinct architectural and  
11 landscape styles spanning the 20th century; as the work of notable architects, designers and  
12 craftsmen, including Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., Saco R. DeBoer, Glen Huntington, James  
13 Hunter, Hobart Wagener, Lado Shanidze, Manon Khaidarov, Mirpulat Mirakhmatov and  
14 Abdoukodir (Kodir) Rakhimov; the skillful integration of design; and, c) its environmental  
15 significance for its planned and natural site characteristics, including the spatial relationship of the  
16 civic buildings and Central Park, Boulder Creek, landscape design and mature trees; and its  
17 prominence as an established and visual feature of the community.  
18  
19

20       Section 5. Private irrigation ditches run along and within the historic district boundary  
21 through which multiple decreed water rights are conveyed across the subject property. Three of  
22 these ditches, the North Boulder Farmers Ditch, the Boulder and Lefthand Ditch and the Boulder  
23 and White Rock Ditch, are co-located in a drainageway known as the Slough. In addition to the  
24 Slough ditches, the Smith and Goss Ditch is located within the historic district boundary. The  
25 diversion structures on Boulder Creek for all four ditches are also included in the historic district

boundary. The ditches were constructed in the late 1850s and early 1860s and their appurtenant operation and maintenance easements arose through construction and nearly 160 years of use. Although portions of these ditches are located within the historic district boundary, a landmark alteration certificate shall not be required for the operation, maintenance or replacement of the ditch or appurtenant structures, respectively, including any necessary repairs or improvements, so long as such activities are within the scope of the ditch easement.

Section 6. The City Council further finds that the foregoing historic district designation is necessary to promote the public health, safety, and welfare of the residents of the city.

Section 7. A new historic district is hereby created. Its official designation and name shall be “Civic Area Historic District” and it shall be hereafter so known. The area to be included in the district is as follows: All of the following lots in the blocks according to the recorded plats of Original Town of Boulder and Smith’s Grove on file in the Boulder County Clerk and Recorder’s Office, Colorado:

Original Town of Boulder Plat

Block 12 – All of Lots 1-6 and the portions of Lots 7-12 north of the midline of Boulder Creek

Block 13 – All of Lots 1-12

Block 14 – All of Lots 4-9

Smith’s Grove

Block 1 – All of Lots 3-7 and the portions of Lots 1-2 north of the south bank of Boulder Creek

Block 2 – All of Lot 1

And all public rights-of-way within the district boundaries.

The boundary of the district and the area included is portrayed on the attached **Exhibit A**.

Section 8. The City Council directs that the city manager gives prompt notice of this designation to the owners of the real property within the historic district and cause a copy of this Ordinance to be recorded as described in Subsection 9-11-6(d), B.R.C. 1981.

Section 9. The City Council deems it appropriate that this Ordinance be published by title only and orders that copies of this Ordinance be made available in the office of the City Clerk for public inspection and acquisition.

INTRODUCED, READ ON FIRST READING, AND ORDERED PUBLISHED BY  
TITLE ONLY this 21st day of March 2024.

Aaron Brockett,  
Mayor

Attest:

City Clerk

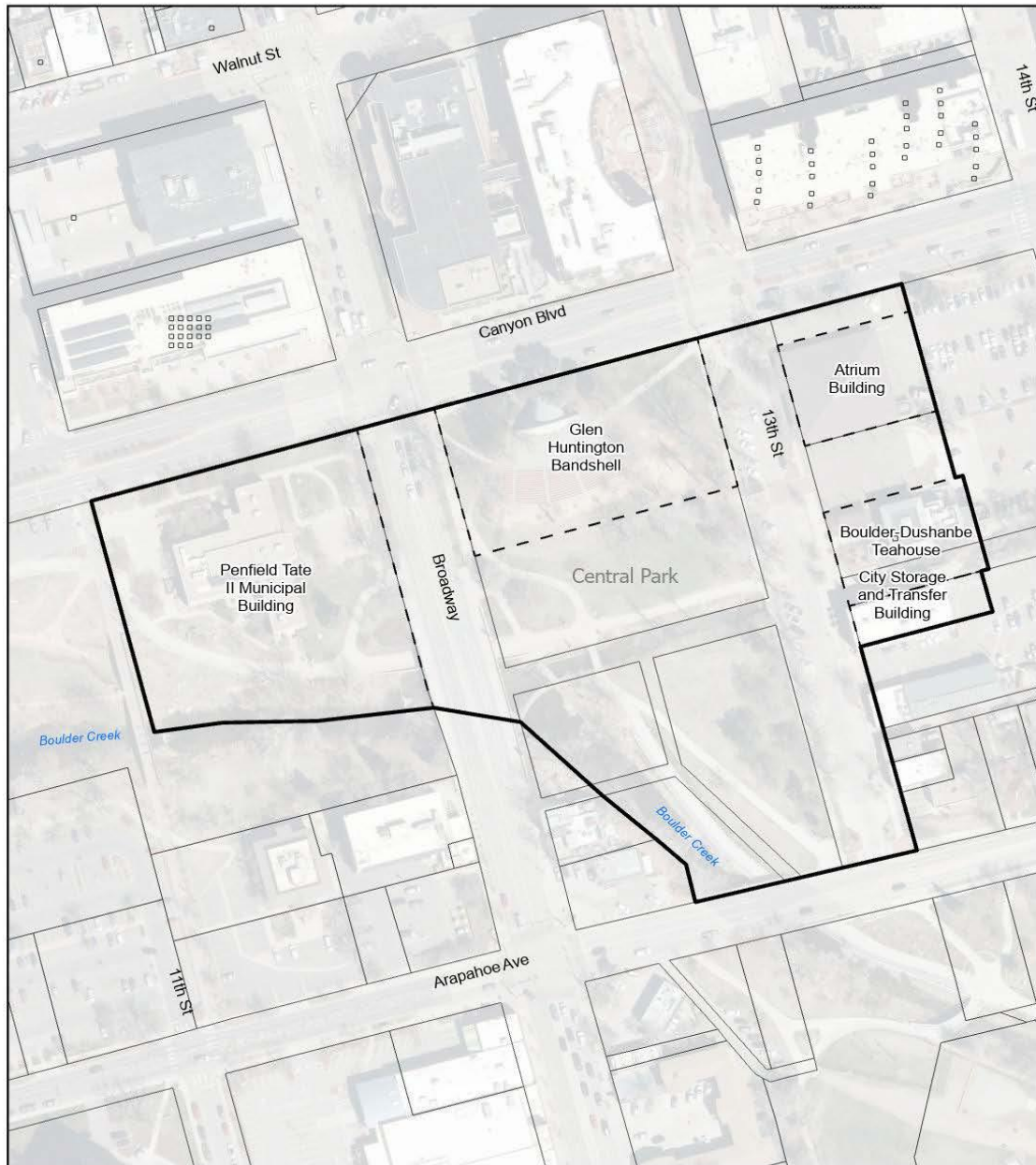
1 READ ON SECOND READING, PASSED AND ADOPTED this 11th day of April 2024.

2  
3  
4 \_\_\_\_\_  
5 Aaron Brockett,  
6 Mayor

7 Attest:

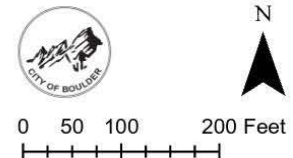
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**Exhibit A – Historic District Boundary Map**



**Proposed Civic Center Historic District**

- Proposed Civic Center Historic District
- Historic Landmarks
- Ownership Parcels



## Public Input Received - October 16, 2023 to April 3, 2024

### CIVIC AREA HISTORIC DISTRICT

#### *Online feedback (as of April 3, 2024)*

The project website has hosted an online form since Oct. 16, 2023 for community members to express their views on the proposed historic district.

Seventy-four people have provided feedback through this channel as of April 3, 2024. The project team recognizes that this is not a statistically valid sample for our community but it does reflect a range of views. The online form asked whether people support a designation.

Out of the 74 respondents:

- 49% *support* the designation
- 34% *do not support* the designation
- 17% *are unsure* if they support the designation.

The sections below summarize the main reasons provided as well as some supporting quotes. A table with the full list of input received is also provided.

#### 1. Out of those who support the designation, the following reasons have been provided:

- It's good for business and for tourism.
- Preservation is a valuable goal for our cities
- This area represents the best of Boulder (besides the mountain backdrop)
- It will help improve safety and allow people to use the spaces currently dominated by the unhoused and substance abusers
- Central park is important for community gatherings
- The history being told acknowledges the impacts on historically excluded peoples

*"Respect our Black History"*

*"Such a district will act as a deterrent against the spread of any radical changes..."*

*"Perhaps this newfound designation could also help drive some of the seedier elements of that area out of the downtown area (or at least to a place that is not so visible or beloved)."*

*"Why are we so eager to get rid of historical stories of Boulder? The Italians would never tear down an article of Art or History."*

*"Thank you to these organizations and the landmark committee for seeing the civic center as something that should be protected."*

*"It's very important that as Boulder continues to change, that we recognize and protect historic properties and areas in the city."*

*"The District will encourage tourism and economic spill-over will greatly benefit the adjacent business district on the Pearl Street Mall."*

#### 2. Out of those who do not support the designation, the following reasons have been provided:



- This area needs redevelopment and programming, not further preservation and restrictions.
- Parking lots are not historic. Affordable housing should be built on the parking lots.
- We need civic spaces that meet the needs of our community today.
- There is limited benefit of a district designation.
- The city should focus on other priorities.
- This is not aligned with the city's equity and climate goals.
- Not worthwhile to pursue a district until issues of unhoused and public safety are addressed in the area.

*"There is no benefit to landmarking the parking lots and lawn areas around these already landmarked buildings."*

*"I think we can recognize the history without making this a historic district that would make future improvements harder to complete."... "The stories and histories of the civic area can be expressed so creatively without the constraint of a district."*

*"The results are clear – landmarking these spaces has simply crystallized their nonfunctionality. Now it's [the bandshell] a relic that has little relevance to the performing arts."*

*"..the plan seems aimed at preserving Olmsted's exclusive version of this area...Why is his version of the use of this land the one that gets preserved? ...Why do three groups that don't include the communities or people with deeper historical ties to this area get to dictate the future of this area for generations to come?"*

*"If we are going to spend taxpayer money on this area, it should be done in a way that repairs past harms and oppressions, rather than preserve them."*

*"Please do not do this. It was a good intention in the past, but not now. Especially because the City owns and manages the resources. Our Downtown needs more cultural interest and creative facilities that expand water related experience, entertainment, art and robust and diverse markets. But a HD designation at this point is a constraint."*

*"Pointless to do this until the issues around homelessness and safety are addressed – otherwise the designation is pointless window dressing and propaganda."*

*"Are you spending all of this money for the homeless to have a beautiful place to occupy?"*

3. Out of those who are not sure if they support the designation, the following reasons have been provided:

- Need more information and understanding of the impacts
- Worried that significant public resources would be spent here with little return
- Skeptical that the collection of disjointed buildings warrants designation of a historic district
- Would support if the use of current buildings can be reimagined
- Worried that the designation glosses over the presence of unhoused in the area and the impact on safety and access to this area for the general public
- Worried that unless the challenges with the unhoused and substance abuse onsite are addressed, the positive impacts of a historic district cannot be realized
- Desire for the city to prioritize public safety

*"I oppose the idea if the inclusion of certain buildings within the proposed historic district will prevent the possibility of replacing or reimagining some of the buildings within that district [reference Penfield Tate and Atrium]."*

*"As far as I know the specific area on the map, it's a lot of random generic buildings. If anything, Pearl St fits the bill and we already have that."*

*"One thing everybody hates, is a grand expenditure of resources on something that is not terribly important."*

*"And I think as long as there are homeless encampments along that whole park area- which seem to be growing – it will never be a vibrant destination. Fact."*

*"If the area was cleaned and made safe I would support the designation."*

*"Advertising and promoting this area will increase the danger to citizens and visitors until this area is managed and drugs are banned from these sites."*

*"No desire to preserve the lawless, degraded and dangerous place this area has become."*

*"Total disconnect between lack of care and lack of law enforcement in downtown civic areas and this effort to create historical designation of an area the City has allowed to become trashed and dangerous....Is this an effort to obfuscate and detract from working on fixing the problem?"*

**Table 1** is the full list of input received through the online form.

**Table 1 Feedback from the online form (as of Mar. 20, 2024)**

No.	Do you support the proposed civic area historic district?	Please explain the reason for your selection.	Please share any other concerns, questions or comments you have related to this proposed designation.
1	Yes	Respect our Black history	Boulder's black history has been swept under the rug AGAIN. This is another example of the City trying to do that. A historic district will make our black history always visible and is so important. The reporting lab article from April 2 is clear that the City has ignored this history for 100 years and will continue to unless it is TOLD to do something different. Tell the Parks Department to start respecting our black history.
2	Yes	I am Joe Stepanek and my wife is Caroline Holmes Stepanek - we live in an historic family home - twice land marked . We have a long time connection to the Central Park neighborhood and we strongly support the proposed Historic District in the civic center area. My involvement in the neighborhood centers on the Sister Cities and the establishment of the Tea House. They are a tangible manifestation of Boulder's commitment to peaceful relations in our community and beyond. I believe the proposed new Historic District would expand on this work to create bridges of understanding among diverse populations. The buildings and park areas illustrate an almost continuous timeline of the history of Boulder. The district would educate about the stories of disenfranchised people in this area including indigenous people, Black Americans, and impoverished citizens. The writings on the wall of our Muni Building says it well..."Promoting peace through mutual respect, understanding and cooperation, one individual, one community at a time." Two of the buildings in the proposed historic district manifest this promise of peace – the Municipal Building with its Sister Cities Plaza, and the Dushanbe Teahouse from a former Soviet country, Tajikistan. These structures contribute to our history, to peace, and support the arts for tourism and for business. Their linkage with the other properties in the proposed historic district would create an even more powerful message of hope and peace. Boulder is very fortunate that the city has been good stewards of the properties in this neighborhood. Creating a historic district here would reinforce the city's commitment to peace, diversity, the arts, to business and to preservation. Riches in diversity - yes – with enjoyment and respect. I strongly support this proposed Historic District. Joe Stpanek	
3	Yes	The area represents an important part of Boulder's civic history and should be recognized as significant to the history of our city.	

No.	Do you support the proposed civic area historic district?	Please explain the reason for your selection.	Please share any other concerns, questions or comments you have related to this proposed designation.
4	Yes	The current use of this space is a blight on the city. The bandshell was created as a civic space for the community and now it's a homeless gathering space in the middle of downtown.	We want this area reclaimed for city use instead of the homeless, drug-addled mess that it is currently. If, by designating this area as an historic district, it means that it will become a safe, clean area for use by tax paying citizens, then this designation will be great for the city.
5	Yes	Creating the Civic Area historic district will promote valuable historic preservation of buildings and places that are highly valued by the people of Boulder. The District will also continue to encourage public engagement and community interaction in a place that is much loved by Boulder citizens. The District will encourage tourism and economic spill-over will greatly benefit the adjacent business district on the Pearl Street mall. The Bandshell is highly valued by Boulder citizens including the existing park surrounding it and the important buildings surrounding the park.	The Civic Area Historic District will prevent development that would contribute to uncomfortable density that further creates more air pollution and contributes to global warming. Preserving the park and surrounding area as a District will assure that future generations of Boulderites can enjoy a quality of life that the civic area has afforded many, many prior generations of Boulder citizens.
6	Yes	It's very important that as Boulder continues to change, that we recognize and protect historic properties and areas in the city.	
7	Yes	These buildings need to be included in order to save the character of the area.	
8	Yes	Civic Park is a valuable part of Boulder history.	This area has an important history and acts as a timeline for the city. Would be cool to display Olmsted's original design in the park.
9	Yes	The proposed site is both of historic and environmental importance	I am writing in support of the proposal because the area should be preserved and protected from any further development especially that which was approved for the property on which the Dark Horse sits. In addition, the park area has the potential to be a flood plain as happened in the

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			1894 flood so there should be no development there as well. It's happened before and it could happen again.
10	Yes	Hopefully the historic district status will mean more enforcement	Concerned that the designation will not make any difference with enforcement
11	Yes	Historic Districts are support tourism and is good for business.	
12	No	A lot of this area needs to be redeveloped. Too many parking lots and empty buildings.	Really need to build affordable housing on the parking lots.
13	Yes	It's historic, and it reflects a Boulder that so many of us wish were still there. Such a district will act as a deterrent against the spread of any radical changes to a place that was already perfect.	Perhaps this newfound designation could also help drive some of the seedier elements of that area out of the downtown area (or at least to a place that is not so visible or beloved).
14	Yes	It is vital to preserve the history of Boulder and remember all of those who came before us.	

No.	Do you support the proposed civic area historic district?	Please explain the reason for your selection.	Please share any other concerns, questions or comments you have related to this proposed designation.
15	Yes	Central Park plays a huge role in Community Gatherings	
16	Yes	I remember going to the Bandshell as a child. There use to be a train engine there, that just amazed me. Why are we so eager to get rid of historical stories of Boulder? The Italians would never tear down an article of Art or History.	<a href="https://youtu.be/xevBo6gfafA?si=4k4LYPwLr0uxVpnJ">https://youtu.be/xevBo6gfafA?si=4k4LYPwLr0uxVpnJ</a> I suggest you watch this video done by Denver CBS on the Huntington Bandshell.
17	No	It's a terrible idea...	<p>This is just an extension of PLAN's nimby reaction to the Civic Area Plan which contemplated improvements and construction of new buildings in the area to make space for civic uses such as an indoor farmers market...landmarking the bandshell, seats, atrium building, etc is a non-sensical approach to making civic spaces that can meet the needs of our community. The results are clear - landmarking these spaces has simply crystalized their nonfunctionally. When the city met with users of the bandshell, the main request was to add green room space. By moving it and adding that space, it could have had life. Now it's a relic that has little relevance to the performing arts.</p> <p>There is no benefit to landmarking the parking lots and lawn areas around these already landmarked buildings.</p>
18	No	I think we can recognize the history without making this a historic district that would make future improvements harder to complete.	
19	Yes	It has so much history and really represents the best part of Boulder besides the mountain backdrop.	
20	Yes	The buildings to be included in the historic district, because of their significance, need to have landmark protection.	

No.	Do you support the proposed civic area historic district?	Please explain the reason for your selection.	Please share any other concerns, questions or comments you have related to this proposed designation.
21	No	Not consistent with the city's equity and climate goals	<p>This area spent far more time in the hands of the Indigenous people who had stewarded it since time immemorial. After the Indigenous people were forcibly removed from their land, this area was dominated by workers, low-income people, and people of color.</p> <p>Yet the plan seems aimed at preserving Olmsted's exclusive version of this area. Olmsted is a noted racist whose plans for this area led to the displacement of those who had long used it for shelter, gathering, and other purposes. Why is his version of the use of this land the one that gets preserved? Why has there apparently been no input from BIPOC people and especially from those with much deeper ties to this area than any non-Indigenous people here now on the creation of this historic district? Why do three groups that don't include the communities or people with deeper historical ties to this area get to dictate the future of this area for generations to come? How does memorializing a racist's vision of Boulder's civic area align, created through traumatic displacement of Indigenous people, poor people and people of color, mesh with our city's racial equity goals?</p> <p>People from groups that have been and continue to be traumatized by displacement from this area ought to be the ones deciding how this area is used. Resources spent creating a historical area would be better used offering housing support or reparations to the descendants of those displaced by Olmsted's vision of a neat and tidy area that destroyed natural ecosystems and excluded BIPOC residents, low income people, and laborers.</p> <p>If we are going to spend taxpayer money on this area, it should be done in a way that repairs past harms and oppressions, rather than preserves them.</p>



No.	Do you support the proposed civic area historic district?	Please explain the reason for your selection.	Please share any other concerns, questions or comments you have related to this proposed designation.
22	Not sure	Is that area really "historic"?	<p>It sounds like Boulder just wants to have a "historic district" like other cities. Historic districts are usually a focal destination for restaurants, shopping, walking. As far as I know the specific area on the map, it's a lot of random generic buildings. If anything, Pearl St fits the bill and we already have that. Boulder has MANY other things that could use improvement and development. One thing everybody hates, is a grand expenditure of resources on something that is not terribly important.</p> <p>And I think as long as there are homeless encampments along that whole park area - which seem to be growing - it will never be a vibrant destination. Fact.</p> <p>I think the band shell should be demolished (it's small, dirty, inadequate, and how often is it really used?) and a bigger stage area could be established for outdoor events.</p>
23	No	<p>This area has so many opportunities for redevelopment that can anchor a variety of community focused and cultural mixed uses. Establishing a vital and creative mixed use East Bookend will strengthen the urban downtown. By establishing a historic district it will prevent so many good things for an equitable downtown. The bandshell influence along the public front door to Boulder is an underwhelming civic experience. The stories and histories of the civic area can be expressed so creatively without the constraint of a district.</p>	<p>Please do not do this. It was a good intention in the past, but not now. Especially because the City owns and manages the resources. Our downtown needs more cultural interest and creative facilities that expand water related experiences, entertainment, art and robust and diverse markets. But a HD designation at this point is a constraint.</p>

No.	Do you support the proposed civic area historic district?	Please explain the reason for your selection.	Please share any other concerns, questions or comments you have related to this proposed designation.
24	No	Why designate parking lots as historic?	Most of the block between 13th St and 14th St is parking lots, which makes that block unworthy of designation as a historic district, particularly when the city can just landmark the existing buildings. Better to prioritize filling in those unattractive empty spaces with something useful (housing would be nice) rather than make it harder to develop anything by creating another historic district. Also, the Atrium building wasn't worthy of being landmarked, doubling down on that would compound the mistake.
25	No	This area needs redevelopment and programming, not further restrictions on use	Please invest in public use--including programming, infrastructure and public safety--in this area.
26	No	This area is TRASHED - totally unsafe currently - certainly no longer "historic"	Pointless to do this until the issues around homelessness and safety are addressed - otherwise this designation is pointless window dressing and propaganda.
27	No	Not until it is safe and the	
28	Not sure	Concern for safety of area given drug use and resulting violent behaviors	I have great concern over lack of acknowledgment that this area is unsafe to visit and enjoy based on out of control drug use and aggression of people on meth and similar stimulants that cause aggression. Advertising and promoting this area will increase the danger to citizens and visitors until this area is managed and drugs are banned from these sites. If the area was cleaned and made safe I would support the designation. The history provided in the report is very beautiful and well done.
29	No	no support until the area is safe on an ongoing basis.	The civic area is disgusting and unsafe. All this beautiful accumulation of history yet, for the past few years, it has turned into a sh*thole with the City's blessing. The intersection of Broadway & Canyon, through which nearly every visitor to Boulder passes, is an embarrassment. Do better and stop normalizing the situation.

No.	Do you support the proposed civic area historic district?	Please explain the reason for your selection.	Please share any other concerns, questions or comments you have related to this proposed designation.
30	Yes	Because hopefully if this happens, the area will be cleaned up and I can return to walking along the Boulder Creek in that area, as well as bringing guest and children to play.	The sooner the better
31	No	Are you spending all this money for the homeless to have a beautiful place to occupy?	As a citizen of Boulder for over 50 yrs I do resent the intimidation I feel when I want to enjoy our lovely river walks. I am not referring to those who are unfortunate in losing their homes, I am referring to those who live that life by choice. They delight in getting as much as they can from society for free, as you well know. They regularly harrass the Boulder High students coming to and from school on their bikes, as you also well know. Untill you figure out a way to create these wonderful spaces for us the citizens to enjoy, why spend all that tax money?
32	No	This area is currently an embarrassment to the city, designating as Historic will only elevate the hypocrisy in how this area is being managed	This area is a complete embarrassment, one of many black eyes on the city of Boulder. Central Park is home to open drug use, open defecation, regular drug overdoses, a multitude of encampments, harassments, physical altercation, etc. etc. Designating as "Historic" may lead residents and visitors coming to the area under the presumption there is some significance/beauty to the area, cultural relevance, or just an enjoyable site with something to be gained (historical perspective). Visiting the area will not fulfill any of these things interests and will likely lead to visitors leaving the area with a less than stellar view of Boulder. Until the city takes a proactive approach to cleaning and maintaining any of the public spaces I am not in support of any of the efforts of this city to designate or elevate our public spaces to anything other than what they are, unsafe and unsanitary areas much of the public chooses to avoid.

No.	Do you support the proposed civic area historic district?	Please explain the reason for your selection.	Please share any other concerns, questions or comments you have related to this proposed designation.
33	Not sure	I no longer feel safe in most of our public spaces and have stop enjoying our public spaces. I used to love taking my kids to Pearl Street, but we have been harassed by drug addicts (been yelled at) and the public bathrooms are not accessible (as meth users use these public spaces). We also witness someone defecating on Spruce Street. A civic area would not be enjoyed by most given that our public safety is precarious!	The City's efforts need to prioritize public safety so that ALL can enjoy our public areas. I don't see how a civic area wouldn't just be plagued with drug addicts and unhoused citizens.
34	No	Get your priorities straight. This town is pathetic nowadays.	How can this even be a consideration with the rampant meth, fentanyl, and violent crime that has plagued this area (and entire town). Needles all over the place. Feces in the river that's covered in trash. You guys really think meth addicts need affordable housing? Addicts need treatment, not housing. Addiction is the root of all of the problems here, and in 15 years of living here I'm repulsed by it nowadays. As a business owner I pay an ungodly amount of taxes and I can't even comfortably take my son to the majority of places downtown. People using meth in public bathrooms. Pathetic. The law only applies to taxpayers. Park your car and your parking goes 3 minutes over, you have a ticket within seconds. Meanwhile right around the corner a meth head is committing grand larceny and BPD just shrugs it off - back to harassing skateboarders and taxpayers. Your priorities are so far from reality. Everyone in Boulder is so fed up with this crap.
35	Not sure	Will the designation insure that regular citizens can use it safely?? And the city will stop prioritizing the use of the are to the meth / fent head zombies that terrorize the passerbys?	This area has been in rapid decline the last couple of years- open drug use, sex, violence, trashing of the land and structures. I don't go down there any more due to the lack of safety. Are you going to clean it up? have security guards? eliminate drug use? eliminate camping? pick up needles? feces? it is absolutely disgusting what has happened the this city in the last 30 plus years.

No.	Do you support the proposed civic area historic district?	Please explain the reason for your selection.	Please share any other concerns, questions or comments you have related to this proposed designation.
36	Not sure	Only if the area is first returned to a safe, clean and actual civic place. No desire to preserve the lawless, degraded and dangerous place this area has become.	Total disconnect between lack of care and lack of law enforcement in downtown civic areas and this effort to create historical designation of an area the City has allowed to become trashed and dangerous. It does not make sense that resources are being expended for this type of designation without first fixing it. Is this an intentional effort to obfuscate and detract from working on fixing the problem?
37	Yes	to preserve the beauty of our civic center, and prevent the area from being turned into dense concrete apartment, blocks, or a larger, drug-filled homeless encampment	<p>Concerns: open air meth and fentanyl use. Encampments. Propane tank fires. Stabbings and shootings. Clean up this area. It's a disgrace.</p> <p>The current council majority that opposes the police and cleanup resources required to keep this area safe are turning Boulder into a dump.</p> <p>Thank you to these organizations and the landmark committee for seeing the civic center as something that should be protected.</p>

No.	Do you support the proposed civic area historic district?	Please explain the reason for your selection.	Please share any other concerns, questions or comments you have related to this proposed designation.
38	No	The designation totally ignores the current situation in this area: that citizens actively avoid the area due to crime and harrassment by transients.	<p>I and my neighbors with whom I have spoken are deeply offended by this. The city spends my time and money on this designation, but not on the unsafe coniditions there??? I am outraged by your tone deafness.</p> <p>This tells me my city staff are more effective with the past than the present.</p> <p>I am so sorry to see the decline in our city staff and elected officials mirroring the decline in our public spaces.</p> <p>I am now motivated -- after many years of support -- to work for an entirely new roster of all of you.</p> <p>You are supposed to LEAD.</p>

No.	Do you support the proposed civic area historic district?	Please explain the reason for your selection.	Please share any other concerns, questions or comments you have related to this proposed designation.
39	Not sure	I oppose the idea if the inclusion of certain buildings within the proposed the historic district will prevent the possibility of replacing or re-imagining some of the buildings withing that district.	<p>It is clear to me that there are two problematic buildings within the district boundary:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The current functions of the Pennfield Tate building should be moved to the Western City Campus on Broadway, as that campus is built. Doing so will allow the Pennfield Tate location to be re-imagined or re-built into a facility that can serve various new public functions - including the function as a central hub for festivals held within the district boundary.</li> <li>2. The current functions of the Atrium building should also be moved to the new Western City Campus on Broadway, as that campus is built. This would allow the Atrium location to be re-imagined or re-built as a year-round indoor/outdoor Boulder Farmers Market facility. Imagine a facility at the Atrium location with large opening overhead doors - open during the warmer months - and closed in the colder months - enabling a year-round Farmer's Market. Look to the success of the Santa Fe, NM Farmer's Market as a great example of such a facility.</li> </ol>
40	No	The area doesn't feel special anymore due to safety concerns.	<p>Would designation make it much more difficult and expensive for tax payers anytime a project occurs within the "landmark"?  Will the "landmark" receive the extra help it already needs in terms of encampments and feeling safe?  Once it becomes a "landmark", are there elements that would be restored to represent or educate visitors on the history of the area (not just a few signs)?  How will the "landmark" designation work with the next phase of the implementation of the Parks department vision for the area?  What has recently been implemented seems to conflict with "landmark" implementation as well as other department visions for the future.</p>



No.	Do you support the proposed civic area historic district?	Please explain the reason for your selection.	Please share any other concerns, questions or comments you have related to this proposed designation.
41	Yes	After reading the StoryMap, it's apparent that the area was deliberately created. Unlike some other parks in Boulder where the land was donated, this was a decision by city leaders to make this space. It's the first time I've heard of Boulder acknowledging that the city displaced residents (a bit like Denver's Auraria neighborhood) and I think the district is a good way to acknowledge that.	
42	Not sure	I support designation but with re-build of music/performing arts structure/infrastructure.	I am in full support of designating this area Historic, with the caveat that we have the ability to upgrade the amphitheater design and infrastructure. We seem to be one of only a few towns in the state that has not invested in an outdoor performance area. This is low hanging fruit. I want to see a world-class outdoor music/performing arts stage and have the current "seating" area leveled, expanding all the way out across the ditch into our other grassy area so folks can spread out and enjoy live events under our beautiful trees and waterways. As it currently is, we don't have a lot of support from folks because the structure, sound quality, dance area, bathrooms/services, etc are so outdated. I can list a dozen small towns within a few hours drive from here who have invested in a complex and they thrive throughout the season. Please take some of the \$ we now have designated for the arts and start planning. go see all these other towns where us Boulderites go to enjoy outdoor entertainment. We'd sure like to stay in our town and enjoy these events.
43	Yes	Central part of Boulder - community, culture, and architecture	
44	No	The area is riddled with open drug use, addicts, encampments, overdoses- where do you propose these people go? They won't magically disappear after you dumps millions of tax dollars into this. And for who? I don't even go to that area anymore due to the needles and harrassment by those who live on the banks of the creek.	See above. This is a big waste of money- no mention of the mess down there? Are you all BLIND? That money would be better spent on inpatient rehab treatment hospital for these people with mental health/ addiction disorder.

No.	Do you support the proposed civic area historic district?	Please explain the reason for your selection.	Please share any other concerns, questions or comments you have related to this proposed designation.
45	Yes	This area is the historic heart of the Boulder community. It has a rich and long history that has lessons that are relevant to our lives today. It supports the City's Comp Plan and 2015 Civic Area Masterplan to celebrate important city owned historic places. The history here is inclusive of under-represented minority populations of Indigenous, Black and LGBTQ people. It is a positive, 'feel-good' action that can be accomplished	<p>1) History has lessons for the issue of homelessness in the Park and the creation of this district. There have been transient people and illegal activities off and on here since the 1880's. Previous responses by the city government have been creating a shelter that was tied with a work program at the "Poor Farm", higher levels of policing, sweeps of the Park to clear it for community festivals, creation of homeless shelters, counseling services for homeless people and more. Some versions of these historic policies may be relevant today.</p> <p>2) The creation of this historic district will shine even more attention on the problems in the civic area by bringing more understanding of the history of the use of the park and the high value as the heart of the Boulder Community.</p> <p>3) The process of reviewing the merits of this historic district, has required that every department of the City has had to be consulted for impacts to their responsibilities. So while this historic district has no direct connection to social welfare programs, it has reinforced the discussion within the government about Central Park and homelessness.</p>
46	Yes	I am 100% in favor of creating the Civic Center Historic District. This area is a repository of Boulder history back in time, not only the last 200 years of Americans settling the area but also through centuries of indigenous peoples. What a gift to Boulder and from Boulder to the nation to specify this as an Historic sight!	
47	Yes	LET'S PRESERVE WHAT WE ALREADY HAVE. And a designation will make it all the better!	For years our visits to the area always seem to result in a feeling that the area is one of neglect, and it "doesn't belong". We have the makings of a keystone to the entire downtown area, by preserving what we have, and the conviction of making it better. Your support is appreciated.
48	Yes	On so many "top places to live today lists" list Boulder as one of the top places. The proposed civic area historic district would help to preserve part of the unique aspects of our City. In many ways this area becomes part of the soul of Boulder. It should be protected lest if destroyed Boulder would become just another, uninteresting city.	

No.	Do you support the proposed civic area historic district?	Please explain the reason for your selection.	Please share any other concerns, questions or comments you have related to this proposed designation.
49	No	I believe this will conflict with future development	How will this help the issues we face in this area currently?
50	No	Nothing in the proposed district that's not already landmarked seems all that sacred to me. I like change and transformation and the Civic Area (especially the bandshell) is ripe for transformation.	The bandshell was built when the population of Boulder was nearly 13,000. Today we should be thinking about serving 10 times as many people. Ogden, Utah, as an example, has a smaller population (86k) but benefits from an awesome downtown outdoor amphitheater that hosts bands like the Flaming Lips, Death Cab For Cutie, Bon Iver, Beck, etc. Yes we have other venues in Boulder that could attract these artists...but certainly not downtown and certainly not in the outdated, undersized bandshell. It should be moved to a neighborhood park like Howard Heuston or Foothills Community Park.
51	Yes	Benefits the community	<p>Heritage Preservation: Historic districts protect the community's architectural and cultural heritage, ensuring future generations can learn from and appreciate their history.</p> <p>Identity and Sense of Place: These districts contribute to the unique identity of a community, fostering a connection between residents and their surroundings.</p> <p>Economic Growth: Preservation efforts attract tourism, increase property values, and support local businesses, thereby stimulating economic development.</p> <p>Environmental Sustainability: Rehabilitating historic buildings is more environmentally sustainable than new construction, reducing resource consumption and waste.</p> <p>Quality of Life: Historic districts offer pedestrian-friendly streetscapes and cultural amenities that enhance residents' quality of life.</p>

No.	Do you support the proposed civic area historic district?	Please explain the reason for your selection.	Please share any other concerns, questions or comments you have related to this proposed designation.
52	No	THE unhoused get enough from us already. No one I know feels safe there	It is an unsafe area and improving it will not change that. This is clearly seen from the last development.
53	Not sure	It seems like money might be better spent towards helping all Boulder citizens to get basic needs met.	So-called development has created a community in which many alternatives no longer exist for buying clothing, utensils for cooking food, bed and bath linens, and the like. Many retail stores on the Pearl Street Mall and 29th street are too expensive and target a much too narrow population. This results in tax dollars for all projects being lost because we residents have no alternatives but to either shop in another community or online. In a larger sense this narrow vision excludes those in the community who don't fit in the bullseye of the marketing target. I believe it's more important to address this exclusion than to celebrate building additional expensive housing, adding more quick fast food options to the continuous turnover, adding more recreational opportunities and the attendant required maintenance. If all of this "development" is meant to attract more people, residents and visitors alike, who MIGHT spend taxable dollars, I suggest that the benefits to providing the above-mentioned retail options would, over time, result in more taxable dollars being spent in the City of Boulder.
54	Yes	Boulder is being ruined by bad city planning and letting developers make big decisions such as how tall buildings can be and what the architecture looks like	
55	Yes	We need more regulation about what developers can and can't do in Boulder to preserve the historic character of the city, which is disappearing.	
56	Not sure	I want to be able to showcase the history of the area (think Indigenous culture) AND also create something that's vibrant for our future...and will those things collide??	See above

No.	Do you support the proposed civic area historic district?	Please explain the reason for your selection.	Please share any other concerns, questions or comments you have related to this proposed designation.
57	No	This area is unsafe, as you well know. It is riddled with human feces, tents, needles, violence. I am guessing you beleive this project will draw more people to a place that has been overrun with drug addicts and feels exceptionally unsafe to the majority of the population. I'm sorry but I am at a loss as to what is going on here. Spend my money on this: clean up this area, enforce laws and sentences, make the public areas safe for hardworking, extremely high tax paying citizens, again. Help those who want help, fund those programs! Arrest and help the others through programs that the State helps pay for. Why are you even contemplating this expenditure? Do you spend any time down there? We have bigger fish to fry. Please, for the love of god, come to your senses and do the right things FIRST.	This area is unsafe, as you well know. It is riddled with human feces, tents, needles, violence. I am guessing you beleive this project will draw more people to a place that has been overrun with drug addicts and feels exceptionally unsafe to the majority of the population. I'm sorry but I am at a loss as to what is going on here. Spend my money on this: clean up this area, enforce laws and sentences, make the public areas safe for hardworking, extremely high tax paying citizens, again. Help those who want help, fund those programs! Arrest and help the others through programs that the State helps pay for. Why are you even contemplating this expenditure? Do you spend any time down there? We have bigger fish to fry. Please, for the love of god, come to your senses and do the right things FIRST.
58	No	The city has already torn up and rebuilt the entire area along the Creek from the Library to the Teahouse during 2016-19 and spent millions and now wants to redo it again. Meanwhile, we have many miles of continuous potholes which are especially bad for bikes without suspensions trying to dodge potholes in traffic. and many other basic service problems.	
59	Yes	Plenty of historic places and buildings. Need to remember where Boulder came from	Please do not install any more artwork similar to the square steel structures near the north library area. They are not my idea of art.
60	No	Why? It adds another layer of bureaucracy, slowing processes, requires more staff resources and will limit creativity.	<p>When the city owns the buildings and they are landmarked, that seems like more than enough restrictions. I understand the district would require common architectural features if new development happens.</p> <p>What's common about the atrium, teahouse, bandshell, &amp; museum? If the area was a historic district back when the Teahouse was built, would the district have stopped the Teahouse building or at least substantially modified it?</p>

No.	Do you support the proposed civic area historic district?	Please explain the reason for your selection.	Please share any other concerns, questions or comments you have related to this proposed designation.
61	Yes	We need a multicultural community center run by People of Color for people of color.	<p>these are ideas from people of color in the community and they needed to be honored:</p> <p>You must engage the people who have been left out of the process and here is some of their input.</p> <p>is a way to use land back action for Indigenous people,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provides inexpensive or free spaces for gatherings, exhibits, and performances,</li> <li>• truly welcomes and includes BIPOC communities with concrete and tangible support,</li> <li>• leverages universal design to create spaces that are accessible to neurotypical, neurodivergent, and people with different abilities,</li> <li>• addresses increasing precarity in the community,</li> <li>• and is a visible demonstration of Boulder's commitment to inclusion that is easily found by all residents, visitors and newcomers.</li> </ul>
62	Yes	Having a civic gathering space is important to the community vitality	For the civic area to be an inclusive, safe and accessible part of Boulder and for the community to fully enjoy the space. there is a dire need for more seating and picnic tables that accommodate everyone's mobility and accessibility needs. Additionally please leave the unhoused folks alone, forcing people to move around is cruel. Just let them be so they can focus on taking care of themselves rather than being worried that people are going to tear down their homes
63	Not sure	Safety, Accessibility and parking challenges that would impact use	
64	No	I'm concerned making it a historic district won't allow the city to make changes needed to improve the civic area.	Making a historic district means less flexibility in creating a modern design that addresses modern issues in the space.

No.	Do you support the proposed civic area historic district?	Please explain the reason for your selection.	Please share any other concerns, questions or comments you have related to this proposed designation.
65	Yes	To preserve historic buildings/structures and the surrounding landscapes and trees	Central Park has many old historic trees that date back to the 1924 Olmstead Brothers' original landscape plan. These trees should be preserved as part of the proposed historic district and protected during construction of Phase Two of the Civic Area master plan.
66	Not sure	It's not clear what the exact plan includes.	I would object to any changes to Boulder Creek that included changing its natural course and any channelizing. The area is fine as it is.
67	Not sure	I don't understand what the advantage of forming a Civic Area Historic District would be, considering that the buildings and amenities in the area will most certainly need updating and/or repurposing in the near future.	I would like to see a return to the conversation about creating a permanent, year-round market hall for the Boulder Farmers Market where the Atrium building now stands, or in the space between the Atrium building and the Dushanbe Teahouse. If the area is given historic district status, it may be challenging to improve and change it over time.
68	Yes	The area seems neglected by the city.	We were hoping the safe4kids ballot initiative would be a victory for the taxpayers. Many avoid the area for obvious reasons.
69	Yes	Having lost the growth battle we need to focus on improving what is left. BTW, I'd change the name from Historic Distric to something else. Nothing proudly historic about it. It is a wonderful chunk of property but it is not for historic value.	Take out the bandshell and seating. I've lived here for 50 years... never seen a concert there. And I would if there was ever one scheduled. Seems to attract unwanted travelers. Scary for families and really for all residents. Bring the train engine back.  Boulder has great bike paths. Literally some of the best in North America. Need to figure out how to solve northsouth challenges. Getting from downtown to hill is flatout dangerous and difficult.
70	Not sure	It won't affect me that much.	I've lived here since 1960 but hardly ever go down town anymore. Too expensive. No place to park - parking garages require a cell phone which I do not own so I cannot use those. I used to go downtown all the time, but aging and economics have marginalized me.



No.	Do you support the proposed civic area historic district?	Please explain the reason for your selection.	Please share any other concerns, questions or comments you have related to this proposed designation.
71	No	The Tea House and BMOCA building are already landmarked. Keep and celebrate those while embracing a new and vibrant future that includes housing, a market building and other uses.	The move to create a historic district is misguided. This area needs love, attention, investment and new life -- not an approach that is focused on preserving its historic dysfunction and mediocrity. Keep what's great, and reimagine what isn't. Embrace the possible and have the faith in yourselves to make decisions that will create the loved places of future generations. And while you're at it, bring BMOCA back to the center of the community, where it belongs, instead of banishing it to a site in NoBo where it will be lost to everyone but those who live close by.
72	Yes	Historic district are the best way to preserve portions of the historic fabric of the city as opposed to landmark properties that are isolated examples without their context.	I would love to see Park Central be a part of the district as a modernist example reminiscent of Van der Rohe. I understand it will be torn down along with New Britain. I would to see adaptive reuse of these buildings. It seems we are too quick to tear down Love that at least part of Alpine Balsam was kept for reuse. Wish the same for Millenium. The embedded energy embodied in existing buildings should be recognized and valued instead of creating the blank slate energy intensive new development requires. Every potential tear down should go through a life cycle energy analysis. Amory Lovins has some great thoughts on this topic.
73	Yes	I like the architecture of the bandshell and would love to see the surrounding area be more cohesive.	I don't know if this could help with making the area safer and more pleasant to access with respect to unhoused/camping
74	No	Historic District designations often create more hurdles for developing and improving areas. The city permitting process is cumbersome as is without a potential investor or developer also trying to appease these advocacy groups and committees opinions.	Drive investment and activities in these areas, make them safe places that can be a destination for the entire city and county.

## Proposed Civic Area Historic District

### Letters Received from July 12, 2023 to April 3, 2024

1. Paul Levitt – Jan. 15, 2024
2. Catherine Cameron – Jan. 18, 2024
3. Robert Hohlfelder – Jan. 19, 2024
4. Steve Lekson – Jan. 20, 2024
5. Barbara Beasley – Jan. 20, 2024
6. M. Roselle Mullins George – Jan. 21, 2024
7. Susan Osborne – Jan. 24, 2024
8. Jane McKinley – Jan. 25 2024
9. Joe Stepanek - Jan. 25 2024
10. Margaret Ryder – Jan. 28, 2024
11. Charles Birnbaum, The Cultural Landscape Foundation – Jan. 29, 2024
12. Jenny Elkins – Jan. 29, 2024
13. Kathryn Barth - Feb. 5, 2024 (including Olmsted  
"Improvement" report 1910 and Randy Cantu report for Historic Boulder,  
Inc.)
14. Joseph Stepanek - Feb. 6, 2024
15. NAACP Boulder County - Feb. 7, 2024
16. Deborah Yin (handout) - Feb. 7, 2024
17. James L. Colwell - Feb. 8, 2024
18. Teahouse employees - Feb. 12, 2024 (dated Feb. 7)
19. Alexey Davies - Feb. 18, 2024
20. Dan Corson - March 14, 2024
21. Charles Brock - March 18, 2024
22. Leonard Segel - March 19, 2024
23. Karl Anuta - March 20, 2024
24. Kathryn Buerkert - March 21, 2024
25. Payson Sheets - March 22, 2024
26. Shelly Benford - March 22, 2024
27. William Bechhoefer - March 23, 2024
28. Lara Ramsey - March 25, 2024
29. Janet Zemeckis Scott - March 27, 2024
30. Olmsted Network - March 28, 2024
31. Amy Alpers - March 29, 2024
32. Rachel Segel - March 29, 2024
33. Rich Alpers - March 29, 2024
34. Stephanie Bingham - March 29, 2024
35. Thomas Cosgrove - March 30, 2024
36. Fran Mandel Sheets - March 31, 2024
37. Robert Hohlfelder - March 31, 2024
38. Stuart Lord, NAACP Boulder County - April 1, 2024
39. Ayleen Perez - April 2, 2024
40. Peter Mayer - April 2, 2024
41. Jerry Shapins - April 3, 2024
42. Patrick Bohin - April 3, 2024

**From:** [Paul Levitt](#)  
**To:** [landmarksboard](#)  
**Cc:** [Paul Levitt](#)  
**Subject:** FEB 7 LANDMARKS BOARD DESIGNATION HEARING.  
**Date:** Monday, January 15, 2024 5:33:59 PM

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**External Sender Notice** This email was sent by an external sender.

