Fort Chambers / Poor Farm Project

Engagement Window 4: Input Compendium

Contents:

1. Comments received via project webpage Comment Form
2. Emails and associated attachments received

Comment Form Submissions

An open comment form is available on the Fort Chambers / Poor Farm project webpage for members of the public to submit feedback through at any time. Responses received since Engagement Window 3 (EW3) are found below.

Received August 14th, 2026 Dear People, I asked a few people right after seeing the design, how I could offer my ideas for a revised design. I didn't get any suggestions. So finally I am seeing this small window of comment. I did a drawing of what I thought could be a useful design and hoped it could be reviewed by someone on the design team. I wonder if that is still possible or are you too far down the path? Let me know. Thanks Bonnie Sundance
Received August 8th, 2026 The Cheyenne and Arapahoe should be recognized and respected in every aspect of this project. They should have a prominent seat at the table every step of the way. The truth about Sand Creek, Chivington's role and generally the utterly immoral doctrine of manifest destiny should be exposed at every opportunity. Thank you
Received August 8th, 2026 RE Ft. Chambers: I am in strong support for a reconciliation with the Cheyenne and Arapahoe, et al. This includes bringing about the truth about Chivington's crimes against those at Sand Creek. Please make this a priority at Ft. Chambers. Sincerely, Brenda Love
Received August 3rd, 2026 Dear members of the OSMP committee on the development of the Fort Chambers site, I have been following in the Daily Camera and other sources, the proposed site and memorial structures. It has come to my attention that the end proposal is felt to fall short of a just and

respectful treatment of the indigenous lives that were lost at the Sand Creek Massacre, as well as the lives of their descendants today. As a retired Boulder High School teacher, I am well aware of this history that my students and others in the community were oblivious to, before we discussed it in my US History classes. This remaking of this site is an important opportunity and sacred responsibility for our community to get right. Please reject the current proposal and reengage with the indigenous partners until a satisfactory result has been found for all stakeholders, especially the descendants of those impacted most by the massacre. It is so very important.
Respectfully,
Kathy Blessing

Received March 27th, 2026

I have previously signed up for updates but never get any?
What is the current status?
Is the property open for visiting?
Thanks,
Karl Ford
Longmont

Received May 17th, 2026

My 2nd and 3rd Great Grandfathers Granville Berkley and Sr arrived in Boulder City in 1863 from Berkeley Virginia in 1863. My great great uncle Junius Berkley had understood Boulder was an extremely valuable opportunity to make establish an aristocratic government by involving the wealthy like minded entrepreneurs to take the land granted to the Cheyenne People in the 1861 Treaty of Laramie. Using totally false claims of atrocities and dehumanizing stories, fear of all native Americans spread throughout Denver and Boulder. Cheyenne Chief White Antelope had returned from Washington DC wearing a 3 inch peace medal given to him by Abraham Lincoln for brokering peace with the miners in Boulder with Cheyenne and Arapaho in Boulder. Chief White Antelope was murdered and horribly mutilated at Sand Creek while wearing the Peace Medal. Cheyenne and Arapaho People's were getting along with miners settlers and farmers. Marriage to Cheyenne wemon was common. They were peaceful, talented and helpful with the growing white population. Peaceful coexisting was the philosophy of the Cheyenne and Arapaho People's.
Gov John Evans, US Calvary Colonel John Chivington, both men preachers, Granville Berkely sr, and prominent judge,lawyer and Calvary Captain viewed the Cheyenne and Arapaho as impeding future growth in commerce, land speculation, mining and water rights.
The next step was an order to insist a US Military force. Governor Evans enlisted 100 men, 3rd Calvary Company D Boulder Volunteers, 46 who served in the Sand Creek Massacre. They quickly built a mostly sod fort Called For8 Chamber and began training and maneuvers. With the expert traning of Captain George Laird Shoup artillery practice took place.
Ft Chambers was the jumping off place for the genocide of 230 innocent human beings ordered by the US Military in US history.
The story of denial in my family persisted until late March 2026. My cousin told me my 2nd great grandfather Granville Berkely Jr was on a hill miles away from the massacre until I texted a 1910 photo with Granville with a Medal of a cannon on his chest. There are no hills anywhere near near Sand Creek.
Speaking as a soldiers descendant we will be funding Ft Chambers with Open Space and Mountain Parks. We want everyone to know what really happened and why.
Robert Batchelder

***Some comments submitted contain the same content received by the project team via email. These responses are available in the following section.*

Email Compendium

Below are emails and email attachment content received by the project team since Engagement Window 3 (EW3).

Received September 11th, 2026
Dear Kacey and Dan,

My name is Gabrielle Olson. As a PhD student at the University of Colorado Boulder, I am proud to call myself a resident of Boulder County. One of the reasons I decided to attend CU was the awe-inspiring beauty of the mountains and the extensive trail network. I love hiking and walking along the Open Space trails.

I am writing with deep concerns to urge you to make changes to the current Fort Chambers interpretive design.

Given the historical significance of this site and its ties to the Sand Creek Massacre, it is important that we tell this story in a way that is both accurate and helps lead the way to a better future. As it stands, the site design is quite concerning and continues the harm that has been done to Native peoples for centuries by dehumanizing them and excusing settler actions.

I am most concerned about the following aspects of the design and encourage changes:

- The design begins with settler arrival, ignoring Indigenous presence on the land for 13,000 years. The design should begin with Indigenous presence to celebrate this history.

- Currently, the design centers settler fears. The Design's message is that the Boulder settlers were afraid of Indian attacks, their fears were manipulated by leaders who were acting in their own political interests, and their fears led them to commit acts of violence against Arapaho and Cheyenne people at a peace camp. The design should name the violence for what it was, not excuse it through emphasizing the motivation.

- Most importantly, the design provides a romanticized ending. In the Design, visitors return to the parking lot viewing "artistic" representation of decreasing Settler dominance in the Boulder Valley and increasing Native presence and influence. This is a fantasy intended to make people feel that all is well. Instead, visitors should leave with challenging questions: What have been the outcomes of Fort Chambers and Sand Creek for the Arapaho and Cheyenne? What have been the outcomes for the people of Boulder? How do we feel about the disparities? What would it mean to build relationships with the Arapaho and Cheyenne based on truth, respect, and justice?

I believe that the City's Open Space and Mountain Parks department will stand for historical accuracy and respectful depiction of tribal nations, to increase trust with Native peoples.

So, **I urge you to take action** and make the above changes to the highly problematic design.

Thank you for your time and future leadership on this,

Sincerely,
Gabrielle Olson

Received September 8th, 2026

Dear Open Space Staff,

My name is Cathryn Rudmann and I have been a resident of Boulder County for 10 years. I am an educator, historian and supporter of the accurate telling of history at many of the parks in Boulder and surrounding communities. **I am writing with deep concerns to urge you to make changes to the current Fort Chambers interpretive design.**

Highlighting Problems:

- Opening: Given the historical significance of this site and its ties to the Sand Creek Massacre, it is important that we tell this story in a way that is both accurate and helps lead the way to a better future. As it stands, the site design is quite concerning and continues the harm that has been done to Native peoples for centuries by dehumanizing them and excusing settler actions.
- I am most concerned about the following aspects of the design and encourage changes:
    - **Begins with settler arrival, ignoring Indigenous presence** on the land for 13,000 years. The design should begin with Indigenous presence to celebrate this history.
    - **Problematic representation:** The Arapaho and Cheyenne people are "artistically" represented in demeaning ways. The design should represent these peoples as the fully complex humans that they are.
    - **Centers settler fears:** The Design's message is that the Boulder settlers were afraid of Indian attacks, their fears were manipulated by leaders who were acting in their own political interests, and their fears led them to commit acts of violence against Arapaho and Cheyenne people at a peace camp. The design should name the violence for what it was, not excuse it through emphasizing the motivation.
    - **Falsely equates settler and Indigenous stories**. The Design presents two parallel stories -- the Native people and the Settlers -- as if these were moral equivalents. Instead, the Design should make clear that the Fort Chambers site is about Boulder men who trained as "Indian fighters" and set out to murder innocent Arapaho and Cheyenne people.
    - **Historically inaccurate:** The Design depicts a gradual increase in Settler population and corresponding decrease in Native population. In fact, 100,000 settlers illegally invaded Arapaho and Cheyenne treaty lands in one summer, and Chief Nawath led his people out of the Boulder Valley to avoid conflict.
    - **Where is the fort?** This is the site of Fort Chambers, but there is no representation of the fort in the design. The official Arapaho representative, Fred Mosqueda, suggests having visitors walk through a reconstructed gate of the fort (with sod walls on both sides), making the fort "real." Implement Fred Mosqueda's suggestion for visitors to walk through the gate of the fort, experiencing the fort's historical reality.
    - **Romanticized ending:** In the Design, visitors return to the parking lot viewing "artistic" representation of decreasing Settler dominance in the Boulder Valley and increasing Native presence and influence. This is a fantasy intended to make people feel that all is well. Instead, visitors should leave with challenging questions: What have been the outcomes of Fort Chambers and Sand Creek for the Arapaho and Cheyenne? What have been the outcomes for the people of Boulder? How do we feel about the disparities? What would it mean to build

relationships with the Arapaho and Cheyenne based on truth, respect, and justice?

Call to action:

- I believe that the City's Open Space and Mountain Parks department will stand for historical accuracy and respectful depiction of tribal nations, to increase trust with Native peoples.
- So, I urge you to take action and make the above changes to the highly problematic design.

Thank you for your future leadership on this,
Sincerely,
Cathryn Rudmann

Received August 3rd, 2026

I have lived in Boulder since 1978 and have lived with Native Americans around Taos, New Mexico, Carlin, Nevada, all over Mexico and in Guatemala. I have participated in many of their sweat lodges and five of their peyote meetings.

The motive for the Sand Creek Massacre in the proposed memorial is repeatedly said to be "fear" of the natives. This is extremely offensive for several reasons:

1. It was almost exclusively women children and old men who were massacred, none being a threat to the arned men who killed them.

2. The more general fear of settlers for the natives is the same fear of any colonial occupiers of those they have dispossessed. It is a secondary motive. The primary motive was greed, for land, gold, water, etc.

3. Chief Niwot and the other Chiefs were repeatedly told that their people would be safe at Sand Creek. The motive for this entrapment is hardly fear. It is to cause terror in the natives generally.

You've already heard all the numerous objections that natives and locals have to the particulars of this extravaganza. To me it's a way of spending lots of money to expiate guilt, without taking responsibility for what happened.

I want to suggest that the city simply put next the 1959 memorial stone a new one saying something like:

"Here , Company D planned the 1864 Sand Creek Massacre in which between 150 and 230 Cheyenne and Arapahoe women, children and elders were killed after being promised protection there, as part of a program of extermination which also included the Buffalo Springs Massacre."

Mark the stones Old and New.

I suggest giving the tribes the rest of the money budgeted for this to do whatever they want at Fort Chambers.

I wonder if this gross misrepresentation is part of the city of Boulder's new love and justification for war, due to the fast-increasing prominence of our war industries, including BAE which according to the Daily Camera made parts of the "Tomahawk" (also offensive to natives) missile which killed some 170 kids at the Minab school on the first day of the war on Iran. This is also indicated by the City's refusal for almost 3 years to divest from companies that profit from Israel's genocide, including Caterpillar whose bulldozers are being used right now to destroy homes all around our sister city of Nablus, where two mosques were also firebombed just last week. Some sister we are, profiting from destroying our sister city.

There are excellent reasons that virtually all Native Americans have supported Palestine against Israel's ruthless takeover for many decades.

Sincerely,
Evan

Evan Ravitz, Founder
Strengthen Direct Democracy
fb://group/309502612936293
We started the country's only ONLINE initiative petitioning: petitions.bouldercolorado.gov
EvanRavitz.com

Received July 17th, 2026

Dear Dan,
I have know about Paula Palmer's work with Right Relationship for many years. I was dismayed to read the Op-Ed she and Jerilyn DeCoteau wrote detailing the falsehoods and disrespectful portrayal of Native people proposed for the trail.
I urge you to use this opportunity to take the suggestions from Paula and Jerilyn to make the trail to tell a more historically accurate and truthful story about what happened in this area and at Fort Chambers.

Kate Readio
5493 Olde Stage Rd
Boulder CO 80302

Received July 16th, 2026

Dan Burke, I write in response to the Guest Opinion in the Boulder Camera about the Interpretive Trail at the site of Fort Chambers. I find the concerns of Right Relationship Boulder to be compelling and hope that you are able to address each of the points raised. What input has been received from historians, knowledgeable groups in addition to Right Relationship Boulder, and current Boulder natives?

Clearly, this project represents a valuable opportunity to provide an authentic history of great interest to visitors and residents of the Boulder area. It's important to get it right. Right includes sensitivity, respect, and factual accuracy. It seems that the plans need some adjustment. Thank you. Lyn Gullette

Lyn Gullette
303-926-7300
she, her, hers

Received July 14th, 2026
Hi Dan,

My name is Lily Zweig and I am a Boulder resident.

I care deeply about the City of Boulder's exhibit at Fort Chambers portraying a just, honest, truthful history of the site, informed by the impact of settler colonialism and violence on the local Arapaho and Cheyenne communities.

As someone with white settler ancestors, a former educator, and current mental health counselor in training, I know that an exhibit that makes visitors contemplate their role in history and modern times is moving, ethical, beautiful, and meaningful, and helps our society move toward greater understanding of the past while healing our future together.

I advocate for the city of Boulder to follow the advice of Right Relationship Boulder, a non-profit in Boulder that works to repair the relationship between the descendants of local tribes and current Boulder residents in designing the exhibit at Fort Chambers.
Please read this article by Jerilyn DeCoteau and Paula Palmer, co-founders of Right Relationship Boulder and follow their advice.

[link to Right Relationship Boulder article]
Sincerely,

Lily Zweig

Received July 14th, 2026
Today, I saw in the Daily Camera the Guest Editorial that Jerilyn DeCoteau and Paula Palmer wrote. I hope you will take Jerilyn DeCoteau and Paula Palmer's advice on the history of Fort Chambers seriously. It is important that we have accurate information on the history of our area. In the past, we have forgotten about the Native American community and their importance to Boulder and the County. I don't think we want to make that mistake again. Jerilyn and Paula have given very specific information about Fort Chambers and I hope you will use that to update your interactive trail.

I am sure the staff did their best research to have the history correct. Now that you have heard from two experts in the field, I expect you will revise your interactive trail information.