Dear Committe Members,

We are what we remember. Memory makes a life. History is memory. When that history can be experienced materially, we have not only the story of its source, but the thing itself. A beautiful home, for example, embodies a story, but when the home is preserved, memory and reality become one. Preservation is the archaeology we bring to valuable sites.

Good fortune has enabled me to live in the historic Hillside district, designated in the early 2000s. It was a fair and aesthetically rewarding experience owing to the helpful suggestions of the preservation staff. I know that I am just one of the descendants, one of the boarders, to enjoy this home as originally designed. The same is true of my neighborhood. I can see in a glance the relationship of my house to the others, which form a community once known as "Little Athens."

Living in a landmark district has drawn my disparate neighbors into a close community and given them a common cause, united by ties of architectural and environmental preservation and beautification.

Demolishing a memorable house and/or neighborhood is akin to a death. The playwright Tom Stoppard calls death an absence. The person or object was once there and is now no longer. Many absences can be rectified. The missing part—or something like it—can be found and substituted for the original. But when a replacement is inadequate, the absence is all the greater. Architecture is like life. Once lost, it can never be regained.

And so I ask you to consider how important it is to retain memory—a valuable part of Boulder's life—by designating Central Park and the five city-owned and already landmarked buildings that are in and surround the park as an historic district.

I thank you for taking the time to read and consider my letter.

Yours sincerel

Paul M. Levitt

Professor Emeritus

**From:** [Catherine M. Cameron](#)  
**To:** [landmarksboard](#)  
**Subject:** Historic District for Boulder Central Park  
**Date:** Thursday, January 18, 2024 4:50:03 PM

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**External Sender Notice** This email was sent by an external sender.

Dear Landmarks Board:

I am writing in strong support of the proposed landmarking of the Boulder Central Park area as a Historic District. This area is the heart of downtown Boulder, it was designed by one of the earliest and best known landscape architects in the country (Fredrick Law Olmsted Jr.) and, at this point, it retains its historic character. By this I mean that Olmsted's design for Central Park remains intact, including the open lawns that allow for public gatherings and events, some of the original trees and other plans remain, the viewshed (to the Flatirons) is still open, and there are pedestrian paths, an irrigation ditch, and more that were all part of Olmsted's original design.

I have been a resident of Boulder for almost 30 years. For a number of years in the 1990s I was on the President's Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. I know that well-designed and well-preserved historic places are of enormous value to cities economically, culturally, and with regard to creating community. I urge you to strongly consider designating Boulder Central Park as an Historic District. This move will reap benefits for Boulder for decades to come.

Sincerely,

Catherine M. Cameron

Catherine M. Cameron  
Professor Emerita  
Department of Anthropology  
233 UCB  
University of Colorado  
Boulder, CO 80309-0233

**From:** [Robert L. Hohlfelder](#)  
**To:** [landmarksboard](#)  
**Subject:** In Support of the Proposed Central Park Historic District  
**Date:** Friday, January 19, 2024 5:33:49 AM

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Our city is constantly evolving in ways that many in our community either like or dislike. Regardless of how Boulder changes, it should not be at the expense of our historic identity. Our landmarked buildings are the physical manifestation of that history. Preserving the integrity of the Central Park area, bounded by some of our more distinguished landmarks, as a historic district will ensure that the very heart of Boulder will remain as a monument to our community's past regardless of how Boulder addresses the challenges of the future.

But will the creation of this historic district honor the contributions of a man, Fredrick Law Olmsted Jr., who some think was a racist? I am aware of the criticism that his park designs were intended in some instances to exclude minorities from their use. If such restrictions were ever imposed, they were implemented by local ordinances and not by him. He was, of course, a product of his time when our country embraced institutional racism (i.e. segregation) and when white nationalism, embodied by the Klu Klux Klan, challenged our hopes and efforts to achieve racial equality even in Boulder. Like everyone then or now, his personal views on any and all subjects may have been inconsistent, changed or evolved over time. It is most important to note that there is nothing in his report to Boulder that supports the view that he was a racist. Rather his plans suggest quite the opposite. He was a progressive populist who wanted to make public spaces available and beneficial to all Boulder citizens. In this regard, he was a man ahead of his times, and we should recognize and honor him for helping preserve such a vital component of our city. I think Boulder is fortunate to have had one of the last century's leading landscape designers originally plan our Central Park area, so much of which still reflects his intended design. The creation of a historic district that embraces, perpetuates, and expands his vision will guarantee that future Boulder citizens can be cognizant of our city's past while experiencing the benefits of a natural oasis within the core of our city.

Having been born in New York City, I know how New Yorkers acknowledge the important contribution Central Park, perhaps the most famous of the Olmsted family's parks, makes to improving the quality of urban life. We also should be proud that our Central Park was FLO Jr.'s contribution to enhancing the landscape and life of our community,

Bob Hohlfelder

Robert L. Hohlfelder, PhD  
Professor Emeritus of History  
University of Colorado, Boulder  
[robert.hohlfelder@colorado.edu](mailto:robert.hohlfelder@colorado.edu)

**From:** [Steve Lekson](#)  
**To:** [landmarksboard](#)  
**Subject:** Central Park Historic District  
**Date:** Saturday, January 20, 2024 11:15:03 AM

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**External Sender Notice** This email was sent by an external sender.

Dear Landmarks Board:

I write in strong support of the proposal to designate as a historic district Boulder's Boulder's Central Park Boulder between Canyon and Arapahoe, 13th Street. and the Municipal Building. As you know, our Central Park was designed by Fredrick Law Olmsted, Jr., which in itself should justify historic district status. It's very likely that the landscape would merit listing in the National Register of Historic Places under criterion C, "representing the work of a master" architect.

I've lived in Boulder for almost 30 years. While not a native, I've been here long enough to value what makes Boulder unique, and Central Park is surely part of that. Listing it as a historic district will help retain a bit more of what made (and makes) Boulder the wonderful place it is.

Thank you,

Steve Lekson

Stephen H. Lekson  
Curator of Archaeology, Jubilado  
University of Colorado Museum of Natural History  
Boulder CO

**From:** [Barbara Beasley](#)  
**To:** [landmarksboard](#)  
**Subject:** Central Park  
**Date:** Saturday, January 20, 2024 9:25:13 AM

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This note is to let you know that my husband and I fully support the designation of Central Park as Boulder's 11th historic district. This park is a spot that can nourish our dear city as it moves through incredible change. It's green, natural and designed by the Olmsted's. What more could we want?

Thank you.

Barbara and Dean Beasley  
695 Northstar Ct.  
Boulder CO 80304  
Sent from my iPhone



**From:** [roselle george](#)  
**To:** [landmarksboard](#)  
**Subject:** Boulder's Central Park  
**Date:** Sunday, January 21, 2024 5:44:21 PM

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Growing up in Boulder in the 1960s and 1970s I was inspired by Boulder's leaders including my architectural designer mother who fought for Boulder's specialness and uniqueness. Now after a long career as an urban planner and a continued presence over 60 years in Boulder I see a need to preserve the Central Park by designating it as a Historic District. The key design elements proposed by the Olmsted Brothers still exist. It has functioned as the heart of Boulder for so many years. Let's preserve it so it continues to be a needed asset to the community while respecting the historical and cultural context. We need to preserve a key area that defines Boulder and makes it special.

M. Roselle Mullins George

2686 4th St  
Boulder, CO 80304

January 24, 2024

Dear Landmarks Board members,

Thank you for the time and energy you each contribute to making our city a good place to live. Keeping the history of our town accessible and alive is one piece of what makes it a joy to be here - whether long time resident, newcomer or visitor.

I'm writing in strong support of the proposed Civic Area Historic District that you'll be considering on February 7. In a way that Marcy Gerwing's excellent memo on the project captures completely, Central Park, the landmarked bandshell and the four additional landmarked buildings included in the district represent important pieces of Boulder's past. As an ensemble, they tell a story of our town's evolution.

I was the lucky city planner who led the project to develop a plan for a greenway and path along Boulder Creek in the mid-1980s. A team of the primary property owners along the creek (the City, the County, BVSD and the University) and the implementing city departments (Transportation, Parks, Flood Control and Real Estate/Open Space) was pulled together. During the course of five months, we researched and then walked each reach of Boulder Creek for the purpose of identifying obstacles, points of interest, capital projects and other possibilities.

From the first, we were inspired by Frederick Law Olmsted Jr.'s ideas about keeping open "a simple piece of bottom-land" along the creek. And as written in his plan for Boulder, the creek would be "near the heart of the city" and "give a piece of recreation ground worth a great deal to the people."

As the City team considered plan details, it was certain that there would be a bike and walking path, but also flood mitigation, habitat restoration and historic site identification. The creek itself would be modified to provide pools for trout and to remove obstacles to rafting and kayaking. We envisioned a project that would connect city parks and important destinations-civic/library functions, educational functions and commercial functions. The plan was unanimously adopted by City Council in 1984.

The creek path from Eben Fine Park to 63rd Street was completed (remarkably!) in about five years, although modifications and improvements continue to this day. It's hard to imagine in 2024 when in Central Park or at the Farmer's Market that both the Broadway and Arapahoe Bridges into Central Park had to be rebuilt - both to let walkers, runners and bikers under, as well as for improved flood control. Access to Central Park was made markedly better.

I share this story by way of background. I see the proposal for a Civic Area historic district as absolutely in keeping with the plan done for Boulder Creek decades ago. It will provide a point of historic interest and a place (in fact the only place today) where the history of the creek is traced back to the indigenous people, through the early white settlers and the tale of our ever evolving place.

Historic designation does not freeze either land or buildings in time. It rather assures that any new use or significant change will be reviewed for compatibility by you and the interested public. As the "East Bookend" for the Civic area and as the obvious non-auto route from the University's conference center to the downtown mall, this future historic district will undoubtedly be an important touchstone as changes to the area are proposed. Let's use this

opportunity to designate and highlight an historic district that reflects in its buildings and green spaces the story of our town.

Best regards,

Susan Osborne

Past City Council member and mayor, past Parks Board member and chair, past Historic Boulder president

**From:** [J. MCKINLEY](#)  
**To:** [landmarksboard](#)  
**Subject:** Please preserve the historic integrity of Central Park  
**Date:** Thursday, January 25, 2024 11:43:46 AM

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Central Park is an anchor for personal memories and links me to the past of Boulder. The remarkably forward thinking design has kept it a gathering place for many decades for all who live in and visit Boulder. For those people who come and go from Boulder, Central Park is iconic. I urge you to proceed with the plan to preserve the integrity of this park.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Jane McKinley

Sent from my iPad

**From:** [Stepanek](#)  
**To:** [landmarksboard](#)  
**Cc:** [Sara Martinelli](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Support for Central Park Historic District by Joe Stepanek - Jan 24  
**Date:** Thursday, January 25, 2024 8:04:38 AM

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External Sender Notice This email was sent by an external sender.

> Hi Sara  
>  
> I plan to use this draft, shortened, for my three minute verbal  
> presentation for the Feb 7 Land Marks meeting in the Muni building.  
> Please address a short note of support to the landmarks board as well  
> - stressing perhaps public access and sagfely, good businmess environment.  
>  
> My thanks, Joe  
>  
>  
> I write to support the establishment of this, Boulder's latest,  
> Historic District - in Central Park, the famed Band Shell and its  
> immediate area. Many have made the case for Council's approval of this  
> proposal and have sited the many benefits for doing so.  
>  
> Here I mention another, often over-looked, reason for doing so -  
> namely, as the City moves to it's new offices on Alpine and Balsam in  
> coming five years or so, it has already announced that it will vacate  
> its current downtown offices and perhaps sell already land marked  
> buildings, perhaps 2 or 3 (The Atrium Building, the Tea House, BMOCA  
> and even the Muni building itself), and even raze 1 or 2 buildings  
> (new Britain and Mustard Last Stand Buildings) in the current flood  
> plan. As these steps are taken, private investors will have an  
> opportunity to buy, design, and build a few new structures in the  
> downtown area. This governmental move will understandable create many  
> issues, even crises, as City officials and even the Boulder public  
> engages in this multi-year, complex process.  
>  
> This era of some turmoil, creates and underscores the necessary and  
> desirability of rethinking Boulder's historic heritage, its riches,  
> and today its many benefits. Protecting this history, written and  
> manifested by a few older Boulderites, a few structures and artifacts,  
> should concern us all.  
>  
> Imagine Neolithic man seeing Boulder Valley for the first time as  
> families walked over Davidson Mesa, and then leaving a stone tool  
> collection behind for next summer's use. Imagine dozens of First  
> Nation tribes settling and hunting in this rich valley, who speak to  
> us to this day. In more recent times, these early peoples were  
> followed by European explorers, hunters, trappers, miners and farmers;  
> then Black Americans seeking opportunity after the Civil War and  
> today, Latinos also seeking opportunity as well. Soon there after  
> Boulder voted for a university, and then, very recently President  
> Eisenhower with a nudge from Ed Condon, placed the Bureau of Standard  
> here as well. As a direct consequence, Boulder today is a hotbed of  
> globally significant R and D. And we keep on going - by welcoming a  
> Soviet era Islamic Tajik Tea House! Today this unique gift is

- > Boulder's most popular retail business! Imagine that!
- >
- > Hence, creating an Historic District will set high expectations and
- > standards for preservation and for public agreement as building
- > permits, licenses etc are considered and approved for this central
- > part of Boulder and of Boulder's history.
- >
- > For my own part, having been raised overseas and savored a career
- > overseas as well, in a total of twelve Asian and Africa Countries
- > spread over thirty years, and having always returned to home in
- > Boulder, I have come to appreciate the remarkable riches in our global
- > diversity - here in Boulder and around the world.
- >
- > A Central Park Historic District can also, inform us, enrich us and as
- > we savor festivals, the arts, music, picnics and parties next to
- > Boulder Creek. Remember our roots as we enrich future generations.
- >
- > Thank you

**From:** [Margaret Ryder](#)  
**To:** [Historic Preservation](#)  
**Subject:** Historic designation for Central Park  
**Date:** Sunday, January 28, 2024 4:41:47 PM  
**Attachments:** [Screen Shot 2022-10-07 at 3.04.50 PM.png](#)

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**External Sender Notice** This email was sent by an external sender.

To the Landmarks Board,

I am writing to support the City of Boulder creating an historic district in the heart of the city and landmark Central Park. The creation of an an historic district in Boulder's Central Park Boulder between Canyon and Arapahoe, 13th st. on the East and the Municipal Building on the West, means preserving the intact design of Fredrick Law Olmsted, Jr. arguably the earliest and best known landscape architect in this country.

No one is opposed to change. Preservation would like a seat at the table, to carefully consider changes that remain sensitive to the importance of this sight. Given the rapid change in Boulder and given this is historically the heart of Boulder, we would like to update the park, make necessary changes yet consider Boulder's roots for now and the future. After all, what would Boulder be without the foresight of the residents who came before us, who had the foresight to save our architecture, save the mountains from development, create our open space program, and honor our view sheds?

Please consider preservation of the sight. A collaboration between the City of Boulder and Preservation means the best outcome to remember and honor the past while preparing for the future.

Best,  
Margaret Ryder  
4 Goldenrod  
Boulder, CO 80302  
214.773.2700



Margaret Ryder

214.214.4144 Office

[mkr@kaneandco.com](mailto:mkr@kaneandco.com)





29 January 2024

**RE: February 7, 2024, City of Boulder Landmarks Board Designation Hearing. Potential Designation, "Central Park/Civic Area Historic District"**

Dear City of Boulder Landmarks Board Members:

I am writing in support of the proposed historic district in the Civic Center area of Boulder. This area has operated as the 'heart' of the community since its inception more than 100 years ago. In 1998, I founded the Cultural Landscape Foundation (TCLF) in Washington, D.C., to document cultural landscapes and advocate for their ongoing stewardship. The proposed district is a significant work of planning and landscape architecture aligned with other such landscapes that create a sense of place in communities across America and are represented in two of TCLF's four major programs: *What's Out There* (a database of more than 2,700 nationally significant landscapes), and *Pioneers of American Landscape Design* (which includes biographies of S. R. DeBoer, Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., and Olmsted Brothers). We encourage the Landmarks Board to look favorably on this local historic district designation.

The five city-owned buildings and Central Park taken together have the potential to tell an almost continuous story of the evolution of Boulder. The park itself is a remarkable example of the creation of a town center that suits the needs of a community and, to quote the great landscape architect Laurie Olin, "serve as a center of energy." Initially founded by a grass roots, self-improvement committee of citizens, the Boulder City Improvement Association, Central Park has been the setting for many memorable events. It's significant that in 1907 the Brookline, MA-based Olmsted Brothers, undertook the master plan for several parks and other improvements for Boulder, when the city's population was barely 10,000.

Like many Olmsted designed parks, there are layers of history and enhancements, and these, too, contribute to its significance when the Denver-based planner, S. R. DeBoer made additions (it's worth noting that DeBoer and the Olmsted Brothers contributions can also be found in Denver's Civic Center Park which was designated a National Historic Landmark in 2012). Taken together, these pioneering landscape architects and planners addressed such issues as flood control, an appreciation of the Boulder Creek's riparian environmental context, opportunities for healthy recreation, and myriad opportunities for passive and gregarious enjoyment that would benefit all citizens. While changes have occurred over time, the integrity of their designs remain intact and serve as the critical "bone structure" for managing change today.

With our mission to "connect people to places," we strongly support the proposed portion of the Civic Area as a local Historic District.

Yours sincerely,

Charles A. Birnbaum, FASLA, FAAR  
President + CEO

**From:** [Jenny Elkins](#)  
**To:** [Historic Preservation](#)  
**Subject:** Historic District Central Park Boulder  
**Date:** Monday, January 29, 2024 3:22:20 PM

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Hi. I am writing on behalf of your efforts to create an historic district in Boulder's Central Park Boulder between Canyon and Arapahoe, 13th st. on the East and the Municipal Building on the West.

I am fully in support.

Thank you,  
Jenny Elkins  
5 Chautauqua Park  
Boulder. CO 80302

**KATHRYN HOWES BARTH, AIA**  
**ARCHITECTURE • PRESERVATION • PLANNING**

Dear City of Boulder Landmarks Board,

February 7, 2024

In May, 2023, three local Citizen Preservation Groups: Friends of the Bandshell, Friends of the Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse, and fifty-year-old Historic Boulder Inc. joined together to request a new Historic District be created in downtown Boulder, including all of Central Park (1924 by Olmsted Brothers) and five individually landmarked, City owned buildings: Penfield Tate II Municipal Building (1952, by James Hunter), Glen Huntington Bandshell (1938 by Glen Huntington, Saco DeBoer), Atrium Building (1969 by Hobart Wagener), Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse (1998 by Tajik artists and Vern Seieroe, AIA), Storage and Transfer Building (1908 19thc. Commercial Style), All five buildings are located in or surrounding Central Park.

Following the 1894 catastrophic flood, the Boulder City Improvement Association (BCIA) was founded in 1903. In a 1907 letter to Olmsted Brothers, the BCIA introduced themselves:

*"We are small but ambitious little town...situated 30 miles northwest of Denver. We want advice, and the best obtainable, as to how to improve our city as to Parks, Boulevards and general plans for Civic betterment."*(1)



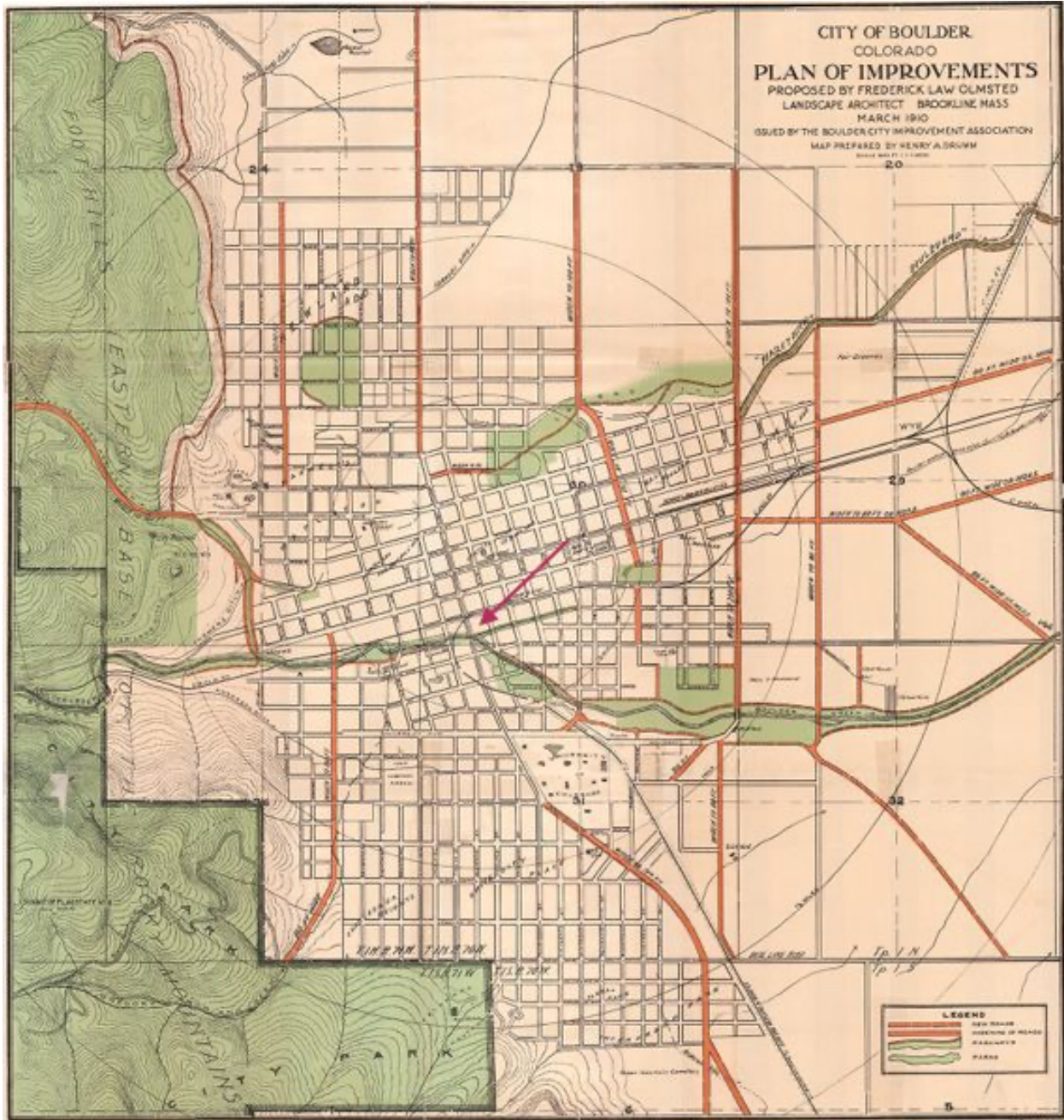
Figure 1, 1894 Flood, Looking east along railroad tracks. Central Park would be located to the right beyond the men.

The Improvers hired Frederick Law Olmsted Jr. to plan a better, safer future for Boulder. Olmsted focused on the physical safety, health and well-being of Boulder's residents. He designed the first waste treatment plant for the town. He envisioned flood control measures as well as nearby neighborhood parks and a linear green space along Boulder Creek. That green space has become Boulder's extensive Bike Path stretching from the point west of town where Boulder Creek emerges from the Rocky Mountains, extending east of town to 63<sup>rd</sup> Street.

Olmsted's written report of March 1910, "The Improvement of Boulder Colorado", was accompanied by a map illustrating his recommendations. The area of the proposed Historic

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District centers around what Olmsted called “The Park at Boulder Creek”, and is shown by the red arrow and the triangular area below it on the map “Plan of Improvements”:



*Olmsted 1910 Map to accompany report. “The Improvement of Boulder, Colorado”, 1910. The red arrow locates the proposed Historic District.*

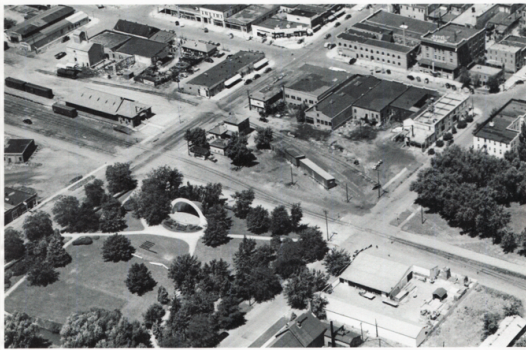
Central Park was the result of combining the talents and insights of three distinguished Architects, City Planners, Landscape Architects: Frederick Law Olmsted Jr, Saco R.DeBoer, and Glen Huntington, Architect.



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Olmsted was primarily responsible for the 1924 Park at Boulder Creek area design, while DeBoer and local architect Glen Huntington were responsible for the 1938 Bandshell design, 1939 landscaping, and the later 1950 associated wooden bench seating. The entire area was protected from floods by a low stone wall, remnants of which still exist, that still functions as a levee.

Looking at aerial photographs we can see there are few substantive changes between 1940 and the present. The basic design elements remain even though some of the diagonal pedestrian paths have changed over the 100 years. Note that the location of trees are much like what was designed in 1924. See 2023 Cantu Tree Study.



1940 Aerial photograph of Bandshell and Site.



2020 Aerial photo of proposed Historic District.

Olmsted showed deep concern for the wellbeing of Boulder's residents on page 1 of the report.

*"Whether knowingly or not, everyone is affected by the appearance of his surroundings, and one of the important factors to be taken onto account in all municipal improvements is the influence which their appearance has upon the mental and nervous condition of the people. As with the food we eat and the air we breathe, so the sights habitually before our eyes play an immense part in determining whether we feel cheerful, efficient and fit for life or the contrary." (1)*

Frederick Law Olmsted Jr. was successful in developing a new urban and natural vision for Boulder. His design focused on making the residents safer, their lives more enjoyable and making them 'fit for life'. The 1938 design by Saco De Boer added a Bandshell that continues to serve as a cultural and entertainment focus for dance, classical and popular music groups.

During Covid restrictions organized dance, opera and musical groups took advantage of the Bandshell's safe outdoor venue for their performances. Hopefully after this area becomes an Historic District, improvements will be undertaken by the City to stabilize the area, protect Boulder residents and revitalize Central Park and its surroundings.

The 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Olmsted's Grading Plan, Planting Plan and Planting List is in 2024. It seems that this year is a very fitting time for the Boulder Landmarks Board to recommend to City Council that they designate this part of Boulder as an Historic District.

Please support the designation of an historic district in the area of Central Park including the five surrounding already landmarked City owned buildings.

**KATHRYN HOWES BARTH, AIA**  
**ARCHITECTURE • PRESERVATION • PLANNING**

Thank you for the devoted and tireless work you do to protect Boulder's historic resources.

*Kathryn Howes Barth*

Kathryn Howes Barth, AIA, Preservation Architect

Former LB member/chair, Historic Boulder Board/President/Preservation Chair

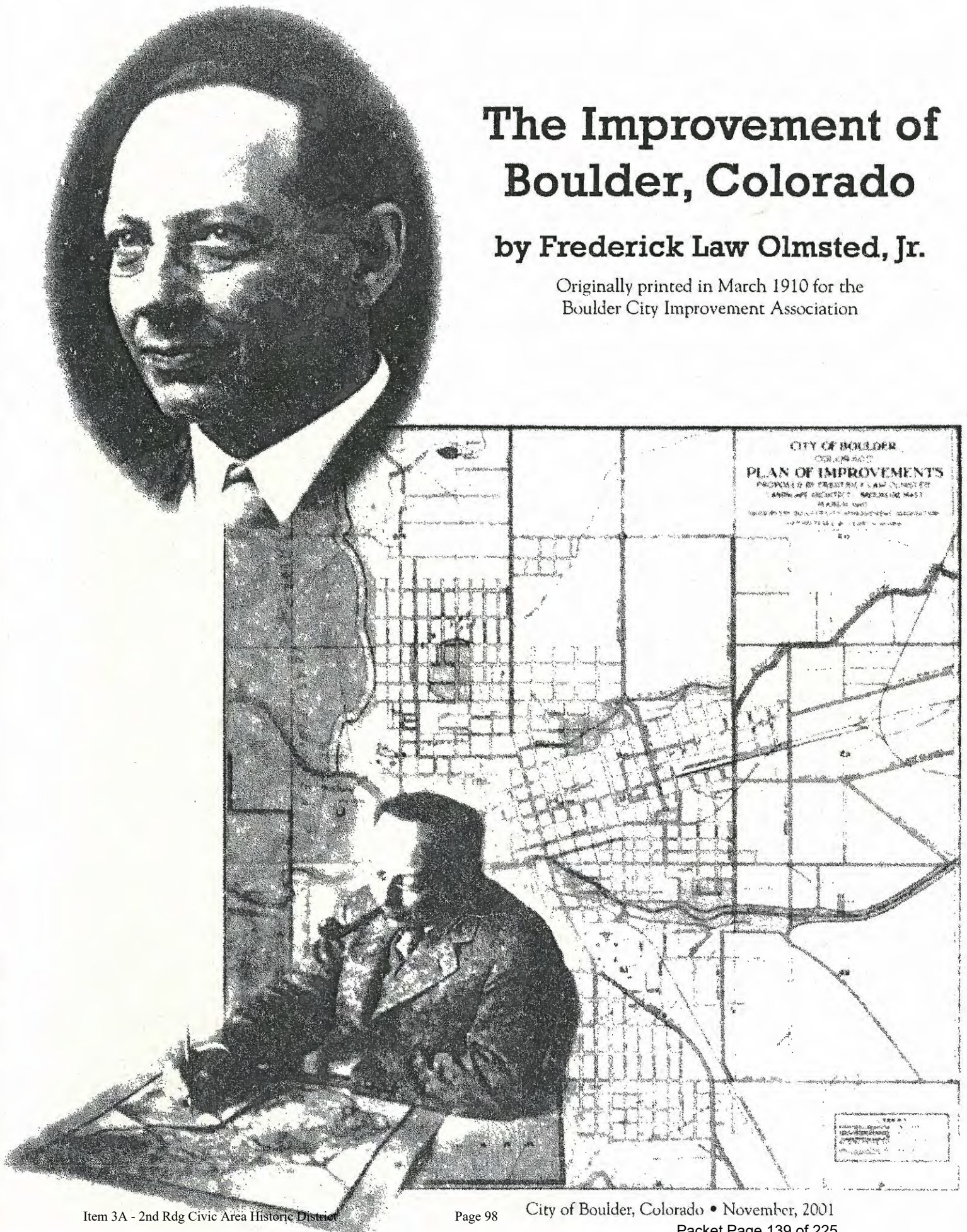
- (1) Letter to Olmsted Brothers, Peter Pollock, FAICP, "Fredrick Law Olmsted, Jr. and the Improvement of Boulder, Colorado,"
- (2) The Frederick Law Olmsted Jr. Report, Reprinted by City of Boulder in 2001, p.1, Originally printed in March 1910 for the Boulder City Improvement Association, 2020

Sent separately to LB:

'The Improvement of Boulder, Colorado', Reprinted by the City of Boulder 2001. Sent separately.

'Randy Cantu Tree Study', 2023. Sent separately.





# The Improvement of Boulder, Colorado

by Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr.

Originally printed in March 1910 for the  
Boulder City Improvement Association



## Preface

Boulder has long been a community that prides itself on preserving its unique quality of life and cultivating a long-term vision of its future. The proof is in your hands. Imagine 1910 Boulder, a city of less than 10,000 souls with dirt streets and processing mills along Boulder Creek. Think of Boulder today with its open space and parks and pleasant streets. These changes are due in part to a committed group of citizens that banded together as the Boulder City Improvement Association and the plan created through their sponsorship by Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr.

The early 1900's was a period in Boulder when the concerns of park development and city planning took expression in the form of citizen associations and ultimately city commissions and agencies. Following an initial effort to form in 1890, the Boulder City Improvement Association was officially constituted in 1903. Its stated purpose was "...the improvement of Boulder in health, growth, cleanliness, prosperity and attractiveness through cooperation with other organizations engaged in similar work." Its major contribution to the development of Boulder was bringing in Olmsted, arguably the best the country had to offer in city planning. Olmsted's plan created a vision for Boulder's future.

In his plan, Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. suggests that "the manufacture of the best possible city of agreeable homes attainable with the means at its command and with the physical opportunities and limitations of the locality is, then, the principal business which the community has before it." This vision of Boulder as a community of homes, intellectual pursuits, and tourism, but not manufacturing, remained unchanged until the 1940s.

Now in 2001, as we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the creation of the Planning Department in the 1951 Charter election, we are proud to once again reprint the work of one of Boulder's planning pioneers, Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. The generosity of the Boulder Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board allows us to look back at the legacy from a previous generation for the quality of life we enjoy today.

Peter Pollock  
Planning Director  
City of Boulder

## Greenbelts/Open Space and the Olmsted Report

The decade of the 1960s brought significant progress to the City of Boulder with respect to the preservation of our scenic backdrop and open spaces. The "Blue Line" had recently been passed by a vote of the citizens, a line above which the City was not allowed to supply water or sewer service. The philosophy of this effort was to stop the upward growth of Boulder onto the scenic backdrop immediately to the west of the city. Our famous Flatirons had been set aside as a mountain park by an act of Congress many years previous, but had not included the mesas in front of them. Except for Chataqua Park, all the mesas to the south were still in private ownership, which included almost the entire Mesa Trail all the way to Eldorado Springs.

In the early 1960s, three significant groups were formed: (1) the University of Colorado's Natural Area Committee, (2) the citizen "watchdog" group PLAN-Boulder City/County. (PLAN stood for People's League for Action Now!), which is still an active group today, and (3) the City of Boulder's Parks & Recreation Advisory Board that was set-up by a vote of the citizens, which at the same time established the Parks & Recreation Department. I was fortunate to be a founding member of all three groups.

C.U.'s Natural Area Committee consisted of Robert E. Gregg (Chair), myself (Secretary), Albert A. Bartlett, Don L. Eicher, and Charles Norris. We represented the Departments of Biology, Geology, and Physics. Later, members were added from other departments, such as Geography. We reported directly to President Quigg Newton. Our first three reports urged the need for preservation in their natural state of (1) the Flatirons-Mesa Trail, (2) the White Rocks on east Boulder Creek, and (3) the Prairie Dog colony on the east campus (where Kittredge Complex now stands). Obviously, our third recommendation fell on deaf ears! The other two were seriously considered by the University, the Parks & Recreation Board, and PLAN-Boulder.

The Parks & Recreation Advisory Board was to advise the City Council, but we also identified many issues dealing with the preservation of open space in relation to Boulder's rapid growth. We worked closely with PLAN-Boulder (some of us were in both groups), and identified the first two areas that urgently needed preservation, one small and one large.

The small area was one acre at the mouth of Boulder Canyon near Red Rocks that was about to be developed with a large office building. It was a key acre that could eventually join Eben Fine Park with the Red Rocks. We were able to consult with the owners who were very cooperative and agreed to build elsewhere if we would buy the one acre from them. I was happy to purchase this acre and hold it until the City could put it in their budget and buy it back from me for the same price a year later. This being accomplished, I had the honor of naming this parcel Settler's Park.

The large area was Enchanted Mesa, just south of Chataqua Park. It was owned by Kenneth Mirise, who planned to develop a hotel and many houses on this land. We were able to get a bond issue on the ballot for \$105,000. We had posters, ads, and bumper stickers that said: "Enchanted Mesa YES!" and the bond issue passed favorably. Mr. Mirise refused to sell Enchanted Mesa for this price, and claimed it was worth a million dollars. The matter went to Condemnation Court, which decided the City should pay \$115,000; so we had a citizens' campaign and successfully raised the extra \$10,000. Enchanted Mesa was purchased.

The next mesa that needed protection was Table Mesa, just south of Enchanted Mesa. About that time, Dr. Walter Orr Roberts came forth with the proposal to purchase the entire Table Mesa area, preserve several hundred acres as public open space, and build the National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR). This structure would be well above the Blue Line, so a vote of



the citizens was necessary for an exception to permit this to happen. PLAN-Boulder played a key role. We could oppose the NCAR plan, or come out in favor of it. The latter would be a compromise of our ideals. We felt, however, since the City had no money to buy Table Mesa, and since Walt Roberts got the National Science Foundation (NSF) to promise, in an "open" letter, to preserve hundreds of acres of open space, that it was a good compromise. PLAN-Boulder came out in favor of NCAR, and the Blue Line exception passed.

What now? Our past successes prompted us to "think big!" We felt that a sales tax to purchase greenbelts was more important now than ever. We were well aware of Frederick Law Olmsted's 1910 report that urged the establishment of greenbelts along Boulder Creek and surrounding the City of Boulder. About that time Thorne Ecological Institute, a nonprofit environmental education organization that I had founded in 1954 when I was a graduate student at C.U., received a generous grant of \$500 from a Boulder resident in order to re-publish the Olmsted Report and distribute it to leaders in the community. We did just that.

This was a very positive influence in the effort to pass the sales tax for Greenbelts. We had a big education and advertising campaign, praising and quoting Olmsted and urging the passage of this tax. We used a bumper sticker similar to the one for Enchanted Mesa, except it said "Greenbelts YES!" We ran photo ads in the local newspaper showing children enjoying our open spaces. We had editorials, letters to the editor, and a display in a store window by a downtown bus stop on Broadway with a large lighted pumpkin and a sign that said: "The Great Pumpkin says Greenbelts, YES!" I had the fun of recording a radio "spot" using my children's voices saying: "Greenbelts are for children...and their children...and their children. Vote for Greenbelts by voting FOR sales tax. Greenbelts, YES!" The sales tax passed. Later the City was able to pass a bond issue, to be paid off by this Greenbelts tax, in order to get a large amount of money up front to buy lots of land at the "then" prices. It was at this time that the term "greenbelts" was changed to "open space," and the City of Boulder Open Space Department was established. The rest is history. So many Boulder citizens worked so hard and accomplished so much to make so great a difference in the way Boulder looks today. What a decade that was!

Dr. Oakleigh Thorne, II  
Founder & Honorary President  
Thorne Ecological Institute

# The Improvement of Boulder Colorado

REPORT TO THE CITY IMPROVEMENT  
ASSOCIATION  
BY FREDERICK LAW OLMSTED JR.  
CHARLES ELIOT PROFESSOR OF  
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE  
IN HARVARD UNIVERSITY

*March 1910*

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THE FREDERICK LAW OLMSTED JR. REPORT

"Beautification" and Common Sense

Whether knowingly or not, everyone is affected by the appearance of his surroundings, and one of the important factors to be taken into account in all municipal improvements is the influence which their appearance has upon the mental and nervous condition of the people. As with the food we eat and the air we breathe, so the sights habitually before our eyes play an immense part in determining whether we feel cheerful, efficient and fit for life, or the contrary.

The attempt to secure in the appearance of our surroundings those qualities which make for good may be called "beautification," but the maximum effects in this direction are never to be secured by means of things done purely for the sake of decoration; they are to be secured only by constant, intelligent, sensitive regard for the quality of the appearance of things whenever any physical change and improvement is undertaken for any practical purpose whatsoever.

When the philosophers discuss the fine arts and the sense of beauty they tell us that at the root of it all is Order; sometimes subtle, complex, intricate and picturesque to a point that defies analysis, but always so far as analysis can carry us Beauty is Order, is dependent on the avoiding of the impression of disorder, although that is only the first step and it must be much more besides.

When it comes to the practical problem now before us of making the appearance of municipal surroundings such as to contribute to a healthy, cheerful, progressive state of mind we can subscribe heartily to the words of one of these philosophic analysts: "I object to the word 'decoration' as commonly used by designers, because it implies that additions are likely to be improvements. \* \* \* As designers \* \* \* we make additions, indeed, to achieve the greater simplicity of Order, and for no other reason. Our object in all cases is to achieve Order, if possible a supreme instance of Order which will be beautiful. We aim at Order and hope for Beauty." \*

With this preparatory statement to indicate that regard for bettering the appearance of a city is not a matter to be delegated to a special department of municipal activity, but is a matter, like the economy and durability of public works, to be kept constantly in mind in every department, we will take up a consideration of the opportunities and needs for municipal improvements that most impressed us at Boulder.

The Net Practical Result to Be Aimed At

The first thing to be sought in taking up any practical problem, especially when it is big, vague and ramified, is a clear conception of the ends to be attained.

Here are some ten thousand people who, for their own benefit and that of their children, their successors and others whom any of them may see fit to admit to the community by selling or leasing additional places of abode, choose to obtain by joint action numerous advantages which are either impossible or at least difficult and extravagant of attainment by individual enterprise. The things they may wisely undertake so to provide and the manner of providing them will depend upon the needs, desires and means of the individual citizens present and future.

There are places which people endure merely because they find there opportunity for economic gain, and are thus enabled

\* Uehman W. Ross: Theory of pure design.

WHAT BOULDER IS NOT to save up money on which to enjoy life elsewhere at a later time or to attain certain of the comforts and advantages of increased income sufficient in their minds to offset the local disadvantages. In such places conditions making for comfort and happiness of living, however important for mitigating the drawbacks of the locality, must be regarded as entirely secondary to conditions that make for increased economic productiveness. If by standing a little more discomfort and dirt and ugliness and noise and worry without actually breaking down, a man can shorten the period of stay in such a place that may be necessary for making the money he thinks he needs in order to lead a comfortable and happy life elsewhere, why he is probably right to endure them.

Boulder is plainly not such a place, and the main lookout of the citizens is not how to make money as quickly as possible so as to go somewhere else to enjoy life, but how to get as much satisfaction out of life as they can in a very agreeable locality without the expenditure of more money than they are able to command while continuing to lead a satisfactory life.

Stretching away from Boulder to the Allegheny mountains extends an enormous region of fertile productive land, the seat of a vastly growing population of hard-working, money-making people. With all its advantages for production this great region has certain obvious drawbacks as a place for the enjoyment of life, drawbacks of climate, for example, and the drawback of relative monotony of scenery. Out of this region are coming in steadily increasing numbers of people of two classes in search of places where they may find rest and enjoyment of life. First, there are those who have decided, like many of the present citizens of Boulder, either because of the threat of ill-health or because their eyes are opened to a wiser philosophy of life, to shift their permanent home, with what savings they may have, to a place where conditions are more favorable for enjoying life as it passes. Second, there are those, of whom comparatively few have yet sought Boulder, who will continue to maintain their chief place of residence where their productive work is done, but with their families will seek rest and recreation for some weeks or months of every year amid different and more refreshing surroundings. These last are not the class called tourists, who hastily pass through a place which attracts them, leaving a few nickels behind or perhaps paying a liberal tribute for the services and materials they demand, but taking not the slightest interest in the welfare of the community and often conducting themselves so as to interfere seriously with the comfort and welfare of those of the permanent residents not immediately dependent upon them for financial profit. We refer rather to those that stay long enough each season to become identified in a measure with the community, who intend to return again and become in many instances householders and taxpayers, ready to do their share toward making the place still more convenient, agreeable, and economical as a place of residence.

The manufacture of the best possible city of agreeable homes attainable with the means at its command and with the physical opportunities and limitations of the locality is, then, the principal business which the community has before it. Boulder will have a gradually increasing importance as a local distributing center for the necessities and comforts of life to a tributary area of farming and mining country of limited extent, and first rate facilities for carrying on this business need to be kept in view, parallel with the problem of a perfect city of homes as such. The presence of the State University means that Boulder will always have a large body of students, of teachers and of scholarly people not



directly engaged in teaching, all occupied with intellectual pursuits and supported, like most of those who will seek Boulder for health or pleasure, wholly or largely by funds accumulated elsewhere or by others. The meeting of the needs of all these people, in the way of food, shelter, merchandise of all sorts, professional and personal service, transportation and entertainment, will occupy and support a great number of others; but all the facilities for business of this sort are of course an essential part of a good city of homes.

What other things need to be taken into account? What other occupations need to be reckoned with and provided for on a serious scale? Nothing, we believe, **INDUSTRIAL ENTERPRISE** which would be more than incidental to a city of homes; nothing which would be inconsistent therewith or detract from the excellence thereof. Such manufacturing as may be carried on without the slightest drawback in the way of noise, dirt, disorder, or annoyance to those not connected with it would be very well, because it would support a certain number of people and enable them to have the advantage of living in Boulder instead of being compelled to live elsewhere; but any manufacturing or other business which is not free from such drawbacks would be a positive injury to the main business of the city with no corresponding advantage to the city at large, only a private advantage to a few persons. It would be a taking from all for the sake of a few, and developments in that direction, however speciously they may be presented and boomed by financially interested promoters, ought steadily to be resisted by public opinion.

In considering public improvements, therefore, no regard need be paid to the possible requirements of general manufacturing or other business inconsistent with the normal requirements of a city of homes.

Any manufacturing, however, such as brick making, or any other business no matter how unsightly or unattractive, such as swill collection and disposal, that may be required economically to meet the needs of a city of homes must be provided for, and so far as public action can affect them at all should be provided for in such a way that the business may be carried on as cheaply and as well as possible, keeping the objectionable features reduced always to a minimum.