Thank you,
Janet Heimer

Received July 14th, 2026
Hello, Mr. Burke,

No doubt you have read the guest opinion in today's Daily Camera.

If the comments from Ms. DeCoteau and Ms. Palmer are historically correct, I urge you to scrap your signage for the interpretive trail at the site of Fort Chambers and work with Native people and the Right Relationship Boulder people to make the signage historically correct.

Thank you.

Andria Bronsten
Boulder, CO

Received July 8th, 2026

Dear Kasey French and Dan Burke, I have been a resident of Boulder County for 30 years and have always appreciated and enjoyed the use of county open space. I am also a member of a local church ministry which includes Indigenous justice work. Currently, I am part of a team preparing a resolution for the Colorado Episcopal Church to begin the long process of repair by repudiating the Doctrine of Discovery-the Europeans' legal and moral framework for justifying the denial of human rights to Indians, to claim "ultimate dominion" and to claim title to land in the Americas. I am aware that the City of Boulder Parks and Open Space has been planning and visioning for the Fort Chambers/Poor Farm property. Given its historical significance as the training grounds for the massacre at Sand Creek, it is important that the story is told with the utmost honesty and moral integrity. I am grateful for the work the City of Boulder has done to build relationships with the Tribal Nations as well as the work of Living Heritage Anthropology, LLC in sharing Indigenous histories and presence through the Ethnographic Education Report. My hope would be that both of these efforts would influence the creation of the interpretive design for the Fort Chambers/Poor Farm property. Through honest storytelling and reckoning with history, there is potential for new and repaired relationships with Indigenous and Tribal People as well as formation of equitable, fair and just practices, programs and policies. Through my active justice work, I am constantly reminded that I cannot see past my own cultural biases and blindspots. As a European-descended (white), upper middle class woman, who identifies as Christian, with a "Western" worldview and its supporting values, I interpret the world in a radically different way from Indigenous worldviews, values and life ways. Truly, two different worldviews collided over 500 years ago and remain, even today, in tension but in many ways, in opposition to one another. While the proposed Studio Tectonic interpretive design raises more questions and concerns than can be fully detailed in this letter, it is clear to me that the plan requires more scrutiny regarding land use, memory and narrative. Prior to advancing this project in its current form, and to move past colonial frameworks, I request that Open Space and Mountain Parks staff and its trustees to explicitly answer the following: To what extent has City of Boulder Parks and Open Space moved beyond mere consultation and allowed the Cheyenne and Arapaho People to truly drive the decision-making process for this use of land? Will the dominant narratives including justification for unjust systems be perpetuated if Indigenous perspectives are not centered in the storytelling? How can any policy, practice or project be developed and implemented with true justice in mind if repair of relationship with the Arapaho and Cheyenne People is not the foundational goal? Does the project aim to restore justice and right relationship with Indigenous nations and if so, what does repair concretely look like-and crucially, who determines what is just? I urge City of Boulder Parks and Open Space together with the Tribal Nations to choose a path that includes creating space to understand our history that is honest, equitable and just for all of Boulder's people, land and all its relatives. Respectfully submitted, Suzanne De La Paz

Received July 8th, 2026

Truth Without Justice Is Not Reconciliation

Growing up in Boulder in the 90s, I attended Chief Niwot Camp. I drove on Arapahoe Avenue. Colonised Indigenous names were woven throughout the landscape of my childhood and into the identity of the city I loved.

Yet I never met an Arapaho or Cheyenne person living in Boulder.

As a child, I never thought to ask why.

Today I understand that absence is not incidental. It is one of the clearest legacies of the history Fort Chambers asks us to remember.

I write as someone born and raised in Boulder, as a descendant of the Chickasaw Nation of Oklahoma, as a descendant of U.S. presidents whose policies and military campaigns contributed to the displacement and massacre of Indigenous peoples, including the Pawnee and Shawnee, and as someone who served on the Fort Chambers/Sand Creek Remembrance Planning Circle from 2020-2022 alongside Arapaho & Cheyenne descendants of the Sand Creek Massacre and other community members.

I also write as someone whose understanding of Boulder has been fundamentally transformed. In 2019, I travelled to Oklahoma to reconnect with my Chickasaw ancestry after generations of displacement and disconnection through colonization. During that journey, I unexpectedly met Cheyenne Peace Chief and artist Gordon Yellowman, a descendant of Sand Creek survivors. Gordon welcomed me into his home and shared his family's history, his artwork, and his vision for healing. That encounter changed the way I understood both Colorado's history and my own responsibility within it.

When I returned to Boulder, I became involved with Right Relationship Boulder and later joined the Remembrance Planning Circle. Alongside Arapaho elder Fred Mosqueda, Chester Whiteman, Gordon Yellowman, descendants, local pastors, and community members, I helped organize the public remembrance memorial titled *Re-membering 1864: From Fort Chambers to Sand Creek.. The future is NOW,* which was video documented and is available as an archival film on YouTube. We co-created that gathering and film to preserve testimony—to ensure that the voices of descendants became part of Boulder's living memory rather than another chapter forgotten. Although I now live in Australia, those relationships continue. They remind me that remembrance is not an event. It is an ongoing responsibility.

I endorse the detailed submissions provided by Right Relationship Boulder and Iayana Rael. Rather than repeating their thoughtful recommendations regarding the concept design, I want to address what I believe is the larger question before the City:

What is the purpose of a Site of Conscience?

If the purpose is Truth, Justice, and Reconciliation, then accurate interpretation alone is not enough.

My concern is not only with the design itself. It is with the disproportionate attention and public investment being devoted to interpreting Fort Chambers—a site where settlers and militia organized and trained for violence against Indigenous people—while the longstanding calls from Arapaho and Cheyenne leaders for meaningful forms of repair, including Land Back, remain largely unaddressed.

This imbalance asks us to consider whether Boulder is more comfortable interpreting the past than repairing it in the present.

The design also risks centering invader fear as the primary explanation for the violence that followed, rather than addressing the illegal occupation of treaty lands, the invasion of Arapaho and Cheyenne homelands, the betrayal of Native leaders, the ideology of Manifest Destiny and white supremacy, land speculation, military expansion, and deliberate policies of removal and assimilation.

Fort Chambers did not emerge in isolation. It emerged as part of a larger colonial project. Equally important, the interpretation must more fully center the experience of the Arapaho and Cheyenne: their cultural connection and strength, and the subsequent loss of a homeland, language, ceremony, food systems, kinship, freedom, and the places where generations of their ancestors had lived in relationship with the land.

These are not parallel stories. They are not morally equivalent.

One of the deepest transformations in my own life has come through reconnecting with my Chickasaw ancestry and my own process of decolonising. This journey has required confronting the grief and disconnection colonization created within my own family and ancestral lands and waters while rediscovering the profound sense of belonging that comes from reconnecting with blood memory and ancestral lands and waters.

Alongside this personal journey, and through my work with We-Al-Li, a sovereign Aboriginal-led organisation in Australia facilitating culturally grounded, trauma-integrated programs, I have continued learning something I was never taught growing up in Boulder:

Land & water is not simply property.
Land & water is relationship.
Land & water is ancestor.
Land & water is teacher.
Land & water is relative.
Land & water is family.

When people are separated from their ancestral lands & waters, what is lost is not merely property. Language, ceremony, ecological knowledge, identity, reciprocal responsibilities, and cultural lifeways are disrupted. These losses do not remain in the past. They continue across generations into the present. We get to decide whether we want a different future.

This is why Land Back matters.

Throughout my time on the Remembrance Planning Circle, and in conversations that have continued since, I have repeatedly heard Arapaho and Cheyenne leaders speak about Land Back—not as charity or symbolism, but as justice and the restoration of relationship.

The Fort Chambers site itself cannot accomplish Land Back. That would be deeply inappropriate and offensive.

But it should help Boulder residents understand why Land Back is central to justice and responsibility.

Memorials do not return land.
Memorials do not restore languages.
Memorials do not bring displaced people home.

People and institutions do those things through the choices and actions they take.

A memorial may help us remember. It may help us tell the truth. But unless that truth changes how the City of Boulder relates to the descendants of those it displaced—and to the lands from which they were removed—this project risks becoming another symbolic gesture that allows us to feel reconciled without changing the conditions that continue today.

The irony of my own childhood still sits heavily with me. We celebrated Chief Niwot. We drove on Arapahoe Avenue. Yet I grew up without ever meeting an Arapaho person living in Boulder. That should be unimaginable. Instead, it became normalised.

The absence of Arapaho, Cheyenne and all other Tribal nations with ancestral connections to Colorado is not an accident of history. It is one of the enduring consequences of that history. If Fort Chambers is to function as a true Site of Conscience, it should ask visitors not only what happened here, but why Indigenous people remain largely absent from the city that continues to benefit from their dispossession—and what responsibility that places upon all of us today.

Next week I will return to Boulder with my colleague Mitch King, a Bundjalung man from Australia, to participate in the SomaSource Institute at Golden Bridge, where artists and changemakers from around the world will gather to explore how movement and creativity can help build bridges across histories of violence and division. We have been working to invite an Arapaho elder and direct descendant of Chief Nawath (Left Hand) to be present and welcome us onto this land

because I do not want our international guests to inherit the incomplete origin story that I inherited growing up.
I want them to encounter a Boulder willing to tell the whole truth.
Fort Chambers should not become the place where Boulder tells itself it has done enough. It should become the place that asks us to listen deeply to Indigenous peoples, the land and each other and ask and respond to what justice requires next.
Until Boulder is prepared to move beyond interpretation, memorialization and engage seriously with Land Back, Indigenous leadership, and the restoration of right relationship with the Arapaho and Cheyenne, it cannot honestly claim to be pursuing reconciliation as a site of conscience.
Respectfully,
Tess Eckert

Received July 5th, 2026
"Hello, Please excuse the lateness of this comment submission. I did not hear of this issue until RRB's urgent meeting at the Museum, perhaps because CIP's former email address was inaccessible. These comments are what i could pull together quickly; more will follow."

"*on a loom, as threads disentangle, they become tangled again*"

Some things I have heard/ questions:
a) When the City asked the Tribal reps to talks about Fort Chambers, the reps said their priority was land back: good healthy land they could work and live on. People gathered to kill their ancestors at Fort Chambers; they don't want to be there. The reps finally stopped asking for land as their pleas were ignored. CIP (Culture In Place) ran around the mountains posting the priority for land back prior to or at least simultaneous with Fort Chambers planning. Kacie French told me OSMP knew of the need for conversations about land back; i said i mean *land being given back*, not conversations. What land has the city given back?

b) Fred Mosqueda, whom I call "Mr. Creativity" since working together on *Re-membering 1864…from Fort Chambers to Sand Creek: the Future is NOW* at the Dairy, proposed that audiences enter the FC site through an arch simulating the old fort, experiencing the fort viscerally. This great proposal has been ignored by OSMP and Studio Tectonic.

c) A primary premise at a site of conscience is that all parties listen to one another. Presumably a concept plan would reflect that listening? For years OSMP has selectively listened to the people they must keep at the table to qualify as a Site of Conscience. Does the City want to *stand out*, without quite standing *in* - simple historical fact?

Some observations/questions:
The Tribes have been taking responsibility for their own healing for years at the actual site of the Sand Creek Massacre, in an annual healing run, and more. Are Tribal people being subtly asked to help heal perpetrator-descendants? Are settler folk transforming their own awareness before asking permission from descendants of the Sand Creek Massacre to speak on their behalf? Why are settler folk urging North American Indigenous presence on land they don't want?

For Chambers is a site for revelation and confrontation of fact. This was established in a community meeting in 2024 when Rick Williams (Lakota-Cheyenne) proposed naming the so-called "healing trail" Trail of Truth. The City and Concept Plan ignore this community consensus.

Contrary to what the plan says, there is no parallel comparison between the parties in this story. The implication of parallel experience is an insult to thought and to Cheyenne and Arapaho history and people.

The text claims/seeks "open-endedness", "avoiding speculation, narrative inflation or prescriptive moral framing" (p.2), "does not prescribe conclusions" (p. 4) yet aims to control audience viewpoint/lens by naming "fear" as the "cause" of outcome. This is 'wrong story'* as they say in Australia. Fear is a universal human emotion, distinct from action. Fear does not control what humans DO. Fear does not lead to or explain killing, murdering, cutting up babies, children, adults, elders, bragging about and cheering for this. These acts were **choices; decisions** on how to deal/'treat with', one's own fear - fear of retaliation by people one has wronged: project it outward knowing what you would do if positions were reversed. Some people - such as Cramer, Soule, Wynkoop and their men, Hardin, Major Waller and more, Cheyenne and Arapaho Chiefs Black Kettle, White Antelope, Nawath, Little Raven, and many Tribal members - exercised the human choice to make and keep peace. This was courage - a word, a human option, absent from the text.

Presenting historical acts as facts is not sensationalizing them. We sensationalize facts through *interpretive choice*. Fort Chambers is not a place for attempted intellectual *rationalizing*.

"the place is central not because the fort endured, but because the ideas that built it did." No. Wrong story. The fact that these ideas endured is a fact that does not describe the relevance of the fort. The fort is central because it is a place people mobilized to kill other people, families, instead of asking to live together sharing land and resources justly. I.e the fort represents the founding of Boulder.

"Layered histories" is inappropriate. Audience needs a clear linear presentation of events relevant to Fort Chambers in 1864 so they can think reflect and make future choices clearly.

"Contested memories" Who contests the facts of the fort and the massacre? Who contests what memories? Are white settler historians contesting historical events?

Invader-descendants veiled their founding history and now, rather than face it clearly and head on, appear to be fetishizing history in a concept plan founded in abstractions like "complexity", a rigorous scientific term they don't actually understand.

Ethics: i.e. what people DO, is the crux. How do we become adults caring for humanity and the Earth as one, the Earth as ourselves? Tinkering with our extant civilization will not do it; A re-rooting of the soil of humanity - A re-rooting of humanity in the earth - will do it. Transforming ourselves and our society into wholistic relational organisms will do it. The Earth loves mutually interacting with humans. How to tend ourselves through learning true self-reflection, internal and external discernment leading to conscious mature adult decision-making...this is what the ground at Fort Chambers could nurture if we nurture her. This is how the ground at Fort Chambers could help humans transform into beings capable of constructing desirable Futures that include memories of our past as reminders of what to stop doing.