Without discussing others, there is one kind of primary productive business not in the least inconsistent with a community

**SUBURBAN FARMING** of pleasant homes, a considerable development of which may perhaps be looked forward to in the outskirts of Boulder. Irrigation farming is only at its beginning as yet in Colorado, and those who practice it have carried over into it traditions of farming under quite other conditions. The limit of the irrigable area is in sight and with the limitation of the area, under the favorable conditions of soil and climate about Boulder, more intensive cultivation is bound to develop, which means larger crops, more labor, and smaller farms. It means rather market gardens than farms in the old sense, and a closer gathering together of the farmers' or gardeners' houses, making possible, if the opportunity is wisely utilized, many of the advantages of town or suburban life. Most cities of rapid and isolated growth—and Boulder for its size is an example of that class—show no typical suburban development. As in other such cities, there is at most points on the outskirts of Boulder a sharp distinction between the city lot, a closely standardized article as to size, and the undivided farm land of the country. There is, to be sure, a margin around the occupied city where houses are a good deal scattered, but they generally stand on small lots with vacant lots between them that are generally

unproductive and uncared for. Only in certain regions, developed for the most part at a period when Boulder was growing very slowly and adjusted itself more perfectly to the conditions for the time being, is there much of that truly and typically suburban character that affords such admirable conditions for the kind of home life which it seems to be the main business of Boulder to provide for—homes with land enough, under irrigation, for really useful and productive gardens that are not only a pleasure but a source of substantial saving or even profit, with land enough for a measure of privacy and real home life outside the walls of the house in the gracious Colorado climate, and yet close-set enough to bring neighbors and school and church and stores and the other advantages of community life within convenient reach.

The Features To Be Considered

The most conspicuous features in the physical equipment of the city that come more or less completely and directly under public control are (1) the streets, devoted primarily to the passage of persons and vehicles including street cars, with incidental use as places of exercise and recreation; (2) the water ways, including the natural and artificial channels for the discharge of storm water and the main irrigating ditches; (3) public open spaces devoted mainly to purposes of recreation or education, but also to various special functions; and (4) public and quasi-public buildings.

The equipments for the supply of water, gas and various forms of electric service and for the removal and disposal of sewage and other wastes are of course of the utmost importance, though less conspicuous; they form a special province of municipal equipment and management with which this report will not deal except insofar as they bear upon the four subjects first enumerated.

One other subject, which is of course the finally determining factor in regard to the general excellence of a city, is the character of development and maintenance **PUBLIC CONTROL OF PRIVATE IMPROVEMENTS** that takes place on the private lands to which all the public improvements are ancillary. The spirit and principles of democracy, of personal freedom and individual responsibility, with which we dare not tamper if we hope to make well-grounded and permanent advance, preclude any public authority from minutely directing this development; yet the public cannot avoid influencing it in two specific ways, apart from the influence of public sentiment as such.

1. It does so directly and in a negative or prohibitory way through the police power, by exercise of which it is bound to prevent such use of private lands as would unreasonably injure or jeopardize the safety, the health or the comfort of others. The final arbiter for determining what constitutes a reasonable standard of public safety, health and comfort, with which individual property owners are not allowed by the courts to interfere for the sake of their private pleasure or private gain, is nothing but sustained public opinion. With every century, with every decade, in progressive countries the standard is raised.

Indeed one means of measuring the civilization of any community is to be found in the effectiveness with which the building ordinances, the regulations of the Boards of Health and the other applications of the police power prevent the individual from seriously endangering or discomforting others without needlessly hampering his freedom of enterprise in harmless or beneficial directions.

2. The public also influences the development of private property in a positive though indirect manner through its method of distributing the burden of the public expenditures.

**INFLUENCE OF TAXATION** License fees, franchise taxes, fees for special services, special assessments for the installation of special public works or for their maintenance and operation, and other special sources of public revenue, all tend according to their amount and the factors which are made to determine how much of them must be paid by any given property owner, to make certain courses of action in the development or neglect of his property more profitable or less profitable, as the case may be. The total amount remaining to be raised by direct taxation of real and personal estate and the wide range of choice exercised in practice by assessors either deliberately or unconsciously in shifting its burden more or less heavily upon personal property, upon land in various conditions of use and neglect, and upon buildings and other improvements, still further influence in a very marked way the action which the property owner is likely to take. Some municipalities have used the control over the power of taxation deliberately and specifically to induce a desired class of improvements on private property by offering exemption for a term of years from certain controllable taxes upon improvements of the class desired. Not infrequently a tax is applied with a distinct view to the discouragement of certain classes of private undertakings as compared with others, as in the familiar high license fees for the sale of intoxicating liquors and the less familiar but growing practice of taxing bill-boards. The subject is a very complex one and surrounded with legal and political pitfalls, but it cannot be ignored. Anyone whose voice has an influence in controlling or modifying at any point the incidence of the burden of taxation and who has a regard for the physical characteristics of his town is bound to consider with the utmost care what sort of thing a possible change in the taxes will tend to make the taxpayer do with his property.

Leaving these more complicated issues, we shall take up in detail the four elements in the physical equipment of the city first above mentioned, beginning with streets.

Streets

In a town laid out as the fully developed central portion of Boulder is laid out, with 80-foot streets, 20-foot alleys and blocks 300 feet square, about 40 per cent of the total area is under public control in the streets. The ordinary amount of travel passing along the streets could, as a problem in transportation engineering, be carried without change in the character of the vehicles or the proportion of foot-passengers, and without changing the size of the lots, upon gangways so much narrower than the streets as laid out that this proportion could be reduced to 10 per cent. In the busiest part of the City of Havana, where there is more travel of all kinds than Boulder is likely to see during the next century, the proportion is below 10 per cent. What is the balance good for?

1. The extra width is valuable as the only feasible insurance against delays, inconveniences and expenses in case the travel should at any time in the future largely outgrow its present volume. 2. It is valuable in order to provide conveniences accessory to mere transportation, such as the right to stop and to load and unload vehicles in the street instead of being compelled to do all such business on private property by means of interior court yards such as are customary in Spanish countries. 3. In order to avoid the necessity for the strict regulation of traffic movement that would be required if the travel were to be carried expeditiously upon ways of the minimum width. 4. In order to afford freer access of light and air to all the abutting property than would otherwise be possible. 5. Finally, in order to permit the streets to serve in some measure purposes of public enjoyment by means of their agreeable spaciousness of appearance and by means of trees and other decorations which the greater width makes possible.

These are sound, strong reasons and the people who made the original layout of Boulder appear to have made an intelligent and reasonable choice in determining the proportion of street area to lot area, avoiding an extravagantly and inconveniently large proportion on the one hand and a mean and short-sightedly small proportion on the other. Their plan is open to some criticism in other respects, as will be noted later,—what human plan is free from faults?—but in this regard it was an excellent start.

Under the system of "additions" platted by real estate owners upon their own initiative and without control, the newer parts of the city have been laid out, naturally enough, with a less liberal regard for the interests of the general public. These "additions" are not laid out as charitable enterprises and there is no reason to expect those who lay them out to be influenced by other motives than those which appear to govern them. It is their business to get as many lots out of each subdivision as they can and to devote as small a percentage as they can to street area without spoiling the sale of the lots by making things too conspicuously mean. The demands of purchasers keep the standard from sinking indefinitely, but they are not free to express their preference effectively in this matter. It is often for them only a choice between evils, and other factors generally seem much more important to the individual buyer than liberal street width; he wants to be near his friends, or in a fashionable quarter, or on high ground, or near a car line, or he wants easy terms, or something which makes him ready to put up with narrow streets. Seller and purchaser have their own proper personal and temporary ends to serve and it is not the business of either of them to look out for the general interests. And as a result, roughly speaking, the more Boulder grows, the narrower its streets get.

In the original town of Boulder the area occupied by streets and alleys was equal to 42 per cent of the area of building lots, and including Court House Square and the streets the total area under public control is equal to 44 per cent of the area in building lots. **PER CENTAGE OF AREA IN STREETS**

In the Chautauqua Heights Addition the area in streets is equal to 32 per cent of the area in lots. In the Newland Addition the area in streets is equal to 36 per cent of the area in lots; East Boulder, 42 per cent; Mapleton, 35 per cent; Floral Park, 35 per cent; Maxwell's Addition, 31 per cent; Interurban Park, 30 per cent.

In none of these additions are there any areas except the streets left under public control.

The tendency is natural and inevitable unless it is made somebody's business to look after the public interest in this matter, and although the tendency has not gone far enough as yet to lead to any very striking results, it is time that some positive measures were taken to check it and at least hold to the standards with which the city started.

We speak of this matter first because it is a simple and positive question of quantity, easy to state and plain to see, but there are questions of quality really of much greater importance. East of Fifteenth Street, for over half a mile, as far, that is to say as any



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subdivisions have been platted, not a single street goes through from Pearl Street to Arapahoe Avenue without one or more kinks or angles in it and a sharp contraction in width. At the limit of the platting 24th Street runs through straight because it was an old country highway, but it is narrow and even it stops at Pearl Street without any connection to the north. Again, Walnut Street offsets nearly half its width when it jerks across the line into the East Boulder subdivision; Pine Street does the same thing and shrinks in width very perceptibly when it passes into Tourtellot and Squires Addition; Broadway, which as the southern continuation of 12th Street forms part of one of the most important thoroughfares in the city, shrinks from 100 feet in width to 80 feet on passing into the University Place Addition, and a little further on makes an angle and shrinks again to 60 feet wide.

Another difficulty arising out of the system of leaving the layout of permanent public thoroughfares to private parties who

**ADVANTAGES OF RECTANGULAR BLOCK** have only temporary and special interest in the result is beginning to be seen where the growth of Boulder is encroaching on the steep and irregular slopes of the mesas. A flat piece of paper of a given size can be subdivided into a larger number of standard sized fragments with less trouble by a rectangular system of cutting up than in any other way, and other things being equal a rectangular house lot is apt to be more convenient and usable, foot for foot, than one of any other shape. These are the principle reasons for rectangular subdivisions, and very good reasons they are. Even

**WHERE RECTANGULAR BLOCKS MAKE TROUBLE** when the flat paper is the conventional representation of a piece of ground that is far from flat, the advantages remain equally strong for the dealer in lots, who alone is responsible for the method of subdividing as things now stand; but in such a case certain difficulties are introduced for which others have to foot the bill in years to come. Steep grades needlessly burden the community with the triple tax of inconvenient and costly transportation, of endless successive expenditures for making improvements in the grade when the inconvenience becomes intolerable, improvements that involve not only the cost of grading and of tearing up a street in actual use, but also more or less serious grade damages to improved property along the line, and finally the tax of a seriously increased cost of maintenance. On the other hand, the theoretical advantages of precisely rectangular lots, although they may attract the inexperienced purchaser, are apt to be counterbalanced by sharp differences in grade between one corner and another that have to be overcome by costly construction, so that the only man who gets much advantage out of the rigidly rectangular system thus applied is the real estate promoter, to whose uncontrolled discretion the choice of a plan is left.

Why should he not stick to the rectangular system regardless of future results? As before mentioned, he is not subdividing **RECTANGULAR PLATTING** the land as a charitable enterprise or **AND THE REAL ESTATE PROMOTER** merely for the civic improvement of Boulder. In some cases the owner is doubtless a non-resident or a temporary resident whose purpose is to sell out at as good a price as he can with the least possible extra investment for surveys, plans and improvements, and then get out. Why should he be expected to give elaborate consideration in laying out the streets, as a well-managed railroad company does in laying out its right-of-way, to questions of grade, of cost of operation and maintenance, and of promoting the permanent prosperity of the section?

And yet under the present system, if the real estate promoter does not happen by some stretch of altruism or by mere

**WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE CITY'S INTEREST IN STREET PLATTING?** luck to provide for these permanent public interests it is certain that nobody else will, because under the present system in Boulder nobody else has anything to say about it.

It is just a hundred and one years since a committeeman of New York City, standing beside a building in course of construction and looking out over the farm lands, swamps and woods that stretched in New York City from Bleeker Street to the Harlem River, picked up a mason's sieve that was lying near at hand and laid it down upon the map of Manhattan Island, saying "there, gentlemen, what better plan could you have than that?" and because nobody proposed anything better, the mason's sieve plan was adopted, with a single diagonal line angling up across it consisting of the old country highway that men call today Broadway: it was an ill-considered, bad plan; and thereafter no one was allowed to open any street except upon the lines of the sieve.

Not a little experimenting has been done in the years since then, both on the question of how to lay out streets for the best **ADVANCE IN THE ART OF CITY PLANNING** permanent interests of a city and on the question of how legally to enforce the public will without unfairness to landowners and without an undue burden of expense upon the community. Today it is possible to speak more definitely upon the former question than on the latter, for at least the principles governing the physical design of cities are well fixed, like those governing the design of any piece of efficient machinery or any work of fine art, but the legal question has been complicated by arbitrary differences in state constitutions, by local and temporary peculiarities of statute law, and by the gradually altering precedents of the courts.

Broadly speaking, two principal legal methods have been used to secure conformity in street layout to plans adopted in **ENFORCEMENT OF CITY PLAN BY EARLY ACQUISITION OF STREETS** advance by city authorities. The first is for the public authorities to lay out and acquire the rights in at least the main thoroughfares and often in the whole street system of a given section, some years in advance of the physical need for the streets, leaving the construction to be done from time to time as required. This method involves the assessment and payment of damages at the time of the original taking.

This system accomplishes the purpose; but it is sometimes rather hard on the public treasury, especially if political favoritism comes into play. Certain individuals are bound to be paid cash down for the right to run streets through their farm lands many years in advance of the need for constructing the streets, and until the construction takes place they can go on using the land for farm or other purposes almost as though no action had been taken. We have seen streets laid out in this way in Brooklyn, New York, which not only were cultivated during many years by the abutters as market gardens but which served an additional corrupt purpose through a contract for street lighting. Being public streets, even though not open to travel, gas mains were laid in them, and at the standard price per light the municipal lighting contractor sent his men night and morning through the rows of cabbages to light and extinguish the gas lamps.

The other principal method of procedure after planning a proposed system of streets is to publish it and announce that no **ESTABLISHMENT OF CITY PLAN BY PROCLAMATION** streets will thereafter be accepted by the city which do not conform to the plan. In theory this is sound, but in practice the results are widely various. Usually the city officials have not the necessary backbone to stand up for their plan, and a persistent and cheeky

promoter, even without corruption, can not infrequently induce the city to accept a platting which differs more or less radically from the established plan. Sometimes the promoter simply goes ahead regardless of the city plan, rough-grades his own inadequate streets as private ways and sells off the lots to more or less unsuspecting citizens and leaves THEM to fight it out with the city. They will have built houses, possibly in ignorant good faith, on the promoter's so-called streets, and when they come with a demand for curbing, sewerage, lighting, etc., it is too much of a strain on the easy-going, good nature of American city officials to tell them that it was their own fault for building on streets improperly laid out and that they must therefore improve the streets themselves as private ways and maintain them as such forever at their own risk and expense. If city officials had the backbone to enforce such harsh and impersonal justice, and stick to their announced plan in spite of baby-talk, a few such unpleasant episodes would soon establish respect for the adopted plan and **THE SYSTEM OF OFFICIAL BLUFF AND SPECIAL PRIVILEGE** it would be followed without more ado. But it appears to be a fact with which it is necessary to reckon that in the mind of the average American official any general rule of policy and almost any ordinance or statute law is more or less of a bluff. If anybody of good standing in the community calls the bluff, he is apt to think more of keeping peace in the family and avoiding harsh feelings than of hewing to the line in the execution of his presumptive duty. If he disregards statute law in this loose, good-natured way, some reforming busy-body may get after him in the courts; but where it is merely a matter of general policy concerning which his office must possess discretionary power in order to make the system workable, his temperament plays havoc with the general rule, resulting in special favors for the more aggressive and self-seeking disregards of the public interest.

A great many laws have been put upon the statute books of various states authorizing cities through special machinery created **UNCONSTITUTIONAL EFFORTS TO ESTABLISH CITY PLANS** ed for the purpose to establish street plans to which the land-owners must conform under various penalties; as for example the Board of Survey Law in Massachusetts, which provided that if any building or other improvement was constructed within the limits of any of the proposed streets after they had been defined by the Board of Survey the owner should not be able to collect damages on account of such building or improvement at the time when the street is actually taken over by the city. But the courts have repeatedly held such laws to be unconstitutional unless provision is made by which the land-owner may receive payment for the encumbrance thus placed upon his freedom to do what he wills with his land. Such laws, therefore, when they accomplish anything, merely serve for a time to strengthen the bluff which the city puts up when it says the established street plan must be followed under severe penalties: which deter the average citizen but which the professional knows cannot be or will not be enforced if he boldly persists in disregarding the plan.

It is easy to see that the difficulty is intimately linked with one of the weakest features of our whole American political and administrative system, and it is therefore no wonder that the situation is rather discouraging and that the street layout of American cities has been floundering for a century without appreciable improvement while a whole science of street planning has been developing and is showing its results in European cities that have been growing at the same rate as our own. It is a discouraging situation but success in it is immensely important to the fu-

ture welfare of every city, and the practical question faces us "TAKING THE FACTS AS WE FIND THEM WHAT CAN REALLY BE DONE ABOUT IT?"

In the first place the city, as **WHAT CAN BE DONE** represented in the political officials responsible for its policies, the Mayor and Council, must be convinced that it is desirable and practicable to look ahead in the matter of street extensions and to safeguard the interests of the city therein, and that such insurance is worth paying something for. The policy having been accepted as a sound one, the necessary authority and funds must be voted to enable a permanent administrative officer of the necessary technical ability to develop a street system plan, with or without special expert assistance as may appear advisable.

We say "permanent administrative official" with reason. Even **NEED OF A PERMANENT ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER IN CHARGE OF CITY PLAN** American cities are coming to recognize that tolerable efficiency in the board of directors, composed of changing political officers responsible for the city's policy, is supplemented by an administrative and executive staff of experts more or less permanent in their tenure. It has come to be generally recognized, for example, that an officer who performs duties of such a highly technical nature and depending to such a high degree upon continuous personal knowledge of technical details as those of a city engineer, or his principal assistants, can only be properly performed if they are in the hands of an expert, non-political, administrative officer, holding office practically during good behavior; as distinguished from the political or representative officers, whose duty it is to control the general policy and the rate of expenditure of the administration in accordance with the popular will and who must therefore change with more or less frequency in order fairly to reflect that will.

It is not, in our opinion, desirable that the making of a general plan for street extensions or improvements should be entrusted to a special, temporary **OBJECTION TO TEMPORARY SPECIAL COMMISSION** mission or officer, because in the nature of things it is not possible that such a plan should be brought to a definite finish, like plans for a building. It is a matter of continuous growth and of a certain amount of continuous revision and the duty of creating the plan and keeping it not merely "up to date" but at least a few years ahead of up to date should therefore be intrusted to a "permanent administrative officer." In a city of the size of Boulder such a duty naturally falls to the city engineer, in a larger city to a special department, but in either case the assignment of the duty must be accompanied by vote of funds for the necessary assistance in doing the work.

It is a matter that requires initiative **NEED OF APPROPRIATIONS** and time for careful investigation, and simply to assign the duty to a busy city engineer's department whose resources are habitually taxed to keep up with the pressure of routine duties amounts to nothing without a special fund available for pushing this particular matter.

Having got so far, the Council ought to pass an ordinance to the effect that no street will thereafter be accepted by the city except upon certificate of its approval **OFFICIAL BACKING** by the officer in charge of the street plan. Of course this cannot prevent a subsequent Council from eating its words and accepting any kind of a street regardless of the plan; but it at least strengthens the bluff, and will enable future weak-kneed but well-intentioned Councilmen to escape pressure from personal or political friends who may want the plan disregarded, by hiding behind the permanent official. The



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latter is better able to stand the pressure than a political official, if he has even a half-hearted and tacit backing in the Council, and he is helped by the pride of authorship to play the part of the hard-hearted partner with a better grace.

Finally the city has got to come to the point of actually acquiring locations for a few wide, main thoroughfares forming essential features of the gradually expanding plan far enough in advance to make sure that they will not be blocked or seriously narrowed or deflected by private improvements or rising land values; and for these few, good, main thoroughfares the cost, which is after all only the margin by which the damages exceed the betterments, must simply be paid with as good a grace as possible, like an insurance premium or the price of grain sowed in the fall for next year's harvest. Even at that the money may be raised on a long term bond issue with more reason than the average expenditure for municipal improvements, most of which give their highest values when they are new and are wearing out when the bonds fall due, whereas proper street locations of course increase in usefulness with every year's growth of the city.

The above appears to be a practical programme which is within the discretion of the city without having to go to the legislature for any special authority. We presume there is nothing to prevent the city from making surveys and plans relating to land outside its boundaries which may at some future time come in, since it is permitted to own and operate water works and a park outside of the city boundaries. It might be convenient, however, to secure some additional authority from the legislature: that is a matter for the lawyers.

If any legislation is to be secured it would be well for the lawyers to consider the following device for diminishing the damages due to taking street locations for future development. We are not aware that the device has ever been employed, but it does not appear to be open to the fundamental constitutional objections that lie against most of the special laws upon this subject. When a street location is not utilized for street purposes for a number of years after its acquisition by the city the usufruct of the land remains in the hands of the owner, but his tenure of the usufruct being uncertain and terminable by the city at will this fact cannot reduce the amount of damages at the time of taking very materially. Also this element of uncertainty of tenure, being dependent upon the discretion of city officials, tends to introduce opportunities for favoritism or at best for charges of favoritism. Our suggestion is that the practice should be to take by condemnation the right of entering upon the street location at a definite future time, say ten years or twenty-five years in advance, leaving in the hands of the owner a perfectly definite tenure of the land, the capitalized value of which can be taken into account in assessing the damages of the taking. If it should become necessary to enter upon the street for construction before the end of the fixed period it will normally be because the owner is anxious to have the improvement made and is ready to waive his right to the continued use of the land for other purposes in order to have the street opened promptly, but if he is not willing so to waive his rights they can be extinguished at any time by condemnation upon payment of the fair value of the unexpired term.

So much for the legal and administrative aspect of street planning. As for the actual laying out of a plan we can do no more than cite a few instances of the sort of thing that needs to be done and discuss a few general principles. To do more on the basis of our brief study of the situation would

be as if a tailor were to look once or twice at a man passing in the street and then go home and cut a suit of clothes to fit him.

We have spoken of the successive narrowings of Broadway. It is plain that there ought to be an ample and convenient main thoroughfare taking up with the 100-foot portion of Broadway and extending indefinitely into the territory that lies between the Colorado Southern Railway and the base of the high mesas, probably between the railway and the corner of the new cemetery. To get a good line, to say nothing of a proper width, would involve some disturbance of the streets and lots of the subdivision called "Interurban Park" and the sooner a decision is reached the better it will be for all parties.

It will become highly important at some time in the future, as Boulder attracts people who are able and willing to pay for more or less detached residences permanently commanding fine views, such as are to be found by the thousand in first-class suburbs and summer resorts in the east, to develop the magnificent possibilities of the great mesas to the south of Chautauqua Park; and to this end a first-class thoroughfare on good grades ought to be planned leading up and into that section. It is a difficult problem from every point of view and it is highly important that it should be worked out before the land to the east and northeast of Chautauqua becomes so fully occupied as to leave no flexibility in choosing the point of departure and improving the layout and grades of the approach. If the best line of approach proves to be Twelfth street, as seems not unlikely, it would seem important to consider whether some improvement ought not to be made in the present means of connection between the corner of Broadway and University Avenue and the beheaded southern portion of Twelfth Street.

Some more direct and better graded line of approach should certainly be provided to connect the central, the western and the northern parts of the city with the Flagstaff Mountain Road. Flagstaff Mountain road where it crosses Gregory Canon Creek.

Lines of travel along Boulder Creek will be discussed in connection with storm water channels and park opportunities below; as will also the problem of handling the flood waters of Sunshine Canon and securing a proper connection for a thoroughfare in that canon with the center of the city. A perplexing problem involving an opportunity for securing excellent results and a more than equal chance of making an extravagant and wasteful botch is to be found in the development of the lower end of Sunshine Canon and the slopes below Red Rock. The best results for all parties can only be secured here by a frank, intelligent, and far-sighted co-operation of the city in the layout of streets and parks with the land-owners in the layout of building lots.

Perhaps a thoroughfare having somewhat the character of a parkway or pleasure drive, but serving also to give access to scattered house sites of great picturesque value but relatively high cost of development, will be justified after the lapse of some years, branching off from the Sunshine Canon Road and Mapleton Avenue at a point west of the Sanitarium, rising through the valley west of the Hogback and passing out on to the east face of the Hogback a little above the level of the Silver Lake Ditch, at a point a few hundred feet north of the place where the ditch crosses on to the east face. Thence it would work northward on a nearly level line commanding wonderful views to the eastward. The park

aspect of this possible thoroughfare will be discussed more fully below.

A good main north and south thoroughfare wide enough for car tracks is needed about where Fourth Street or Fifth Street is laid north of Maxwell Avenue. Fourth or Fifth Street would give considerably better grades than Fourth Street and is probably preferable, but whichever street is adopted the city ought to insist upon its being widened and graded to a much improved profile as a preliminary to its adoption as a main thoroughfare and the laying of tracks in it. Both Fourth Street and Fifth Street "break joints" to some extent in passing from the "Mountain Heights" subdivision to the "Newland Addition" and there should be a sufficient enlargement or square at the junction to overcome its awkwardness unless the general widening of the street can be made to accomplish the same purpose. In the Newland Addition any widening of a north and south street would curtail the depth of lots, but the widening should be done without cost to the city at large because 100-foot lots on a wide street with car tracks are worth more than deeper lots on a narrow street without car tracks. And the city will be entirely within its rights and entirely justified in taking the position that it will never authorize the location of car tracks except in wide thoroughfares properly adapted for such use. To widen Fourth Street or Fifth Street through "Maxwell's" and "Mountain Heights" subdivision will involve wiping out a certain number of lots, but again the cost of doing so will be fully justified and may reasonably be assessed in whole or in part upon the adjacent property benefited by the widening and by the car line contingent thereon.

Twelfth Street beyond the angle near Portland Place ought to be laid out wide enough to serve in the future all the purposes of a great main thoroughfare for traffic and car lines with ample sidewalks, shade trees, etc., for an indefinite distance to the north.

East of Twelfth Street for a distance of a mile a high steep-sided ridge, called Lovers' Hill, blocks all north and south travel except at a single pass opposite Twentieth Street, and the only important future thoroughfares in this section are therefore the two country roads which extend north through this gap and past the east end of the ridge. These should both be laid out of ample width. In this connection it is to be noted that Twentieth Street, which will be of considerable importance through its connection to the north, now comes to a dead end at Walnut Street and it is seriously to be considered whether it ought not to be extended south to Goss Street between which street and Arapahoe Avenue it has already been opened, although at a reduced width. Also, as before mentioned, Twenty-fourth Street, which has a fairly important connection to the south and which is on the same line as the road which leads to the north past the east end of Lovers' Hill, is at present laid out as a narrow street and comes to a dead end at Pearl Street. It certainly ought to be extended north to complete the connection at a respectable width. Its extension would include about a quarter of a mile of the Beasley Canal and could be made to have a rather striking and valuable character as a parkway or boulevard in a manner discussed below under the proper head.

From this proposed widening and extension of Twenty-fourth Street at its intersection with Hill Street a wide, main

thoroughfare ought to be laid out on a diagonal line to the north east, preferably following the line of the Beasley Canal in whole or in part for a considerable distance.

Either Pine Street or Spruce Street ought to be extended as a wide, main thoroughfare parallel to the D. & B. V. R. R., and a new east and west thoroughfare tapping the traffic of both Pearl and Walnut Streets should be laid out to the eastward of 24th Street on a line not immediately next the railroad. This proposed new thoroughfare would probably fork about half a mile east of 24th Street, one branch entering the district between the D. & B. V. R. R. and the arm of the C. & S. Railway while the other branch would keep entirely to the south of the latter.

Twenty-eighth Street is a cross-town thoroughfare of some future importance and should probably be widened and extended, and certainly an ample cross-town line should be laid out just west of the Wye, which offers a permanent obstacle to street travel of considerable extent.

South of Boulder Creek again and between it and the Marshall Branch of the C. & S. some improved lines of communication will be much needed. From the Seventeenth Street bridge in addition to a connection under the railroad to University Avenue and through the University grounds to the south, a road ought to be laid out on a good grade rising up the face of the bluff north of the Hospital (in place of the present precipitous road that runs between the Hospital and the Railroad). The proposed road would rise gradually to the edge of the level ground south of the Hospital and extend along near the edge of the declivity so as to tap the various roads leading southward while commanding a fine view of the city with Boulder Creek in the foreground. The park value of such a road would be very large and it will be discussed in more detail under that head, but it is certainly desirable as a mere means of communication. Ultimately, descending again to the lower level at or near Twenty-eighth Street, it would presumably extend off to the southeast through Section 32.

It is not to be supposed either that the above is an exhaustive statement of the thoroughfares that it would be well to provide for or that all of the lines mentioned are equally important to lay out in advance of the actual growth of the city; but it may serve as the basis for a programme of work and it may help to make clear a fundamental principle too little recognized in most of the city planning that has been done in this country. That principle is to make sure of a limited number of main thoroughfares, first; to get these laid out of the most ample width, so as to be sure that the contingencies of the future will not overcrowd them, and on reasonably direct and continuous lines and with no bad gradients; to do this regardless of local and individual objections and opposition and even at considerable expense in order that the general transportation interests of all other localities and individuals may be properly provided for: and then in laying out the secondary or intermediate streets to consult local wishes and individual preferences and minor economies of land and construction to a marked degree. Systematic adherence to this principle not only results in a street system that serves the practical requirements of transportation adequately, but it is as a whole, more economical of land and construction than one in which the distinction between main and secondary streets is not so clearly made,



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and finally it tends to make a far more interesting and agreeable city than one in which all the streets approximate an even uniformity of width and character regardless of the purposes for which they are used. For residential purposes there is a coziness and quiet attractiveness about a street of moderate length and moderate width through which no heavy traffic has inducement to flow, that is in marked and pleasant contrast with the interminable vistas of streets that go on indefinitely in an unbroken straight line, especially if their grades be such as to attract considerable amount of general teaming; while on the other hand for the sort of occupation that naturally seeks the main lines of travel, such as stores, etc., the advantage of thus concentrating the through travel on certain streets is very considerable. What-

**EFFECT OF SUCH PLANNING ON REAL ESTATE VALUES** ever tends to stability in the distinct segregation of different classes of occupancy of conflicting or incongruous character tends to stability of real estate values and to a higher average range of values. The more certain a man can feel that the character of a given street is pretty well fixed the more he is willing to pay for the privilege of having a lot on the kind of street that he wants. The sharp differentiation in width and character of treatment between the main thoroughfare and the ordinary streets is a step in this direction as well as a practical economy in dealing with the transportation problem. To discuss at this point the next step, which concerns district building laws and other localized restrictions intended to safeguard the class of occupation in given districts would take us too far afield.

The detailed improvement of existing and future streets in point of practical utility, economy of maintenance and appearance is the next matter to be considered; **DETAILED IMPROVEMENT OF STREETS** the main elements being roadway pavement, surface-water drainage, sidewalks, street trees, street fixtures and incidental features, but the most important thing of all is the general effect of all these features considered as a whole. It is just as well to point out at the beginning that there is no single best type of treatment even for streets of a given width and of the same general character of occupancy. Nothing is more desperately uninteresting and unattractive than the monotonous repetition of the same type of street. It is conceivable that a committee of ladies might come to a consensus of opinion as to which was the best looking dress in town but what a depressing thing it would be if they all took to wearing it! Yet we may venture some general recommendations as to Boulder streets without much risk that they will be so literally followed as to lead to monotony of appearance.

A good roadway well maintained is a rather costly article and the wider the roadway in any street the longer it will take to bring it up to a good standard and the harder it will be to keep it there. **ROADWAY WIDTH** Moreover every unnecessary square yard of roadway is an unnecessary source of dust and glare. If a street be laid out wide enough between property lines to provide for future contingencies it is a simple matter to widen its roadway whenever it proves desirable to do so, and the saving in cost of maintenance and in interest charges due to building a roadway narrow at first and widening it some years later is usually more than enough to pay for the extra cost of doing the work in two or more operations. Except on the streets carrying a large volume of traffic we believe that most of the Boulder streets have a wider traveled way than is economically desirable and that they would be distinctly improved in appearance if the traveled way were narrowed. Ex-

cept on main thoroughfares a roadway about 24 feet wide will serve all practical purposes and generally look better than a greater width. This is sufficient for ordinary vehicles to turn in without serious inconvenience and permit vehicles to come to a stop on both sides of the road without blocking passage. On minor and suburban streets a width as narrow as 16 feet has been recommended by a distinguished authority for the city of Chicago and there are cases in Boulder where we should endorse this recommendation, but in such cases it should ordinarily be possible for vehicles to turn off over the edge of the road on emergency; in other words the curb, if any is used, should be set back some distance from the edge of the road, the intervening space being occupied by grass, or by unpaved earth, or possibly by some inferior form of pavement of low annual cost when subjected only to light and occasional use. A central pavement about 16 feet wide of first-class smooth pavement flanked by borders eight feet wide paved with cobblestones and graded so as to act as gutters, while at the same time providing standing space for vehicles at the side of the road and turning space when required, makes a form of street pavement relatively inexpensive to construct and maintain and having some distinct advantages where grades are steep and where a macadam pavement is subject to washing and any smooth pavement is liable to be slippery on occasion. But ordinarily a good smooth pavement about 24 feet wide clear of the gutters is a reasonable design for ordinary residential streets.

**FORM OF GUTTERS:** Except in those streets where an irrigation storm water drainage gaging channel serves at the same time as a gutter for carrying off the surface water, the gutters, as a matter of convenience and appearance, ought not to be like ditches sharply separating the sidewalks from the roadway. But to avoid deep big ditches requires that the storm water should be removed from the gutters at frequent intervals into a system of storm-water sewers connecting ultimately with the open natural channels of storm-water discharge. In the long run this is a large and costly undertaking and one that needs to be planned in a comprehensive and systematic way if a good deal of money is not to be wasted on it; but it is an item that every well-organized city has to face sooner or later.

As to the kind of pavement, there is no single kind of pavement to which a city can turn as the best solution of the problem, neither asphalt, nor brick, nor creosoted blocks, nor bitulithic nor macadam nor stone. In any given city each street, or each class of streets, according to their grades, the volume and character of the traffic, and the character of the abutting property presents a separate problem; and the first step in reaching a satisfactory result is for the city engineer or other proper administrative department to classify the streets carefully and scientifically according to the above factors, and then to deal with each class by itself. **KINDS OF PAVEMENT**

Most progressive American cities have dealt with the street improvement problem much after the fashion in which a well regulated household of moderate but increasing resources deals with the question of household furniture. An intelligent family having an equipment with which it can get along after a fashion, invests from time to time in pieces of good, durable, beautiful furniture of immediate use and permanent value, being spurred to each purchase by growing requirements and a high standard of living and by the sense of financial ability, knowing that if it can afford the immediate expense the gain in comfort and pleasure will be real and permanent with a very slight added burden of care. It is a form of saving, really, almost like putting money in the bank if the purchases are intelligently made, for really first-class

furniture in the hands of a good housekeeper does not seriously deteriorate. And cities, looking upon good pavement as a kind of municipal furniture, have been apt, when they have faced the problem at all seriously and progressively, to proceed in the same way; under the spur of expanding needs and rising standards, they have bought for one street after another a first-class pavement, asking the engineers to give them a real good durable article. To meet the demand for durability the engineers worked out the granite block pavement on a concrete foundation. This was somewhat as if the furniture men offered to our typical householder clumsy cast-iron furniture; the first cost is very high and comfort and appropriate grace of appearance are sacrificed for the sake of durability.

Many other types of pavement have been experimented with, less durable than granite blocks; but even granite block pavement wears out faster than good and well-cared-for tables or chairs, and pavements have come to be regarded more in the way carpets are,—as things to be bought of as good quality as the purse will afford, to be used and swept and cleaned until they are worn out, and finally when they are no longer usable to be completely replaced. That is the common idea. But it would be a great deal fairer to compare many forms of street paving with a wooden house, which will last indefinitely if it is reshingled and repainted and otherwise repaired at sufficiently frequent intervals and at just the time when the repair begins to be needed, but which if the weather is permitted to make inroads upon it will rot and collapse within a few years after the roof ceases to keep out the rain and snow.

The undoubtedly bad and extravagantly costly pavements of the average American city are due to the prevailing weakness of the permanent administrative staff and to the fact that it is easier to induce a city council to appropriate a big round sum for a complete new improvement than to vote funds for the unspectacular routine work of keeping the improvements already made from going to pieces by neglect. It is probably necessary to reckon with this common attitude of mind in Boulder as elsewhere, but surely it is worth the effort to present constantly and forcibly in connection with street pavements as with other improvement problems, the question of **NET ANNUAL COST** after allowing for depreciation and maintenance and interest charges **AS THE PROPER MEASURE OF THE COST OF EVERY IMPROVEMENT** whether its first cost be high or low.

Sheet asphalt is the standard smooth, clean, first-class pavement in American cities and there is often a tendency to adopt it as the ideal and use it regardless of circumstances. It is as a matter of fact open to serious objections for certain classes of streets; for example, it is very slippery and for that reason unfitted for any streets that are not nearly level; its volatile components are subject to evaporation and under light travel "it rots" out long before it wears out, so that the deterioration rate is abnormally high on streets of light traffic; its first cost is high and the method of repairing requires special apparatus and special technical experience, making its use relatively more costly and less satisfactory for small cities than for large cities, through putting the latter more at the mercy of the asphalt contractors. **ASPHALT**

Creosoted wood block pavement on a concrete foundation is a close competitor of sheet asphalt. It is less noisy, rather pleasant to drive on, more slippery under some conditions and a trifle less

slippery under others, almost equally cleanly, much more easily and simply repaired, probably much more durable under light traffic, and rather higher in first cost.

Another competitor now pushing asphalt rather hard is the patented material called "bitulithic." It is less slippery than asphalt, about equally cleanly, is claimed to be more durable, though it has not been in use long enough to demonstrate this positively, and its first cost is not far different. **BITULITHIC**

Paving brick makes a hard smooth surface, about as slippery as asphalt under some circumstances and much less so under others; it is harder and more noisy; it is not quite so easily cleaned, especially when it becomes worn; it wears out faster under heavy traffic; and it costs, usually, considerably less. **BRICK**

Various special types of composition block pavements have been tried but have not established a standard position for themselves.

The various forms of stone block pavement need hardly be considered, for their advantages apply mainly to streets carrying a traffic heavier than any that the city of Boulder has to deal with at present or seems likely to have in the immediate future. **BLOCK PAVEMENTS**

There remain to consider gravel and crushed stone roads. With the former Boulder has had a good deal of experience: they are known to be cheap in first cost and at their best, under light travel, to be very agreeable. They wear out rapidly and are apt to be dusty and muddy and otherwise dirty. It is probably fair to say, however, that if the construction of gravel roads were more scientifically done than it has been in Boulder in the past, and if they were more systematically repaired and maintained it would be possible on streets of light travel to have gravel roads that would be far more satisfactory than the article to which Boulder citizens have become accustomed and at an additional annual cost which would be trifling compared with that of any of the pavements discussed above. **GRAVEL**

As to crushed stone roads, it is probable that most of the citizens and officials of Boulder who have not happened to travel much in Europe or in certain very limited districts in this country, are under a serious misapprehension on this subject. The things called macadamized roads in a great many parts of this country are neither built in accordance with the principles which Macadam laid down nor are they maintained in such a manner as to get tolerably good results out of the construction, such as it is. We believe it to be a fact that under a proper system of systematic maintenance and repair any street in Boulder, with the possible exception of a few main thoroughfares, could be paved with a first-class crushed stone pavement and kept permanently smooth and in satisfactory condition for a small part of the annual cost of sheet asphalt or other high-priced pavement, and that the saving could be more profitably expended in other directions. **CRUSHED STONE**

The chief objections to a macadam pavement for most of the streets of Boulder are that the wear is more rapid than when the mineral particles are firmly bonded together as in asphalt or bitulithic, that more dust is therefore produced, and that as it is difficult to clean off the dust and mud thoroughly without further injury to the pavement they are allowed to accumulate. The objection of the comparatively rapid wearing away of the surface and consequent roughness of pavement almost disappears under proper **OBJECTIONS TO MACADAM**



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care and simply goes into the cost of maintenance. Proper cleaning and watering reduce the objection on the score of dust and mud to a reasonable minimum, adding still further to the maintenance cost. A crushed stone pavement merely put down and then almost neglected is a pretty poor investment, more so than a pavement of asphalt or brick, but one well laid and thoroughly well kept will give results on most of your streets of which the city can be proud and the annual cost of which, maintenance and all, will not be unreasonable.

It is true that the relatively dry climate of Colorado is less favorable to macadam than a moister one, tending to more dust and more rapid wear because the bond of the surface particles is more or less dependent upon moisture. For this reason it will probably be advisable, especially on steep grades where the tendency to "ravel" during rainstorms is

**BITUMINOUS BINDERS** very marked, and upon any streets where automobiles come to be common with their notable disintegrating effect upon the road surface, to utilize some of the special binding materials introduced of late years for dust laying and protection against disintegrating action, such as asphaltic oil and the special coal tar preparations like "Tarvia." On streets of light traffic a good macadam, treated annually with a surfacing of Tarvia and stone-dust offers a surface having many of the advantages of a bitulithic or asphalt pavement at a very much lower cost. In our opinion, especially under the dryer climatic conditions of Colorado, it would be advisable to use a heavier application of Tarvia at the time of first construction than has been customary. The first cost is thereby slightly increased but the results should be enough better to justify the difference. This method of impregnating the road for a depth of an inch or more with Tarvia is really a long step in the direction of a bitulithic (or asphalt) pavement, in which the **WHOLE** mass of broken stone (or of sand) is impregnated with a bituminous binder instead of only a thin top layer.

In any experiments that may be tried in the use of Tarvia or similar coal tar preparations or asphalt it should be borne in mind that apparently very slight differences in method will change the results from success to utter failure. Success depends, first, upon getting the bituminous material of exactly the right composition, for which, practically speaking, reliance must be placed upon the knowledge and good faith of some concern that has had an extended and successful experience in producing material for just these uses; second, upon having the road metal in the right mechanical condition and thoroughly dry and sun-warmed, conditions easily obtained in Colorado; and third, upon heating the tar or asphalt to exactly the right temperature before applying it. It is not at all difficult to secure these conditions by the exercise of some intelligent painstaking care, but the margin between success and complete failure will be quickly crossed by the least carelessness or neglect.

The asphaltic oils, from Texas or California, require less precision in use to get good results, whether applied straight or, as we believe to be better, in the form of an emulsion with water. But there is no question, apart from practical advantages one way or the other, that the oil is in all respects much dirtier and less agreeable in its results. It is in fact quite offensive in appearance and often so in smell, and the particles of oily dust when they do get on to clothing or vehicles are a serious nuisance.

**OIL TREATMENT** To sum up as to improved street pavements, we are inclined, for most localities in Boulder, to advise the use of macadam

**SUMMARY AS TO PAVEMENTS** properly built and properly maintained, with systematic cleaning and repairs and either systematic watering or the use of Tarvia for bonding the surface. Where Tarvia is not used the watering should always be done by the City and not left to the discretion of the abutters, for it must be regarded not primarily as a method of mitigating the dust nuisance but as a means of preserving the bond of the road surface and prolonging the life of the road.

In the matter of sidewalks the standard generally adopted in Boulder is a line of slabs either of stone or cement, from four to six feet wide, laid in the turf between the property line and the street trees which follow the curb. The standard is a good one and we have little to offer by way of suggestion. There appears at present to be a prejudice in favor of the cement slabs based in part upon a popular misconception, to which it may be well to call attention. The preference for the cement is based upon the idea that the cement walks are ipso facto smoother and less liable to hold puddles of water and to offer irregular joints on which to stumble. A somewhat careful examination of the Boulder sidewalks after a rainstorm confirmed what has been our observation elsewhere that so far as cement walks of the **SAME AGE** as the stone walks do possess these advantages it is not due to the fact that they are made of cement but to the fact that they are laid on proper foundation of well-drained stone, cinders, sand or other firm porous material. Most of the Boulder flagstones are sufficiently smooth, individually, not to hold puddles except where a stone has settled below its neighbor or has been cracked on account of the settlement of the foundation. Poorly laid cement walks after a few years develop just the same defects and are somewhat more liable to fracture under the same conditions. We regard the choice between stone and cement when equally well laid as an aesthetic rather than a practical one. Personally we find the texture of the stone the more agreeable, but it is a matter that turns on local surroundings more than upon any general considerations.

Another detail about the sidewalks is perhaps worth mentioning. It appears to be a common though not universal practice, in order to prevent the flooding of the sidewalks and the stone paths leading up to the doors by the water used to irrigate the lawns, to dig little ditches about four inches wide and two or three inches deep in the turf along each side of the flagging. The appearance of these little gashes is certainly far from agreeable; it is indeed quite painful to the unaccustomed stranger; and assuming the practice to have resulted from a real practical need we have wondered if some better way could not be found for meeting the difficulty. In the case of cement walks it would be a simple matter at the time of construction to form a groove or narrow gutter in the cement close to its edge, like a border line. In the case of the flagstone walks a narrow piece of flagging set on edge like a curb, coming to the same level as the walk or a trifle above it but removed about two inches from its edge would form a similar little gutter. It would be neat and orderly and instead of being separated from the grass by the frequently renewed raw and ragged edge of the little dirt ditch the stone would be in pretty contact with the overhanging blades of grass.

Boulder is properly proud among Colorado towns on account of its numerous and large street trees. They are an example of the immense effect upon a town's appearance that may rapidly result from a popular custom once set agoing. The result is surely pleasing, yet as our function is not praise but suggestion we must

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point out how much better it might have been had the popular tree planting habit been better guided, and how much it can still be improved for the future. Everyone must admit that the planting of silver maples and cottonwoods has been overdone. The reasons why it was overdone are not far to seek, but overdone it was. The silver maple is one of the most brittle of trees and short-lived at that. It is as little adapted as almost any tree could be to withstand the pressure of late and early snows upon its brittle branches, and the practice of tree-butcherly frequently resorted to as a precaution against snow-breakage is ugly in the extreme.