I endorse the RRB letter signed by Jerilyn DeCoteau, Marrton Dormish, Tim Harmos, Paula Palmer and Laurie Rugenstein. And just add that friends who lived in the valley in the 70's tell me

there was a thriving North American Indigenous community of entrepreneurs, business people, artists, law professionals and more in the valley then. Why did they leave? What might bring them back?

One thing we must stop doing now is pushing the Tectonic Concept Plan any further. We must step back and accomplish some land back.

Then, we must start a new design process with community people, not paid professionals. We need to test ourselves to find out if we can do this in a good way. If the outside world wants, they will turn up at some point.

Some things in the Tectonic plan are good to keep, such as environmental elements. Time demands my writing about this in another commentary.

Thanks so much for your attention.
Iayana T Rael

Received July 2nd, 2026

Dear Boulder Open Space and Mountain Parks Department,

I am a resident of Boulder. I write to you to encourage the inclusion too ribal representation in the decision-making process regarding the proposed Fort Chambers memorial site.

The current design reinforces a version of history that whitewashes the actual actions of the calvary at Fort Chambers and the massacre they committed at Sand Creek. The only way to heal the horrors of the past is to acknowledge them, grieve them and begin making repairs. Much has been brushed under the rug in American and Colorado history. Boulder needs to take a strong step forward and stand on the solid ground of the truth.

Any memorial at Fort Chambers needs to acknowledge the thousands of years of Native presence in Boulder Valley. It must clearly state the truth of the Sand Creek massacre.

Thank you,
Avara Yaron

Received July 2nd, 2026

Dear Open Space Board of Trustees/City Council staff members,

Thank you for the work you are doing on the Fort Chambers site and your effort to tell a more accurate view of the history of the region and to bring to light the full history of our state. I have been a Colorado resident for over 30 years. I have visited Sand Creek twice. As an anthropologist and educator, I am very invested in the way we tell stories and how we preserve them for future generations. I am also a descendant of Bois Forte Chippewa (Nett Lake Ojibwe band) on my fathers side. Although our people were not part of this landscape, it is still important to me to learn from about other indigenous people who did (and still do) live here. Being able to see both sides of my heritage represented accurately is very significant to me. I imagine this is the case for the people who are ancestral to this place.

However, there are a few areas that the local people have pointed out that I agree need to be addressed before this site might be considered truly representative. For example,

1. The Arapaho and Cheyenne people are "artistically" represented in demeaning ways. The design should represent these peoples as the fully complex humans that they are.
2. The Design presents two parallel stories -- the Native people and the Settlers -- as if these were moral equivalents. Fort Chambers as well as many other forts in the region were created to stop the local indigenous people from defending their own homelands and rightfully protect their own treaty rights, as granted to them, by whatever means necessary. Rather than honorably protect their word and the rights of the native people, the U.S. government and their civilian militias chose to starve and massacre the native populace instead. This is the historical truth and needs to be understood fully and reckoned with.

There are a few other areas where they have indicated there are issues that do not feel authenticate to who they are or who their ancestors were. It is imperative to heal from this past trauma and address the ugliness of our own history, that we are doubly mindful and careful with how we present indigenous people and our relationship to them.

Thank you for your time and attention,
H.Claire. Kopp

Received May 27th, 2026
Introduction: The Truth and why the Fort Chambers plan is unacceptable to the Northern Cheyenne and Northern Arapaho.

Two years ago, the Truth Restoration and Education Commission Report was released to the public. On numerous occasions, there have been public discussions about the TREC report and its **recommendations**. The continuing failure of the officials in Boulder County to recognize the Truth is insulting. They have, from the beginning, chosen to work with the Southern Cheyenne and Southern Arapaho, who did not legally own the land. READ the Fort Wise Treaty of 1861, it was made with the Cheyenne and Arapaho of the Upper Arkansas River, not with the owners of the land, the Northern Cheyenne and Northern Arapaho, who NEVER signed a treaty giving up the land.

It is time to stop the misinformation and establish a legitimate process to address the land theft issue.
Please read the attached document. In the two years since the introduction of the TREC commission report, NOT a single person has challenged its facts. Instead, the report has received awards for its contribution to the Truth about Colorado's history.

Please read the attached document to understand the issue of doing something with land that was never ceded to the Federal Government legally. There is NO Treaty with the Northern Cheyenne and Northern Arapaho that ceded the land to the government and there has never been a payment for the land.
Rick

Richard B. Williams
People of the Sacred Land
President

Email attachment content

Attachment contained 24-page "Summary Of the Land Taken From the Northern Cheyenne and Northern Arapahoe Without A Treaty" from People of the Sacred Land.

Received May 22nd, 2026

Hello,

I am attaching a letter concerning the Ft. Chambers project for your consideration.

Best regards, and I am happy to answer any questions you might have,

Andrew Cowell
Director, Center for Native American and Indigenous Studies
Professor, Linguistics
University of Colorado

Email attachment content

I am currently the Director of CU's Center for Native American and Indigenous Studies (CNAIS). I'm also a professor of linguistics, and have worked extensively with the Northern and Southern Arapaho Tribes, and also have relationships with Northern and Southern Cheyenne tribal members. I am taking this opportunity to share some thoughts on the proposed Ft. Chambers installation, beyond the narrower responses that can be provided through the survey that is open through May 17. I did fill out that survey, but doing so inspired me to write some further comments.

First of all, I would like to thank OSMP for pursuing this project. I think it is an important effort on behalf of the people of Boulder County. Also I would like to thank you for providing an opportunity for individuals to respond via the survey. And of course thanks to all who have contributed to the proposed designs. Any project of this sort is bound to be complex, time-consuming, and fraught with many challenges.

My main purpose for writing is to raise certain concerns -- or in other cases, queries -- about aspects of the project. The first one regards the use of the sticks and sod to represent Native Americans and settlers, and also the way in which the exhibit presents linear declines and inclines of these respectively, in the first portion, and then reverses these directionalities in the second section. I want to acknowledge that I don't know the full thoughts of the artists or designers involved, and these thoughts might be shared more fully within the exhibit, in ways which would alter my understanding and reaction. But based on what I know now, the design seems to represent a false narrative of Native recuperation in Boulder County. The initial linear rises and falls of the sod and sticks admittedly captures a historical reality to some extent, but it seems to me to "naturalize" the process of settlement as inexorable, irresistible and inevitable – and thus just "a process that happened, or happens," in a mechanistic fashion. Then at the end of the exhibit, the process reverses. This is supposed to represent a rising consciousness of Native history and issues, roughly speaking. But the two metaphors on each end are not equivalent: if the rising sod represents rising Euro-American presence, wouldn't the falling sod logically represent a subsequent decline of presence again? But that is certainly not the case actually, and the rising sticks seem to me to convey a false sense of robust Native return and recuperation, which ignores the reality of continuing inequality, disadvantage and exclusion related to Native nations in the area.

I would add that the use of sticks also seems problematic. From the plans, these represent tepee poles. But they aren't obviously tepee poles, they're just sticks, right? While the sod clearly represents the agency of "sod-busters," the sticks or wood don't clearly capture the agency involved in carving them into tepee poles. While the sod captures the *agency* and *results* of the sod-busters, the broken(?) sticks represent the Native peoples *themselves*, and their work on the environment, as primitive and fragile.