Systematic annual pruning of a tree, even pruning so severe as to reduce the tree to a formal or geometrical outline, may be justifiable and proper under certain conditions, and it will result in a character of twig and branch formation which, although quite different from that of the tree under favorable natural conditions, yet has a certain orderliness, is indeed the natural response of the tree to a new force systematically applied to it, just as a certain other twig and branch formation is its natural and characteristic response to the conditions of a constantly windswept situation. In other words such a systematically pruned tree has a distinct and self-consistent character with a certain beauty of its own, which we may or may not think appropriate under certain circumstances, but which we must recognize as being good of its kind. But a tree which is unsystematically and unsympathetically lopped off at irregular intervals and places and is permitted to grow without restraint or care in the interval, is apt to look like nothing but a miserable cripple. It would be a great deal better either to let the silver maple alone and prune the broken branches after each storm or else to lop it off once for all level with the ground and put in some tougher and more permanent tree.

Another common defect of management in the Boulder street trees is that they were planted close when they were small trees in order to secure a good immediate effect, and, as often happens where this is done, they were seldom thinned out when they began to crowd each other. Consequently in most of the streets the continuous foliage canopy has about twice as many trunks holding it up as is really necessary and the trees are less vigorous and healthy than they should be. In some cases it is just as well to accept the condition until the trees begin to fail seriously and then to make a new start with better trees; in others it would pay to thin out even now. It is a matter for close personal judgment by a competent man going over all the trees, block by block.

As to the kinds of trees suitable for street planting in Boulder it would be presumptuous for us to offer any positive advice when you have at Boulder a thoroughly competent arboriculturist who has studied the subject for years. We refer to Mr. D. M. Andrews. We insert here a report from him upon the subject:

Street trees in general should be:

- 1st. Enduring; that is, reaching prime of life at a great age, of strong and vigorous but not necessarily rapid growth.
- 2nd. Of pleasing proportions.
- 3rd. Requiring a minimum amount of pruning or other attention.
- 4th. Free from insect pests or disease.

Street trees for Boulder in addition should be:

- 1st. Capable of sustaining or of shedding from the branches

without injury a heavy weight of snow.

2nd. Able to make a symmetrical growth without tendency to lean or grow one-sided when exposed to prevailing westerly winds.

In the opinion of the writer the following named trees, approximately in the order in which they are named, best meet the requirements stated above. Several other oaks may be substituted, or these interchanged to meet special requirements or personal preference. All the other trees named are selected for individual characters, and for which other related sorts cannot be well substituted, with the exception of the Scotch elm, instead of which certain horticultural forms of English elm, or certain types of American elm might be used if obtainable.

1. Thornless Honey Locust, *Cleditsohia triacanthos inermis*.
2. Red Oak, *Quercus rubra*.
3. White Oak, *Quercus alba*.
4. Horsechestnut, *Aesculus Hippocastaneum*.
5. Sugar Maple, *Acer saccharum*.
6. Western Catalpa, *Catalpa speciosa* (must be true).
7. American Ash, *Fraxinus Americana*.
8. European Linden, *Tilia Europaea*.
9. Pin Oak, *Quercus palustris*.
10. Scotch Elm, *Ulmus scabra*.
11. Norway Maple, *Acer platanoides*.
12. Kentucky Coffee Tree, *Gymnocladus canadensis*.

In using any of the trees in the above list or in experimenting with others or guiding the development of any of the existing street trees, the controlling fact should always be borne in mind that the street does not exist for the purpose of growing arboricultural specimens but that the trees are grown for the purpose of contributing to the excellence of the street. A good general effect is the thing to aim at—one that shall be appropriate to the conditions and circumstances of a given street. The suitable general effect should be decided on first and then the trees so chosen, so planted, and so managed, whether by thinning or leaving thick, whether by pruning or letting alone, as to accomplish that result.

The kinds of effect that can be secured are infinitely varied, happily enough, but there are certain distinct types, and some reference to them will make clearer what we mean when we say that a given effect ought to be chosen and then kept steadily in view in making every subsequent decision of detail, as to kinds of trees, spacing in the rows, location of rows, method and extent of pruning up the lower branches, pruning or non-pruning of sides and tops, etc., etc.

There are three marked types of tree-planting in use on straight, formal avenues and streets. The first is the over-arching type, in which the trees grow to such size and form that their branches meet or nearly meet across the street, forming an umbrageous tunnel or vaulting, which may be lofty and pointed in its form, as often with elms and old cottonwoods, or may be low and flat, as often with maples. In this type of avenue the commonest defect, especially where the straight vista is a long one, is inadequate height. Practically as well as aesthetically the systematic pruning up of the lower branches, not all at once but gradually, as the tree grows taller, is very important in order to provide free circulation of air and to make it possible to illuminate the street properly at night, as well as in order to

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give height reasonably well proportioned to the length of the vista and to give an impression of pleasant spaciousness. This type is and must remain the commonest type on streets of ordinary width, and the need of systematic pruning of the growing trees in order to develop tall, clean, healthy trunks and high crowns is one of the strong arguments for public control of the street trees. A few low-branched, crooked trees allowed to grow in a form quite different from the general run of trees on a street will interrupt the vista and spoil the general effect no matter how much pains may be taken with the rest.

The second type is the avenue which is open to the sky above but runs between high walls of foliage on either side.

**OPEN AVENUE** This is adapted only to avenues where the space between the rows of trees can be considerable. Most of our large-growing trees will spread in time twenty-five to forty feet or so on each side of the trunk if they have space for full development, and elms will spread even further, so that in order to leave a clear space of respectable width between flanking masses of tall, free-growing foliage the trees must ordinarily be planted a hundred feet apart or thereabouts. But by choosing trees of tall and narrow form, as in the extreme case of the Lombardy Poplar, or by annual trimming of the side branches in the same way that a hedge is trimmed it is often possible to secure this type of avenue in a much more limited space; and of course in its younger stages an avenue of the over-arching type generally takes on for a few years this second form. For an avenue of impressive length, especially for one that has any splendid object at the end of the vista, this second type is often preferable to the first. There are many streets in Boulder that lead toward wonderful views of the mountains, but which are so completely over-arched by trees that they might just as well be in a suburb of Chicago for all that anyone can see when he travels on them. This second type of avenue cannot be classed as superior to the first, or as inferior; it is merely different, and therefore preferable under certain conditions. Often it would be a toss-up which to choose, but choice must be exercised and when the choice is made the necessary steps must be taken to make it effective by selecting the species of tree with discretion, and by discretion in placing the rows, spacing the trees in the rows, and guiding the growth of the trees thereafter.

A third type of avenue is one in which the trees instead of over-arching or enwalling the vista are mere decorative adjuncts, the sides of the avenue

**AVENUES DECORATED BY SMALL TREES** being really formed by the buildings. This means comparatively small trees, and is a type most appropriate in busy city boulevards where stores and tall buildings closely line the avenue, where large trees would be rather in the way and would cut off too much light from the windows. The type is common in French cities and would be here if our cities took more heed of the appearance of their streets. What we generally do in this country when a street becomes so thoroughly urban that the big trees are out of place and in the way is to kill them off one by one and put nothing in their place. The French set out small trees that ornament and shade the sidewalks without bothering anybody. In part they use trees of species that by nature remain small and in part they accomplish the result by persistent trimming of top and side branches so as to make a series of semi-formal leafy umbrellas. This type is well adapted to certain situations in Boulder where any high trees along the sides of the street would cut off fine views of the foothills that are well worth keeping open. Looking westward on Pearl Street from Twelfth, although the buildings along the sides of the street are far from lovely and although the whole foreground has a rather shabby, dusty, untidy appear-

ance which the presence of trees would do much to obscure and palliate, yet a traveler in search of the beautiful is really grateful that the trees are out of the way as his eye sweeps up to the broad sunset sky above the serried foothills and the notch of Boulder Canon. It would be a pity to have this scene obscured by over-arching elms or cottonwoods, to say nothing of their possible interference with the shopping trade; but imagine the effect of lining each sidewalk with a row of handsome little trees growing no more than about twenty feet in height, masking the crude appearance of the buildings, giving shade to pedestrians, and forming a verdant, flanking foreground for the distant view without encroaching on it.

It is needless to go on to a discussion of variants of these types, because these will serve to make clear the principle that in street tree planting and in street tree maintenance, if you want to get good results you have got to make up your mind exactly what you want and then see that all the necessary steps are taken to produce just that particular thing—and not just “any old thing.”

It may be well, however, to point out that all of the above types refer to straight streets, of which the most striking feature is the vista which each presents; and that in all of those types a certain uniformity of treatment is essential from end to end of every vista. Specifically, one kind of tree and one method of treatment only should be adopted for each vista thus to be seen as a unit. When we come to crooked or curving streets, of which Boulder is bound to see more as houses push on to crooked ground, the case is radically altered. On a street that follows

**VARIED TREES ON PICTURESQUE STREETS** a gentle, sweeping curve, especially if the street be broad and dignified, it still may be desirable to maintain a dignified uniformity of trees, at least for considerable distances; but on streets and roads that are distinctly picturesque in type, whether built on a series of angles or on a series of curves, especially if they be comparatively narrow, as with mountain roads or private driveways, or many park drives, then uniformity of kind and size and shape and spacing in the trees that shade them ceases to be a virtue and becomes a discordant note, totally out of keeping with the character of the way itself. Here, as always in matters of art, it is not what you do, but how and where you do it that counts.

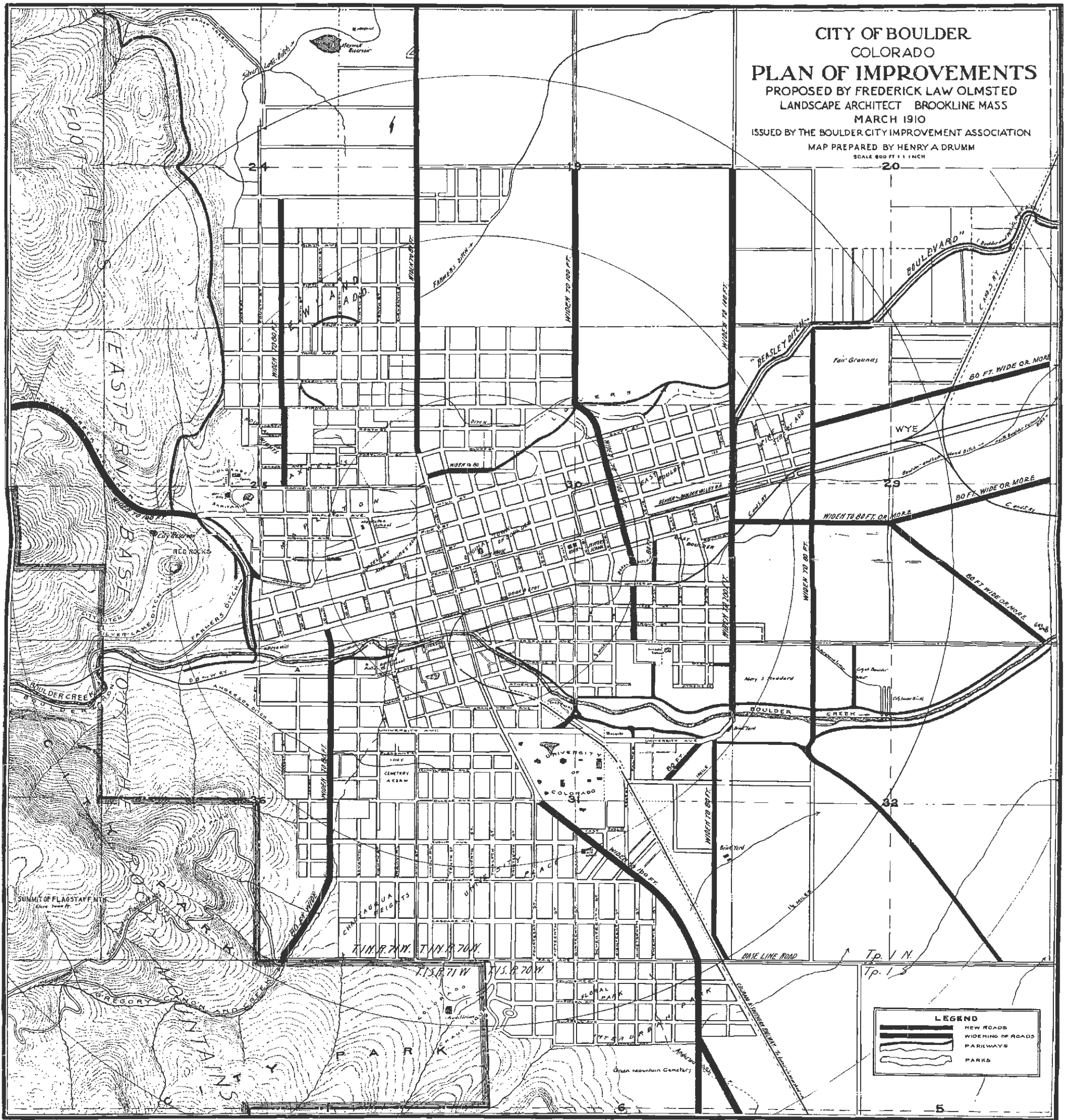
In most of the Boulder streets the straight alignment and limited width point definitely toward the use of a single

**LOCATION OF TREES** kind of tree for each, so planted as to over-arch the street. Ordinarily the best location is the usual one, between the curb and the sidewalk; but sometimes it would be better to plant the trees between the sidewalk and the property line. This gives a greater distance between the two opposite rows of trees, which is sometimes desirable, even when an ultimate over-arching effect is aimed at, and is generally desirable when a vista permanently open to the sky is wanted. But it has also two practical advantages to commend it in all residential sections, where the buildings are set back from the street line. These advantages are, first, that the trees are much safer from injury by horses (a prolific cause of disease, decay and decrepitude in street trees); and second, that the tree roots are enabled to spread under the adjacent lawn and get much more moisture and nourishment than they are apt to get in the narrow strip between the paved roadway and the paved sidewalk.

This brings up the question of irrigation of street trees. Even in regions of much larger rainfall than Colorado it often

**IRRIGATION OF STREET TREES** becomes necessary to provide artificial irrigation for street trees if





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they are to flourish successfully under the very unnatural conditions of city highways. Two principal methods are employed, separately or in combination. One is to provide some system of sub-surface irrigation by laying tiles or blind drains in the soil at the time the tree is planted, connecting with one or more small boxes or drain pipes rising to the surface of the ground, through which in the dry season a large dose of water can be quickly run into the ground around the roots of the tree either by the use of a large hose connected with the regular street hydrants and moved quickly along from tree to tree, or by turning in a surface stream from an irrigating ditch in the usual manner. In Berlin and many German cities such sub-surface irrigation is customary, the watering hole of each tree being covered in some cases by a loose brick in the pavement of the sidewalk.

The alternative method is much simpler and cheaper to install but is troublesome and laborious in operation and precludes the maintenance of turf under the trees. It is to send a gang of men around once a month or so during the dry season to spade up and cultivate a patch of ground a few square yards in extent over the roots of each tree. When the soil is thus loosened a little dike is formed around the cultivated space and the area is flooded with water. The flooding is repeated once or twice if necessary and the ground is then smoothed over. This method is practically the same as that employed in orange groves and for other fruit trees in irrigation districts, but we have seen it employed on one of the fashionable avenues in the City of Berlin, and in most soils it is probably the more efficacious method because the loosening and cultivation of the surface soil is as valuable for a street tree as for a farm crop.

With a moderately clean soil which does not get too muddy when it is wet or form impalpable dust when dry, there is much less objection to clean, tidy, well-kept surfaces of bare earth than popular prejudice in America is apt to suppose, especially where such surfaces are well shaded by trees. Colorado has been settled mainly by people from the eastern states, which in turn received their traditions from England where, even more than in the eastern states, grass flourishes naturally and covers almost all unpaved surfaces that are not kept under cultivation or subjected to the severest wear and tear or darkened by the densest shade; so that most people in Colorado as a matter of habit or tradition tend to think of grass as the only proper and pleasing treatment for the surface of unpaved ground. We are not here arguing for the general substitution of bare earth for grass under the street trees; but we do mean to urge that there may be many places, especially in the level central and eastern parts of the city, where the soil is gravelly or sandy, and especially in places where the shade is dense or the wear and tear is heavy, in which it would be possible by proper attention to keep a surface of bare earth looking a great deal neater and better than an attempt at grass could be kept and at a small fraction of the cost, while incidentally it would simplify the problem of properly irrigating the trees. Only it must first be got into the heads of people that the presence of bare earth does not justify neglect and that such a surface needs to be raked and swept and kept in order like the floor of a house. But it takes less work to keep it in neat order than turf does in the Boulder climate.

In localities where there is a great deal of wear and tear on the surface, as in busy shopping districts, it becomes practically necessary to put down some hard pavement over practically the whole surface from curb to property line. Where this is done over the roots of established trees they may last a long time after

the paving, but it is hard upon them and it makes the growth of young trees very slow and difficult. Unless some special precautions are taken in such cases for the permanent maintenance of the trees they are very apt to go. The best method, judging from the experiments of European cities where the most attention has been given to these matters, is to lower the surface of the soil in which the tree is planted a few inches below the finished grade of the sidewalk, say about the level of the street gutter, and to lay that part of the sidewalk which comes over this soil area in the form of slabs, either of cast iron or of stone or reinforced concrete, supported at their edges only, with an air space between them and the surface of the soil. The sidewalk slabs can be lifted once a year or so and the soil cultivated and manured, while irrigating can easily be done at any time without disturbing the sidewalk at all. If the soil under the slabs is at or slightly below the level of the gutter and the curb has occasional openings in it the soil receives natural irrigation at every rainstorm and artificial irrigation is accomplished merely by turning a stream into the gutter when watering is required. A modification of the usual sub-surface irrigation system is one in which the holes which lead into the irrigation pipes or blind wells of the tree pits open out of the gutter in the same way as the above. But there is danger of over-watering by either of these methods except where the soil is very porous and well-drained.

To sum up in regard to street trees: The planting of trees in the streets and their maintenance or neglect may be left, and in many communities are left, to chance and private initiative. If this policy is pursued the inevitable result, with the growth of a city, is the gradual disappearance of street trees following a long period of raggedness and shabby decline. Half-hearted and unsystematic efforts on the part of the municipality may prolong the period of decline, arrest it sporadically, or sporadically establish new rows of shade trees; but if satisfactory results are to be secured the matter has to be taken up seriously and systematically, with a fair counting of the cost, because here as elsewhere it is impossible to get something for nothing and under the arduous conditions to be found in city streets any trees worth the having can be permanently maintained only by systematic and somewhat costly care—and that care must be directed not so much to immediate conditions and result as to conditions and results years in the future, because the principal returns from any expenditures on street trees can be obtained only after a long period. It takes about twenty years before most planted trees begin to be really fine, and their lifetime thereafter, if wise precautions have been taken in planting and caring for them, is apt to be anywhere from twenty-five to a hundred years or more. The return is an annual one, and it is obvious that the biggest returns on any investment in the planting and maintenance of street trees are to be secured only when steps are taken to secure those returns during a long period of years after the time the trees have reached a respectable size.

The usual methods are such that city street trees begin to go to the bad long before they reach the period of their full value, and by far the major part of the expected return upon the investment is entirely lost.

In every city there are many streets where it would cost more to establish and maintain good and long-lived trees than they would be worth. In some streets it pays best to maintain cheap, quick-growing trees for a few years at a time, in some streets no trees at all, in some streets trees of a compact, small-growing habit, in others trees of great height and spread,



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like the American Elm. These questions can be intelligently decided only after full consideration of such questions as the width of street and sidewalk, the present and prospective character of occupancy and amount of travel, the character of the sub-soil and exposure, and the possibility and estimated cost of establishing and maintaining successfully certain alternative styles of street tree plantations.

To handle this street tree problem in a businesslike way each street or distinct portion of a street ought to be taken up on its own merits, in relation to its surroundings and conditions, and after reasonable inquiry into the facts and consultation with the abutters by hearings or otherwise, it should be decided what definite policy it will best pay to adopt in regard to trees in that street during the next fifty or seventy-five years, considering the probable results of the proposed policy and facing the necessary cost fairly and squarely.

Next to the street trees the most conspicuous objects in the streets are the various necessary fixtures, such as lamp-posts,

**STREET FIXTURES** hydrants, street name signs, mail-boxes, fire-alarm and police-telephone boxes, boxes or cans for papers and other waste, etc., and poles for the support of various electric wires, together with the wires which they carry. The first principle in regard to these fixtures is to combine them as much as possible so as to reduce the number of obstructions and of confusing objects on the sidewalks; the second principle is to make them as simple and as agreeably proportioned as possible, with little ornament, but of pleasing outline. As to the poles for the support of telephone and telegraph and electric light wires, the ultimate ideal is unquestionably their entire removal and the substitution of underground conduits, but as an immediate practical matter the effort should be to adhere more rigidly to the principle, already somewhat general in Boulder, of confining such poles and overhead wires to the alleys.

It is by no means a Utopian project, however, to undertake the gradual introduction of underground conduits for the wires, beginning with the central

**UNDERGROUND WIRES** part of the city and gradually extending. But the thing must be taken up in a conservative, businesslike way with the electric service companies concerned and a reasonable policy adopted. It is true that in a community the size of Boulder the annual cost of an underground conduit service, allowing for the interest on the investment, would be higher than that of an overhead service, even allowing for the greater depreciation and repair charges of the latter; and added to this extra annual cost is the difficulty of financing the first investment for the conduits. But there is no doubt on the other hand that the gradual elimination of the overhead wires will be of very real advantage to the community and is worth paying for. The community must pay for it in the long run, for no good is to be obtained in the end by trying to beat the electric service corporations out of a fair profit; but on the other hand the community ought to make sure that the companies do not screw an unfair profit out of it or give it a poorer equipment and service than it is entitled to get for the price it is willing to pay. In the matter of putting the wires underground either one of two policies may be followed: One is for the city to build and own the conduit, appropriating to that end a certain amount every year and planning the system in conference with the experts of the electric service corporations, and then require the companies to put their wires into the conduits district by district as they are completed; the other is to decide after thorough conference with the companies upon certain dates within which the wires

are to be put underground in certain districts by the companies in their own conduits, and then hold them to a strict accountability for completing the work in each district on time. In either case both the public and the stockholders of the companies are entitled to a thorough investigation of costs and the determination of rates that shall be a fair compensation for the equipment and service provided, neither more nor less.

Few people realize the great importance of this matter of overhead wires as affecting the appearance of the city because

**THE GREAT HARM IN OVER-HEAD WIRES AND POLES** custom gradually blunts our sensibility to the effect of the wires and poles. They are like an irritating, little noise to which one gets so accustomed as not to notice it at all until it ceases; then one suddenly becomes aware of a grateful, refreshing quietness.

In a city the only thing the eye can rest upon that is not necessarily controlled by man, either for good or bad, is the sky; and while we are most actively conscious of the objects on or near the ground, with which we have immediate practical concern, our feelings of pleasure or depression are largely dependent upon the subconscious effect of the ever-present sky, whether it be bright and soft and beautiful, or overcast with clouds or smoke, or obscured with ugly and inharmonious objects of human interjection. Both in the slowness of the impression it ordinarily makes on the attention and in its immense real effect upon the general sense of pleasure or discomfort, the appearance of the sky and what is seen against it may be compared with the purity of the air habitually breathed or with the degree of noise or quiet in habitual surroundings. The nervous system can be adjusted to almost any constant surroundings so that they cease to be noticeable, no matter how noisy or how foul, but the effect of the conditions upon the health of the nervous system and upon the general sense of well-being does not cease when the attention becomes blunted.

In the matter of street lighting Boulder has a capital opportunity in the proposed municipal lighting plant, to be operated by the surplus head of the city

**STREET LIGHTING** water supply. With an excess of available water power the city should be able to afford the luxury of the very best of lighting. Now, apart from the question of cost, one of the elements of excellence in street lighting, whether from the practical or aesthetic point of view, is the use of numerous well-distributed small units instead of a more limited number of very powerful units. Especially in a city like

**ARC VERSUS INCANDESCENT LIGHTING** Boulder, where the streets are full of trees, powerful arc lights at relatively infrequent intervals give far less satisfactory results than numerous incandescent lights, because the trees are apt to throw large parts of the street into black shadows unless the lights are set so low as to dazzle and blind the eyes in approaching them, whereas the incandescent lights may be set below the foliage level without the slightest objection and give a much more uniform as well as a mellower light and more decorative effect. It is to be hoped, therefore, that incandescent lighting may be adopted as the standard, for the residence streets at all events.

It is hardly necessary to say that the design of the lamp-posts is an important matter, too generally treated with carelessness.

**LAMP POSTS** A good deal of money has been spent upon them and cast iron costs about the same amount per pound whether it is given the clumsy, uninteresting, or ill-decorated form of some stock pattern or a really distinguished and beautiful form specially designed for the city by an able artist. A moderate investment in devising a first-

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class pattern for such posts is a very good investment.\*

Other objects within the highway limits, street signs, hydrants, rubbish boxes, catch basin inlets, etc., and especially large

**ARTISTIC DESIGN OF MUNICIPAL CONSTRUCTION** structures, like bridges, offer in their location and design an interminable series of problems, both large and small, calling for the joint application of technical knowledge, artistic skill and good common sense. In proportion as these qualities are jointly applied to all of such problems the streets of the city will improve and in proportion as any or all these qualities are left out of consideration the streets will suffer. It is only by unusual good fortune that a city can fill its service with men who are thoroughly and adequately strong in all three of the requisite qualities, and practically in order to accomplish good results the most important thing is that there should be a clear recognition of the natural human limitations of responsible officials and that they should be provided with assistants or with consulting advisors competent to help them out on their short suits. An official may be somewhat short on artistic skill or on technical knowledge or even on both provided he has common sense and the desire and opportunity to get the co-operation of people who are long where he is short, and he will get good results. But somehow or other all three of the above qualities must be brought to bear or the results will be relatively unsatisfactory.

Assuming that the leading responsible officials are reasonably long on common sense and honest desire for excellence and efficiency, it ought to be possible to secure as assistants, if a reasonably permanent tenure could be assured, men having both technical and artistic training. But aside from any doubts about the above premises, it is very hard to find assistants having a technical training in municipal construction work who have any artistic training at all. The artistic aspect of construction work is so generally ignored in the training of civil engineers, and on the other had most architects and architectural draughtsmen are so lacking in the particular kind of technical knowledge required in municipal work, that the right combination is very hard to find. Men with a sound, professional training as landscape architects might come a little nearer to filling the bill than architects, but the number of such men available as municipal employees is too small to be worth mentioning. Practically dependence must be placed mainly on securing assistants whose training has been along engineering lines, leavened if possible by a small proportion who have had artistic training in landscape architecture, architecture or otherwise, and on supplementing this somewhat one-sided agency by the occasional or regular services of a consulting architect and a consulting landscape architect.

Of course, when it comes to the design of a school house or the laying out of a park, or the adoption of a radically new water

**THE EMPLOYMENT OF SPECIAL EXPERT DESIGNERS** supply or sewerage system, it is customary and proper to select and employ for that special undertaking an expert who has proved by his work elsewhere that he has special skill in dealing with such a problem. But it is neither convenient nor economical nor productive of harmonious results to parcel out all the minor constructional problems of a city among independent professional men. Up to a certain limit of magnitude and difficulty the problems ought to be dealt with by a departmental force, the responsible executive head of which is normally an engineer. In cities of moderate size there is one such department under a City Engineer, and in very large cities several such departments, under independent Chief Engineers. But

\*For arc lights the form of support and lights introduced in the South Park System of Chicago and known as the Daniels System of boulevard lighting is worth careful consideration.

in any case the work turned out by such city departments is apt to be of better all-round quality if the responsible executive head has the privilege of informal consultation with certain other experts, especially on artistic matters. The City of New York has recently established the office of Consulting Architect to the Board of Estimate and Apportionment, the holder of which office is debarred from undertaking any architectural work for the city on his own account, but whose advice as a consultant is open to any of the city departments that prepare projects for construction to be passed on by the Board. The principle is a sound one and ought to be more generally applied.

Waterways and Related Park Opportunities

The principal waterway in Boulder is Boulder Creek, and its principal function, from which there is no escaping, is to carry

**FLOODS** off the storm-water which runs into it from the territory which it drains.

If, lulled by the security of a few seasons of small storms, the community permits the channel to be encroached upon, it will inevitably pay the price in destructive floods. So with the channel of Sunshine Canon and others of less importance. In the case of Boulder Creek the formation of the ground indicates that at one time or another the stream has spread or wandered over the whole of the low-lying part of the city. Its present banks in that section are low and the larger floods have always been relieved in the past by a great increase in the width of the stream whenever it has risen more than a few feet above its normal summer level. The fact that the lands nearest to the stream channel are so obviously subject to flooding has tended automatically to retard their occupation and keep them free for the passage of floods, but increasing land values are steadily increasing the inducements offered to the owner of any given parcel of these lands to fill it to a level above what he guesses

**ENCROACHMENTS ON FLOOD PLAIN** the floods will reach and so build upon it. It is obvious that if this process goes on without the exercise of any control for the purpose of maintaining an adequate channel, the cheap, unoccupied low-lands over which the flood-waters now pass harmlessly away will all be filled up and occupied; and then when a big flood comes, larger than the restricted channel can carry, the flood is going to tear through streets and houses, doing immense damage. Again and again this little piece of history has repeated itself on stream after stream, in town after town; and after the damage from exceptional floods has come to be enormous the community has gone to work at further great expense to widen and otherwise increase the capacity of the storm channel, often condemning buildings and building land of much value to secure the necessary relief.

It is well to point out in this connection that the City of Boston, through neglecting to take action to prevent encroachment on the channel of Stony

**HOW BOSTON PAID FOR NEGLECTING ITS LITTLE FLOOD PROBLEM** Brook—a much smaller stream than Boulder Creek and much less torrential in character—was finally compelled by repeated flooding of streets and basements to undertake radical improvements which have cost to date upwards of two million dollars.

Unless some systematic community action is taken for the regulation of the stream and its banks and flood channel one

**THE RESULTS OF NEGLECTING BOULDER CREEK** or the other of two serious economic wastes is bound to take place. Either a good deal of the low land near the stream will remain unimproved, idle, and neglected,



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tending to depreciate values near it and involving a serious loss of the opportunity afforded by its location near the heart of the town; or else this land will be filled and used for private purposes, thus restricting the flood channel of the stream and sooner or later causing calamitous floods.

This is on its face a plain, straightforward question of hydraulics and municipal common sense. If the people of Boulder only have the sense to take warning by the experience of other towns they will deal with it now, while it can be dealt with cheaply and easily, instead of waiting till a catastrophe forces them to remedy their neglect under conditions that will make a solution far more costly and less satisfactory.

What would be a businesslike procedure? First, to form a serious and painstaking estimate or forecast of the maximum volume of flood water which the creek is likely to have discharged into it in the future, based upon a careful compilation and study of all the existing records and reports of past floods and upon a comparison of the extent and character of the drainage area and the precipitation thereon with those of other comparable streams of which the flood records have been kept. With this estimate it is a relatively simple matter for a hydraulic engineer to figure how much of a channel must be left to provide free outlet for the expected flood without its being forced to tear through the streets.

It is a complicated technical investigation, but in principal it does not differ one whit from the process through which a woman goes when she looks at the howl into which she is about to turn a can of peaches and makes up her mind whether it will hold what is in the can. Either it will or it won't, and she is a foolish woman if she gives no heed to the probabilities until the peaches slop over on the table.

Without attempting to anticipate the results of a careful investigation of the flood problem of Boulder Creek it is safe to say this: There are two general

**TYPES OF TREATMENT** types of channel adapted to meet such conditions as Boulder Creek presents. One is the relatively narrow walled channel of relatively great depth, deep enough or high-sided enough to take any expectable increase of flow without an appreciable widening of the stream. This may be called the artificial reproduction or imitation of a canon or gorge. The other provides a small shallow channel for the ordinary stages of the stream but permits the water when it rises above the level of this low-water channel to spread out and occupy a much broader flood-channel, which can carry it off without forcing it to rise much higher. This is of course an adaptation from the ordinary form of a natural river channel in lowland country. Where land values are very high and land is preoccupied by buildings, etc., so that the saving in width will pay for the cost of construction of the deep channel with its high, protecting walls and numerous incidental expenses, the former is generally employed even in flat ground, but where land values are lower the latter is apt to be employed. We are strongly inclined to believe that at least below the Twelfth Street bridge the latter will prove the more economical and satisfactory plan. Under

**INCIDENTAL VALUE OF FLOOD CHANNEL MARGINS** such a plan, in a city, one great incidental value attaches to the margins of flat land subject to occasional flooding which intervene between the ordinary channel and the outer embankments that limit the flood channel. With the exception of a few days in the year these "washes," as such lands are called in the English midlands, are dry ground, available for any kind of use not inconsistent with the free passage

of the flood waters when the time comes. To make a "park" of such ground in the sense in which that much abused term is often applied, as indicating something very highly polished and exquisite with costly flowers and other decorations of a kind that would be ruined by flooding, would

**A BOULDER CREEK "PARK"** be foolishness. But the plan of keeping open for public use near the heart of the city a simple piece of pretty bottom-land of the very sort that Boulder Creek has been flooding over for countless centuries, of growing a few tough old trees on it and a few bushes, and of keeping the main part of the ground as a simple, open common, where the children can play and over which the wonderful views of the foothills can be obtained at their best from the shaded paths and roads along the embankment edge—this would give a piece of recreation ground worth a great deal to the people. And at the same time it is probably the cheapest way of handling the flood problem of Boulder Creek.

Before discussing further the landscape treatment of the "washes" of Boulder Creek, in case of the adoption of the treatment we suggest for the flood channel, we should like to set forth certain considerations that have a general application to any parks or pleasure grounds that may be undertaken in the city.

The three great natural advantages attainable within the city of Boulder are: First, the climate, supplemented by ample water, without which the climate would become a curse instead of a blessing; second, the views toward the beautiful foothills; third, the eastward views from the higher ground in the western parts of the city out over the plains.

In a region of brilliant sunshine which at times becomes distinctly too hot for the greatest comfort and at times is sought for its grateful warmth by anyone

**THE OUTLOOK FROM SHADE TO SUN** who can find a sunny spot that is sheltered from the driving wind, two types of situation and of landscape become of especial value. One is the densely shaded promenade or grove from which one can look out upon the contrasting brilliancy of open sunshine and luminous air, and enjoy its brilliancy the more for the contrast. To stroll or sit on a warm day beneath clean-stemmed trees through which the breeze may freely draw, to feel their canopy overhead protecting the eye from the glare of sky and sun, and to look out upon an open space bathed in the brilliant sunshine, even if it be but a little open courtyard or lawn or a street, is to taste one of the highest charms of the wonderful climate with which Boulder is blessed. The other type of situation is a nook sheltered from the searching winds by wall or hedge or mass

**THE SUNNY SHELTERED CORNER** of trees but freely open to the sun above. In either case one of the essentials is a certain amount of clear open space not obstructed by trees or buildings or anything rising much above the surface.

Again: if one would enjoy the view of the foothills or the occasional glimpse of the Arapahoe Peaks looming up over the notch of Boulder Canon from any place in the central or eastern part of the city he must bear in mind that houses and trees will completely shut off those views unless he can find a spot in front of which there is open ground in the line of view entirely free from such obstructions for a considerable distance.

Any intelligent effort in the way of providing public recreation grounds in Boulder and especially in the flatter eastern part thereof cannot fail to be profoundly influenced by the above considerations. Except where peculiar circumstances dictate some other treatment, the problem must be to secure, with whatever variation in detail and in expression, certain elements of design

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essential to utilizing the great natural resources of the situation; **A SPECIAL TYPE OF RECREATION GROUND PROPER FOR BOULDER** a more or less densely shaded promenade generally surrounding and always contiguous to an open

space which shall be preferably free from all obstructions rising above the level of the eye, and which shall be of such size and shape in relation to the height and character of the enclosing objects as to afford permanent views of the foothills from the promenade, and preferably from the open space itself, over a pleasing foreground. These essentials may be secured again and again without any sameness, indeed with infinite variation of character if proper skill be used. The shaded promenade may be a vine-clad arbor or a formal and orchard-like grove or avenue of trees; it may be a winding path that picks its way along within the margin of the most irregular and picturesque of varied plantations. The open space may be a garden all aglow with bloom, or a smooth, irrigated grass plat, or a field of alfalfa ready for the scythe, or the smooth, bare surface of a playground, or a wide basin of water where children could wade and play with boats or even go in swimming, or it may be the rough, unkempt but cleanly surface of a pasture. The principle is the same in any case, though the execution be indefinitely varied.

In the treatment of the "washes" of Boulder Creek this principle points to the concentration of the tree planting mostly along the roads and paths of the **THE DESIGN OF THE BOULDER CREEK RESERVATION** bordering embankments, the careful studying out of the best views and the limiting of all other tree and shrub growth to locations that will never interfere with these views but merely afford them pleasing frames. The treatment of the remaining surface is something of a problem. Every requirement of landscape enjoyment would be met by laying it down in alfalfa and either cutting it for hay or pasturing it. Indeed it would be a simple and inexpensive way of maintaining a beautiful piece of park-like landscape to fence off the "washes" from the roads and paths of the enclosing embankment and turn cattle in to graze at so much per head. This would not prevent those who are unafraid of cows from strolling along the stream or through the fields and it would certainly tend to form a very beautiful type of landscape excellently suited to the circumstances. No one can doubt this who has seen the little bits of pastured ground along the creek above the railroad, where gypsies or other campers have been in the habit of gathering and turning loose their animals to graze. If cattle are to be excluded from the "washes" and if they are opened to general trampling by the public, some experimenting will have to be done to find the best treatment of the surface; but whatever happens we hope the city will not be led into the foolish extravagance of trying to make an artificial clipped lawn of these areas. Such a treatment would be far less beautiful and far less appropriate, as well as far more costly, than to treat it as rough pasture or mowing land—just set apart to be seen and enjoyed from the ample paths and roads on its margin during all times of year, to serve as a simple open foreground to the lovely distant views, and to serve when the floods come down as a vent for their rising volume.

The width as well as the treatment of the proposed public holdings along Boulder Creek must be adjusted in detail according to land prices and local availability for park purposes as well as by hydraulic requirements, but a superficial study of the situation suggests the following approximate outline. Starting down stream, beginning at the Twelfth Street bridge where the land values are high, we advise limiting the control of the banks to a very narrow strip on each side,

enough only to provide an adequate channel for the stream, with substantial walls to protect its banks in place of the present wooden bulkheads whenever their reconstruction is justified, with an ample foot-path shaded by a single row of trees along the north embankment and with some planting against the Twelfth Street, lots on the south embankment. After getting beyond Twelfth Street lots the breadth of the embankment could be increased at small expense, giving room for more trees and for benches, etc.

After reaching Arapahoe Avenue (by means of which vehicles can reach the banks of the stream from Twelfth Street without the necessity of any costly **RIVER DRIVE** new roadway through expensive property) the left bank of the creek would be bordered by a park drive and promenade, overlooking the water and commanding occasional views across it to the foothills. This boundary drive or street would be set at a grade just sufficiently high to protect the lands northeast of it from flooding and would at the same time form a very attractive new street for house frontage, thus tending to raise adjacent values considerably. It would reach 17th Street just north of the bridge, and would be continued east of 17th Street on a due east line, passing just south of the occupied lot on the southeast corner of 17th and Athens Streets.

On the south side of the stream below the Arapahoe Avenue bridge it would seem expedient to widen boldly and include the considerable tract of vacant level **PLAYFIELD** land lying between the railroad and the creek east of the lots which face on 12th Street. This tract would be very useful as a playfield and as an open space over which to enjoy the foothill views from the drive and path along the north bank already described. Where the houses have been built close to the stream bank just west of the 17th Street bridge, of course it would not pay to take any land, except the valueless land under water in the bed of the stream itself. The reason for acquiring the latter is to guard effectively against any encroachment upon the stream in connection with possible further improvements of this land and to put the city in a position to put up an embankment wall on the west side of the stream if it should at any time seem desirable. But since the city could not acquire any holdings above this bank at present without getting into rather heavy damages it is not advisable for the city to take over the burden of maintaining the protection of the bank itself against the wash of the stream.

East of 17th Street on the right bank a new street or parkway already referred to should be laid out, starting from 17th Street by a curve just south of the bridge, passing south of Mr. Parce's house about on the line between his lot and that of the University, and rising by an easy grade along the steep hillside below the Hospital so as to reach the upper level about opposite the end of Palmer Street produced. Such a drive running along the edge of the bluff would command a superb view of the city with the mesas and foothills rising behind it to the north and northwest, with the valley of the creek in the foreground. Unless some such drive is built, this view, which is one of the most characteristic in the city, will be permanently lost to the public. The University originally commanded this very view, but the location of the railroad and the building up of intervening lots have already greatly impaired that outlook, and the process is still going on. Soon no one will get the benefit of this situation but some of the patients in the back rooms of the Hospital and those occupying the back rooms and back yards of a few private lots on University Avenue. The accompanying sketch shows the



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type of cross section we have had in mind for this drive and promenade. It is assumed to be taken at a point a little west of the line of Palmer Street. At the rear of the Hospital the road would be wholly in fill; at the upper end it would be perhaps wholly in cut. This drive would cross the County Road at or about the corner of University Avenue and continue on to the end of the ridge at 28th Street, where it might be expected to branch, one branch following along the south side of the creek on the low ground and the other extending as a thoroughfare to the southeast.

With the exception of the brick yard and a small dwelling near the County Road and of Mr. Parce's dwelling just east of 17th Street, all of which might be omitted from the purchases, the property between this proposed drive and the creek is of very little market value and should be secured for park purposes very cheaply. For park purposes it is decidedly valuable as the foreground to a series of inspiring views from the high level parkway, and as the enclosure and protection of the landscape of the creek over which the views of the foothills are to be obtained from the low level parkway on the north bank of the creek.

Returning to the latter, there are some large vacant fields just west of the County Road and extending practically up to the yard of the Lincoln School. This is the nearest point to the heart of the city and to the principal schools where a good sized field can be secured, and the purchase of it at present prices is very much to be desired. Between the County Road and the outfall of the city sewer a much more limited taking would suffice to protect the stream and afford an agreeable parkway. Indeed all that is needed in this whole section from 17th Street eastward is an inexpensive gravel road and some skillful thinning of the trees and brush to make a parkway of very remarkable beauty. It is at present such a difficult matter to make one's way along the creek through fences and thickets and other obstructions that we venture to guess there are very few citizens of Boulder who have any conception of the potential beauty of such a parkway as is here suggested. And always it is to be borne in mind that sooner or later the problem of controlling and caring for the flood waters of the creek will force the city to take control of the channel. If action is delayed too long the only result will be a costly piece of engineering construction serving no purpose other than the prevention of floods; whereas if the matter is taken in hand now the city will spend less money on the hydraulic improvement and get a beautiful parkway to boot.

THE COST OF DELAY  
We have made no examination of the creek banks below the sewer outfall, because there is no hurry about that part of the improvement, but it would seem desirable ultimately to extend the parkway indefinitely in the direction of Valmont and the lakes.

Just what to do in the neighborhood of the sewer outfall is a complicated question about which we have only certain general considerations to put before you.

SEWAGE DISPOSAL PLANT  
The problem of a permanently suitable method of sewage disposal is one which the City of Boulder will sooner or later have to face. At present the sewage is discharged with all its dangerous impurities into Boulder Creek a short distance below the town, and passes in a somewhat diluted condition into the several intakes that supply water to various localities further down the stream. Experience elsewhere indicates that considerations of public health will require these conditions to be remedied and that either voluntarily or under legal compulsion Boulder will have to assume the burden of disposing of its sewage without menace to the health of other communities.

Of late years under careful scientific study of the problem the method most generally adopted for the purification of municipal sewage has been the use of "bacterial filtration beds," so-called, in some of their many forms. The same results in transforming the dangerous organic matter of the sewage into harmless compounds have also been obtained, and to a great extent by identical natural processes, where the sewage has been applied not to bare filter beds but to cultivated and productive sewage farms. The chief reasons why the bare filter beds have been favored in American cities as against the irrigated sewage farm are, we believe, first, that the area required to deal with a given amount of sewage is smaller in the case of the bare beds, and second, that under ordinary conditions of municipal management, the farming is a more complicated business than city employees can be expected to carry on successfully, even though it might bring in enough income if skillfully handled to pay for a competent manager. Another reason is that in the East, where most of the development in sewage disposal methods has thus far taken place, irrigation farming is an unaccustomed idea and water is generally regarded merely as something to be got rid of in the easiest possible way. It is hardly necessary to say that the latter condition is entirely reversed at Boulder and that every economic reason points toward the utilization of the Boulder sewage for irrigation purposes. We have been given to understand that an offer has already been made to pay the city for the right to use the outflow from the sewer for irrigating private lands.

SEWAGE FARMS  
There appear to be two sound reasons for objecting to this method of dealing with the question and for preferring a sewage farm owned by the city. The first is a sanitary one. The primary purpose of the undertaking being to protect the public health it would be very unwise for the city to turn over the handling of this dangerous though useful material to a private party whose main object would not be to make sure of its purification, but to use it in the handiest way for irrigation. The second reason is that owing to the difficulty and cost of frequently changing the point of discharge of the sewage there would be little if any competition in bidding for its use and the city would be more or less at the mercy of the land owners with whom the first contracts were made. On the other hand if the sewage were applied to land owned by the city the business of growing crops on the irrigated land, under proper restrictions for insuring the sanitary disposal of the sewage and preventing the use of crops (like lettuce, etc.) of a sort that might endanger health through their contamination by sewage, could be leased out annually or at longer intervals to the highest bidder.

REASON FOR A CITY SEWAGE FARM  
As the city grows to the eastward it would become necessary at intervals of some years to extend the sewer system, to acquire a new sewage farm and to dispose of the old one for other purposes, in part probably for building land and in part for parks and other public purposes.

Even while in use for its original purpose a sewage farm would have some park value, for if properly conducted it is in no way an unsightly or disagreeable spot, and though the general public could not be permitted to walk about in the irrigated area, there might very well be a public drive and promenade along the border overlooking the fields and commanding the mountain views beyond them. The natural place for such a farm would be on or near the banks of the creek, its precise location and extent being more or less closely determined by engineering considerations as to grade of outfall and probable volume of sewage to be handled.

Returning now to the 12th Street bridge and working up

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stream, it appears impracticable to secure any continuous drive-way or border street near the creek. BOULDER CREEK ABOVE TWELFTH STREET  
It does seem practicable and desirable, however, to secure a margin of vacant land of varying width, most of it subject to occasional overflow. It is desirable here as elsewhere to avoid the complete obstruction of these "washes" by filling in right up to the edge of the creek because all such constriction of the channel tends inevitably to raise the flood level of the creek. If the public controls a comparatively narrow margin of the lowland on each side of the creek, and if trees are allowed to grow near the property line as a screen against the rather unattractive class of occupancy to be found in much of this section, and if too many trees are not permitted to grow along the stream banks so as to obstruct the valley, the immediate result will be to conserve and greatly enhance the views that can be obtained from all of the street bridges in crossing the creek. But even here these "washes" can be made of direct service for park purposes by means of a low level path reached by steps from the bridges and winding along the stream-side. This path should be formed of cement or tar concrete and should be so designed and built that it would offer no obstruction to the water when covered by floods and cause no eddies that would be likely to start a washout of the adjacent surface. Although the head-room would be very limited, such a path could pass under the existing bridges and form a continuous park path that would offer a very attractive stroll when the surroundings are decently cared for. Very likely people in Boulder have got so accustomed to thinking of the creek and its banks as a place to throw tin cans and rubbish that it may require too great a feat of the imagination to conceive of it as a pretty, shady spot with a clean, well-kept park path running beside the murmuring waters, but as a matter of fact such an ideal is quite easily attainable. Of course every time the creek is flooded the path will be put temporarily out of business, but the day after it goes down, when the caretaker has had time to sweep off a little mud or gravel here and there and pick up and burn the driftwood or rubbish that may have lodged against the bridge abutments or the trees, it will all be as good as ever.

Next 12th Street the strip of low vacant land between the creek and the first building south of it and about an equal amount on the north ought thus to be acquired, running through on these lines to the railroad bridge and the "paper" location of 11th Street. West of 11th Street the south bank of the creek is occupied (on paper) by a narrow street or alley called Riverside Street which would be continued through as such to 9th Street. On the north side of the creek from 11th to 9th Street the taking line would be about parallel with the creek, starting from 11th Street on the line of the alley as laid out and meeting 9th Street just north of the angle where the latter turns to go over the bridge. A row of lots would be left between this taking line and the railroad and they would have frontage on the embankment roadway.

West of 9th Street on the north bank of the creek only a path, at varying levels, can be provided for. It would pass between the reduction works and the creek, under the railroad bridge, along a bulkhead between the Boyd mill and the creek and so along to the westward. On the south bank it is to be hoped that a street can be put through from 9th to 6th Street, passing just north of the Highland School grounds and the old house marked "Austin" on the large map, and that all the low land covered with interesting vegetation which lies between this line and the creek can be included for park purposes. West of 6th Street there is an alley or path for a short distance which ought to be extended through as a public path as far as the

railroad. The creek is here bordered by a fine growth of trees, and despite the extreme difficulty of scrambling along the bank at present there are signs that it is a good deal used, probably for the most part by tramps and small boys. A proper public path which could be lighted and policed would do away with a nuisance here at the same time that it opened a pretty strolling place to decent people. At present such a path would dead-end against the railroad and anyone going beyond would have to cross the railroad at grade as they do now; but ultimately it would be perfectly feasible to carry the path down the bank and under the railroad bridge in the creek bed, where of course it would be flooded whenever the creek rose but would ordinarily be entirely convenient. West of the railroad bridge lies a strip of land on the south side of the creek which is now entirely isolated between the stream and the railroad. A portion of it next the creek is prettily wooded and the higher open part backing on the railroad is good for building purposes if it could be made accessible. There is probably no market for it now, but it is to be considered whether it would not be worth while to arrange, after a few years, for parking the banks of the stream, putting in a park boundary street upon which lots backing on the railroad could face and putting in a bridge across the creek to connect with a street leading out to Pearl Street along the line of Sunshine Canon Creek.

This brings us to the problem of Sunshine Canon Creek, a torrential stream which has already played havoc more than once with improvements in its vicinity because people had not learned sufficient respect for its flood volume and had not arranged to give it space enough in which to sweep harmlessly down to Boulder Creek. We did not have time to study the problem carefully, as needs to be done, but this much is plain: That the city ought to take steps to lay out and put in order a proper and well-protected channel extending from the wooden culvert to the inverted syphon by which the Farmers' Ditch crosses Sunshine Canon Creek down across Pearl Street to Boulder Creek, and that when such an open channel is being laid out it would be a sensible and pleasing design to provide for a road and sidewalk on each side so that the open space of the channel and its banks may count as part of a street or parkway instead of being wasted in the back of a block. An incidental advantage is that such a channel is much more easily policed and kept in order if it runs in the midst of a parkway than if there are back yards abutting directly upon it.

Beyond the line of the Farmers' Ditch and Mountain Avenue, as the valley of the creek becomes more pronounced the park opportunity which it affords becomes more striking. The present creek bed and the low ground close to it on either side are a positive burden and drawback to the owners from the point of view of sub-division into lots, and they ought to be delighted to transfer them to the city to hold as a park, over which their lots on the northeasterly side would command a permanent view of the foothills over a most charming foreground.

It is not going to take the lot-buying public of Boulder very much longer to realize that when it is attracted to a lot on high ground because of the fine view commanded thereby, the paying of any extra price on account of that view is sheer folly if there is another lot just across the street on which the next purchaser is certain to put up a house that will absolutely block the view. And per contra, those few lots which are so arranged that they have permanent command of fine views will fetch constantly growing prices with the growth in the number of people who



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appreciate such things and can pay for them.

Here is a notable case in point. By setting apart for park purposes a narrow strip of steep hillside and a piece of valley bottom washed by the torrential

**A SPECIAL OPPORTUNITY** floods of Sunshine Canon Creek, and by laying out a parklike street at the edge of the valley, a row of lots can be obtained on the upland which not only will have permanent command of a view that will put them in a class apart from almost all of the lots with which they come into market competition, but will have a frontage on what would probably become one of the fashionable drives. This valley parking should certainly extend up to include the picturesque Green Rocks and ultimately something more than a narrow road ought to come within public control in the further part of Sunshine Canon.

It would be a beautiful thing to retain the whole slope from the valley parkway described in the foregoing up to the Red

**RED ROCKS** but we doubt very much whether the city would do wisely to charge itself with the double burden of paying out cash for the market value of the land and depriving itself of the tax returns which would result from the development of most of it into house lots. It is a piece of land which is capable of development into a considerable number of residence lots of attractive and valuable kind; but it is equally capable of being very badly botched if it is lotted up in a thoughtless, commonplace way. If the latter is done the sellers of the land will be the losers to some extent, but the chief losers will be the purchasers and the city at large through failing to get what the opportunity entitles them to. The steep upper part of the slope and the Red Rocks themselves, together with the city reservoir, ought certainly to become a public park.

An opportunity almost equal to that presented by the northeast side of Sunshine Canon between Mountain Avenue and

**MOUNTAIN AVENUE** Mapleton Avenue as just described, existed, and is not yet finally lost, in the case of Mountain Avenue itself. The splendid views to the south and southwest from that street and from the houses on the north side of it are entirely at the mercy of the owners of the lots which slope steeply down from the opposite side of the Farmers' Ditch. These lots have not been so built upon as to obstruct the view thus far, because they are steep, poor lots upon which it would be relatively costly to erect houses; but it is only a question of time before the demand for lots in this locality will induce people to go to the expense of propping up buildings there, and then good-bye to the view. If it were only a matter of transferring the control and enjoyment of the view from one set of house owners to another the public would have no cause to worry about it; but the fact is that this process if it is allowed to take place will mean that the public, which can now enjoy the view from the street, would also be the loser, and the command of the view would be transferred from the fronts of one set of houses to the backs of another set. The park commission ought to buy or condemn the hillside lots below the Farmers' Ditch from the point where it crosses Spruce Street to where it crosses Sunshine Canon Creek, but the owners of the lots north of Mountain Avenue could well afford as a matter of investment to meet the whole cost of such a park taking themselves rather than let the situation go by default.

In connection with this park taking some intelligent treatment of the margins of the Farmers' Ditch with a shady path and

**TREATMENT OF FARMERS' DITCH** benches would of course be undertaken, and a good deal of skill should be utilized to make this a pleasant shady spot for people to stroll and sit and enjoy the view, but without allowing any trees to interfere unduly with the views from the street and from the houses north of it. This means careful study on the spot and the limitation of the foliage to exactly the right places. Not improbably it would mean, in part, recourse to systematic pruning, or to the use of a vine-clad arbor or pergola for shading part of the path instead of trees, but it might be possible to accomplish the result by selecting small trees of low habit and placing them very carefully. Already there has been some manipulation of the natural growth along the ditch by pruning, apparently to improve views from houses, on the opposite side of the street, but it has neither been systematic nor agreeable in its general effect.

The presence of the Farmers' Ditch is a very happy feature here, as a part of a public promenade. Given sunshine and breeze and the wonderful plunging view across the valley to rugged mountains bathed in sunlight; given shade from the direct glare of the sun and sky, easily to be obtained by planting; the one thing wanted to complete the situation is water, and the quiet flowing canal on its way to irrigate the fields beyond the city gives the very note that is needed. To be sure its banks are here shabby and neglected, the vegetation is weedy and an appearance of squalor is more or less in evidence, so that a superficial observer might turn away without feeling the least interest in the ditch. But all the essential elements of the most beautiful scenes of Italy are here, waiting only a little patient, skillful care to unite them into a little picture of paradise.

Indeed, there is nearby, although without the distant view and without the outlook from shade into sunlit space which is the

**PLEASANT IMPROVEMENTS NOW EXISTING ALONG THE FARMERS' DITCH** soul of this situation, an example which suggests the charm that can be found in the simple combination of the quiet, flowing water of the irrigating ditch with a little well-kept foliage. At several points between Spruce Street and the Mapleton School the so-called ditch, in passing through a garden, becomes the central feature of a really charming scene. The stiff walling of the banks and the raising of the adjacent ground quite high above the water level makes the water count for less than it might, and we can call to mind many more lovely gardens bordering canals in European countries where the people have acquired a greater knack at such things; but here and anywhere a considerable degree of charm is felt the very moment anyone takes care of the borders of such an irrigating stream in an appreciative spirit. The hand of a good housekeeper is the thing most essentially needed, doing away with dirt and slatternly neglect, but not changing everything into a rigid and mechanical formalism.

We are inclined to dwell upon this point, because not only in the Farmers' Ditch but in the many other irrigating channels which traverse the city in so many quarters Boulder has what seems to us a veritable treasure of municipal decorations, now for the most part neglected and defaced, but all retaining their essential elements unspoiled and ready to shed beauty all about them if only given a proper setting.

Among those people of every generation and every race who have most enjoyed life and the beauty of the world about them,

**OPPORTUNITY PRESENTED BY THE IRRIGATING DITCHES** but especially among people dwelling in climates of sunshine, blue skies and dry air, the testimony is overwhelming, whether we look to the poets and to literary records of the enjoyment of beauty, or

to painters, or to gardens themselves; that living water, glancing in the sunlight and the shadow, is one of the most refreshing, cheerful, lovely elements that can be introduced into any scene. Whether it be spring or jet or fountain, picturesque cascade or smooth overpouring of mill-dam, meandering brook or prim canal, the essential beauty persists throughout; and only the signs of human contempt, foul contamination and slovenly surroundings, can obscure the natural beauty of water in the open air. A thing that strikes the easterner unaccustomed to the irrigating ditch, is that however neglected and ignored such a ditch may be as to its banks and surroundings there is something about it radically different from the ditches he is familiar with at home; a something that makes it far more attractive, more suggestive of pleasant possibilities. The feeling is hard to analyze, but it arises, perhaps, mainly from two causes. First, the water of the ditches is relatively clean and sparkling; and second, it is elevated close to the level of the adjacent ground, or even above it, thus catching the sunlight and holding the eye, and expressing the fact that it is cared for and conveyed as a thing of value destined for human use, instead of being sunk in a drainage ditch as far below the surface as possible, rejected and considered only as something to be got rid of quickly and completely. If the inherent beauty of the water of the irrigating channels were supplemented by such treatment of their immediate borders as would remove the unpleasant associations that now in many places attach to them, such treatment as would bring out and enhance the natural associations of refreshment and abundance that are inseparable from them and would re-enforce their intrinsic charm, these channels alone would serve to make Boulder a place of high civic beauty.

If only people could be got to realize that while they are looking for beauty in things which have no use except for decorative purposes, the highest possible beauty is to be found nine times

**AN AESTHETIC PREDICAMENT** out of ten in the most utilitarian things when perfected and treated as worthy of respect and loving care, they would be saved a vast deal of extravagant and foolish expenditure which now leads to confusion, disharmony and ugliness though made in the vain hope of achieving beauty. It is the peculiar difficulty of such an awakening to the value of beauty in the scheme of life as is now being manifested all over our country, that people whose interest has been largely concentrated upon utilitarian things from the commercial standpoint are apt, when they do awaken to the value of beauty and set to work to get their share of the enjoyment of it, to look anywhere else for it rather than in the familiar things which they have always regarded as of commercial or practical interest only, not at all realizing that the lack of beauty or the positive ugliness of these things is due solely to the misshaping of them by their own narrow commercialism and that of others like them.

We trust the good people of Boulder will pardon us for this preachment. They are no worse sinners than most of us in this great, prosperous, well-meaning nation, where opportunities are so numerous that we spend all our energies trying to grasp more of them than we can hold and so have no time left in which really to live. It is merely that a person is more vividly struck by examples of foolish waste of a kind new to him than by those to which he has become accustomed; so when Boulder is visited by an eastern stranger who has an eye for beauty and some acquaintance with the use to which water is put in the gardens and cities of older countries he cannot fail to be strikingly impressed with the neglect of what seems to him an extraordinary opportunity for civic beauty.

There are several canals in which the city has a shareholder's

interest in addition to its powers of general control, and along the banks of most of these the city has a right-of-way. Many indeed are within the limits of streets or public alleys, already adequate in width or capable of being widened at slight expense so as to provide the essential elements for the public enjoyment of the opportunity which the waterway presents.

What are those essentials?

First, convenient provision for the public to pass or to stop where it can enjoy the opportunity. This may mean no more than the roadway and sidewalks of a street within which the waterway occurs, or even a bridge carrying some street over a waterway in such a manner that those crossing it can get a pleasant view over a rail or parapet designed to present the view to the best advantage. Or it may mean a special path running along near the water with occasional benches at the more inviting spots; and from that anything up to summer-houses and refreshment booths and concert groves along the banks of waterways, with all of the incidental provisions for public comfort and convenience that attend upon public parks. The only vital thing in this regard is that convenient, safe and decent provision be made in some manner for the coming and going and pausing of the people where they can enjoy the beauty that is offered. Civic beauty is worthless, even if it can be said to exist at all, where it is not seen and enjoyed by the people.

Second, offensive, foul and ugly things, where they come into view, should be done away with, made over, or obscured by foliage or otherwise, so far as possible; a general impression that the place is regarded by someone as worth caring for, as expressed by the fact that it is always swept and garnished, has a great deal to do with the extent to which others will care for it and be able to appreciate it.

Third, agreeable scenes and compositions should be noted and enhanced, or created, mainly by such control of light and shade and of enclosing and framing masses as can readily be effected through controlling the disposition of the foliage of trees and bushes. Along many of the ditches that run through alleys or on private rights-of-way there are many trees and bushes already present in combination with the water and the sky very pretty scenes and which need only to be supplemented by a good path and a few benches and an impression of good order and solicitous appreciation to become ready-made park spots of the highest value. In many other places judicious removals and a very moderate amount of supplementary planting would soon bring similar results. In other places the foliage element is still to be supplied by planting.

Fourth, in places a certain amount of manipulation of the edges of the channel or of the adjacent surface of the ground may be called for in order to harmonize these elements with the general effect of the scene of which they form a part. Fortunately the volume of water is comparatively constant and its surface is normally but little below the level of the banks, so that the channels just as they now are give that ever-delightful impression of brimming abundance and of intimacy of relation between the surface of the water and that of the ground. Generally speaking, the more closely on a level they can be and the more intimate their relation the happier will be the result. Where the general impression of the scene is one of formality, of conspicuous regularity of order in its dominant features, the margin of the water may need some rectification to bring it into harmony with this impression; where the general effect is notably picturesque and informal it may be that some inharmoniously formal lines in the canal could be to advantage modified or obscured; not infrequent-



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ly, especially where a path comes next to the ditch, it may be desirable to introduce a simple curbing or a piece of wall (mostly below the water level) to hold the earth from crumbling or slumping. But generally speaking it is better to avoid the use of walls or banks which would have the effect of depressing the water below the adjacent ground by more than a very small fraction of the width of the stream. If this mistake is avoided the water will be all right anyhow, and it will be just as well to do nothing to its margin except what is really needed as a practical matter for the proper maintenance of the ditch. In the case of the little ditches that run along in the parking of so many of the streets in the easterly part of the town, the boards which form their sides rise just to the level of the ground and are generally overhung with grass that gets a delightful, fresh richness from the water. The effect is charming and it would seem a pity to substitute a conspicuous and rigidly formal curbing either of concrete or stone and the substitution of a perfectly smooth bottom for one made of rough cobblestones takes out an element of interest and beauty for no sufficient reason, for the sparkle and dance of the water as it runs over the cobbles is part of its life and charm. The boards must give way for something more permanent, certainly, because their maintenance is troublesome and expensive. But why not substitute for them thin slabs of local sandstone of irregular lengths set at the same height as the present edgings so that the grass will overgrow them somewhat as it now does the plank? And why not use the same old cobble pavement for the bottom?

Of the larger waterways the Beasley Ditch was the only one of which we made a complete examination throughout its length within the city. With the possible exception of one or two short passages we found that it would be possible to convert this ditch and its margins into a very attractive public promenade at surprisingly small expense. From 12th Street to 19th Street, for example, it runs mostly through a public alley not used as a thoroughfare for other purposes, and by the acquisition of a few bits of vacant land, the opening of a good path, and a small amount of thinning and planting, the thing would be done; while just north of 21st Street the ditch passes through or borders a piece of land excellently adapted for local park purposes and can be made to add much to its park value if acquired. It is however, useless to discuss these possibilities in detail in view of the proposition since called to our attention for a great increase in the capacity of the Beasley Ditch. This will involve, of course, an entire change of conditions all along the route and radical changes in many streets. The matter should be taken up by the city and the promoters of the project in a spirit of intelligent co-operation and a well-conceived plan should be adopted that will take into account the hydraulic requirements, the result upon the street system, and the opportunities for public recreation afforded by the banks of the canal if properly utilized. One suggestion which we were prepared to offer in any case appears still more appropriate in view of the probable changes in the Beasley Ditch. It is that in widening the County Road and extending it north from Pearl street past the east end of Lovers' Hill as a great, cross-town thoroughfare, the Beasley Ditch, so far as it occupies the line of the street, be treated as a formal ornamental canal or basin running down the center of the boulevard, with a fairly wide border of grass on either hand and flanking rows of trees on the edges of the two roadways that would border this parking.

BEASLEY DITCH

COUNTY ROAD BOULEVARD

NEEDS OF EASTERN PART OF CITY

ly, especially where a path comes next to the ditch, it may be desirable to introduce a simple curbing or a piece of wall (mostly below the water level) to hold the earth from crumbling or slumping. But generally speaking it is better to avoid the use of walls or banks which would have the effect of depressing the water below the adjacent ground by more than a very small fraction of the width of the stream. If this mistake is avoided the water will be all right anyhow, and it will be just as well to do nothing to its margin except what is really needed as a practical matter for the proper maintenance of the ditch. In the case of the little ditches that run along in the parking of so many of the streets in the easterly part of the town, the boards which form their sides rise just to the level of the ground and are generally overhung with grass that gets a delightful, fresh richness from the water. The effect is charming and it would seem a pity to substitute a conspicuous and rigidly formal curbing either of concrete or stone and the substitution of a perfectly smooth bottom for one made of rough cobblestones takes out an element of interest and beauty for no sufficient reason, for the sparkle and dance of the water as it runs over the cobbles is part of its life and charm. The boards must give way for something more permanent, certainly, because their maintenance is troublesome and expensive. But why not substitute for them thin slabs of local sandstone of irregular lengths set at the same height as the present edgings so that the grass will overgrow them somewhat as it now does the plank? And why not use the same old cobble pavement for the bottom?

sive urban development, where transportation facilities by roadway and by trolley can be most easily and cheaply perfected and extended, and where, by consequence, is likely to occur the principal development of dwelling places for people of small or moderate means, and that on the other hand the continued attractiveness of this flat region is closely dependent upon the maintenance of public open spaces, sufficient to preserve the views of the mountains and to afford the sunny openings with contrasting shady or sheltered promenades which are requisite to the full enjoyment of the climate and which are absolutely unattainable on fifty-foot lots occupying level ground. The need has not yet been strongly felt, partly because there are so many vacant lots scattered among those already occupied or at least within easy reach, and partly because people have not thought much about the basic physical advantages which make Boulder a better place to live in than other cities of the same size and tax rate. They must think about them and preserve them if they would not kill the goose that lays their golden eggs.

The County Road boulevard suggested above and the proposed parkway along Boulder Creek would be good examples of the sort of thing that is needed, but a considerable number of local parks and squares ought also to be acquired.

Parks and Other Public Open Spaces

Not only the eastern part of the city but all parts ought to be provided with local parks, some to be used primarily for playgrounds, others mainly or wholly for more sedate recreation, all contributing to the agreeableness of the town.

Every home in the city ought to be within about a quarter of a mile of a good playground and of a spot where older people can take their exercise or their ease in the open air under pleasant surroundings and in the presence of a fine view or at least of such breadth of sunlighted open space as is wholly beyond the means of most to attain on their own property. The man who can afford to own a couple of acres in the outskirts of the city, or one of the limited number of sites on the commanding eminences near it and who can pay for the relatively high cost of the roads or streets required to make such sites available, and who can keep a carriage or an automobile to take him back and forth, is able to look out for himself. If he fails to make intelligent use of the opportunities which Boulder presents for the enjoyment of life, it is due mainly to his own lack of appreciation and initiative. But for the majority of people, whose means are limited, who have neither the financial strength nor the physical strength and mental aggressiveness that would enable them to seize for their own exclusive use the means of enjoying adequately those precious commodities, air and sunlight, and that subtle promoter of health and cheerfulness, the sense of spaciousness and freedom—for these, the great body of the citizens, a co-operative, democratic method of attaining these ends must be sought.

The standard house lot in Boulder appears to be 50 feet wide by about 150 feet deep, although a tendency is apparent through the uncontrolled operation of supply and demand to reduce the size of lots as well as the width of streets. To reduce the depth of the lots from 150 to 125 feet would mean, even if there were no corresponding reduction in width, that 1-6 of the usable ground after subtracting streets would be left over. If this amount of space were set apart for joint use in the form of playgrounds, squares, and local parks it would mean that every half mile square of the city would have not less than 16 to 20 acres of

BACK YARDS VS. PARKS

public grounds. No one who considers this proposition for a moment can doubt that the average householder with a 150-foot lot is in no such enviable position, with his extra 25 feet at the back end of his back yard, all shut in by other people's houses, as he would be with a lot measuring 50 x 125 feet and the use of a big, safe playground for his children within less than a quarter of a mile of his house and the use of pleasant parks and squares close at hand on every side of a size sufficient to command the beautiful views which he is now unable to see to advantage unless he goes entirely outside of the built-up city.

The point is worth pausing over a moment. A given tract of land half a mile square, provided with streets occupying a third of the total area will subdivide into 619 lots of the standard Boulder size of 50 x 150 feet. In such a district, when the lots are all occupied, there will be no playgrounds for the children except the streets and the cramped back yards, there will be no parks or squares or other open ground whatever, no views of mountain or plain except an occasional glimpse between the chimney pots. If on the same tract, with the same area in streets the same number of houses should be erected on lots 50 by 125 feet in size, there would be left over 17.7 acres for purposes of public recreation. This would be more than enough, if well arranged, to assure for all time that every boy and young man who will ever live in that district shall have opportunity and inducement near his own home to play baseball and all the other vigorous outdoor games that make for a sound body, a clean mind and a healthy nervous system; that space could be set apart for a swimming pool to be put in operation whenever the neighborhood or the city might feel disposed to pay for constructing it and supplying the water; that the little children could have a shallow pool of their own with a clean, sandy beach and bottom where they could wade and play with toy boats and make sand pies and forts as well as if they were to be taken thousands of miles to the ocean beach itself; that for all time the dwellers in that district would have only to walk two or three blocks or so to find a pleasant open spot with shady paths and benches for summer use, looking out upon a cheerful prospect, with sheltered sunny nooks and covered benches for the season when cold or driving wind makes walking in the streets unpleasant and tends to keep the people closely housed.

Again we say that no sane man can doubt the advantages of the latter method of subdivision, with its slightly smaller lots supplemented by parks, if he will take note of the trifling additional use which the average householder derives from the deeper lots of the old part of the town as compared with the shallower lots in other localities. That the average householder is reasonably well content with the shallower lot, even where he gets no parks at all in compensation, is proved by the fact that he does not hesitate to buy the shallower lots. He is evidently not seriously influenced in selecting his abode by the fact that lots in the University Terrace Subdivision are nearly 20 per cent. shallower than the lots in East Boulder.

LOTS ARE GETTING SHALLOWER

BUT NO PARKS ARE MADE FROM THE SAVINGS

to the city's furnishing the means for exploiting the land into building lots by providing water, sewerage, street lighting, policing and other urban advantages. The burden of the cost of setting apart such local recreation grounds should normally fall upon the districts particularly benefited. It may fairly be placed upon the land-owners; who have the option of recouping themselves for the value of the land thus devoted to neighborhood uses either by dividing their remaining land into smaller lots, made acceptable by the presence of the parks and playgrounds, or by charging higher prices for the standard size of lot, the choice depending on the demands of the market.

Under the present system the lots are being made smaller, but the space thus saved is used not for parks but only for more lots; to the manifest detriment of the conditions of life in the city; and to whose benefit?

Not to the land-owners as a whole, certainly; for since the condition of the individual householder is plainly less satisfactory with the smaller lots and without the local parks, it simply means that the demand for lots in Boulder will be less keen than would otherwise be the case and the value per lot will average lower; which is only another way of saying that the land value per family of residents will be less, or that the total land value of the city per thousand of population will be less. Incidentally its growth will be slower because of its lesser attractiveness. With a slower growth of population and a lower total of land values per thousand of population it is obvious that the less attractive method of development into which Boulder is now drifting tends to retard the growth of the total land values in geometric ratio.

Who does benefit?

No process goes on actively under the pressure of uncontrolled commercial motives unless somebody sees a profit in it.

The immediate and obvious results of curtailing at every possible point the amount of city land used per family, in lot and street and park and otherwise, is to make a city more compact, to make it spread more slowly, and to concentrate the population, and therefore the total land values which arise from the demand for housing space, upon a more limited area. If the owner of a tract of undeveloped land on the immediate outskirts of the city's growth, by means of laying out as narrow streets and as small lots as he is able to market, and by means of omitting from his subdivision any squares or parks or other provision for public recreation, can succeed in concentrating upon his land say 5 per cent. of the city's total growth in population during the succeeding decade, together with a correspondingly large share in the city's total increment in land values during the same period, and if he can sell out and realize upon this increment, it is obvious he is better off, commercially, than if a more enlightened public policy controlling the method of subdivision had led to a 25 per cent. greater increase in the city's total land values but prevented him from gobbling more than 3 per cent. of it.

AN UNCONTROLLED MONOPOLY



BOULDER CITY IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

There is nothing essentially unfair in the game of land speculation, and the biggest profits in the long run go to the shrewdest and most expert players; the value of undeveloped land on the outskirts of a city are market values which take into account the chances each piece offers for scooping some of the "unearned increment;" so that there is, perhaps, no great need to worry over the fact that the present system enables the skillful players to make a profit at the expense of those who are so unfortunate as to be holding property that lies either outside of the zone of sharply rising prices or inside of that zone in the district of improved property and relatively stable values.

But it is manifestly to the disadvantage of the community at large, to the majority of land-owners in the long run, and BUT THE PUBLIC SUFFERS emphatically to every wage-earner IN THE END and every family dependent upon a salary or upon an income derived from non-speculative investments, that the players of the game of land speculation, interesting and legitimate though it be, should be permitted to make the city less pleasant, convenient and healthful to live in, and of a slower growth and smaller total valuation than it can perfectly well be made if the community simply insists on such a provision of streets and such a provision of public recreation grounds and such other arrangements as will give the best practicable results from the point of view of those who have got to live in the city after it is built. We are not here concerned with any socialistic projects for appropriating the "unearned increment" to the people. As we have previously pointed out the total land values, and therefore the total "unearned increment" passing into the hands of land-owners, would be larger in case there were an adequate allowance of park area than without it. What we are concerned THE PUBLIC MUST PROTECT with is such action by the community ITSELF AND THE LIBERAL as will result in the invariable settling apart of the desirable proportion of public open spaces as a necessary incident of the subdivision of land and thus remove the pressure under which an illiberal and shortsighted policy is forced, as a plain matter of business, upon the promoters who now determine the layout of subdivisions. It is possible that such action might tend to reduce the purely speculative profit in putting lots upon the market, and it might be expected to arouse opposition from those who are, or who think they are, particularly skillful in the speculative game; but for the main body of real estate owners as well as for all the rest of the community such action would be distinctly advantageous.

What does such a public policy involve? Briefly, that in or for every neighborhood or district which is subdivided and added to the city a certain minimum percentage shall be set apart for public recreation grounds. What this minimum should be we will discuss later. The method of setting it apart, in the case of a considerable subdivision, or district under a single ownership would normally be dedication, as in the case of streets; but in the case of a subdivision owned by a number of different parties the city might have to purchase or condemn the necessary tracts and assess the cost of them upon the whole district benefitted. In districts already fully subdivided and largely occupied a similar method may be followed except that since the whole city is short of local parks it would be fair to charge a part or the whole of the cost in such cases to the general fund.

As to the selection of the areas to be set apart for local park purposes, it is of prime importance that they should be equitably distributed, and preferably SELECTION OF LOCAL PARK AREAS so that no neighborhood will be

more than about a quarter of a mile from the areas that serve it. With the exception of certain special sites to be mentioned later which have peculiar advantages for certain park purposes, the chief points to be considered in selecting land for local parks are cheapness, and accessibility to the people who will use them. The best plan, always assuming the necessary funds to be available, is first to decide upon the general locality within which the local park is needed, to examine carefully the assessed valuations of property within the locality and to select (tentatively) one or more sites which seem promising as to location and cheapness. The second step is for the commission to obtain options on such of the lands within the limits of the tentative site or sites as can be put under favorable options. The third step is to ask publicly for the tender of any lands within the locality for park purposes and to hold public hearings thereon; and the final step is, in the light of all the information thus secured, to select definitely the site and boundaries of the park or playground and take the land by condemnation proceedings. The land taken will ordinarily consist in whole or in part of tracts upon which the commission has obtained options or public tenders of sale at reasonable prices and for such lands it can settle at once at the agreed price, while the price of other lots required to secure proper boundaries will be determined under condemnation proceedings either by agreement or before a jury. It is far better to proceed in this way than to buy or accept certain pieces of land, no matter how favorable the terms may be, and subsequently acquire adjacent pieces for the rectification of boundaries or completion of the requisite area; because the very establishment of a park renders the adjacent land more valuable at once, and if the city buys park land piecemeal it has to pay in the later purchases an increased price due simply to its having previously started to establish a park in the neighborhood. The condemnation process, preceded by obtaining options where possible, takes all the land at one and the same instant and at the value of land in a district which has no parks.

As to the proportionate extent of local parks, we have seen that the reduction of lot depths from 150 to 125 feet and the use of the land thus saved out of the lots for parks and squares would give 10 EXTENT OF LOCAL PARK AREAS of the total city area in local parks (depending upon the proportion of the total area occupied by streets.) Five per cent. has been considered a reasonable minimum allowance in some large cities, but no positive rule can be laid down. Perhaps as much as we can say is that less than 5 per cent. is generally inadequate and that much more than 15 per cent. in small local parks, except under peculiar circumstances, is apt to imply a needlessly dispersed, and therefore costly, urban development.

Since in general the selection of local park lands should be determined mainly by considerations of price it is inexpedient for us to make any definite recommendations except in case of certain sites possessing peculiar advantages for park purposes in proportion to their apparent market value as real estate. Of these, we have referred to three pieces in connection with the discussion of waterways. One is the vacant land on the south side of Boulder Creek just east of the 12th Street lots, and another is the vacant meadow lying between the creek and the Lincoln School. Both of these are valuable for landscape purposes and as playgrounds and they are well distributed.

The third is the west half of the block lying between Nineteenth Street and the line of Twenty-First Street. This piece is traversed and bordered by the Beasley Ditch, and the water, with the trees that occupy its banks in part, gives a good start toward

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making a pleasant little park. If the three inexpensive houses on Water Street south of the ditch are acquired it would be possible to form an open playground of more than two acres in extent, surrounded by a shady walk along the ditch and along the surrounding streets, with an existing grove at the northwest corner and a small separate playground for little children in the space between the ditch and Nineteenth Street. Even if the house lots on Nineteenth and Water Street were omitted the vacant land alone would make a good though very limited local park. Apart from the park value which attaches to the water of the Beasley Ditch and to the grove of trees, the chief advantage of this tract is that it is the nearest considerable piece of vacant land to the High School and the Jefferson School. It is within a short couple of blocks of those two schools, which are urgently in need of playground space.

In connection with Boulder Creek we have called attention to the importance of preserving public access east of Seventeenth Street to the edge of the bluff that flanks the south side of the valley and commands such fine views over the city. North of the valley a similar situation is presented by Lovers' Hill. This mesa, if it is proper so to call it, is divided into a western and an eastern part by a notch, through which Twentieth Street makes its twisting way. The eastern part has one house upon its southern edge, reached by a rather precipitous approach from the south. The western part, though platted (on paper) into streets and lots, is wholly vacant and is being slowly eaten away from the northwest by the brick works situated at its base.

To those citizens of Boulder who are not familiar with the view we urgently recommend a stroll, some pleasant Sunday, along the top of Lovers' Hill, both parts, from Fourteenth Street to the County Road near Twenty-Fifth Street. The view, especially toward sunset time, is one that cannot be matched in many thousand miles of traveling.

The situation is a delightful one for dwellings were it not for the difficulty of access and the entire absence of trees, which renders it bleak and unsheltered both in appearance and in fact except in the pleasantest of weather. Of the two possible methods which have occurred to us for utilizing the recreative value of this hill one provides for developing also the opportunity which it presents for building sites. Starting from Thirteenth Street, we advise widening High Street on the vacant north side, so as to make it at least the equal of the old streets in liberality, and parking it and planting it with trees. East of Fourteenth High Street now vanishes into nothing up the steep hillside. A parkway in continuation of High Street should be carried through, in a cut, on a reasonably easy rising grade, until it reaches the surface of the mesa at its southerly edge. It should follow this edge approximately, on a curving line working off in an easterly and northeasterly direction at the level of the flat top surface of the hill to a point whence it could descend again by a reasonable grade, mainly in cut and crossing to the north side of the ridge, so as to meet the grade of Twentieth Street where the latter goes through the saddle between the west and east parts of the hill. Thence the parkway would rise again on a line just north of the present city boundary and again would skirt the southerly escarpment of the hill on curving lines to a point from which it could descend by an easy grade to join the County Road just as it crosses the easterly tail of the hill.

Wherever it is not encroached upon by houses—and those points are fortunately few—the steep hillside below this proposed parkway should be acquired and kept permanently open to protect the view. The market value of the land in question is relatively trifling because it is for the most part too steep to build on and

most of it is rather inaccessible. The parkway itself would consist of a drive of moderate width, say thirty feet, and on the southerly side of it, commanding the view, a broad promenade or gathering place, with benches, the whole being shaded by rather closely planted trees forming a long and somewhat winding or irregular grove rather than mere rows as in a street. The promenade or grove would vary somewhat in width, according to the shape of the hill, from a minimum of twelve or fifteen feet up to perhaps fifty or seventy-five feet and would sometimes be on the same level as the drive and sometimes a little below it. The water required for irrigation of the trees would be delivered on each part of the hill from a simple fountain which might in one case form the central feature of a concert grove where the band could play occasionally on summer evenings, a time when this promenade would be peculiarly attractive because of catching every breeze that stirs across the city.

The level land of the hilltop north of the parkway might be left in whole or in part available for building sites fronting on the parkway. In this case the increased value of the land as a result of the opening of such a parkway would offset a respectable share of the cost of land and construction. But it would be very much finer if the whole top of the narrow ridge could be kept forever open as a place of public recreation, commanding the views to the north and northwest as well as those to the south and southwest.

It is to be noted that the northern part of the hill is perhaps more valuable at the present time as a source of brick clay than for any other purpose, and that it would probably be very costly to make an adverse taking which would interfere with the established brick industry dependent on the use of the hill. If, however, the city should decide on the parkway and establish the grades thereof an advantageous co-operation with the brick works might be brought about, permitting them to remove the surplus material down to the grade of the parkway where it is in heavy cut at the north end with little or no expense to the city, and then permitting them to excavate to an indefinite extent along the north side of the parkway, provided enough material were left to support it at the established grade. If this were done the parkway in this section would be a peculiar and interesting civic feature, a driveway and grove accessible on easy grades but standing isolated at a level above the roofs of the city, over which it would look both north and south to the mountains.

It is important that some decision should be reached soon for while it would be equally convenient for the brick works to adjust their excavations to the plan of a high level parkway, they are not unlikely, in the absence of such a plan, to excavate that portion of the ridge over which the parkway should run, thus complicating or wholly blocking the project.

Another point of some topographical interest for park purposes is the basin-like valley round which the Farmers' Ditch VALLEY IN NEWLAND'S makes a large loop in the Newlands ADDITION. It is true that the soil is a wretched, stiff, alkaline shale, very ill-adapted for the growth of park vegetation, soggy, wet, cold and undrained, a most unpromising field from a horticultural standpoint. Nevertheless would we gladly see a park established there, for the form of the ground, within the boundaries marked by the Farmers' Ditch and Ninth Street and First Avenue, is from the artist's point of view most admirable, and the way it lies in relation to the views of the foothills gives opportunity for the development of a beautiful landscape of a type nowhere else to be found in Boulder and nowhere else in the city possible of creation in so perfect a form.



## BOULDER CITY IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

We should hesitate to cast our opinion against that of Mr. Andrews, who has condemned this site for cultural reasons; indeed we have admitted that the soil is wretched; but unless the case is rendered hopeless by factors of which we are left in ignorance by our superficial examination we should think it possible to redeem the soil sufficiently by thorough underdrainage and irrigation. This process might cost, at a guess, say \$1,000 an acre. For park purposes the land, on account of its topography, is certainly more than \$1,000 an acre in advance of the value of any other vacant land in the northwesterly quarter of the city, and at the same time its low, wet situation must make it much less valuable for most other purposes.

## Chautauqua Grounds

The city has an interesting and valuable institution in the Chautauqua grounds and buildings and one which ought to become increasingly useful as time goes on. It is a sort of institution that may be expected both to grow and to alter in character a good deal from decade to decade as new conditions and new opportunities of usefulness arise, and it seems to us peculiarly a case where rigorous adherence to a predetermined plan of development is almost out of the question, and where it is wise, contrary to the principle which should ordinarily be followed in public works, to treat much of the improvements as frankly temporary, making the first cost low even at the expense of higher maintenance charges. This has been the policy in regard to much of the work done hitherto and we mention the point only because this is one of the rare cases in which such a temporizing policy has anything to commend it. We do not mean for a moment to suggest that it is not desirable or even necessary to have a plan of development and to work to that plan. Nothing but confusion and waste can result from proceeding without a programme of well defined aims. But we do mean to suggest that this is peculiarly a case where a comprehensive plan cannot be drawn up once for all and then carried out piece by piece literally and mechanically just as drawn. If this were attempted some new condition would soon turn up for which the plan made no provision and something would have to be done contrary to the plan, or at least something not provided for therein. After a few such occurrences the plan would appear hopelessly out of date and would soon be disregarded. The only wise procedure is to keep the general plan alive and up to date every year by revising it to meet new conditions as fast as they arise. That is to say, when there appears to be good reason for doing something contrary to the plan, the conditions ought to be squarely faced and an attempt made to see just how such a change would affect other features of the plan considered as a consistent whole. If the changes still seem wise, the plan should be changed first and the work then continued in accordance with the up to date plan. Obviously such changes and adaptations can be more understandingly made by the man responsible for the plan than by anyone else.

We make these explanations because this is an important question of general policy and also because we were consulted about the desirability of departing from the general plan prepared by Mr. Parce. It is a good plan and the work already done under it is interesting and very attractive; we strongly advise against departing from it; but we do think that Mr. Parce and the Commission might consider whether it would not be wise to modify it at certain points. For one thing it struck us that it would be an agreeable addition to plant a considerable number of trees on the terrace of the Auditorium with a view to providing shade and verdure close to the building and at the point commanding the best view. As it is desirable not to blanket the building entirely, these trees ought to be low and spreading, forming a sort of canopy or awning about the base of the building.

We had in mind the treatment often adopted in such situations in European countries, where it is common to use sycamore trees (*Platanus orientalis*) for this purpose. They are planted pretty closely, even as close as 15 or 20 feet apart, their side branches are pruned so as to give clean, straight stems about 10 or 12 feet tall and at that level the branches are allowed to spread but the top of the tree is headed back by persistent annual pruning so as to prevent it from getting more than 15 or 18 feet tall altogether. Often the young branches that push up above the standard level are bent down and forced to grow horizontally by tying them down to light poles extending from tree to tree. With a little patience and persistence a living arbor can be formed in this way that would give shade without checking the breeze and greatly enhance the attractiveness of such a terrace as that of the Chautauqua Auditorium.

Another point to be considered is whether in the long run the sacrifice of a good part of the view from this terrace will not be too great a price to pay for the advantage of having a grove at the particular point below the terrace where trees have been planted.

A third point to be considered is as to the area north of the Dining Hall. In view of the necessarily tentative and experimental development of the grounds we question whether the large oval terrace for tennis courts is quite justifiable. It is a rather large undertaking that must be put through completely at one operation if the design is not to look very unfinished and confused, and the amount of grading is rather large in proportion to the number of courts which can be accommodated on an area of this form. Further, the practical necessity of tall back-nets for the tennis courts would introduce a very conspicuous and inharmonious formal element, built on a rectangular plan to fit the tennis courts and seriously injuring the effect of the oval with its border of informal shrubbery as designed. Bearing in mind this practical requirement of a formal character and the fact that the straight row of buildings to the west of the space already establishes a somewhat formal treatment of that side, and the further fact that the tennis courts must have a dirt surface instead of a turf surface, we are inclined to think that it would look more reasonable (and therefore better) to plan for a series of terraces rectangular in plan and substantially parallel with the row of buildings, each terrace being just wide enough for one row of courts. The first of these terraces, coming immediately east of the road on which the Dining Hall faces, could probably be depressed enough below the level of that road to allow the steep bank or boulder wall which would support the latter to serve instead of a back-net on the west side, especially if supplemented by a parapet or closed railing along its upper edge. This would do away with any obstruction to the northward view from this road and would enable people to stand or sit on the road terrace and look down upon the tennis games as from a grandstand. Of course the tennis courts ought to be turned with their long axis approximately north and south so that the afternoon sun will not be in the eyes of either set of players. The first terrace of such a series would accommodate as many courts as the whole oval, with a movement of hardly more than half the quantity of material, and the plan is so simple that it would not look unreasonable or confused in design to build part of such a terrace, (enough say for two or three courts only) at the first go-off and to extend it later on when the demand and the funds might justify. The number of courts might subsequently be doubled or trebled by adding other, lower, terraces to the eastward.

As to the plan for cottages facing toward the Dining Hall and backing upon Park Avenue (the Base Line Road), about which we were questioned, we are in some doubt. Unless a reserved space of some width is left between the street and the

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backs of the cottages and is well planted out, there is a danger that the effect upon the general public and upon those approaching the grounds by electric car would not be altogether agreeable; and further unless some rather heavy grading were done the cottages themselves might appear to be rather below the road on which they were facing, or at all events too much below the bank on the uphill side of it. On the whole we are inclined to think it would be better to omit this row of cottage sites and use this part of the grounds ultimately for such general purposes as tennis and basketball courts, a little children's playground, and general park purposes in which the public entering at the adjacent gate is more interested than in the cottages. The best opportunity for the institution to expand in case of need is westward, and the land belonging to the city in that direction ought to be held with such possible expansion in view.

Up the hill to the southwest beyond the reservoir there is a change in the character of the topography and scenery, and it seems to us of the utmost importance to maintain a pronounced and sharply defined difference in treatment. The Chautauqua grounds ought to be nicely kept, orderly, trim, thoroughly domesticated in character. If they are expanded from time to time by taking in additional pieces of land, this character of treatment should be extended also, but always they should have a well-marked boundary and once across that boundary all domestic niceness of finish and especially all garden-like planting, or lawn-making or decoration—in short all sophistication whatever—should be left behind.