Again, I want to stress that I don't have access to all the discussions and thoughts that have gone into this project, and I could be lacking important information that would alter my interpretation of the installation. I don't doubt the seriousness and good intentions of those involved. But based just on what I saw in the survey, this is my reaction as a scholar deeply involved in Indigenous Studies.

A potential concern – or at least a query – involves the competing voices that will be presented. The survey doesn't provide details on these. But I wonder how these voices will be contextualized? Does the installation intend to suggest that Natives had one set of views, settlers other sets of views? This would be what I would call a "neutral" view of the confrontation. Or does it intend to take a stand and suggest that the events subsequent to and connected with Ft. Chambers (Sand Creek) were wrong and condemnable – which I think was clearly the case, and which was stated even at the time in hearings and so forth? If the latter is the approach, then reading settler voices advocating harsh treatment, removal and even genocide in relation to Native Americans doesn't seem like a productive way to make that case. If such views were included, they would need to be very carefully framed and contextualized, in order to avoid a simplistic "two sides, difficult issues" kind of approach. So I urge careful consideration of how this framing of voices of the time is done.

Related to the end section of the installation, several proposed designs were presented, ranging from stones to rusting metal. These were suggested to evoke various concepts, from medicine wheel circles to the passage of time, showed via the rust on the metal. All of the designs seemed quite lugubrious to me, and not very representative of some kind of redemptive Native presence. They seemed to suggest ruins, cemeteries, abandoned industrial sites and so forth. I understand the idea that they represent the passage of time, but this leads me back to my initial concern: by focusing on distance in time, it suggests the events of Ft. Chambers and Sand Creek are now in the past and far removed from us. Yet the harms produced by Native expulsion are very real and very ongoing, as the CU Boulder Land Acknowledgement makes clear (**[link to CU Boulder Land Acknowledgment]**).

That Acknowledgement also makes clear that non-Natives have an ethical responsibility to not only recognize the ongoing harms, but to act to mitigate them. The installation on the other hand seems to me to diminish the *ongoing* nature of the harms, and to claim that mitigation has *already* occurred (as the sticks increase in number again). Thus rather than being an installation that encourages redemptive action and consciousness, it risks leading merely to a sense of false forgiveness which removes the onus of mitigation from present viewers.

I hope this letter is useful feedback. At a minimum, it provides you with an example of one possible "reading" or response to the installation – and likely not one

which you want to nurture. Again at a minimum, I suggest that some very careful (re)framing of the installation would need to be done to guide visitor experience toward the most productive outcomes. More radically, it is perhaps necessary to fundamentally revisit aspects of the installation. Of course mine is just one, non-Native voice. I would hope that OSMP has sought broad feedback from the local Native community – and of course they may have different perspective from mine.

Best regards, and thank you for considering my thoughts,

Andrew Cowell
Director, Center for Native American and Indigenous Studies
CU-Boulder

Received May 19th, 2026

Dear Kacey, Dan and David,

I hope you will accept and read my letter with comments (more than I was able to put in the survey) on the Fort Chambers Project plan. As you will see I spent considerable time on it. I know you will hear the frustration in my comments, as Hayley most certainly did when Paula and I talked with her in person a couple of weeks ago.

I hope you will take my comments in the spirit intended of being supportive, but very concerned about the proposal's tone and message and about what is omitted.
At the end of my letter, I suggest a meeting with RRB, and OSMP and consultants, including Richard Williams, Karen Wilde and possibly others.
I hope this can happen.

Respectfully submitted,

Jerilyn DeCoteau

Email attachment content

Subject: The Fort Chambers Design proposal.

I am writing to OSMP to comment on the Fort Chambers Design Proposal as a longtime resident of Boulder and Eldorado Springs, a member of Right Relationship Boulder, a tribal member (Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa) and an Indian law lawyer who is fully immersed in Indian law, history and policy.

To begin, I wish to acknowledge and thank OSMP staff for their work, their research, their leadership on this project and their generosity in the time they have spent talking with RRB and other members of the community. I appreciate the time and resources that have gone into telling this important part of Boulder's history and on-going story through the proposed project. I see your commitment to making this an impactful project.

I know that OSMP engaged regularly with representatives from the Arapaho and Cheyenne Tribes. Representatives from these tribes have repeatedly said this is Boulder's story to tell. I am writing here, not to contradict any input by tribal representatives, but as a community member, a tribal member, and a lawyer steeped in Indian law, history and policy.

So you know a bit more about me as a commenter, I will share a bit about myself.

I was born on my reservation, where I lived a good portion of my life. I graduated from Turtle Mountain Community School and, after college, returned to help found Turtle Mountain Community College, where I worked for seven years before leaving to become a lawyer. I have more than 40 years of experience as an Indian law attorney, law professor, and tribal judge. My roles have included senior staff attorney at the Native American Rights Fund, Trial attorney in the U. S. Department of Justice, Indian Resources Section of the Natural Resources Division, visiting adjunct professor at Yale University, visiting professor at the University of Denver Law School, and Director of the University of Colorado Law School's Indian Law Clinic. Although retired from legal practice, I now serve as the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the Pueblo de San Ildefonso, and as a Justice of Kiowa, and Tonto Apache Tribes' Supreme Courts. I previously served as an appellate judge for my own tribe.

I have long been active in the Boulder community, serving on numerous boards, including the Museum of Boulder's, and I currently serve on the External Board of the Center for Native American and Indigenous Studies (CNAIS). I was a member of the ad hoc committee that drafted the Indigenous Peoples Day Resolution, and I presented it to the City Council on the committee's behalf; the Council adopted it unanimously in 2016. I also helped found Right Relationship Boulder to support the City's implementation of the Resolution and to build meaningful, lasting relationships with the Arapaho, Cheyenne, Ute, and other tribes who were in this area, as well as with Native people who live here today. RRB's projects include an annual Arapaho Language Camp and an Arapaho Culture Camp for tribal members from Oklahoma and Wyoming, helping reconnect them with their homelands.

RRB members have done substantial work documenting the history of Fort Chambers and bringing it to the attention and understanding of the Boulder Valley community, in part, so that they are able to have meaningful input into the management plan for Fort Chambers. Some of you may have seen our slide presentation on Fort Chambers.

RRB members have met with OSMP many times over the years to discuss Fort Chambers and knew we had some differences about what should be included in the plans, most notably whether to include a representation of the Fort. We think a physical representation of the fort is essential to understanding what happened at Fort Chambers; OSMP have said they couldn't locate the fort with certainty, so wouldn't include a physical representation in their plans.

I put many comments in the on-line survey. I got more frustrated as I worked through the questions, which seemed focused on details and the scenarios, all centered on the monument, instead of the Fort. The survey did not invite or provide space for commenting on the large picture, the "Big Idea." So I will start there.

The Big Idea

The "Interpretive 'Big Idea'" put forth in the OSMP's plan is that Fort Chambers was built because of "a shared and systemic fear" of Indians. The word fear appears 34 times throughout the concept plan, but only as settler fear; the Indians' fear is not mentioned. The idea that the settlers acted only out of fear, no matter how unfounded, serves to excuse their illegal occupation of Arapaho land and their desire to exterminate the Indians who might get in the way of their illegal acts.

What do you think the "settlers" told themselves as they invaded Arapaho territory? Can you imagine the scene on arrival in the Boulder Valley: Martha: "George, there are people here, they have homes, and gardens and children. They live here, George." George: "Oh

Martha, those aren't people. Those sticks and cloth aren't houses. They don't live here. They're off chasing buffalo leaving this land unused. We know what to do with this land. And the government will take our side." Martha: "Oh George, you always know the right thing to do." It is worthy of note that in 1864, the "settlers" on the front range outnumbered the Tribes 30 to 1 (100,000 to about 3,000) and the buffalo were being systematically destroyed to deprive the Indians of their main resource for living.

As part of the Big Idea, OSMP seeks to "avoid[] sensationalism" "avoid speculation, narrative inflation, or prescriptive moral framing." OSMP strives for neutrality and wants people to make their own moral judgments. The problem is, OSMP avoids telling the truth in favor of equalizing the experiences of the "settlers" and Tribes. The experiences were not equal, behavior and intent on each side were not equally good. There is a right and wrong side here; the harms caused need to be understood and acknowledged. There is a wrong that needs to be righted.

An example of an untruth in the plan jumps out: The Indians disappear through abstract representation by diminishing numbers of wooden sticks in parallel with increased "settler" presence represented by increasing stacks of sod bricks. In the reverse of this scenario, as you exit the exhibit, the stick Indians reappear, despite no Indians being left in the area, and the sod bricks diminish in number, despite the rapid rise in "settler" population. This is an exercise in artistic expression and license, not in truth telling. And it avoids having to say what actually happened to the Indians, where they ended up – that they were murdered at Sand Creek and the survivors forcibly removed, the Arapaho to Oklahoma and Wyoming, and the Cheyenne to Oklahoma and Montana. Those voices are no longer heard in Boulder Valley.

The project would be improved, to my mind, if you change the overall tone and give up your effort to equalize the experiences of the "settlers" and Tribal Nations and their citizens. Changing the tone would require giving up the Big Idea. The Big Idea of settler fear is a big problem - it sounds catchy, but it is misguided and leads the project way off point.

How about the Big Idea being "Truth" or the "True (or real, or accurate, or honest) Story of Fort Chambers: How learning it can help Boulder move toward reconciliation and eventually toward healing.

Truth brings historical wrongs to light. This project should focus on uncovering those historical wrongs (truth) and foster mutual understanding (reconciliation through acceptance and understanding of the truth). We must move through these first two stages before we can begin to envision what healing might look like.

Much of what OSMP omits from the plan is critical. It does not state that the Arapaho were, and remain, a sovereign nation whose territory includes the Boulder Valley. It fails to say that, in the 1851 treaty, the United States recognized Arapaho sovereignty and territory and pledged to protect that territory from incursions. The Arapaho allowed the settlers to remain through the winter of 1858, with the understanding that they would leave afterward. Instead, they stayed and became "intruders" who "founded" Boulder against Arapaho instructions and in violation of the treaty. OSMP's plan does not present these facts. After Boulder was "founded," the Arapaho moved farther south to avoid conflict, not to surrender their territory. The settlers then built Fort Chambers to protect

themselves from supposed “Indian uprisings,” even though it is widely acknowledged that no such threat existed in the Boulder Valley.
Meanwhile Boulderites were “legitimizing” their land theft by platting land and issuing deeds. Today,160+ years later, Boulder Valley residents “own” their property by virtue of these illegal deeds handed to European ancestors. Those deeds still stand. But so does the Treaty. That is the truth. But the plan does not tell it, so the plan can’t provide the understanding (reconciliation of truth) and present the necessary question: how are we going to move forward in the face of this truth and the harm caused?
Telling the Truth should be the goal. Healing is a process that only begins with telling the truth. This exhibit falls short of the first step in healing.
Some other important things.
The plan uses the term “Indigenous” throughout. This is a term that has become popular and is sometimes carelessly used because it feels more inclusive. To be clear, a Tribe is a People. Arapaho and Cheyenne Tribal members are citizens of their Tribes, not parts of amorphous Indigenous group. Tribes’ names should be used whenever they are referred to. Indian Nation, Native Nation, Tribal Nation are appropriate for general references.
For more context and deeper understanding of potential consequences: there are Indigenous people in all parts of the world and many have lost their lands and their sovereign authority, effectively turning these indigenous people into a category of race, or racial minorities. It is of critical significance that in the United States Tribes are recognized as sovereign nations. Lumping Tribes and their citizens into the category of Indigenous persons can undercut tribes’ status as political bodies with sovereign authority, and that can lead to decisions and treatment of tribes as a racial category, rather than as the sovereign nations they were in 1851 and remain today.
For example, the Indian Child Welfare Act, a hallmark of Tribal sovereignty, could be viewed as a based on race, rather than polity, with the result that it would be struck down as a violation of the 14th Amendment’s equal protection clause. It was recently upheld by the United States Supreme Court because it is not a raced-base law, but one based upon the political standing of Indian tribes.
This is such an important point, I hope you will eliminate the use of the term “Indigenous” when referring to Tribes and their citizens.
Another comment about the term Indian. It is ok to use the term “Indian.” “Indian” is a legal and politically correct term. Most legal and historical documents say, “Indian Tribe” and “Indians.” Most tribes and tribal people accept the term. My tribe is the “Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians.” I would say that I am an Indian. I don’t say I am “indigenous.” It is just not an adequate term for citizens of sovereign tribal nations.

There are several people in the Boulder area who have studied and have in depth knowledge of the history of Fort Chambers. To name a few, Tim Harmos, Paula Palmer, Laurie Rugenstein, Christie Yoshinaga Itano (she recently moved but is still involved in RRB and easily accessible), and Karen Wilde (Muscogee Creek), Boulder County’s Native American-American Indian Relations Manager. Karen was the Tribal Liaison for the Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site.

Richard Williams (Oglala Lakota) has produced the only in-depth history of Colorado Tribes, “The Legal and Political History of Colorado Tribes,” a report by People of the Sacred Land’s Truth, Restoration, Education Commission (TREC). OSMP staff and consultants should read, quote from and cite the TREC report in OSMP’s plan.

All these people could provide deep understanding and perspective that comes from committed study of Colorado's Indian history, and especially the Sand Creek Massacre and Fort Chambers. Are their voices reflected in the project plan? The stick/sod interpretative design would indicate they should be.

To return to a critical point -- show the fort and what took place there. Don't make it an artistic abstraction. This was a real fort where real people trained to commit murders of real people, whose descendants bear the scars of this trauma to this day.

Using the marker to serve as the heart of the exhibit says loudly "they were fearful" when the heart of the exhibit should convey the murderous preparations being made there. I know the Tribal consultants wanted the marker and I agree it should not be removed but put it in the context of the lie it represented up to1959 and until was removed a couple of years ago. Don't elevate it to a place of honor by coddling it in a manger type scene, where it appears to be cradled by the stick Indians, who presumably were no longer there. Don't hint at changed attitudes by tipping the marker a bit to one side. The artistic renderings and abstractions are confusing. Say the marker represents the thinking of the community up to at least 1959 and if this thinking still lingers because of lack of knowledge of accurate history, this project is here to correct that lie.

Say that tribes are sovereigns with full authority over their territory, which includes Boulder Valley. This is an essential understanding. It is likely that people looking at the plan do not know that Tribes are sovereigns, that treaties are the Law of the Land, and under the U.S. Constitution and by treaty, Boulder Valley still belongs to the Arapaho. Discuss the Treaty of 1851 recognizing Arapaho (and other tribes') sovereign status and promising to protect the tribes and their territory. This is critical understanding as well. When and why was the treaty violated? Did the settlers violate the rights guaranteed to the Tribes in the treaty? What is the status of the settlers' deeds in the face of the treaty? These are valid and important questions.