## The City Forest

In the great tract of unspoiled foot-hill scenery lying above and beyond the Chautauqua grounds Boulder has a priceless possession. It may be that only a comparatively small proportion of the citizens have learned to make full use of it. Indeed most of it is as yet so ill-provided with means of access that it is very difficult to reach it at all. But as paths and well planned roads are gradually extended through the tract it will become possible for anyone to traverse in the course of two hours' leisurely walking or driving, as beautiful, wild and refreshing scenery as any that thousands upon thousands of busy, hard-working Americans spend largely of their money and time to enjoy by traveling thousands of miles from home.

We have little specific advice to offer beyond the caution not to spoil what a bountiful nature has provided. The qualities that make such scenery precious are subtle and difficult to analyze. Verdure of a richer quality than these foot-hills have to show may be found in every commonplace suburb in the country; handsomer trees abound throughout at least three-quarters of the United States; taller and more precipitous cliffs, deeper chasms, are to be found along the canons of Wall Street and Broadway and in the business districts of other great centers of population throughout the country. But on the foothills of Boulder, beside the intrinsic beauty of color and form and texture in the wonderfully sculptured surfaces of earth, in the rock masses and in the vegetation; beside the impression of spaciousness and freedom derived from the height of the peaks, the depth of the valleys and the breadth of sweeping outlook over miles of varied open plain; there is beyond all that, a sense of escape from the tiresome evidences of the human management of everything in sight which pervades all civilized life and especially life in cities. The more highly civilized our life becomes and the more skillfully and perfectly all our affairs are managed by human agencies, the more we come to value the means of securing occasional relief from the insistent pressure of human contact and

control. Therefore the one principle before all others that should control the management of Boulder's City Forest in the foot-hills, is to avoid every single thing that would obtrude the idea of human control of the scenery, except insofar as is necessary to provide convenient means of making the scenery accessible. Roads and paths, well planned, on easy grades, to lead people without undue effort to the most lovely points of view are certainly needed. But they should be so designed as to be as unobtrusive as possible and from the very edge of the traveled way, if possible, Nature should appear to be in full command. Sometimes to accomplish this end may require more interference with nature at the time of constructing the road or path than the businesslike engineer would regard as necessary. The minimum of construction, for example, might leave a raw, stiff, artificial bank of earth beside the traveled way some twenty feet in width, of such a character that the processes of nature would not subdue it and bring it into harmony with the rest of the hillside for several generations if unassisted, whereas by flattening and modelling the bank and merging its edge with the surface beyond, the way might be prepared for nature to repossess the surface in a short time, leaving the traveled way itself as the only conspicuous mark of dominant human interference. But very often in such rough and rocky ground, especially on steep side-hills, a rough wall to support the lower side of the road leaves the least conspicuous mark of human interference beyond the traveled way, and has the great advantage of stopping sharply and not "dribbling" out over the landscape. Other human structures may be needed here and there in time, bridges and shelters for example. But any such things should have two invariable characteristics; unobtrusiveness in design, material and color, depending in detail upon the nature of the immediate background and surroundings; and such permanence of character that nature can have time to adopt them as her own by the processes of surface weathering and the growth of lichens and of larger vegetation upon and about them, long before they are so far decayed as to need renewal.

Above all no single thing should ever be done within the limits of the City Forest with a view to decoration, for human decorations are bound to be trivial and distracting if applied to nature on this great scale.

To guard against the defacement of the foothills by fire or by careless private exploitation the area now controlled by the city ought to be gradually and systematically extended so as to include all of the frontal escarpment directly in view of the city, reaching southward beyond South Boulder Peak and northward to the vicinity of Two Mile Canon. So much of this land as is still in the hands of the Government ought to be secured as a gift on condition that it be held forever as a public forest.

A plan ought to be devised for a system of first-class roads on easy grades leading through the most interesting passages of scenery that can thus be made accessible; and then each year as much road should be built, according to plan, as the city feels ready to pay for. Walking trails, being so much more flexible in location and so much cheaper to build need not be so thoroughly planned in advance, but a certain amount of planning and construction of trails should be done each year as well.

One other small improvement of some importance is the establishment of conveniences for picnicking at certain selected points, especially at points where water is available. At these points convenient stone hearths should be prepared so situated and designed as to minimize to the utmost the danger of the spread of fire, and a supply of firewood should be kept on hand so that every inducement will be offered to the "beefsteak parties" and to campers to use these points and no others for fires. Stringent rules should then be published against the making of fires except at the designated camping places.



BOULDER CITY IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

When we urged above that beyond building necessary roads and structures nothing should be done in the forest that would obtrude the idea of human control, we did not mean to imply that nothing at all should be done to it. Protection against fire is an essential, and the utilization and sale of the timber as it ripens to merchantable size is a reasonable and proper use of the forest, provided it be done in a conservative manner and with due regard to certain special passages of scenery where venerable and even decrepit trees are important elements of scenic value. Indeed there are thousands of places where the present condition of sparse small tree growth, by permitting an unobstructed outlook from road, path or other special vantage point, offers greater enjoyment of scenery than would be the case were the trees to grow to full size and density of stand. The new forest growth is spreading steadily down over the lower slopes and thickening above, and throughout a large part of the reservation the time will soon be ripe to begin systematic thinnings and cuttings, whether the matter be regarded mainly from the point of view of scenic enjoyment, as we believe it should, or from the standpoint of economic forestry. While we believe that the ordinary considerations of economic forestry should here be secondary, we can see no reason why they should be wholly disregarded; and with the steadily rising price of timber there is no reason why the forest should not, under proper management, bring in a small return from timber sales, sufficient, presumably, to pay the expenses of protection and care, so that the city would be burdened only with the cost of such improvements as new roads and trails.

Another small source of income which can be utilized to the distinct advantage of the scenery is the grazing privilege. There are a number of tracts, especially on the lower slopes and on the mesas, where persistent grazing, if properly regulated as to amount, will tend to extend and maintain one of the most beautiful types of quiet landscape that can anywhere be found, the park type of landscape in the true sense of that misused word, a type of smooth-cropped pastoral land merging into open woodland with scattered trees and groups of trees and shady groves and open sunny glades intermingling and merging one into the other in a succession of charming picturesque compositions of endless variety and beauty.

It is to be hoped that the people of Boulder will never be beguiled into permitting the establishment upon Flagstaff Mountain, or elsewhere in the midst of the Municipal Forest, of a so-called amusement park such as has been proposed in connection with a project of an inclined railway. This is not because we have any objection to amusement parks as such; we have laid them out and we fully appreciate the amount of pleasure they can give. Also we fully appreciate the fact that if they occupy sites of peculiar natural interest they will draw larger crowds than otherwise; for many are attracted by points of natural interest made easily accessible who would not go out of their way for the "amusements" alone, although when they are on the spot they are apt to follow the herd and leave their share of nickels behind. The promoters of the shows and the transportation companies gain from this combination and those who go primarily for the sake of the amusements get a mild flavoring of the sauce of scenery along with their salad of varied excitements and amusements. The people who go primarily for the sake of the scenery are apt to be in doubt whether they are the more pleased to have it accessible or the more disgusted to have their attention distracted by so many incongruous sights and sounds.

The enjoyment of scenery is a good deal like the enjoyment of music. A great many people, probably the majority of people, are rather pleased to hear music, if it is not too loud or too absorbing, when they are at a gay dinner party and busily engaged

in chatting and eating their dinner. It is the habit of some of the vulgar rich to treat the best of opera music in the same way, as a mere sauce to conversation in their boxes. But no one who really enjoys music wants to be distracted from a great performer's playing by conversation or dinner or a game of billiards or any of a thousand and one things that he might be glad to do at some other time and place.

The scenery of Flagstaff Mountain is too noble, too magnificent, too precious, to be wasted in serving as an almost unheeded accompaniment to the fun of roller coasters, moving pictures and vaudeville shows. There are dozens of places near Boulder where a pretty and attractive amusement park could be laid out and provided with transportation facilities at less expense than on Flagstaff Mountain and where it would draw just about as big a crowd and give just about as much pleasure, whereas an amusement park on Flagstaff Mountain would to a great extent ruin the highest value possessed by the whole City Forest, namely, that when you get into it you pass into a different world from the city, into a place of quiet mountain scenery, remote and vast, where the weary can find peace.

Public Buildings

The matter of public buildings and their location is one to which, in our brief study of the city, we did not give the attention which the subject deserves. But we could not help noticing that the present arrangements for the City Hall and other city offices are a makeshift, neither convenient nor by any means worthy of the community.

It goes without saying that it is desirable, within reasonable limits, to group together the main public buildings of a city, both as a matter of convenience and for the sake of appearance, and when one examines the opportunity of making such a grouping in Boulder he is confronted with two alternatives. The City has a distinct center in Court House Square and the thought naturally suggests itself that the principal public buildings ought to be grouped around this square. But since the sides of the square are already occupied by private property of considerable value a good deal of expense would be involved in such an improvement and one looks, as an alternative, for some cheaper property where a new center could be formed.

The Pearl Street frontage on Court House Square is part of the principal shopping street, and apart from the expense of acquiring the property for public buildings there is a strong objection, for general commercial reasons, to the complete interruption of the continuity of stores along such a shopping street. We may therefore dismiss the Pearl Street frontage as a site for public buildings. On the Thirteenth Street frontage the new hotel has just been erected, a quasi-public building of the sort that can very properly form part of a civic center. It is to be carefully considered whether the remainder of the Thirteenth Street frontage and the frontage on Spruce and Fourteenth Streets cannot reasonably be utilized for public buildings. The price of such sites, taking into account land and buildings, would be relatively high, but the advantage of facing Court House Square, the great convenience of such a grouping in so central a locality, and the architectural effect made possible, would be worth paying a good price for.

Conditions do not seem to favor starting a new center. The nearest locality where a sufficiently large block of land to make a really good group could be secured at a low price is toward Boulder Creek, and apart from the prejudice against a low site and one which is now in such unattractive condition, this is

THE FREDERICK LAW OLMSTED JR. REPORT

objectionable because of its being separated from the business center of the town by the railroad.

Fine isolated sites for public buildings or monuments are to be found at the northerly ends of several streets where they terminate against Lovers' Hill, and in planning and acquiring the proposed parkway along that hill it would be well to secure public control of these strategic points, which can so readily be used for striking features at the termini of the several street vistas. The opportunity is particularly good at the ends of Fourteenth, Sixteenth, Seventeenth, Eighteenth (if we remember correctly) and Twenty-Third Streets. A glance northward on Fifteenth Street, the vista of which is closed by a small private house, will suggest the value of a proper architectural treatment of these sites and the desirability of getting them into public possession.

Control Over Private Property

This report has already drawn itself out to such length that we must not further extend it by entering upon a general discussion of the pregnant subject of the control which may reasonably and wisely be exerted by the municipality over the freedom of the individual to use his property according to his personal pleasure without regard to the interests and wishes of his neighbors.

We cannot, however, forbear to touch upon one point, the matter of billboards and display advertising. No one can question that the presence of large and frequently garish advertising signs, designed specifically to stand out strikingly from their surroundings and violently arrest the attention, is more or less irritating and annoying to most people and tends to make the city less agreeable in appearance. Not infrequently an acceptable piece of information is conveyed to the mind, especially in the case of posters announcing some entertainment or other passing event, but it is very seldom that the ordinary citizen gets any advantage from the signs and posters that compensates him for the annoyance. It is clearly a case where the privilege of the abutter upon a public highway to see and to be seen by the passing public is liable to abuse, and frequently is abused to the detriment of the general public which pays for maintaining the street. When the abuse goes so far as to give indubitable offense to public morals or health through the nature of the advertisement or through the erection of a shield which invites the commission of nuisances by others; or when the abuse goes so far as to cause serious risk of life, limb or property through the maintenance of structurally dangerous or inflammable billboards; then the courts will protect a complainant under the law of nuisance, if anybody is willing to take the trouble to go to law about a matter which is everybody's business and therefore nobody's business. In our easy-going American way most of us hate to take an unpleasant initiative, or to risk getting the reputation of being fault-finding busy-bodies; so we do not get the relief and protection from such nuisances which we might get even under the common law. But the courts are, properly, so conservative and cautious about arbitrarily interfering with an individual's use of his own property that the abuse has to be a crying and outrageous one before the courts will order it to be abated under the law of nuisances. And up to that point there is now no relief or mitigation of the abuse. The most effective way to deal with it appears to be by license and taxation, the same method that is used to control many other business enterprises which are legitimate but liable to abuse.

The requirement of a license before any sign may be publicly exhibited, other than one relating to business carried on upon the premises; the requirement that any sign or structure for the support and exhibition of signs or posters which may be erected under the license shall be securely built, and of fireproof material (galvanized iron is commonly used); the imposition of a reasonably heavy annual license tax based upon the size of the sign or billboard authorized by the license; and a proviso that the license may be revoked or suspended at the discretion of the licensing authority in case any immoral, indecent or fraudulent advertisement is exhibited; these measures are legally practicable and will tend to keep the abuses of the business within bounds.

In closing this long and discursive report we beg to express the pleasure and interest we took in our visit to Boulder, brief as it was, and the interest with which we look forward to the results of a fuller awakening of the citizens to the peculiar opportunities of the situation and to the need of a progressive municipal policy in conserving and developing them.

Respectfully submitted,  
OLMSTED BROTHERS,  
Landscape Architects.

Brookline, Mass.  
Nov. 9th, 1908.

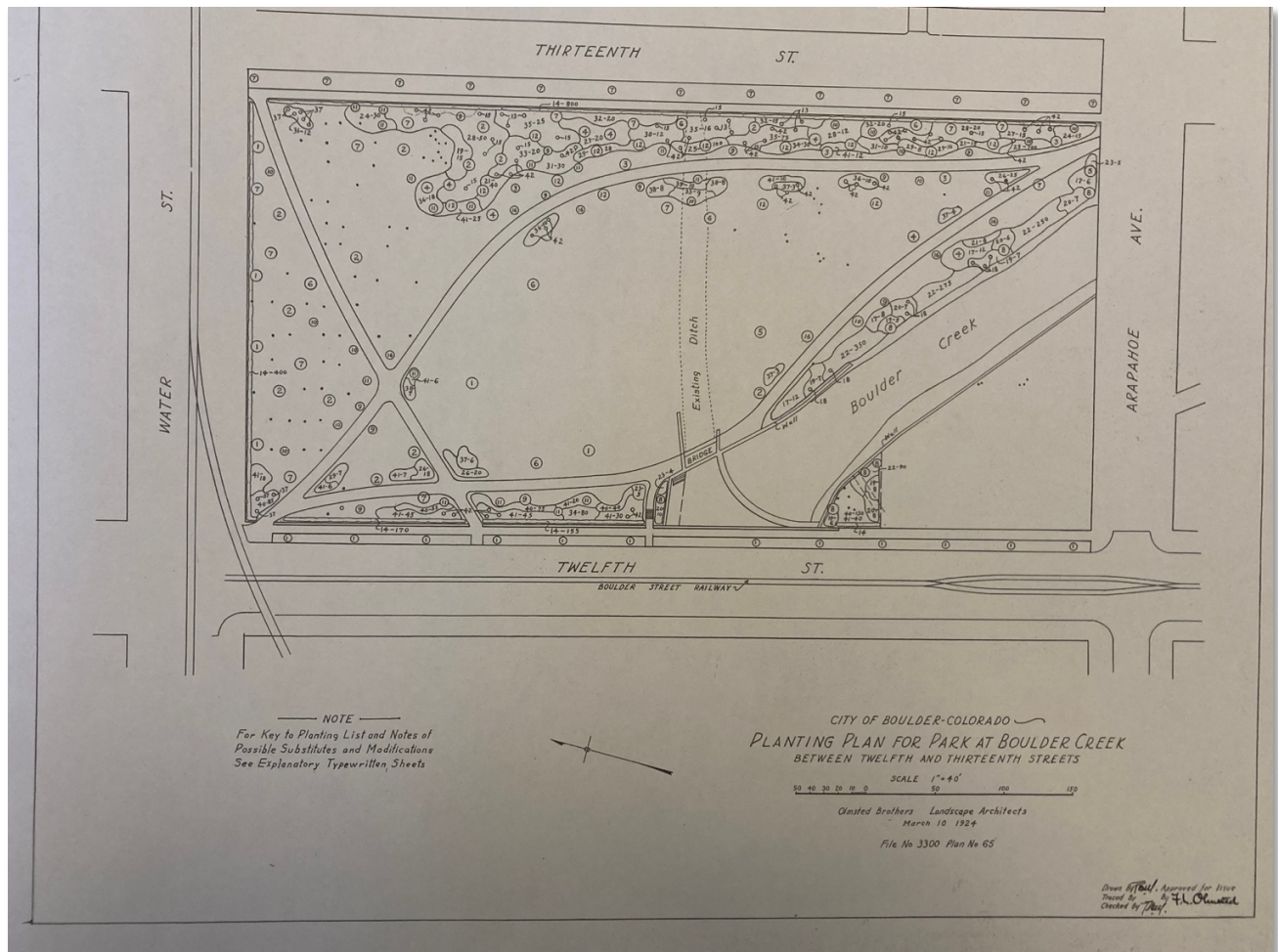
**Boulder's Central Park Old-Growth Trees**

Research by Randy Cantu for Historic Boulder, Inc.

(revised 4-11-23)

Boulder's Central Park is a historical treasure, and a beautiful greenspace. One of the most noteworthy features of the property, in addition to the expansive lawn, is the abundance of large old-growth trees.

Referring back to the original 1924 Planting Plan, a document created by Olmstead Brothers – Landscape Architects, one wonders if any of the current large trees possibly date from this era, when the park was formally created, almost 100 years ago.



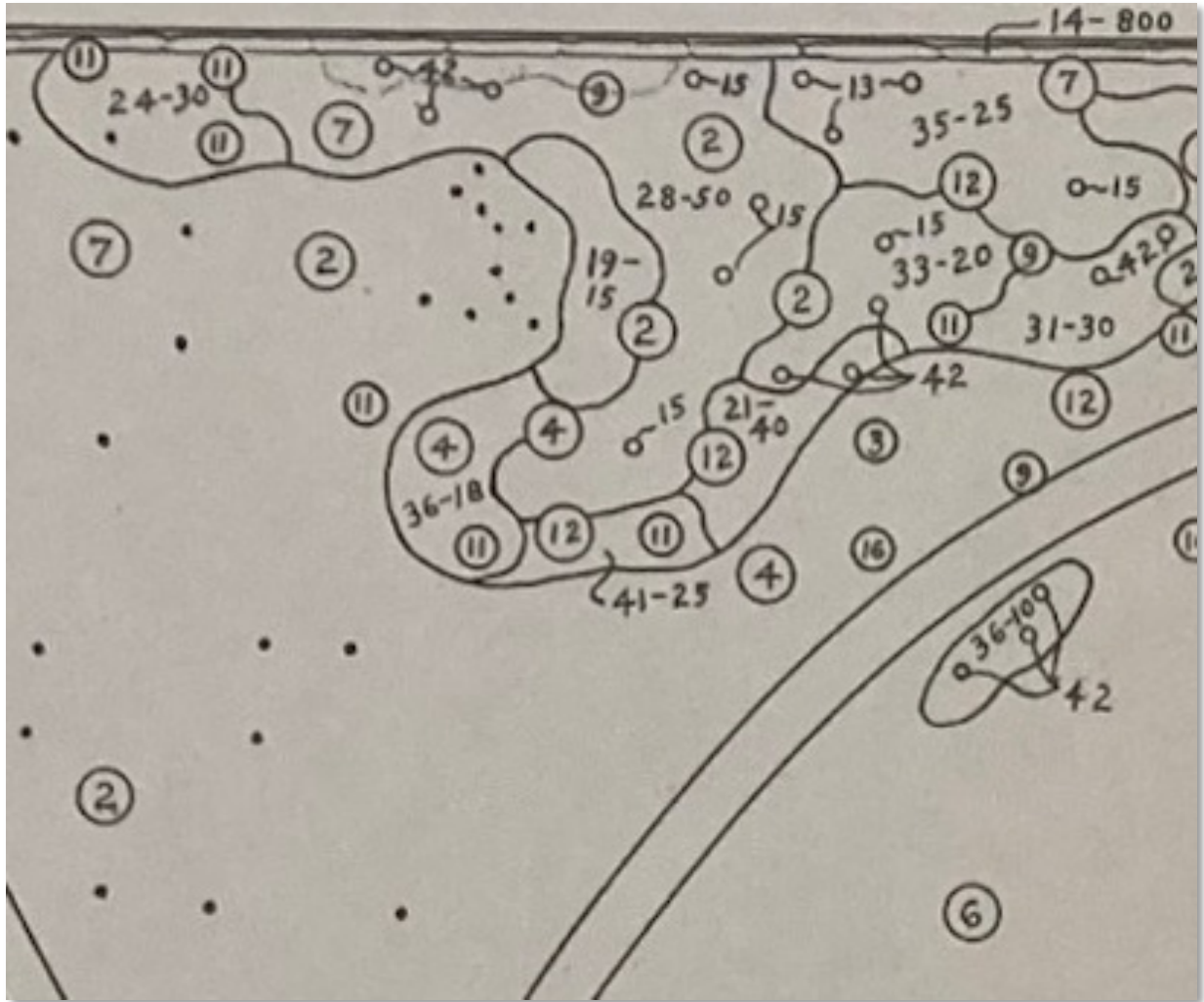




## Boulder's Central Park Old-Growth Trees

Research by Randy Cantu for Historic Boulder, Inc.  
(revised 4-11-23)

Here is a detailed excerpt of the Planting Plan showing the accompanying identifying numbers from the Planting List:



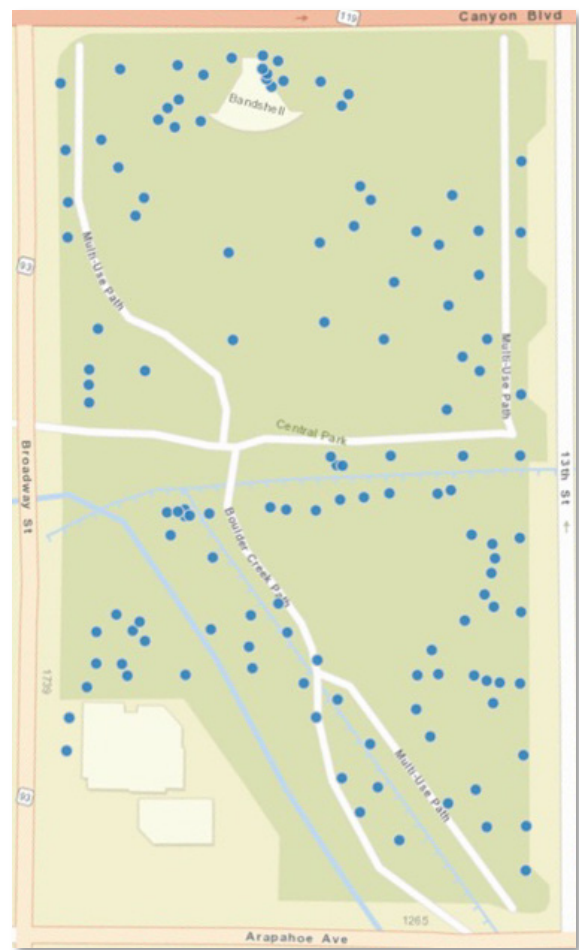
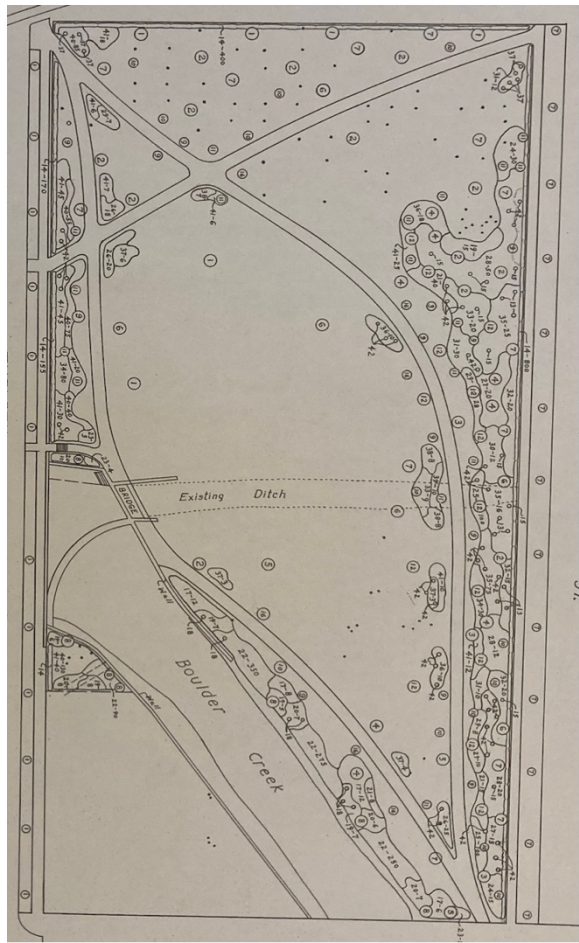
As you can see, the plan precisely identified locations and designs of planting beds, shrubbery, and trees.

## Boulder's Central Park Old-Growth Trees

Research by Randy Cantu for Historic Boulder, Inc.  
(revised 4-11-23)

The City of Boulder Forestry Department maintains an online Tree Inventory that presents a detailed layout of all of the 126 existing trees in the park, with their exact location, as well as some identifying characteristics, such as, genus, scientific name, common name, trunk diameter, etc.

Using some creative digital graphics manipulations I was able to overlay the original 1924 Planting Plan on a map of the current tree inventory.

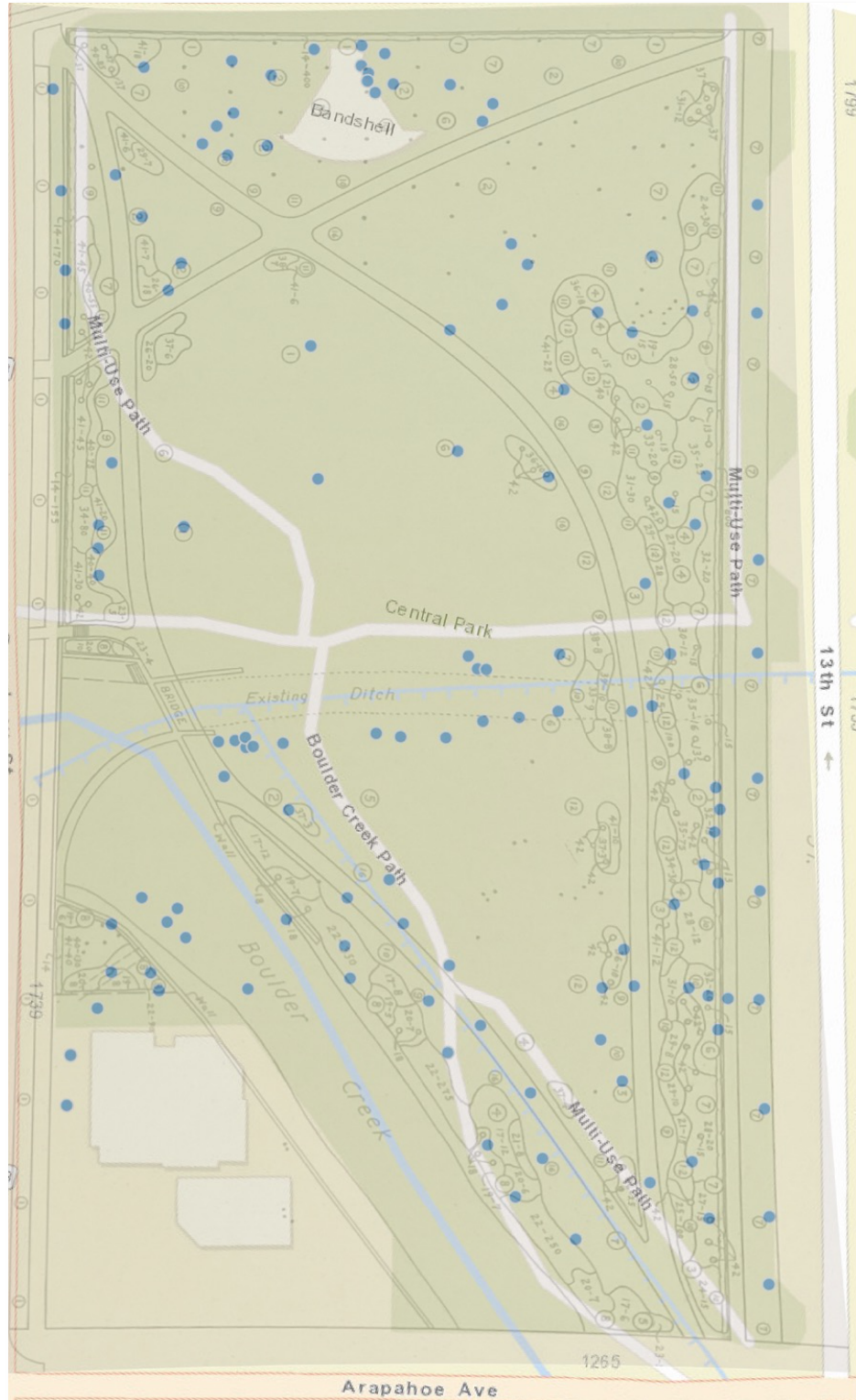




# **Boulder's Central Park Old-Growth Trees**

Research by Randy Cantu for Historic Boulder, Inc.  
(revised 4-11-23)

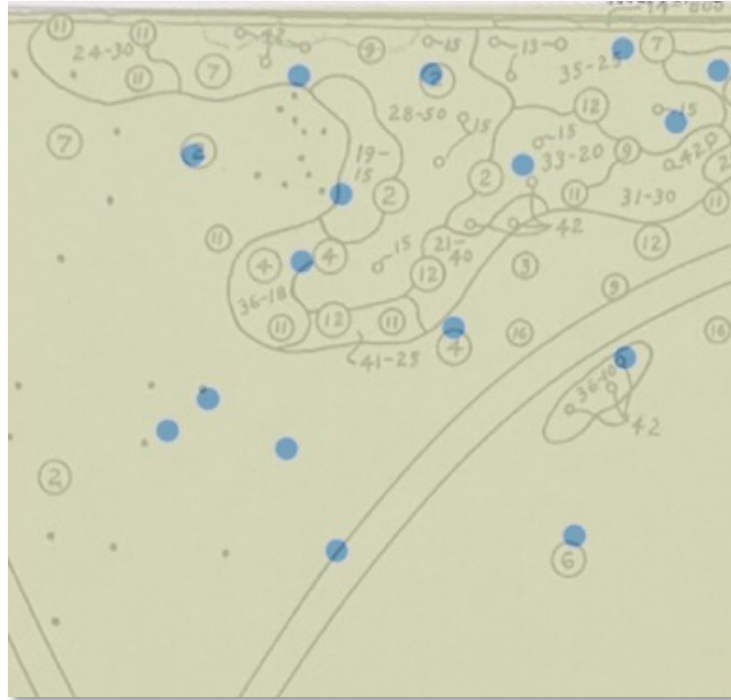
This is the result. Each blue dot represents a currently inventoried tree in the Forestry Department's system, and the gray lines/drawings are from the original Planting Plan:



## Boulder's Central Park Old-Growth Trees

Research by Randy Cantu for Historic Boulder, Inc.  
(revised 4-11-23)

Looking a bit more closely one can see that some of the originally planted trees align very closely with existing mapped trees:



**Boulder's Central Park Old-Growth Trees**

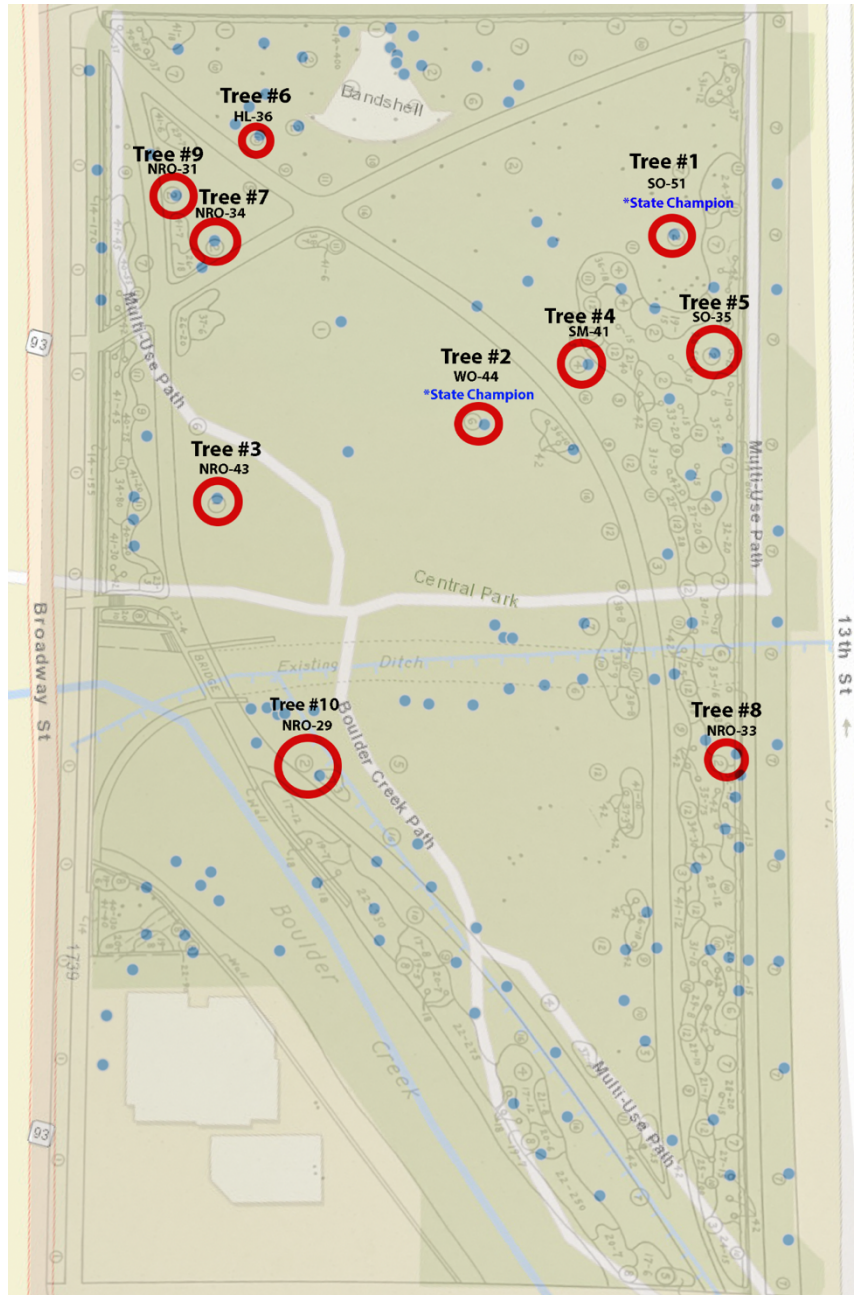
Research by Randy Cantu for Historic Boulder, Inc.  
(revised 4-11-23)

Using this information, as well as on-site observation, I investigated a subset of large trees that we suspected were old enough to be from the original park development. I specifically looked at any tree that has a trunk diameter of 29 inches or greater and aligned closely with the original planting locations. For most trees, the 29-inch diameter would represent a growth period of at least 100 years.

I came up with 10 trees that are likely candidates. Here is a map with their locations and trunk diameters (largest to smallest):

- 1 - Shumard Oak - 51"
- 2 - White Oak - 44"
- 3 - Northern Red Oak - 43"
- 4 - Silver Maple - 41"
- 5 - Shumard Oak - 35"
- 6 - Honey Locust - 36"
- 7 - Northern Red Oak - 34"
- 8 - Northern Red Oak - 33"
- 9 - Northern Red Oak - 31"
- 10 - Northern Red Oak - 29"

\*note that these measurements are current as of April 2023, so they may differ from the measurements on the city's inventory





**Boulder's Central Park Old-Growth Trees**

Research by Randy Cantu for Historic Boulder, Inc.  
(revised 4-11-23)

These 10 trees match up closely with the planned locations. And all but one of them match the planned species. The one exception is the 43" diameter Northern Red Oak (Tree #3 at the left center of the map). It is listed on the original Planting Plan as an American Elm, but has been documented by the City Foresters as a Northern Red Oak. It's interesting to note that the original plan called for almost 50 Elm trees, but as a result of the Dutch Elm Disease epidemic, today there is only 1 large Elm remaining in the park. Also, the original plan did not include any true Ash trees, only some European Mountain Ash, which are immune to Emerald Ash Borer.

And, as an added bonus, two of these trees are State Champions! Tree #1 (the 51" Shumard Oak) and Tree #2 (the 44" White Oak) are both on the Colorado Tree Coalition's State Champion Tree Registry ([www.coloradotrees.org/champion-tree-program](http://www.coloradotrees.org/champion-tree-program)). So, as State Champions they hold the distinction of being the largest of their species in the state of Colorado.

Also, an interesting observation is that the calculated ages of many of these 10 trees are well beyond what would be expected if they were planted around 1924, the date of the original Planting Plan. The only true methods of determining a tree's actual age is either by documented record-keeping from the time of planting, by taking core samples, or by cutting the tree down and counting its annual growth rings. Another less-accurate, but commonly accepted method for estimating tree age is to multiply the trunk diameter by the known growth factor for a particular species. Using several different on-line tree age calculators we came up with the following estimated ages:

Tree #	Species	Diameter	Estimated Age
2	White Oak	44"	220 years
3	Northern Red Oak	43"	172 Years
1	Shumard Oak	51"	153 years
7	Northern Red Oak	34"	136 years
8	Northern Red Oak	33"	132 years
9	Northern Red Oak	31"	124 years
4	Silver Maple	41"	123 years
10	Northern Red Oak	29"	116 years
6	Honey Locust	36"	108 years
5	Shumard Oak	35"	105 years

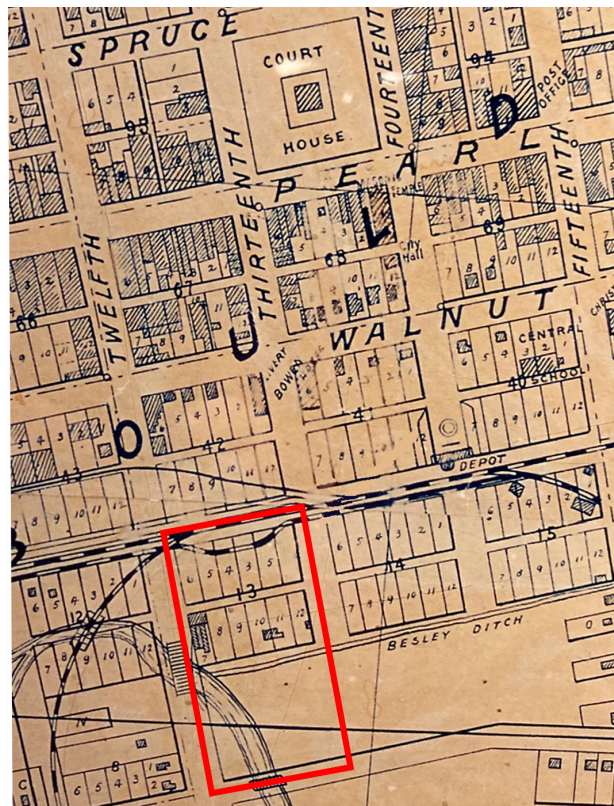
\*Sources: <https://www.purduelandscapereport.org/article/how-old-is-my-tree/>  
<https://www.omnicalculator.com/biology/tree-age>

As you can see, the majority of these trees have an estimated age that seems incongruous with the estimated planting date of around 1924, even taking into consideration that they were likely several years old when transplanted from a nursery. There could be a few possible reasons for this:

## Boulder's Central Park Old-Growth Trees

Research by Randy Cantu for Historic Boulder, Inc.  
(revised 4-11-23)

- 1) The formula for these estimates is based on averages. So, it's possible that these trees are exceptions to the rule. They could just be unusually healthy specimens, having been well-maintained, and having just grown incredibly well.
- 2) It's possible that some of these older trees existed before the park was created. In fact, if the age of the two oldest trees in the chart above is roughly correct, those trees would have taken root even before Boulder saw its first settlers 165 years ago, in 1858.
- 3) It's also possible early homeowners could have planted and nurtured these trees. Below is a section of an original city plat map dating from 1878 with small city home lots on the land that would eventually become Central Park.



So, in theory, the park designers might have then developed their Planting Plan to incorporate these already-mature trees, either naturally occurring or planted by landowners.

Regardless of their origin, these beautiful senior trees are a vital part of Boulder's Central Park and should be respected and maintained for their value to the citizens and visitors of Boulder for years to come.



**From:** [Stepanek](#)  
**To:** [landmarksboard](#)  
**Cc:** [Joe & Caroline Stepanek](#)  
**Subject:** Support for the proposed Central Park Historic District  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 6, 2024 4:46:54 AM

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External Sender Notice This email was sent by an external sender.

Joe and Caroline Holmes Stepanek We reside at 720 11th St. - a twice landed, family designed and owned structure, built in 1922; City landmarked in the 1960; placed on the National Register in 2022.

Here we mention another, often over-looked, reason for establishing this proposed Historic District.

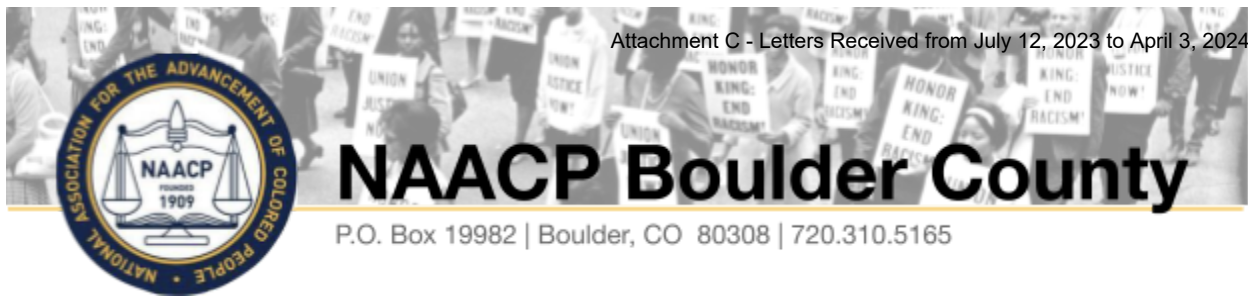
As the City moves to it's new offices on Alpine and Balsam in coming five years or so, it has already announced that it will vacate its current downtown offices and perhaps sell already land marked buildings, perhaps 2 or 3 (The Atrium Building, BMOCA and perhaps the City's Muni building itself), and the City has also announced that it may raze 1 or 2 buildings (new Britain and Mustard's Last Stand buildings) in the current flood plan. The Bandshell was landmarked with early work by June Holmes (Caroline's mother) and others to preserve it.

As these steps are taken, private investors will have an opportunity to buy, design, and build a few new structures in the downtown area. This City move will understandable create many issues, as City officials and even the Boulder public engages in this multi year, complex process.

This era of some turmoil, does creates and underscores the desirability of rethinking Boulder's historic heritage, its riches, and today its many benefits. Protecting this history, written and manifested by a few structures and artifacts, should concern us all.

As a Tea House operator has stressed - the Central Park should foster prosperity, beauty and safety - it should foster community. his process should welcome public discussion, inclusiveness, and high standards of preservation.

As City moves out, and new businesses move in. A new preservation district can and should promote all the performing arts, as well as retail businesses. Tourists from far and wide are attracted to historic districts. These processes can and should foster a sense of community, our rich history and the enjoyment of Boulder Creek and the City's newest public space. Thank you.



2/7/2024

Dear Landmarks Board Members and City Council,

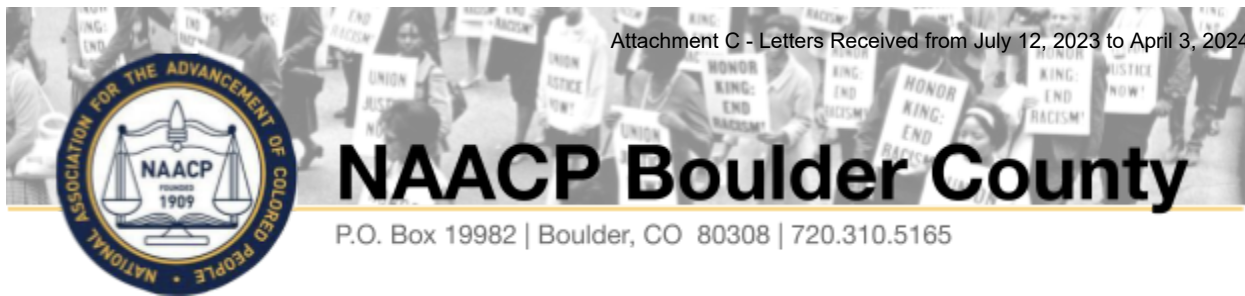
We, the Executive Committee of the NAACP Boulder County Branch, are writing to express our strong support for the proposed “historic district” designation of the Central Park area in downtown Boulder, including the crucial expansion to encompass Block 11. This comprehensive designation is scheduled for discussion at your meeting on February 7th, starting at 6 pm MT, at the Municipal building. We firmly believe that recognizing the entirety of this historic area, including 11th street, is long overdue and essential in acknowledging the complete history of our Community.

**Central Park Area Historic District:** We believe that recognizing the Central Park area as a historic district is not only significant but long overdue. This area holds historical significance as the site of Boulder’s first Black community, dating back to the 1880s. It was a neighborhood where some of Boulder’s first Black business people and entrepreneurs resided, particularly Black women who operated businesses to support the working-class community.

Despite the deliberate erasure of much of this area’s history from documented records, its importance in Boulder’s earliest Black history cannot be understated. We strongly urge the Landmarks Board to consider an appropriate naming convention for the historic district that acknowledges the early residents of this neighborhood. Additionally, we suggest naming the pedestrian bridge after a resident of the area. The Landmarks Board and City Council should support the historic district only if it recognizes the historical Black neighborhood within its boundaries and name.

We believe that it is essential to acknowledge the complete history of this area, even if it may not meet all current preservation guidelines or criteria. Historical preservation criteria sometimes prioritize the dominant narrative while overlooking or erasing the stories of Black communities. Recognizing the historical significance of this neighborhood is a step towards rectifying this Imbalance.

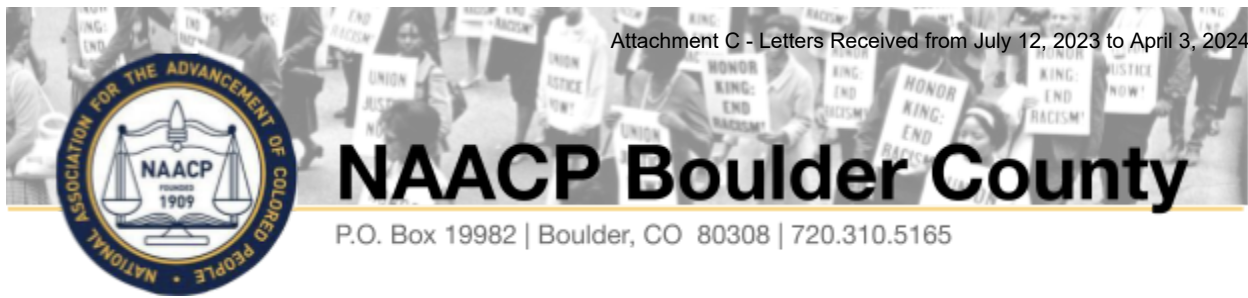
**Property Acquisition Injustice:** It is worth noting that the homes and properties in the historic Black neighborhood were acquired at prices significantly below their market value or asking prices, further highlighting the historical injustice and economic disparities faced by the Black community in Boulder.



**African American Cultural Center:** In addition to our support for the historic district designation, we feel it is paramount that the city of Boulder allocates funds to establish an African American Cultural Center. Such a center will not only enrich the cultural landscape of our community but also play a pivotal role in restoring the history of the African American community in Boulder County, which was tragically disrupted and dispossessed in the late 1800s.

The Benefits of an African American Cultural Center: An African American Cultural Center will serve as a beacon of knowledge and understanding, celebrating the rich heritage and contributions of African Americans to Boulder County and our nation. It will provide a platform for education, art, culture, and history, fostering a sense of unity and belonging among all members of our diverse community. Such a center will:

1. **Restore Historical Justice:** Acknowledging and commemorating the history of the African American community in Boulder County is a crucial step in redressing the injustices of the past. Establishing this center is a significant way to honor the resilience and contributions of the African American community.
2. **Promote Education:** The center will offer educational programs and exhibitions that shed light on the often-overlooked history of African Americans in our region. It will provide a space for learning and dialogue, fostering understanding and reconciliation.
3. **Encourage Cultural Exchange:** An African American Cultural Center will be a hub for cultural exchange, offering a diverse array of events, performances, and exhibits that celebrate the traditions, arts, and achievements of the African American community.
4. **Strengthen Community Bonds:** By providing a space for community gatherings, discussions, and collaborations, the center will strengthen bonds among residents of Boulder County, fostering a more inclusive and united community.
5. **Support Black Entrepreneurship:** The African American Cultural Center will actively promote and support Black-owned businesses by dedicating space for entrepreneurship, workshops, and showcases. This commitment will stimulate economic growth within the Black community, fostering self-reliance, financial empowerment, and economic independence. It aligns with our dedication to advancing economic equity and prosperity for all residents of Boulder County.



**Reparations Consideration:** In addition to advocating for the African American Cultural Center, we also request an investigation into the historical injustices suffered by the African American community in Boulder County, particularly the displacement and land theft that took place in the late 1800s. We call for the formation of a committee to consider reparations for these past actions, make recommendations to the City Council, and ensure that justice is served.

We emphasize the importance of using equity tools to make informed decisions regarding the establishment of the African American Cultural Center and the formation of a committee for reparations. By doing so, we not only acknowledge the dark days of our history but also commit ourselves to a more equitable and just future.

We firmly believe that the establishment of an African American Cultural Center and the consideration of reparations are vital steps toward healing and reconciliation in our community. We look forward to your support and collaboration in these important endeavors.

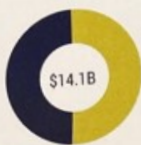
Thank you for your attention to these matters.

Sincerely,

Executive Committee, NAACP Boulder County Branch

# Heritage Tourist Spending in Colorado, 2015

Every \$1 million spent on historic preservation in Colorado leads to \$1.03 million in additional spending, 14 new jobs, and \$636,700 in increased household incomes across the state.



**\$7.2B**

Heritage Tourist Spending

**\$6.9B**

Other Tourist Spending

Overnight Tourists, 2015



**15.8M**

Heritage Tourists

**15.7M**

Other Tourists

Growth in Heritage Tourism, 2014-2015



Percentage of Tourists Visiting Historic Sites

## Planning for a Changing Colorado



### Changing Demographics

Our state's population is becoming more diverse, and preservation is helping to meet the needs of Colorado's growing senior and millennial populations, multigenerational households, immigrant populations, and renter households.



### Changing Economy

Larger economic trends also are changing the ways in which Coloradans work, and preservation is providing new spaces for creative communities and co-working.



### Effective Placemaking

Preservation is playing a key role in helping communities of all sizes to create and sustain meaningful places.



### Changing Climate

Officials are rethinking concepts like resiliency, and how historic resources can be protected in planning for hazards.

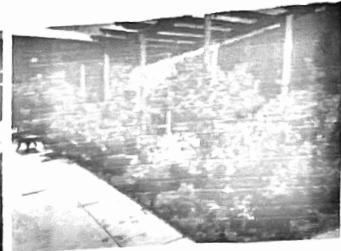
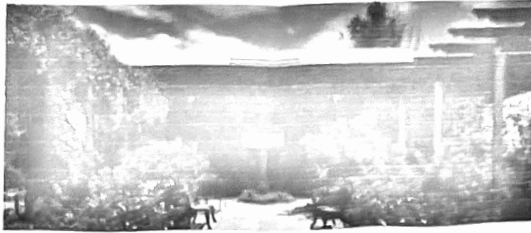
Scenic and Historic Byways Economic Impact, 2009-2014 (\$ not adjusted for inflation)





Landmarks Board Designation Hearing  
Proposed Central Park/Civic Area Historic District

February 7, 2024



Dear Landmarks Board,  
(landmarksboard@bouldercolorado.gov)


We love working at the Boulder-Dushanbe TeaHouse. It is a very special place and visitors from all over the world come to visit us. They enjoy the beautiful rose gardens and unique interior. We love all the big trees in Central Park and the views of the mountains looking across the park.

Although the TeaHouse is an Individual Boulder Landmark, we hope that the surrounding area with four more City owned Landmarked buildings will become an Historic District. We hope that special care will be taken to not hurt the TeaHouse when development occurs in the area.

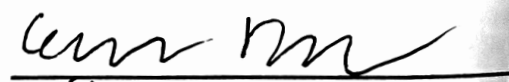
We understand that being in an historic district does not mean that this area cannot have changes and improvements made to it.

We urge you to recommend to City Council that the whole area surrounding Central Park become protected as an Historic District..

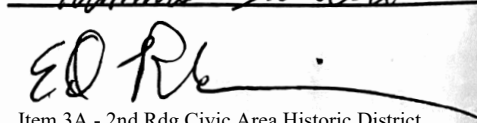
Thank you for your consideration.

Sontasia Salmans 


Herbie Dobbin 

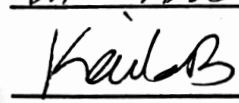




ED Re 

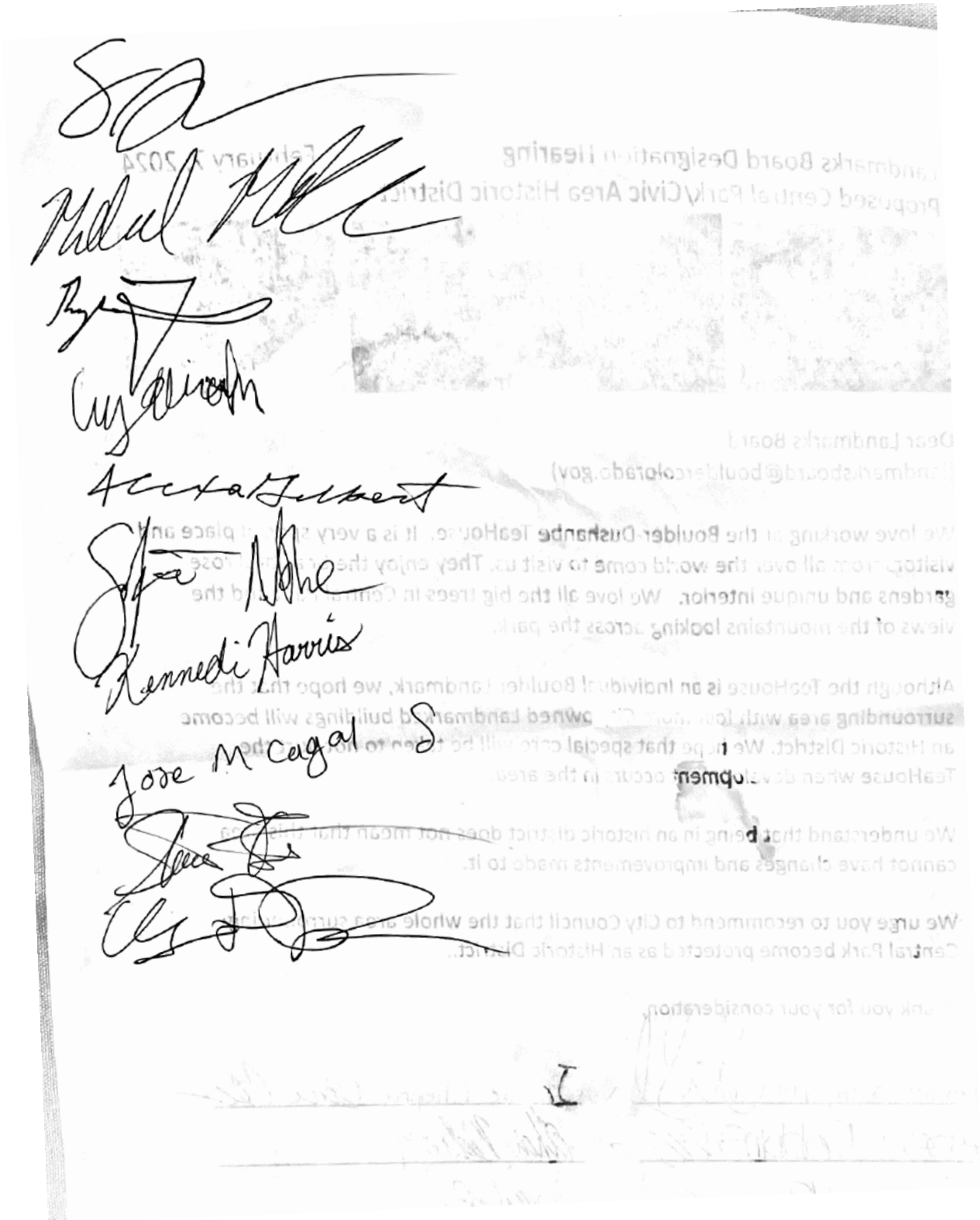
Jessie Chopra 

Alan Nelson 

Karl B 

Coryn Daley 





**From:** alexey davies <alexey.davies@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 18, 2024 4:51 PM  
**To:** boulderplanningboard <boulderplanningboard@bouldercolorado.gov>  
**Cc:** alexey davies <alexey.davies@gmail.com>  
**Subject:** Civic Area and the proposed Historic District

[alexey.davies@gmail.com](mailto:alexey.davies@gmail.com) appears similar to someone who previously sent you email, but may not be that person.  
[Learn why this could be a risk](#)

**External Sender Notice** This email was sent by an external sender.

HI

I respectfully question the need for designating part of the Civic Area as a historic district.

Given that the land is city owned and the existing landmarking, I feel that the area can be preserved and the story told of the history of Boulder without a district.

The Civic Area project has a limited budget. The process of setting up an historic district will involve numerous departments, staff, board & Council time, and if approved will be an extra hurdle for any changes.

I understand that there could be potential financial benefits in terms of external funding if a historic district is formed. Have the costs & benefits been quantified?

That said, I'm looking forward to the improvements to the Civic Area.

Sincerely  
alexey davies  
Boulder

**From:** [No Reply](#)  
**To:** [Council](#); [ContactCoB](#); [Mueller, Brad](#); [Johnson, Kristofer](#); [Gerwing, Marcy](#)  
**Subject:** Dan Corson :- Historic Preservation/Landmarking  
**Date:** Thursday, March 14, 2024 10:06:26 AM

---

**Preferred Form Language:** English / Inglés

**Name:** Dan Corson

**Organization (optional):**

**Email:** dwcorsen@msn.com

**Phone (optional):** (303) 842-9975

**My question or feedback most closely relates to the following topic (please choose one):**Historic Preservation/Landmarking

**Comment, question or feedback:** Dear Honorable Council Members,  
I offer support for the proposed historic district in the civic center area. I am a 50+ year citizen of Boulder who has served the community in many ways including chairing the planning board and serving on city council.

The expanded proposal that is the staff recommendation with the support of the NAACP would honor two groups of Boulder citizens. For most of its history Canyon Boulevard, known then as Water Street due to its propensity to flood, carried several railroad track lines. The area to the south of the tracks was an undesirable place to live and was home to those living on the margins--both Black and white citizens--a veritable "wrong side of the tracks." Smelters and other ore-processing plants spilled poisonous chemicals into Boulder Creek. The landmarked building housing BMOCA is the last remnant of this industrial heritage. This group of marginalized citizens would be honored by the designation.

As this industrial use started to wane at the turn of the 20th century, a group of Boulder citizens lobbied for improvements to benefit all Boulder citizens. After successfully lobbying for the first parks board in the state in 1907, in 1908 with their private funds it hired the premier landscape architect in the country--the Olmsted group in Massachusetts--to recommend a plan for the city. This plan included using Boulder Creek and its tributaries for flood mitigation and recreation to prevent the results of the 1894 flood from occurring again calling for a "Boulder Creek Park" and similar use of the drainages that are now our greenways. He also recommended that no citizen should be more than 1/4 mile from a park, preserving the mountain backdrop, and recognizing that the agricultural land to the east was part of the community character. Olmsted continued to advise the city for decades regarding the creation of the city manager form of government in 1918 that also created the first planning board [combined at that time with the parks board], and the landscape design for Central Park. It should be noted that one of the parks Olmsted recommended is now called the Emma Gomez Martinez Park that was along the railroad tracks in the working-class and minority neighborhoods of the city. The efforts of this group of future-minded citizens would also be recognized by the historic district designation.

I personally recommend that the district should be called the "Water Street Historic District" because the street was Water Street for more than twice the time it has been Canyon Boulevard.

Thank you, and thank you for your service.

Dan Corson

[[FSF080521]] Submission ID is #: 1204660526

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**From:** [No Reply](#)  
**To:** [Council](#); [ContactCoB](#); [Mueller, Brad](#); [Johnson, Kristofer](#); [Gerwing, Marcy](#)  
**Subject:** Charles Brock :- Historic Preservation/Landmarking  
**Date:** Sunday, March 17, 2024 6:02:21 PM

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**Preferred Form Language:** English / Inglés

**Name:** Charles Brock

**Organization (optional):**

**Email:** charles.a.brock@comcast.net

**Phone (optional):** (303) 887-2523

**My question or feedback most closely relates to the following topic (please choose one):**Historic Preservation/Landmarking

**Comment, question or feedback:**

Dear Councilmembers:

My name is Charles ("Chuck") Brock, and I live at 717 Evergreen Ave in Boulder. I am currently (through March 2024) the Chair of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board. This letter represents my own opinion, and not that of the PRAB nor any other member of the PRAB. It also does not represent any opinion of any member of the Parks and Recreation Department.

In January 2024, the PRAB heard presentations from Planning and Development Services staff regarding the proposed Civic Area Historic District (CAHD) initiated by Friends of the Bandshell, Friends of the Teahouse, and Historic Boulder Inc. The PRAB had a number of concerns regarding the creation of the CAHD. A straw poll of the PRAB members present showed unanimous opposition to the CAHD. My own concerns included:

- 1) A lack of recognition that the Civic Area hosts the core civic functions of the City, and has functioned in the past to always evolve--sometimes rapidly--to meet the needs of the City and its residents,
- 2) the timing of the effort to create an expanded bandshell Landmark, and now a historic district, and its physical scope, coming just as city staff begin planning for the Phase 2 development of the Civic Area and covering precisely the areas that are intended for this effort,
- 3) the lack of clear benefits to having a historic district, and
- 4) the potential costs associated with delays to the Civic Area Phase 2 planning and construction.

Please allow me to expand on these concerns. First, I will say that the history of the current Civic Area is fascinating, and I enjoyed reading the detailed history of all that has taken place in this area, from indigenous peoples to the settler era, the stories of the various homeowners and businesses, the Olmstead Jr. park development, the DeBoer bandshell construction, the social activism of the 60s and 70s, the assembly of the Teahouse in the 90s, and on through to the present day.

I also appreciate that the three organizations applying for historic designation have the best of intentions to preserve this remarkable history and to ensure that it is not erased by over-aggressive redevelopment. I also agree with them that the history of the Civic Area needs to be told, raised up, and discussed more broadly.

But when I look at this eastern end of the Civic Area, what I see is Boulder's civic heart, a place that has changed with time according to the activities and societal needs of the day. Since its founding, Central Park has been repeatedly modified, adapted, and altered to fit the concerns and desires of the community. New buildings have appeared. The bandshell was built. The railroad display was constructed, vandalized, repaired, and ultimately moved. The Farmer's Market arrived, changing the use of the park and street. And, recently, camping and open drug use have altered how the site is viewed and used, and may necessitate a response from the City.

In fact, I would say that change in response to the demands of the times is THE defining feature of the Civic Area and Central Park. It is essential that the civic core of Boulder be adaptable in response to the changing needs of the community.

I am deeply concerned that the historic district application is intended to put the brakes on the Civic Area Phase 2 process. It's interesting to note that the history of the Civic Area extends well beyond the boundaries of the proposed CAHD. For example, the areas west of the Penfield Tate II Municipal Building, including the Library, are also integral contributors to the history of this section of town. Yet the proposed CAHD seems limited to only that area being considered for Phase 2 redevelopment. Making this area a historic district will dramatically slow the Phase 2 process down, adding at least 6 months to the evaluation as the historic aspects of proposed designs are given unique public input, evaluated by the Landmarks Board, sent to Council, and voted on. It's not clear to me if only one such round would be needed, or if small modifications to the plan would trigger a new process each time they occur. Each delay is costly and causes substantial additional effort by city staff members across a range of departments.

The Phase 2 redevelopment is essential to take what is basically a tired and abused, but also much-loved, park, and to reinvigorate it with new features and designs. The goal is to "activate" the park so that more people are drawn to it. Phase 2 should also reimagine how key pedestrian and bicycle connections are made, especially between the Hill businesses and downtown, as well as eastward to the Goss-Grove neighborhood.

In contrast, the benefits of the historic district are not at all clear to me. There are five buildings near the park that already have protected status: the Penfield Tate II Municipal Building; the Atrium building, the Dushanbe Teahouse, the Storage and Transfer Building (BMCA), and of course, the Bandshell. They are landmarked; they will not move or be changed. The Cultural Landscape Assessment performed by an outside consultant found that found virtually no historic integrity remaining between the current park design and the original design of Olmstead Jr., with the exception of the landscape immediately around the bandshell. In other words, the park itself is not historic physically because it has been changed so many times in the past that it does not reflect Olmsted's original design. (I understand that some members of the Landmarks Board disagree with this assessment. To me the consultant's findings make sense and are consistent with my intuition when I try look at the park as dispassionately as possible.)

If the CAHD is approved, we will get a bronze plaque. And we can make some online exhibits about the history of the area. But we don't need a district to celebrate the history of the area; it's already celebrated by the landmarking of the key buildings. And the stories around the past uses of this land can be told regardless of whether it has an official designation. The putative benefits of historic designation can be realized without official designation.

Boulder's civic heart needs to be able to adapt to the current and future needs of the city. Those current needs include bringing more activity to the area so that the drug use and camping is discouraged, improving transportation connectivity, providing recreation and relaxation activities for Boulderites, and improving commercial viability of businesses in the area. These changes will be made with careful evaluation of and great respect for the historic context of the existing park as part of the Civic Area Phase 2 process. We do not need a new historic district designation to treat the area with the respect and love it deserves.

Finally, I have heard some public comments that Parks and Recreation staff members are opposed to the historic designation, and that PRAB members are merely their mouthpiece. Let me state very emphatically that, in my viewpoint, P and R staff have been resolutely neutral in their presentation of materials regarding the bandshell landmarking effort, and now the proposed CAHD. In fact, it has been impossible for me to elicit an opinion from them. And I have tried!

Thank you for considering my comments, and for your service to the community.

Chuck Brock  
303-887-2523

[[FSF080521]] Submission ID is #: 1205614565

[Compose a Response to this Email](#)

**From:** [No Reply](#)  
**To:** [Council](#); [ContactCoB](#); [Mueller, Brad](#); [Johnson, Kristofer](#); [Gerwing, Marcy](#)  
**Subject:** Leonard Segel :- Historic Preservation/Landmarking  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 19, 2024 12:36:17 AM

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**Preferred Form Language:** English / Inglés

**Name:** Leonard Segel

**Organization (optional):** Ferguson Pyatt Architecture

**Email:** leonard.segel@gmail.com

**Phone (optional):**

**My question or feedback most closely relates to the following topic (please choose one):**Historic Preservation/Landmarking

**Comment, question or feedback:** Greetings City Council members of Boulder:

I am writing in support of the proposed historic district in the Civic Center area of Boulder. This area has operated as the ‘heart’ of the community since its conception more than 100 years ago.

The primary reasons to create this historic district now are:

- 1) The district designation would ensure that the historic spirit of Boulder would be included in considerations for the redevelopment plans being explored for this area.
- 2) The proposed district is unique and significant. The historic properties here tell an almost continuous story of the evolution of Boulder.
- 3) The history of this district includes stories about underrepresented minority groups – Indigenous tribes, Blacks, and blue-collar workers.
- 4) Officially recognizing the important historic contributions of this neighborhood would give this area a fresh appeal. Designation would give citizens more appreciation of the area, encouraging them to participate in activities like the Farmers’ Market in the Park areas.
- 5) This historic district can bring more visitors downtown. According to the Boulder tourism board, 6 of the top 10 most visited places in Boulder are historic.
- 6) This historic district would be recognized state-wide and nationally, permitting access to preservation funds.
- 7) In 2022 the City Council directed the Planning staff to explore the designation of this area. There are several policies that direct the city to value its own historic properties and preserve them, including this area.

There are some misconceptions about this historic district that need to be addressed, as follows:

- 1) Historic Districts do not create an unnecessary layer of bureaucracy. Think of them as stepping stones, not stumbling blocks. The 10 existing historic districts thrive, not in spite of the designation but because of it. They help property owners understand the historic qualities of their buildings and landscapes.
  - a. The system of collaboration between the Preservation planners and other departments of government is well established and has been very successful.
  - b. In the past year 88% of requests for modifications to landmarked properties have been

approved within 2 weeks.

2) The historic district would in no way limit the housing developments being considered along 14th street.

3) This historic district does not curtail the potential adaptive reuse of the properties. Renovation vs. demolition is inherently environmentally progressive.

4) The designation of this historic district does not put limits on the use of this area by unhoused people. It does not interfere with social service efforts to remedy the issue of homelessness.

5) Historically-speaking, the creation of the civic area was not discriminatory. It was a citizen-led, grass roots effort to improve Boulder that began around 1900. For 100 years this area has provided many benefits for all citizens of Boulder.

6) The park design is primarily intact from 100 years ago. While some changes have occurred the basic design principles are alive and well.

7) Some people are asking why create an historic district when most of the properties are already landmarked. Aristotle gave the answer 2,400 years ago. He said, "The whole is more than the sum of the parts."

Thank you for the work you do to protect and honor Boulder's historic built environment. Please support the designation of the proposed historic district in the civic center area.

Leonard Segel

[[FSF080521]] Submission ID is #: 1206073951

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**From:** [No Reply](#)  
**To:** [Council](#); [ContactCoB](#); [Mueller, Brad](#); [Johnson, Kristofer](#); [Gerwing, Marcy](#)  
**Subject:** Karl Anuta :- Historic Preservation/Landmarking  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 20, 2024 12:31:00 PM

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**Preferred Form Language:** English / Inglés

**Name:** Karl Anuta

**Organization (optional):** None

**Email:** karl.anuta@gmail.com

**Phone (optional):** (720) 562-8005

**My question or feedback most closely relates to the following topic (please choose one):**Historic Preservation/Landmarking

**Comment, question or feedback:** I can remember when a locomotive, a passenger car and a caboose sat of tracks in Central Park. Things have changed. Central Park, since its creation (and even before) has been the cultural center of Boulder. It still is in many aspects.

There is pending a proposal to designate the Park as an Historic Landmark. This is a recognition of our community's history, and most critically a means to preserve the Park and prevent future destruction.

Change would still be allowed to accommodate new uses, and to assure economic viability, but Landmark designation would assure that two City boards (not just one) would have input. Modifications and "improvements" would thus receive critical and through review and citizen input. Like Chautauqua, the Pearl Street Mall, and several other locations, our Council and citizens are well versed in handling multi-layered Community amenities.

I urge the Council to approve designation.

Karl F. Anuta

[[FSF080521]] Submission ID is #: 1206697689

[Compose a Response to this Email](#)

**From:** [No Reply](#)  
**To:** [Council](#); [ContactCoB](#); [Mueller, Brad](#); [Johnson, Kristofer](#); [Gerwing, Marcy](#)  
**Subject:** Kathryn Buerkert :- Historic Preservation/Landmarking  
**Date:** Thursday, March 21, 2024 9:51:32 PM  
**Attachments:** [114330582\\_240321 Boulder City Council.docx](#)

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**Preferred Form Language:** English / Inglés

**Name:** Kathryn Buerkert

**Organization (optional):**

**Email:** kathrynb7000@gmail.com

**Phone (optional):**

**My question or feedback most closely relates to the following topic (please choose one):**Historic Preservation/Landmarking

**Comment, question or feedback:** Dear Members of the Boulder City Council,

I urge you to support the establishment of a Historic District in heart of our city.

The proposed Civic Center District (encompassing the area from the Atrium Building and Dushanbe Tea House on 13th Street to our Public Library, from Canyon Boulevard to Arapahoe including the Boulder Bandshell) holds immense historic, architectural and environmental significance for our community.

Throughout history, this area by the Boulder Creek has played a pivotal role in our city's development. Serving as a vital water source for indigenous communities and early settlers, 'Central Park' has remained a focal point in Boulder. Its rich tapestry of stories, including those of early Black citizens, miners, pioneering business men and intrepid business women, embodies the essence of our community's heritage.

Furthermore, the beauty of this historic section significantly contributes to Boulder's tourist industry. Its scenic beauty and proximity to downtown enhance our reputation as a premier destination for both residents and visitors, fostering a sense of pride and belonging. Recognition of its historical worth would encourage appreciation and wider use of Central Park for cultural and community events.

Preserving our historic assets not only enriches our cultural identity but also facilitates informed decision-making in city planning. By designating this area as historic, we can unlock access to additional preservation funding, ensuring its longevity for future generations to enjoy.

I urge you to support the proposed Civic Center historic district, safeguarding the spirit of Boulder for years to come.

Sincerely,  
Kathryn Buerkert

**From:** [No Reply](#)  
**To:** [Council](#); [ContactCoB](#); [Mueller, Brad](#); [Johnson, Kristofer](#); [Gerwing, Marcy](#)  
**Subject:** Payson Sheets :- Historic Preservation/Landmarking  
**Date:** Friday, March 22, 2024 9:21:43 AM

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**Preferred Form Language:** English / Inglés

**Name:** Payson Sheets

**Organization (optional):**

**Email:** [payson.sheets@colorado.edu](mailto:payson.sheets@colorado.edu)

**Phone (optional):** (720) 347-0556

**My question or feedback most closely relates to the following topic (please choose one):**Historic Preservation/Landmarking

**Comment, question or feedback:** Dear City Council Members,

I was surprised to learn that some people are claiming that our Central Park has been significantly modified from Olmstead's design and achievement a century ago. I have two lines of data-based reasoning that demonstrate that its integrity does persist to today. Therefore, I request that you consider protecting our park from significant changes, so that multiple generations of Boulderites that have not even been born yet, can enjoy it. First, my grandparents moved our family from Durango to Boulder in 1920. We continue to live in Boulder, and five generations have enjoyed Olmstead's achievement (my grandparents, parents, my sister and I, our two daughters, and two grandchildren). We plan to continue enjoying it well into the foreseeable future, if it can be protected. We have always lived within walking distance to the park, and have enjoyed regular picnics, performances, and other activities. Our sustained use for decades indicates its integrity. Had any significant landscape changes occurred, we would have known about it, and we would have raised one helluva fuss. Those changes have not occurred, and this jewel in the center of our community is intact and must be preserved.

Second, I professionally document and interpret landforms in three countries (USA, El Salvador, and Costa Rica). I distinguish human-caused changes from inadvertent ones, and those caused by natural factors, and I study the interactions among them. It is easy to test the allegations that significant landscape modifications occurred since the park of Olmstead's 1924 plan was created. I took his map to Central Park, and compared its details to what is existing today. The result is an encouraging high degree of integrity. Most importantly are his two largest contiguous areas: the triangular-shaped zones in the northeast and the southeast of his map. These comprise the majority of the park area. My detailed comparisons with today's reality clearly demonstrated that significant landscape modification has not occurred. I would be glad to walk the park with you and compare it with his map. Please call me at 720-347-0556, and we will find a time that works for you and me.

My conclusion is clear: most of today's Central Park is reassuringly close to Olmstead's design. I therefore ask you to protect it from major changes. Please include Central Park as a key element in a Civic Park Historic District.

Dr. Payson Sheets 520 Marine St. Boulder. [Payson.sheets@colorado.edu](mailto:Payson.sheets@colorado.edu).

**From:** [No Reply](#)  
**To:** [Council](#); [ContactCoB](#); [Mueller, Brad](#); [Johnson, Kristofer](#); [Gerwing, Marcy](#)  
**Subject:** Shelly Benford :- Historic Preservation/Landmarking  
**Date:** Friday, March 22, 2024 10:23:25 AM

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**Preferred Form Language:** English / Inglés

**Name:** Shelly Benford

**Organization (optional):** The Colorado Chautauqua

**Email:** shelly.benford@chautauqua.com

**Phone (optional):** (303) 952-1617

**My question or feedback most closely relates to the following topic (please choose one):**Historic Preservation/Landmarking

**Comment, question or feedback:** Hello -

I am writing in support of the creation of a new official historic district in the civic center area of downtown Boulder.

This area is the historic heart of Boulder and has historic, architectural, and environmental significance. Importantly, a district designation would ensure the historic nature of the area is considered in future designs for the neighborhood.

Shelly Benford

[[FSF080521]] Submission ID is #: 1207446602

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**From:** [No Reply](#)  
**To:** [Council](#); [ContactCoB](#); [Mueller, Brad](#); [Johnson, Kristofer](#); [Gerwing, Marcy](#)  
**Subject:** William Bechhoefer :- Historic Preservation/Landmarking  
**Date:** Saturday, March 23, 2024 1:04:27 PM

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**Preferred Form Language:** English / Inglés

**Name:** William Bechhoefer

**Organization (optional):**

**Email:** wbb@umd.edu

**Phone (optional):**

**My question or feedback most closely relates to the following topic (please choose one):**Historic Preservation/Landmarking

**Comment, question or feedback:** I am writing to support the creation of a new Historic District centered around the Central Park area in the heart of Boulder. I was a member of the "Friends of the Boulder- Dushanbe Teahouse" that supported its landmarking, and I feel strongly that such a new district would enhance and increase protection for this important area that is central to the history and identity of Boulder.

The Olmsted plan for Boulder of the early 1900's is in itself noteworthy as urban and landscape design, and it also tells the story of Boulder's history and civic identity. The Central Park area of the plan is the setting for a significant grouping of landmarked structures; as such, the district should be considered as an ensemble in which buildings and landscape create a whole that is

greater than the sum of its individual parts. This is how civic identity is reinforced and protected - not just individual buildings, but the totality of a cultural landscape. Creating this historic district would demonstrate the City's conviction about the values that historic preservation gives to the culture and vibrancy of Boulder. I support the designation of this important neighborhood as a new Historic District.

William Bechhoefer, FAIA

Professor Emeritus of Architecture, University of Maryland

825 10th Street, Boulder, CO 80302

[[FSF080521]] Submission ID is #: 1207749508

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**From:** [No Reply](#)  
**To:** [Council](#); [ContactCoB](#); [Mueller, Brad](#); [Johnson, Kristofer](#); [Gerwing, Marcy](#)  
**Subject:** Lara Ramsey :- Historic Preservation/Landmarking  
**Date:** Monday, March 25, 2024 1:43:02 PM

---

**Preferred Form Language:** English / Inglés

**Name:** Lara Ramsey

**Organization (optional):**

**Email:** alramsey2@comcast.net

**Phone (optional):**

**My question or feedback most closely relates to the following topic (please choose one):**Historic Preservation/Landmarking

**Comment, question or feedback:** I'm writing to ask for support of the creation of a new official historic district in the civic center area of downtown Boulder. This area meets the Historic Preservation Code's requirements for historical, architectural, and environmental significance.

Designation of this area provides the following opportunities to the City of Boulder, land owner and steward.

1) Education - the proposed district is unique and significant. The historic properties and land areas here relate an almost continuous story of the evolution of Boulder from the Indigenous inhabitants to today.

2) Minority representation - the history of this district includes stories about underrepresented minority groups – Indigenous tribes, Black citizens, and blue-collar workers. The district would bring to light stories of these underrepresented people.

3) Designation will improve the quality of the future developments planned for this neighborhood. The district designation would ensure that the historic spirit of Boulder would be included in considerations for the designs for these developments.

4) Reviving the reputation of this area - officially recognizing the important historic contributions of this neighborhood would give this area a fresh appeal. Designation would enable better appreciation of the area, encouraging people to use it more often.

5) Economic benefits: According to the Boulder tourism board, 6 of the top 10 most visited places in Boulder are historic. Some of these include Pearl Street, Chautauqua, the Dushanbe Teahouse, and Mapleton Hill. This historic district can bring more visitors and money downtown.

6) Publicity could access outside sources of funds to the city. This historic district would be recognized state-wide and nationally. This would permit access to preservation funds and enable positive media coverage.

7) “Walking the talk”! There are several policies that direct the city to value its own historic properties and preserve them. Some of these policies include the Comp Plan, the Greenways Plan, the Civic Area Masterplan, and the Preservation Plan. In 2022 the City Council directed the planning staff to explore the designation of this area.

8) Affordable Housing - creation of this historic district would enhance the development of affordable housing nearby. It is proven that landmarked properties add gravitas to new developments like the Union Pacific train depot at the Transit Center on 30th street. This

historic district would not limit the potential development of the housing being considered along 14th street.

9) Coordinated city planning - Historic Preservation would create a more informed and coordinated decision-making process in the city government. Designation would not add bureaucracy to the process of proposing improvements to this area. There are 10 historic districts in Boulder that have been in operation for 46 years.

[[FSF080521]] Submission ID is #: 1208456778

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**From:** [No Reply](#)  
**To:** [Council](#); [ContactCoB](#); [Mueller, Brad](#); [Johnson, Kristofer](#); [Gerwing, Marcy](#)  
**Subject:** Janet Zemeckis Scott :- Historic Preservation/Landmarking  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 27, 2024 12:51:45 PM

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**Preferred Form Language:** English / Inglés

**Name:** Janet Zemeckis Scott

**Organization (optional):**

**Email:** janet@janetz.net

**Phone (optional):** (970) 690-5507

**My question or feedback most closely relates to the following topic (please choose one):**Historic Preservation/Landmarking

**Comment, question or feedback:** Historic area with Band Shell. Hi! My family moved to Boulder in 1959 and I consider Boulder my home. As Boulder has evolved, as most cities do, some of the familiar structures have gone by the wayside. It is ultimately sad to see what made Boulder Boulder go by the wayside in the interest of Development. I see the Dark Horse will go, the Harvest house, the vintage buildings on the Hill razed to make way for Hotels and Convention centers. I fear that someday Boulder will not be recognizable. It is such a beautiful city rich with history, that I support Historic Boulder's efforts to make this area a historic district. Thank you for your time, Janet Zemeckis Scott

[[FSF080521]] Submission ID is #: 1209214925

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March 28, 2024

Boulder City Council  
1777 Broadway  
Boulder, CO 80302  
By Email

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Olmsted Online Content Manager

**RE: Support for Designating a "Civic Area Historic District"**

Dear Members of the City Council:

The Olmsted Network wholeheartedly supports designation of the Civic Area Historic District. Such designation would provide due acknowledgment of the inspired work of Frederick Law Olmsted Jr. and others in creating the city's historic core.

The proposed Historic District offers unique insight into town leaders' visionary early planning, desire for open space, and commitment to exceptional public design. Boulder's City Improvement Association, a group of committed volunteers, realized that Boulder was transitioning from a mining town to a residential community – and they wanted to ensure both beauty and utility in the town design.

As with many other cities at that time, Boulder sought out the most famous landscape architecture firm of the day, Olmsted Brothers, specifically requesting Frederick Law Olmsted Jr., the son and namesake of the profession's founder.

Olmsted Jr. birthed the field of urban planning, making Boulder one of the early beneficiaries of his planning vision. Commissioned in 1907 by the Improvement Association, Olmsted Jr. immediately recognized the genius of the place, then a town of barely 10,000 people. He created a master plan which included a linear greenway along Boulder Creek, including Central Park and the civic center. He also proposed the locations for North Boulder Park and Martinez Park, and the preservation of the mountain backdrop.

Biographer Elizabeth Hope Cushing singles out Olmsted Jr.'s work in Boulder. She notes Olmsted's painstaking research of the terrain (including scrambling in the bush and bicycling around town), his meetings with local officials and business people and his lecture at the university about landscapes and parks. From this work, Olmsted developed ambitious plans for Boulder that would make it a livable city and accommodate people from all economic levels.

In the 1910 report, Olmsted focused on defining "physical improvements within the reach of the city [that] will help make it increasingly convenient, agreeable and generally satisfactory as a place in which to live and work." He set out streets, waterways, parks and quasi-public buildings and singled out Boulder Creek as an especially fine natural amenity and one that offered design opportunities, including flood control.

**PARKS, PLACES & PEOPLE**

With Central Park in mind, he urged “keeping the main part of the ground as simple open common ... over which the wonderful views of the foothills can be obtained at their best from shaded paths and roads along the embankment edge – this would give a piece of recreation ground worth a great deal to the people.” To this day, the open common embodies the Olmstedian ideal of a “democratic space” that brings people of all backgrounds together in community.

Olmsted emphasized the future potential of Boulder parks to provide citizens – not just the rich and powerful – access to the “precious commodities, air and sunlight, and that subtle promoter of health and cheerfulness, the sense of spaciousness and freedom.” His design of Central Park and the Civic Area embodied those worthy goals.

Like many Olmsted-designed parks, Central Park today includes a later enhancement made by another designer, Denver planner, Saco DeBoer. Both Olmsted’s and DeBoer’s designs planned for flood control, an appreciation of the Boulder Creek riparian environment, opportunities for healthy recreation, and cultural offerings that benefit all citizens.

**While changes have occurred over time, the integrity of the Olmsted design is clear.** By designating the Civic Area Historic District, the Council can honor the visionary work and planning of Boulder leaders and help protect and preserve the beautiful and useful open space designed by Olmsted Jr. over a century ago.

The Civic Area has served as the “heart” of the Boulder community and a setting for memorable events. Today, the park and the five city-owned buildings tell an almost continuous story of Boulder’s evolution. This important part of downtown Boulder is worthy of local historic recognition and we strongly support its designation.

Thank you for protecting and honoring Boulder’s historic built environment.

Sincerely,



President & CEO

*The Olmsted Network is dedicated to championing Olmsted parks, places and principles through advocacy, education and stewardship. We foster and support park conservancies, friends’ groups and citizen volunteers to protect and preserve these special places. Our Network includes Central Park Conservancy, Biltmore, Washington Park (Milwaukee), Prospect Park Alliance, Bok Tower Gardens, the Midway Plaisance Park Advisory Council and Louisville’s Olmsted parks. For more information, go to [www.olmsted.org](http://www.olmsted.org).*

#### PARKS, PLACES & PEOPLE

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**From:** [No Reply](#)  
**To:** [Council](#); [ContactCoB](#); [Mueller, Brad](#); [Johnson, Kristofer](#); [Gerwing, Marcy](#)  
**Subject:** Amy Alpers :- Historic Preservation/Landmarking  
**Date:** Friday, March 29, 2024 11:03:17 AM

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**Preferred Form Language:** English / Inglés

**Name:** Amy Alpers

**Organization (optional):**

**Email:** amy@thepilatescenter.com

**Phone (optional):**

**My question or feedback most closely relates to the following topic (please choose one):**Historic Preservation/Landmarking

**Comment, question or feedback:** Hello City Council Members:

I'm a long-time resident of Boulder and am writing in support of the historic district being proposed in the civic center area. This neighborhood has historic, architectural, and environmental significance. In many ways this area is the historic heart of Boulder.

Please vote in favor of this historic district at your meeting on April 11th.

The primary reasons to create this historic district now are:

- 1) There are currently several redevelopment plans being explored for this area. The district designation would ensure that the historic spirit of Boulder would be included in considerations for the designs for these developments.
- 2) The proposed district is unique and significant. The historic properties here tell an almost continuous story of the evolution of Boulder from the indigenous inhabitants to today.
- 3) The history of this district includes stories about underrepresented minority groups – Indigenous tribes, Blacks, and working-class people. The district would bring to light stories of these underrepresented groups.
- 4) Officially recognizing the important historic contributions of this neighborhood would give this area a fresh appeal. Designation would give citizens more appreciation of the area, encouraging them to participate in activities here.
- 5) It will increase tourism, bringing more visitors downtown.
- 6) The City will demonstrate it is 'walking the talk' regarding the protection of its own historic properties.

The evolution of Boulder has been complex and varied. This neighborhood encapsulates many of the significant stories of Boulder all in one location.

Please vote in support of the proposed Civic Center historic district to help to keep the spirit of Boulder alive for the next generation.

Amy Alpers

**From:** [No Reply](#)  
**To:** [Council](#); [ContactCoB](#); [Mueller, Brad](#); [Johnson, Kristofer](#); [Gerwing, Marcy](#)  
**Subject:** Rachel Segel :- Historic Preservation/Landmarking  
**Date:** Friday, March 29, 2024 10:55:06 AM

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**Preferred Form Language:** English / Inglés

**Name:** Rachel Segel

**Organization (optional):**

**Email:** [rachel@thepilatescenter.com](mailto:rachel@thepilatescenter.com)

**Phone (optional):**

**My question or feedback most closely relates to the following topic (please choose one):**Historic Preservation/Landmarking

**Comment, question or feedback:** Hello City Council Members:

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- 5) It will increase tourism, bringing more visitors downtown.
- 6) The City will demonstrate it is 'walking the talk' regarding the protection of its own historic properties.

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Please vote in support of the proposed Civic Center historic district to help to keep the spirit of Boulder alive for the next generation.

Rachel Segel

[[FSF080521]] Submission ID is #: 1209845230

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**From:** [No Reply](#)  
**To:** [Council](#); [ContactCoB](#); [Mueller, Brad](#); [Johnson, Kristofer](#); [Gerwing, Marcy](#)  
**Subject:** Rich Alpers :- Historic Preservation/Landmarking  
**Date:** Friday, March 29, 2024 11:01:29 AM

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**Preferred Form Language:** English / Inglés

**Name:** Rich Alpers

**Organization (optional):**

**Email:** rich.alpers@gmail.com

**Phone (optional):**

**My question or feedback most closely relates to the following topic (please choose one):**Historic Preservation/Landmarking

**Comment, question or feedback:** Hello City Council Members:

I'm a long-time resident of Boulder and am writing in support of the historic district being proposed in the civic center area. This neighborhood has historic, architectural, and environmental significance. In many ways this area is the historic heart of Boulder.

Please vote in favor of this historic district at your meeting on April 11th.

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- 2) The proposed district is unique and significant. The historic properties here tell an almost continuous story of the evolution of Boulder from the indigenous inhabitants to today.
- 3) The history of this district includes stories about underrepresented minority groups – Indigenous tribes, Blacks, and working-class people. The district would bring to light stories of these underrepresented groups.
- 4) Officially recognizing the important historic contributions of this neighborhood would give this area a fresh appeal. Designation would give citizens more appreciation of the area, encouraging them to participate in activities here.
- 5) It will increase tourism, bringing more visitors downtown.
- 6) The City will demonstrate it is 'walking the talk' regarding the protection of its own historic properties.

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Please vote in support of the proposed Civic Center historic district to help to keep the spirit of Boulder alive for the next generation.

Rich Alpers

**From:** [No Reply](#)  
**To:** [Council](#); [ContactCoB](#); [Mueller, Brad](#); [Johnson, Kristofer](#); [Gerwing, Marcy](#)  
**Subject:** stephanie bingham :- Historic Preservation/Landmarking  
**Date:** Friday, March 29, 2024 1:05:42 PM

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**Preferred Form Language:** English / Inglés

**Name:** stephanie bingham

**Organization (optional):**

**Email:** stephanie@binghamarts.com

**Phone (optional):** (720) 260-5680

**My question or feedback most closely relates to the following topic (please choose one):**Historic Preservation/Landmarking

**Comment, question or feedback:** I am writing in support of designating Boulder's civic center neighborhood as a historic district. As a long-time resident, I believe this recognition is essential for preserving our community's rich heritage.

The district safeguards our history amidst redevelopment plans, ensuring Boulder's unique character remains intact. Each historic property tells a diverse story, from indigenous tribes to present-day residents, underscoring the neighborhood's enduring legacy.

Official acknowledgment would shed light on the contributions of underrepresented groups, fostering inclusivity and empathy. Moreover, it would reignite interest and investment in the area, boosting civic pride and economic vitality through increased tourism and local engagement.

By embracing this designation, Boulder demonstrates its commitment to preserving its heritage, setting an example for others. I urge you to support this initiative, ensuring our community's soul endures for future generations.

Thank you for your attention, and feel free to contact me for further information.

Sincerely,  
Stephanie Bingham

[[FSF080521]] Submission ID is #: 1209888381

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**From:** [No Reply](#)  
**To:** [Council](#); [ContactCoB](#); [Mueller, Brad](#); [Johnson, Kristofer](#); [Gerwing, Marcy](#)  
**Subject:** Thomas Cosgrove :- Historic Preservation/Landmarking  
**Date:** Saturday, March 30, 2024 3:26:22 PM

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**Preferred Form Language:** English / Inglés

**Name:** Thomas Cosgrove

**Organization (optional):**

**Email:** tcos@comcast.net

**Phone (optional):**

**My question or feedback most closely relates to the following topic (please choose one):**Historic Preservation/Landmarking

**Comment, question or feedback:** I support establishing the new historic downtown designation area to be voted on the April 11th meeting.

[[FSF080521]] Submission ID is #: 1210118145

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**From:** [No Reply](#)  
**To:** [Council](#); [ContactCoB](#); [Mueller, Brad](#); [Johnson, Kristofer](#); [Gerwing, Marcy](#)  
**Subject:** FRAN MANDEL SHEETS :- Historic Preservation/Landmarking  
**Date:** Sunday, March 31, 2024 10:26:07 AM

---

**Preferred Form Language:** English / Inglés

**Name:** FRAN MANDEL SHEETS

**Organization (optional):** 520 MARINE ST

**Email:** fmandelsheets@gmail.com

**Phone (optional):** (720) 660-9999

**My question or feedback most closely relates to the following topic (please choose one):**Historic Preservation/Landmarking

**Comment, question or feedback:** Two and a half years ago, as a member of the Landmarks Board, I made a motion to expand the Bandshell's southern boundary. After consideration the Board passed the motion over the opposition of preservation staff. When the proposal went to Council on June 14, 2022 staff recommended a best practice would be to designate an historic district for the area. It is this historic district in the heart of downtown that is before the council now.

In June 2022 Council voted 5-4 against the Bandshell expansion but gave clear instructions for staff to bring a historic district forward by the end of 2023. This process was finally started when three organizations came together and submitted an application in May of last year.

Despite delays and hundreds of human hours later, the historic district is finally ready for designation by this new Council.

The Landmarks Board designation hearing held two months ago was long and fruitful. The Board approved the designation and added five recommendations each approved with a 5-0 vote.

Staff said there was not enough turnaround time to modify the memo for Council. Many of us who have worked hard for this designation are concerned the recommendations not get lost in Council deliberations. The recommendations are all important to this being an effective district.

In brief, the recommendations are:

The district should commemorate those displaced during the park's development.

Council should consider expanding the boundary to include Block 11 to be more inclusive.

Council should consider including the southern and western banks of Boulder Creek.

City Council should consider expanding the period of significance to a date that includes the residential period (1880)

City council should recognize Olmsted's plan as being intact, recognizable and significant to the historic district.

The fifth recommendation is highlighted for your consideration and discussed here.

It is staff's opinion the Bandshell addition in 1938 devalued Olmsted's plan such that the defining features of the original Olmsted design have been compromised and the park is no longer eligible for recognition or protection in the district. Though designed by Olmsted, it would be non-contributing in historic preservation terms.

This opinion stands alone among professionals including former City Council and Landmarks Board members, former preservation staff and the Cultural Landscape Foundation, a national organization. It is clear Olmsted's original design is visible, intact and remains significant to the district.

Preservation does not prohibit change. Think of Chautauqua or Boulder's Downtown Pearl St. Mall. They are major contributors to our city's historical heritage. They are both landmarks and both have been modified over the years. They change over time yet maintain their relevance. So are Boulder's landmarked homes. Another example is New York's Central Park. Many buildings have been constructed since it was originally built but the park remains recognized as one of Olmsted's major accomplishments and is a national landmark because the defining features remain intact.

We will argue the same is true of our central park: the original Olmsted design is intact. Olmsted designed Boulder's park. He advocated for nature, openness, mountain view sheds, the water running through, the open grassy areas, and the trees in the park and along 13th street. The topography Olmsted drew is intact. These are defining features and make the park what it is today. Olmsted's legacy should be recognized. He was a major figure in Boulder's design of both the park and city.

It's amazing to me that Boulder residents had the insight in 1900 to have engaged Olmsted to plan our small city given his national prominence at that time. Boulder is lucky the people before us worked hard to design and build a carefully planned city we still enjoy today. The significant features in Olmsted's drawings for our central park are intact and visible as they were 100 years ago. The park helps make Boulder a beautiful place to live today and hopefully into the future. Hopefully you will designate this as Boulder's newest historic district.

Thank you for your time, commitment and effort!

Thank you for reading this.

Fran Mandel Sheets

Boulder

[[FSF080521]] Submission ID is #: 1210228637

[Compose a Response to this Email](#)

**From:** [No Reply](#)  
**To:** [Council](#); [ContactCoB](#); [Mueller, Brad](#); [Johnson, Kristofer](#); [Gerwing, Marcy](#)  
**Subject:** Robert Hohlfelder :- Historic Preservation/Landmarking  
**Date:** Sunday, March 31, 2024 11:51:13 AM

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**Preferred Form Language:** English / Inglés

**Name:** Robert Hohlfelder

**Organization (optional):** University of Colorado, Boulder

**Email:** robert.hohlfelder@colorado.edu

**Phone (optional):** (720) 273-4349

**My question or feedback most closely relates to the following topic (please choose one):**Historic Preservation/Landmarking

**Comment, question or feedback:** The story of our city gives credence to the tenet that change is a principal constant of life. Boulder is evolving before our very eyes in ways that some citizens embrace while others decry. Regardless of the character of our growth, it should not be at the expense of our historic identity and heritage. Our many landmarked buildings are the physical manifestation of that history. Preserving the integrity of the Central Park area, bounded by some of our most distinguished landmarks, as a historic district will ensure that the very heart of Boulder will remain as a monument to our community's past regardless of how we address the challenges of the future.

The creation of this historic district will also honor the contributions of a man, Fredrick Law Olmsted Jr., whose vision for creating a park that would serve the needs of all Boulder residents endures to this day. In this regard, he was ahead of his times as one of the last century's leading landscape designers. At a point in our history, when our country embraced segregation and when white nationalism challenged our hopes and efforts to achieve racial equality even in Boulder, he was a progressive populist who wanted to make public spaces available and beneficial to all Boulder citizens by planning for a central park area that would be a vital component of our city's life. Fortunately, the historic district now under consideration still reflects much of his original design. It embraces, perpetuates, and expands his dream and guarantees that future Boulder citizens can be cognizant of our city's past while experiencing the benefits of a natural oasis within the core of our city.

Some will argue that the creation of a Central Park historic district will prevent any future modification or development. This view is incorrect. Changes can and will be made as the needs and aspirations of our community shift in the future. But the historic district designation will simply ensure that all future alterations will respect and not denigrate the historic integrity of what many citizens see as the core of our city.

Having been born in New York City, I know how New Yorkers acknowledge the important contribution that Central Park, perhaps the most famous of the Olmsted family's parks, makes to improving the quality of urban life. We also should be proud that our Central Park was FLO Jr.'s contribution to enriching the landscape and vitality of our community. I urge you to establish the historic district that will ensure the integrity of Central Park and the associated landmarks.

Robert L. Hohlfelder, PhD  
Professor Emeritus of History  
University of Colorado, Boulder  
robert.hohlfelder@colorado.edu

[[FSF080521]] Submission ID is #: 1210240140

[Compose a Response to this Email](#)

**From:** [No Reply](#)  
**To:** [Council](#); [ContactCoB](#); [Mueller, Brad](#); [Johnson, Kristofer](#); [Gerwing, Marcy](#)  
**Subject:** Stuart Lord :- Historic Preservation/Landmarking  
**Date:** Monday, April 1, 2024 8:18:47 PM

---

**Preferred Form Language:** English / Inglés

**Name:** Stuart Lord

**Organization (optional):** NAACP Boulder County

**Email:** drstuartlord@gmail.com

**Phone (optional):** (720) 438-8323

**My question or feedback most closely relates to the following topic (please choose one):**Historic Preservation/Landmarking

**Comment, question or feedback:** Point of Clarification

In response to inquiries regarding our recent letter to the City Council regarding the Civic Park historic designation decision, the NAACP Boulder County wishes to provide clarification on our stance regarding reparations.

Our letter to the City Council emphasized the importance of acknowledging and addressing historical injustices suffered by the African American community in Boulder County, particularly the displacement and land theft that occurred in the late 1800s. We advocated for the formation of a committee to investigate these past actions, make recommendations to the City Council, and ensure that justice is served.

It has come to our attention that there may be some confusion regarding the connection between our request for a committee to study reparations and the Civic Park historic designation decision. We would like to clarify that our request for the formation of a committee to consider reparations is separate from the Civic Park issue.

Our intention in advocating for the establishment of a committee to study reparations is to address historical injustices comprehensively and ensure that the voices of those affected are heard. We believe that it is essential for the City Council to engage in a thorough examination of past actions and consider measures to rectify these injustices.

We hope this clarification addresses any misunderstandings and reaffirms our commitment to advocating for justice and equity in Boulder County.

If you have any further questions or require additional information, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.



**From:** [No Reply](#)  
**To:** [Council](#); [ContactCoB](#); [Mueller, Brad](#); [Johnson, Kristofer](#); [Gerwing, Marcy](#)  
**Subject:** Ayleen Perez :- Historic Preservation/Landmarking  
**Date:** Tuesday, April 2, 2024 7:43:57 PM

---

**Preferred Form Language:** English / Inglés

**Name:** Ayleen Perez

**Organization (optional):** CU BOULDER

**Email:** ayleenperez@gmail.com

**Phone (optional):** (303) 735-1025

**My question or feedback most closely relates to the following topic (please choose one):**Historic Preservation/Landmarking

**Comment, question or feedback:** The evolution of Boulder has been complex and varied. This neighborhood encapsulates many of the significant stories of Boulder all in one location.

[[FSF080521]] Submission ID is #: 1211094553

[Compose a Response to this Email](#)

**From:** [No Reply](#)  
**To:** [Council](#); [ContactCoB](#); [Mueller, Brad](#); [Johnson, Kristofer](#); [Gerwing, Marcy](#)  
**Subject:** Peter Mayer :- Historic Preservation/Landmarking  
**Date:** Tuesday, April 2, 2024 8:40:16 AM

---

**Preferred Form Language:** English / Inglés

**Name:** Peter Mayer

**Organization (optional):**

**Email:** peter.mayer@waterdm.com

**Phone (optional):** (720) 318-4232

**My question or feedback most closely relates to the following topic (please choose one):**Historic Preservation/Landmarking

**Comment, question or feedback:** Dear Council,

My remarks will not be popular with those in favor of historic preservation. I have lived in Boulder and attended events at the Huntington Bandshell since 1969, I have attended plays, concerts, dances, protests and more. I have also attended similar events in other cities. The Boulder bandshell is terrible venue and should be replaced. The acoustics are awful with traffic noise and a long distance between stage and audience. The seats are uncomfortable, and the overall layout and structure chains Boulder to the past and prevents us from doing something truly great in the future.

I urge you to un-landmark the bandshell and announce a national competition for a fully redesign of the municipal area and farmers market. The design should include a new modern performance space with good acoustics, closer to the creek and away from traffic noise. We can do so much better.

The current bandshell is ugly and very poorly located and given all the changes that have occurred downtown with the farmers market and Dushambe Tea House, we could use this space far more effectively.

Somethings are simply not worth preserving and the Huntington Bandshell is one of them. It has been a lousy, under-utilized venue for many years.

Boulder has many wonderful historic buildings that are worthy of preservation. Our city would be better served with a dramatic new vision for the municipal downtown area that does not include the historic, but basically useless Huntington Bandshell.

Thanks for your consideration.

[[FSF080521]] Submission ID is #: 1210828959

[Compose a Response to this Email](#)

**From:** [No Reply](#)  
**To:** [Council](#); [ContactCoB](#); [Mueller, Brad](#); [Johnson, Kristofer](#); [Gerwing, Marcy](#)  
**Subject:** Jerry Shapins :- Historic Preservation/Landmarking  
**Date:** Wednesday, April 3, 2024 7:58:43 AM

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**Preferred Form Language:** English / Inglés

**Name:** Jerry Shapins

**Organization (optional):**

**Email:** jshapins1@gmail.com

**Phone (optional):** (720) 839-6280

**My question or feedback most closely relates to the following topic (please choose one):**Historic Preservation/Landmarking

**Comment, question or feedback:**

Dear City Council!!!

Great you are weighing in on the Civic Area..And especially Central Park re Historic District. Good for Boulder to think deeply here but... we all need to support better ways to preserve history and good ideas through good design and development rather than outdated rules, regs and policies that limit and “strangle” our futures!!! What we have at Central Park now remains detached from its context and in need of green facilities and urban vibrancy plus the area is not performing like it should...we demonstrated this with many past studies and most recently Social Streets. Finally we can act with focusing on implementation. We are way behind most cities re engaging and equitable downtown urban parks and public gathering places. The ideas of the past can be interpreted in so many creative ways. The potential for mixed uses and connections to CU and Downtown are critical. Plan it first with wholistic urban design not a mindset from a narrow slice of the population...and then evaluate from a broad perspective. The area needs diverse and creative and compelling experiences to broaden its impact to all..so lets change it with class...and equity too that resonates with future generations. We can surely do that with our amazing staff and team (RIOS) recently hired if you let them. So great!

Thank you so much for your amazing work and patience and care for citizens here.

Ciao! Ciao! Jerry

[[FSF080521]] Submission ID is #: 1211218891

[Compose a Response to this Email](#)

**From:** [PAT BOHIN](#)  
**To:** [Historic Preservation](#)  
**Subject:** Support for Proposed Historic District Designation of Central Park  
**Date:** Tuesday, April 2, 2024 6:09:44 PM  
**Attachments:** [Central Park's Notable Trees.pdf](#)  
[CV Patrick Bohin.pdf](#)

---

**External Sender Notice** This email was sent by an external sender.

Dear Marcy,

I strongly support the proposed historic district designation of Central Park.

As a former Boulder City Forester, I wish to see Central Park preserved as it was originally designed by the Olmsted Brothers in 1924 including the pedestrian paths, open lawn areas and the many notable trees.

I was dismayed by the improvements that took place in the park area between the Main Library, South Wing, and the Municipal Building where several mature trees were removed and the space was sectioned off with posts and chains restricting access to the public.

Working with another concerned citizen, Randy Cantu, we did an analysis of the trees in Central Park and identified 15 trees that date back to the Olmsted Brothers' original landscape plan. These trees are a part of Boulder's heritage and should be preserved and protected. Improvements to Central Park will likely affect the root zones of these trees compromising their health. Designating Central Park as a historic district will help to preserve these trees.

I am attaching a report I wrote about the notable trees in Central Park and my CV. Please see to it that my email to you, the attached report on Central Park's Notable Trees and my CV are submitted to the City Council packet for the upcoming public hearing for the proposed historic district for Central Park.

Thank you,

Patrick Bohin  
Consulting Arborist  
ArborCraft LLC

***Civic Area Historic District  
Design Guideline Framework  
March 6, 2024***

## **Intent**

---

### ***What is the purpose of these design guidelines? How will they be used?***

(Language from Boulder's [General Design Guidelines](#) and [University Place Historic District Design Guidelines](#))

The purpose of the guidelines is to facilitate both the Landmark Alteration Certificate (LAC) application and approval of alterations proposed for design review by assisting owners and designers as they plan maintenance and changes to buildings and public spaces and to provide the Landmarks Board with a framework for evaluation of proposed improvements.

The guidelines reflect the Landmarks Board's philosophy that underlies all its decisions: to encourage the preservation and careful treatment of the city's historically significant resources, while recognizing the need for continuing adaptation and improvements to these resources.

The guidelines have been developed to recognize the unique character of the district and are intended to supplement the General Design Guidelines for Boulder's Historic Districts and Individual Landmarks (the General Design Guidelines), which apply unless otherwise stated. Where the two guidelines conflict, the district-specific guidelines shall prevail.

The design guidelines are intended to be used as an aid to appropriate design and not as a checklist of items for compliance. In some cases, unusual circumstances may allow for projects to deviate from them.

## ***Table of Contents***

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### ***What areas will the guidelines address?***

- Review Process
- Roles and Responsibilities
  - Include review bodies, policies and regulations (i.e. floodplain, Park Plan for the Civic Area, Art Acquisition Policy, Downtown Urban Design Guidelines, plans and policies related to the list in Guiding Principal #2, etc.)
- What Requires Review?
  - Define what does and doesn't require review in the design guidelines to streamline and clarify the review process (i.e. maintenance, emergency repairs, new work)
  - Clarify that improvement or maintenance work within the ditch easements and CDOT easement (Broadway) is exempt from LAC review
- History of the Area
  - Summary of area history based on new research to tell more inclusive history of area.



- Design Guidelines
  - Rehabilitation of Historic Structures
  - Additions to Historic Structures
  - New Construction
  - Coordination with Floodplain Development Regulations
  - Central Park
  - Boulder Creek
  - Public Art
  - East Bookend
  - 13<sup>th</sup> Street
  - Plazas

### ***Guiding Principles***

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***What values are important to inform the district-specific design guidelines?***

1. The [Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation](#) are the foundation for the historic district design guidelines.

*Rationale: Adopted by the Landmarks Board in 1985 (revised in 1990), the Standards for Rehabilitation are the foundation of the General Design Guidelines and the eight district-specific design guidelines. As a Certified Local Government, design review is required to be consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards.*

2. **To ensure life safety and accessibility, preserve maintenance access and align the design guidelines with related management practices in adopted city plans and policies for utilities infrastructure, urban trees, park design standards, flood mitigation and transportation networks.**

*Rationale: The City has established programs and professional staff that manage the many assets within the historic district. The design guidelines should reinforce the importance of life safety and accessibility within the boundaries of the district. Additionally, defining what does and does not require review in the design guidelines will clarify and streamline the review process and ensure that emergency repairs and regular maintenance projects can be swiftly executed.*

3. **The area has character-defining features that contribute to its historic character and setting. Define these key historic features within the historic district and consider drawing inspiration from them. Key features include but are not limited to:**

- Boulder Creek as a living entity that is significant to Boulder's past, present and future and provides critical public safety, health, flood conveyance, water supply, and environmental benefits.

- The unique architectural character of the area as defined by five distinct, individually landmarked structures, each representing a forward-looking and progressive city identity.
- The area is a place for recreation, gathering and play that contributes to the health and well-being for all and should continue to reflect the variety of community needs and desires for the enjoyment of the site.

*Rationale: The area has character-defining features that contribute to its historic character. While this is not a complete list, this guiding principle emphasizes the importance of Boulder Creek, the unique architectural character of the structures, and the importance of the area as a place for recreation, gathering and play.*

- 4. The area is significant for its association with Boulder’s municipal, social and political history. As part of Boulder’s Civic Area, this district continues to have a symbolic, geographic, and functional importance and therefore should serve as an inclusive place where all feel welcome. Celebrate the diversity of our community and enrich our collective understanding of different periods of Boulder’s history by developing and installing educational elements that focus on sharing the stories and history of Boulder’s historically excluded communities.**

*Rationale: The historic district process provided an opportunity to tell a more complete history of the area. While there is additional work to be done, it is evident that the area currently tells only a portion of Boulder’s history. As the civic center of Boulder, it is even more important that it be inclusive and welcoming, and broad representation through art, educational opportunities and programming is encouraged. This principle aligns with the Park Plan for Boulder’s Civic Area, which states “Preserve, reflect and celebrate the area’s fully inclusive history (e.g., Indigenous Peoples, mining, the railroad, Olmsted’s linear park and landmarked structures).”*

- 5. Align the selection of works of art within the Civic Area Historic District with adopted city plans and policies to encourage creativity, contribute to a sense of place, spark conversation, tell our shared stories and capture our moment in time, foster the enjoyment of diverse works of art, and be thoughtfully designed contributions to the urban environment of our vibrant city. Additionally, select artwork within the Civic Area to attract, inspire, educate and engage the community.**

*Rationale: The Civic Area Park Plan identifies this area as one of the major art centers of Boulder, and new artwork within the proposed historic district is anticipated and encouraged in the future. This guiding principle repeats the mission of the [Acquisition Criteria of the Public Art Policy](#), as well as language from the Park Plan for the Civic Area. Both of these statements are compatible with the intent of historic district designation, which among other things, seeks to promote tourist trade and interest and foster knowledge of the city’s living heritage. Understand and strengthen coordination*

*between the Landmarks Board and Arts Commission the design review of art installations.*

- 6. Encourage a vibrant mix of uses in the East Bookend through adaptive reuse and creative infill. New building design may reflect the character of its own time and have meaningful juxtapositions, while respecting the integrity, scale and massing of the surrounding historic buildings. (Park Plan and DUDGs)**

*Rationale: The East Bookend is anticipated for redevelopment. Both the Park Plan and the Downtown Urban Design Guidelines provide guidance on how redevelopment should occur, and encourages a vibrant mix of uses, adaptive reuse and creative infill. As the East Bookend includes three individually significant buildings, care should be taken to respect the existing integrity, scale and massing of those buildings.*



## **COVER SHEET**

### **MEETING DATE**

**April 11, 2024**

### **AGENDA ITEM**

Vision Zero Action Plan Update

### **PRIMARY STAFF CONTACT**

Devin Joslin, Civil Engineering Senior Manager

### **ATTACHMENTS:**

#### **Description**

- ▣ **Item 4A - Vision Zero Action Plan Update**



**CITY OF BOULDER  
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM**

**MEETING DATE: April 11, 2024**

**AGENDA TITLE**

Matters from the City Manager: Vision Zero Action Plan Update

**PRESENTER(S)**

Nuria Rivera-Vandermyde, City Manager  
Pam Davis, Assistant City Manager  
Natalie Stiffler, Director of Transportation & Mobility  
Valerie Watson, Deputy Director of Transportation & Mobility  
Devin Joslin, Principal Traffic Engineer

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Vision Zero is Boulder's goal to eliminate all severe crashes resulting in a fatality or serious injury. Vision Zero is a priority of the *Transportation Master Plan (TMP)*, and it also informs the city's other transportation plans and standards. The *Citywide Strategic Plan* includes Priority Actions in support of achieving Vision Zero within the Sustainability, Equity, and Resiliency (SER) Framework goal area of Safe.

This memorandum provides an update on implementation of the *Boulder Vision Zero Action Plan, May 2023*, which includes a five-year list of actions for the period 2023-2027. The Vision Zero Action Plan is oriented towards the implementation of improvements across Boulder's transportation system that will reduce the seven common crash types, as well as address other location-specific safety issues. The most recent update to the Action Plan is innovative in that it takes a Safe Systems Approach to transportation safety, which is a proactive and human centered approach rather than the historical reactive approach based solely on crash data. The plan prioritizes



implementation along the High Risk Network (HRN) then expands to other streets. The Vision Zero Action Plan includes four categories of actions to achieve Vision Zero through 20 specific actions (and numerous sub actions) as outlined in the plan document.

The purpose of the April 2024 presentation to City Council is to give Council an update on implementation of actions in the plan.

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

#### **Suggested Motion Language:**

No action is requested. Staff are presenting an update on the implementation of the Vision Zero Action Plan.

### **COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENTS AND IMPACTS**

- **Economic** – The Vision Zero Action Plan promotes safe access to Boulder destinations in support of a diverse and sustainable economy that supports needs of all segments of the community.
- **Environmental** – Implementation of the Vision Zero Action Plan will have positive effects in transportation by reducing fatal and serious injury crashes. Thoughtful implementation of proven safety countermeasures will ensure that these effects can be achieved cognizant of impacts to air quality and greenhouse gas emissions.
- **Social** – For location-specific projects, the Vision Zero Action Plan prioritized projects according to Boulder’s Racial Equity Index and community feedback received through Be Heard Boulder. Staff met with the Center for People With Disabilities and Community Cycles Advocacy Committee twice during preparation of the plan and this feedback informed development of the Vision Zero Action Plan.

### **OTHER IMPACTS**

- **Fiscal** – The cost of countermeasures, especially higher cost capital improvement projects, exceeds the amount of city funds available annually toward Vision Zero. The Vision Zero Action Plan prioritizes actions so that they can be completed incrementally as resources (including competitive external grant funds) become available. The cost of countermeasure installation is also balanced with resulting ongoing maintenance costs, which informs this funding strategy and implementation timelines.

The crash analysis and data-driven process to prepare the Vision Zero Action Plan set the Transportation & Mobility Department up to pursue competitive federal grant funding for actions and projects identified in the plan. In December 2023, the United States Department of Transportation awarded the city with a monumental \$23 million Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) grant. These funds will significantly accelerate implementation of key actions to eliminate severe crashes. Projects will be in design over 2024-2025 with construction occurring between 2026-2028.

- **Staff time** – The actions and timelines identified in the Vision Zero Action Plan are key priorities of staff work plans for 2024 through 2027. In 2024, staff are working on the following actions, in support of timely plan implementation:
  - Speed limit setting and signing framework
  - Pedestrian Crossing Treatment Installation Guidelines Update
  - Signal Timing Practices Update
  - Photo Enforcement Expansion
  - Right Turn Slip Lane Signing/Marking Changes
  - Green Conflict Markings along the High Risk Network
  - Traffic Signal Upgrades

## **RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS FROM COUNCIL AGENDA COMMITTEE**

None

## **BOARD AND COMMISSION FEEDBACK**

Staff presented the Vision Zero Action Plan to the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) throughout development of the plan. Prior to city council receiving the final Vision Zero Action Plan on April 6, 2023, at the March 13, 2023 meeting, TAB unanimously (4-0, with one member absent) endorsed the plan.

Staff continues to involve TAB on the development and implementation of key actions within the Vision Zero Action Plan.

## **PUBLIC FEEDBACK**

Gathering diverse perspectives about travel safety and areas of community concern was a key goal of the community engagement strategy for development of the Vision Zero Action Plan. The project team conducted engagement in two phases, with the first phase taking place from summer to fall 2022 and the second phase in winter 2023. Throughout development of the plan, key engagement materials were provided in both English and Spanish. Materials can be reviewed on the project webpage, available at this link: [Vision Zero Action Plan](#)

During the first phase of community engagement, the project team completed the following activities in 2022:

- Hosted a virtual public meeting in June
- Spoke with Center for People with Disabilities, attended the San Lazaro Resource Fair, and analyzed over 700 community member responses to a Be Heard Boulder Questionnaire in July
- Spoke with Community Cycles Advocacy Committee in August
- Spoke at the Boulder Chamber Employee Transportation Coordinator meeting in September
- Sought feedback from the Community Connectors in Residence in October

For the second phase of community engagement in Winter 2023, the project team posted short videos and a summary sheet in both English and Spanish languages to describe the plan approach and process to the project webpage in late January 2023. These resources were shared with the public and key stakeholders via city social media and through stakeholder communication channels. City staff hosted a virtual public meeting on February 7, 2023 to provide more detailed information on the plan. The meeting presentation slides and recording were posted to the project webpage. On March 3, 2023, the draft plan with recommendations were posted to the project webpage and subsequently reviewed with community partners, Center for People with Disabilities and Community Cycles Advocacy Committee. Staff answered questions from these groups and made minor changes to the plan based on their feedback alongside changes requested from TAB.

For continued implementation of the Vision Zero Action Plan in 2024-2027, each action or project will have its own tailored community engagement strategy, as appropriate. Consistent with recent advice from TAB members, staff intend to be clear on where stakeholders and community members are asked to consult on matters of policy versus provide feedback or be informed on technical engineering and operational matters.

## **BACKGROUND**

Staff presented the Vision Zero Action Plan to Council on April 6, 2023. Materials submitted for that agenda item can be found here:

- April 6, 2023: [Vision Zero Action Plan Update](#)

As previously mentioned, the Vision Zero Action Plan contains 20 specific actions (and numerous sub actions) divided into four categories. The four categories include:

- Implement and improve engineering solutions to reduce fatal and serious injury crashes (9 actions)
- Pair engineering solutions with education and enforcement (6 actions)
- Improve the city's internal Vision Zero practices (2 actions)
- Improve Vision Zero data and transparency (3 actions)

Through a comprehensive crash data analysis, seven common crash types that account for 62% of fatal and serious injury crashes on the HRN were identified. Focusing on the HRN will have an outsized impact on reducing fatal and serious injury crashes. For this reason, the actions within the Vision Zero Action Plan rely on a systemic safety approach that aims to: focus on common crash types and effective solutions; prioritize locations with the most risk; and proactively implement solutions across the transportation system.

**Table 1** summarizes the actions, timeline, and implementation status.

**Table 1. Vision Zero Action Plan Progress Summary**

Action	Status	Time Frame
<b>Implement and improve engineering solutions to reduce fatal and serious injury crashes</b>		
1 – Broadly implement low-cost projects on the HRN to address top crash patterns	Gold	Ongoing
2 – Strategically implement higher cost solutions on the HRN to address top crash patterns	Gold	Ongoing
3 – Implement capital projects to improve safety and comfort along HRN and CAN corridors	Gold	By 2027
4 – Upgrade traffic signal equipment not built to current standards	Gold	Ongoing
5 – Update signal timing practices for right turn on red and left turn phases	Gold	2024
6 – Update <i>Pedestrian Crossing Treatment Installation Guidelines</i> ; document existing marked crosswalk locations that no longer meet the guidelines	Green	2024
7 – Update and implement policies and practices regarding speed limit setting	Green	New practice by 2024; ongoing implementation
8 – Pursue and attract state and federal funding for high cost projects	Green	Ongoing
9 – Study right-turn slip lane design	Gold	Begin study by 2025; evaluation complete by 2027
<b>Pair engineering solutions with education and enforcement</b>		
10 – Identify and enforce unsafe travel behaviors	Green	Ongoing
11 – Strategically deploy photo radar van along high-speed corridors where allowed by state law	Green	Ongoing
12 – Expand the use of red light running cameras at eligible locations	Green	Ongoing
13 – Support legislation to enable expanded photo enforcement	Green	Ongoing
14 – Collaborate with regional partners to implement campaigns focusing on behaviors of concern (e.g. distracted driving)	Gold	Ongoing
15 – Combine countermeasure deployment with accompanying events, such as press releases, ribbon cuttings, etc.	Green	Ongoing
<b>Improve the city's internal Vision Zero practices</b>		
16 – Designate a representative to champion Vision Zero across city departments	Gold	Ongoing
17 – Continue participation in the national Vision Zero Cities Network	Gold	Ongoing

<b>Improve Vision Zero data and transparency</b>		
18 – Maintain and update the crash data dashboard	<b>Green</b>	Ongoing
19 – Continue to refine and improve accuracy in and utility of crash documentation	<b>Gold</b>	Ongoing
20 – Annually summarize progress in delivering the Vision Zero Action Plan	<b>Gold</b>	Ongoing

**Legend:**

**Green** = action on track to be completed or completed

**Gold** = action underway but less than 50 percent completed

**Gray** = action not yet started

The 2024 staff work plan includes focusing on the following key actions (found in the Action Plan document starting on Page 64):

- Speed limit setting and signing framework (Action 7)
- Pedestrian Crossing Treatment Installation Guidelines Update (Action 6)
- Signal Timing Practices Update (Actions 1.A.ii, 1.A.iii, 1.B.ii, 1.C.i, 5)
- Photo Enforcement Expansion (Actions 11, 12, 13)
- Right Turn Slip Lane Signing/Marking Changes (Actions 1.E.i, 1.E.ii)
- Green Conflict Markings along the High Risk Network (Action 1.D.i)
- Traffic Signal Upgrades (Actions 4, 8)

In December 2023, the United States Department of Transportation awarded the city with a monumental \$23 million Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) grant. The city received an approximately \$3.2 million Demonstration grant and an approximately \$19.8 million Implementation grant. These funds will significantly accelerate implementation of key actions to eliminate severe crashes, and further the Core Arterial Network (CAN) initiative. Projects will be in design over 2024-2025 with implementation and construction phases occurring between 2026-2028. The projects funded with the SS4A grant include the following and are shown on **Figure 1** below:



# Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Grant Program

## Project Locations



Figure 1. SS4A Project Locations

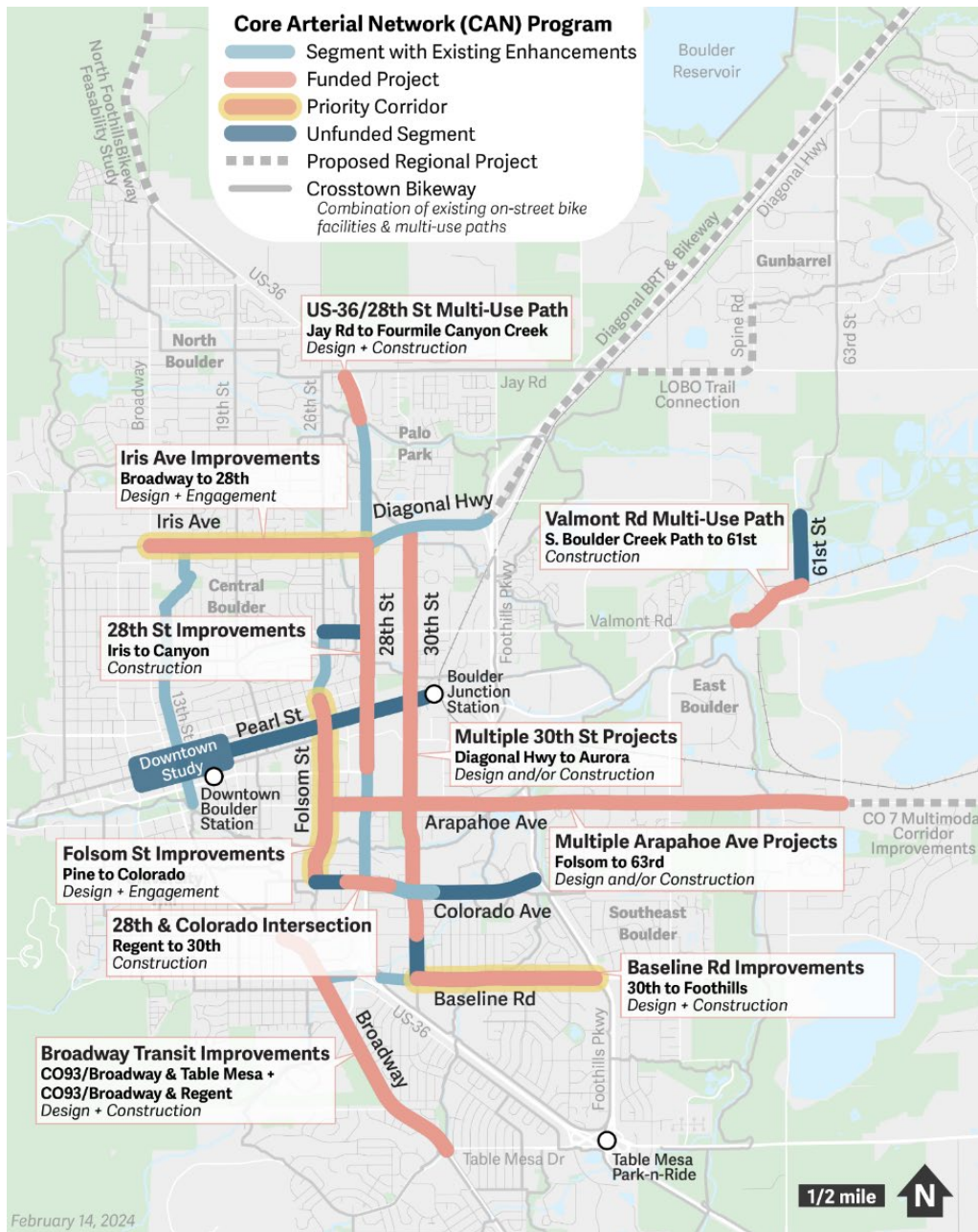
- **Demonstration Grant**
  - Conduct a demonstration to evaluate the safety of various configurations and traffic control options for right turn slip lanes (Action 9).
    - Change 8 locations from wide angle to tighter angle design.
    - Change 8 locations from wide angle design to traffic signal control.

- Implement changes to 16 locations (to configuration shown to maximize safety)
- Evaluation and reporting.
- **Implementation Grant**
  - Enhance nine existing pedestrian crossing treatments (Action 8).
    - Broadway/Union Avenue – static signs to RRFB
    - Broadway/Norwood Avenue – RRFB to pedestrian signal
    - Folsom Street/Newton Court – static signs to RRFB
    - Folsom Street/Taft Drive – static signs to RRFB
    - 28<sup>th</sup> Street south of Iris Avenue – RRFB to pedestrian signal
    - 28<sup>th</sup> Street north of Spruce Street – RRFB to pedestrian signal
    - 30<sup>th</sup> Street south of Spruce Street – RRFB to pedestrian signal
    - 30<sup>th</sup> Street south of Walnut Street – RRFB to pedestrian signal
    - Pearl Street east of Target Access - RRFB to pedestrian signal
  - Construct multimodal and safety improvements along Arapahoe Avenue from Culver Court to 33<sup>rd</sup> Street (Actions 3, 8; CAN corridor).
  - Construct multimodal and safety improvements at the intersection of Arapahoe Avenue and 30<sup>th</sup> Street (Actions 3, 8; CAN corridor).
  - Construct multimodal and safety improvements along 30<sup>th</sup> Street from Pearl Street to Diagonal Highway (Actions 3, 8; CAN corridor)
  - Construct improvements at key HRN intersections, as identified in the Vision Zero Action Plan (Actions 1, 1.F.i).

Other Transportation & Mobility Department items related to Vision Zero presented to council recently include:

- July 20, 2023: [Core Arterial Network \(CAN\) Information Item](#)
- October 5, 2023: [E-Bike Safety Information Item](#)
- November 2, 2023: [Design and Construction Standards Update, 1st Reading](#)
- November 16, 2023: [Design and Construction Standards Update, 2nd Reading](#)
- December 7, 2023: [Photo Enforcement Expansion](#)

In the next two months, key Vision Zero-related work items are also scheduled to come before council. Staff are planning to provide council with an update on the overall collection of corridor projects under the CAN initiative via an Information Item on May 16, 2024 and an update specifically related to the Iris Avenue Transportation Improvement Project, a CAN priority corridor, scheduled on June 6, 2024. Significant progress has been made on the CAN since it was initiated in January 2022. The CAN initiative remains on track with 18 projects on 9 of the 13 CAN corridors having funding or being active in planning, design and/or construction in 2024, as shown on **Figure 2**. Work on CAN corridors is an integral part of achieving Vision Zero since the projects will transform some of Boulder’s busiest arterial streets – where 67% of traffic crashes resulting in serious injury or fatality occur – with enhanced multimodal infrastructure and proven safety countermeasures.



**Figure 2. Core Arterial Network Map – Project and Funding Status**

Another key work plan item is to update the Design and Construction Standards (DCS), beginning in 2025, pending 2025 budget approvals. The effort will be joint between Transportation & Mobility and Planning & Development Services Departments. The update will complete all transportation related section updates of the city's Boulder Revised Code (BRC) and DCS to align with the adopted policy and technical documents, so Boulder's transportation infrastructure (constructed by both private and public projects) is designed and constructed using industry best practices for safety, mobility, sustainability, and/or quality and so that outcomes are more effective, consistent, and



efficient in delivery. The update is anticipated to be complete by mid-2026. Staff are scoping the effort in 2024.

As part of VZAP action item 14, in 2024-2025, staff are also continuing to advance multimodal and micromobility safety and courtesy education campaigns, local to Boulder as well as in partnership with regional agencies including CU Boulder, Boulder County, Boulder Valley School District, and DRCOG. In fall 2023, the city launched an initial safety and courtesy education campaign, called [Share the Path](#), focused around shared micromobility to coincide with the citywide expansion of Lime shared e-scooters. Staff are currently working to advance this initial campaign more broadly with more public communication anticipated later this year.

Vision Zero remains a core tenet of many aspects of the Transportation & Mobility Department work plan. In everything we do, we consider how to advance safety and our community's Vision Zero goals, whether related to how we acquire and enhance the streetlight system, how we upgrade traffic signal system communications and monitoring, or collaborate with CDOT on key corridors, like Arapahoe Ave (CO 7), to name a few examples of 2024 departmental priority work plan items.

## **ANALYSIS**

Staff are presenting an update on progress implementing this operational plan; there is no proposed change to policy or formal council action required. In the future, as work on key projects and actions advances, such as on the Iris Avenue CAN priority corridor, council will be asked to provide feedback and direction on tradeoffs related to various alternatives aimed at advancing Vision Zero.

**2023-2027 Vision Zero Action Plan Status:** Work is underway on all 20 actions contained within the Vision Zero Action Plan. Nine actions slated for 2024 initiation are on track to be completed or have already been completed. Work has been initiated on the remaining eleven items with later timeframes, and all are anticipated to be completed. There are no actions for which work has not yet begun or that are anticipated to be delayed or not completed by 2027. As noted in the Background section of this memorandum, there are also many work plan items not explicitly described or contained within the action plan that also relate to and advance Vision Zero.

**Beyond the current VZAP:** As actions are completed over the next five years, staff will continue to anticipate future equipment and infrastructure enhancements across the transportation system that will best achieve Vision Zero. Specifically, several actions of the 2023-2027 Vision Zero Action Plan focus on updating city guidelines and practices relating to pedestrian crossing treatments, traffic signal timing and phasing, and other key tools. In tandem with these updates, and as envisioned in the VZAP, staff will identify approaches for either programmatically retrofitting or enhancing the transportation system over time in future years according to the outcomes of the updated guidelines and practices as well as identify candidate priority locations. This allows the department to anticipate and be prepared to apply for funding to augment limited local dollars in future

external grant funding cycles, most of which are competitive in nature and not guaranteed.

Additionally, it is likely that the outcomes or work products of several 2023-2027 Vision Zero Action Plan action items will directly lead to efforts that will become actions in the next five-year update to the city's Vision Zero Action Plan, which is currently in its second full update.

**Resource Considerations:** Staff are also mindful, however, that the Transportation & Mobility Department budget is constrained. Every action plan investment and capital project enhancement that is made must be balanced against taking care of existing transportation system assets. Further, each enhancement adds to the ongoing maintenance cost of the transportation system (e.g. as more green conflict markings are installed, more must be maintained annually). With continued inflation experienced on contractor labor and materials, the cost to provide core services and routine maintenance of transportation system assets is also increasing. For this reason, the overall strategy for funding Vision Zero Action Plan items is to focus local dollars on preliminary design, community engagement, and consultant assistance for priority actions. Funding for final design and construction efforts, to realize Council's vision for transformative, capital-intensive outcomes, will be solicited from external grant opportunities, such as was done to achieve the monumental SS4A grant award that will greatly accelerate progress on constructing key action plan priorities.

Additionally, given this resource-constrained condition, funding availability impacts the timeline by which the city makes progress on implementation of the Vision Zero Action Plan. As discussed previously in this memorandum, the premise of the Action Plan is to identify key actions generated from a data-driven and safe system approach and prioritize them in order of which will best address crash severity and the most common severe crash types. In this way, the city makes the most of its limited resources to accelerate progress on our community's Vision Zero goal.

## **NEXT STEPS**

Staff will continue implementing the 2023-27 Vision Zero Action Plan as the department's funding strategy and resources allow. In 2024, staff will continue work on scoping the 2025 update to the city's Design & Construction Standards (DCS). Staff will also continue work on multiple Core Arterial Network (CAN) corridors that will be detailed in full via an Information Item at the May 16, 2024 council meeting. Lastly, staff will continue 2024-2025 work on multimodal and micromobility safety and courtesy education campaigns.

## **ATTACHMENT(S)**

Attachment A – Safe Streets and Roads for All Grant Award Fact Sheet





## Rural

Safe Streets for Boulder: Systemic Safety Countermeasure  
Implementation

Applicant: City of Boulder

Boulder, Colorado

SS4A Award: \$23,032,000

## Project Description

The City of Boulder, Colorado, is awarded funds to address intersection and corridor safety issues for pedestrians and bicyclists. The project focuses on three key problems: pedestrian safety at marked, non-signalized crosswalks, crashes affecting vulnerable road users on priority arterial segments, and severe-injury crashes at 6 key intersections.

To address these issues, the project will implement safety best practices at 22 intersections in the City, including installing leading pedestrian intervals, rectangular rapid-flashing beacons, and protected intersections. Project components also include adding traffic signals and retroreflective backplates, constructing protected bike lanes and bus lanes, completing missing segments of an existing multi-use path, increasing all-red clearance intervals, and prohibiting right turns on red at key intersections. The project includes a demonstration activity to study and address right-turn slip lanes across Boulder.