Land ownership: please correct the eternally incorrect assumption that Tribes did not own land. It is not true that no one "owned" Boulder Valley or that Indians only existed in "relationship" with the land. That's romantic, euphemistic language. Tribes own lands as governments own land. They control their territory as governments do. The Arapaho knew their territory. Other tribes knew Arapaho territory and used it only with the Arapaho's permission. The United States recognized and confirmed Arapaho territory in 1851. Imagine if you tried to give yourself a deed to federal land.

Say how settlers came to "own" their land. Here's how they established ownership. They made up deeds in this way:

The settlers became invaders when they did not leave. Everything the settler/invaders did from there going forward was in violation of the treaty of Fort Laramie, U.S. and Arapaho law. Every thing. The settler/invaders decided to stay and pretend the land was theirs. They made laws and put words of ownership on pieces of paper and called the papers "deeds". They put the papers in boxes they called files and put the files in a building they called the "Land Office", all to document and justify their existence on land that was not theirs. And the settler/invaders were willing to exterminate the Indians in order to keep what wasn't theirs. By now they knew the story of Indian Removal, and about the stealing of Indian lands. They were not acting out of ignorance, or innocence, or justifiable fear. Fast forward 160+ years, those pieces of paper - those made-up

"deeds" survive. But so does the treaty, the Supreme Law of the Land, that recognizes and guarantees the Tribes' ownership of the very same land represented by the pieces of paper. This is the truth.

Show the names of volunteer Boulder militia, names of the Arapaho and Cheyenne victims. Tell us the names and fortunes of those who participated in the massacre. They became wealthy and respected leaders of the community and society.

Finally, the opening paragraphs of the plan in the shaded area of the first page fail to place the project in any historical context. A fuller, more honest opening statement might look something like this:

For more than 14,000 years, Colorado has been home to Indigenous peoples who hunted, traded, held ceremonies, raised families, and who lived and died here. Boulder Valley is the homeland and within the territory of the Arapaho and Cheyenne people. The United States recognized tribes as sovereign nations and in the 1851 Treaty of Fort Laramie, it recognized the territory of the Arapaho and Cheyenne, including Boulder Valley.

In 1858 when gold seekers arrived in the Boulder Valley and asked to spend the winter, Arapaho Chief Nawath said they could stay but must leave after winter. Instead, that next year, these "guests" became "intruders" when they founded the Boulder Company town against the wishes of the Arapaho and in violation of the Treaty. These intruder-settlers repeatedly violated the terms of the 1851 Treaty of Fort Laramie, and the territorial government refused to enforce it.

As Civil War broke out in the East, hostilities, raids, and attacks between settlers and Tribal warriors escalated in the West. In the summer of 1864, Colorado's territorial governor John Evans authorized settlers to kill, quote "hostile Indians", and he raised a volunteer army of "Indian fighters."

Although Boulder Valley intruder-settlers were never directly threatened by Indian attacks, in 1864 they built a sod fort on the homestead of George W. Chambers to defend themselves. In 1864, when Governor Evans issued his call for volunteer "Indian Fighters," Boulder Valley men mustered at Fort Chambers. They were designated as Company D of the 3rd Colorado Volunteer Cavalry Regiment, under the command of David Nichols, who resigned his position as Boulder County sheriff to accept a captain's commission. In late summer of 1864, the one hundred and eleven (111) men of Company D began training for planned attacks on Indians. The Boulder men joined Colonel John Chivington's U.S. military forces to carry out the Sand Creek massacre. More than 230 Arapaho and Cheyenne people – including Chief Nawath -- were murdered.

I appreciate your reading my comments. I want to be respectful, but also to share fully and make comments I hope will help present the truth.

I would like to suggest a meeting with RRB folks, Rick Williams, Karen Wilde and possibly others to talk about the survey and letters you receive.

Also, I hope you will allow more time for survey. The plan is complicated, and the questionnaire is also complex. It takes far more than the suggested 15-20 minutes to complete.

Sincerely yours,

Jerilyn DeCoteau

Received May 17th, 2026

Dear Kacey and OSMP team,

Thank you for the dedication and care you have put into the Fort Chambers Interpretive Plan, and the ongoing opportunities for public comment.

I am Deputy Director for Community Engagement at the Museum of Boulder and I work extensively in exhibits and programs that address intergenerational racial trauma. This includes a current exhibit, "Colorado's People of the Sacred Land" featuring the Truth, Restoration, and Education Commission Reports. I find it infinitely difficult to share the most personal and traumatic histories in ways that do justice to those who live the impacts of those histories. I am hopeful that there is some time to make some major changes, though, and believe your team has the best of intentions to do justice to this site.

My main concern about the Plan is that I am hearing strong negative reactions from Native leaders whose knowledge and perspective I respect immensely. These reactions include offense, shock, and dismay.

First and foremost, settler narratives and perspectives seem far over-emphasized. The violence that the site represents should center the impacts of Company D and the Sand Creek Massacre on Cheyenne and Arapaho people.

I have spoken to members of Right Relationship Boulder and agree with their critiques. In particular I agree that the name "Healing Trail" has seemed widely criticized by Native people, yet it has stuck. I also agree that the names of the people killed at Sand Creek as well as the names of Company D should be included. And I agree that attempting to frame an uplifting message of the Native population increasing at the end of the exhibit inhibits further exploration into ongoing barriers and impacts of these histories.

I do want to quote part of the response Right Relationship had shared with me and reiterate my agreement: "Exhibits should contrast the outcomes of the Sand Creek Massacre. The Arapaho and Cheyenne were forced out of their homeland, confined on reservations, and their children were taken away to boarding schools. They remained determined to preserve their languages and cultures and govern their nations. In contrast, Boulder “Indian fighters” are honored as “founding fathers” of Colorado. Boulder is one of the country’s wealthiest communities. We need to see data comparing health and economic indicators and ask: how do we feel about these contrasting outcomes?"

Thank you for considering my comments,
Emily Zinn
Deputy Director for Community Engagement
Museum of Boulder

Received May 17th, 2026

Hello Kacey,

Thank you for the opportunity for us to discuss the new Fort Chambers/Poor Farm Design with Seth Frankel at the meeting at the Municipal Building. We learned from him and briefly shared some of our perspectives.

We have studied the information that was provided regarding the interpretive experience.

We responded to the survey.
We have not been able to find the Fort Chambers/Poor Farm Project Comment Form.

Therefore, we are responding with this email. We respectfully request a meeting with you and Mr. Frankel ASAP to discuss our concerns with proposed text to be included on the exhibits. We have information regarding the building and use of the fort by settler families that should be included in the exhibits.

We have information that should be shared regarding the marker. We want the entire story of the marker to be correctly presented, including the event that broke the marker stone. This is a story of a family privately funding the purchase of a monument to recognize the history of their ancestors and the area. There was no malice intended. The story of the marker being repaired and reset will be a story of restoration and shared communication, of healing of brokenness.

We would like to suggest wording for an interpretive sign about the marker telling the rest of the story. We believe that it is possible to move the original base of the marker with the broken stone part and to reattach the marker to it's base. The physical saga of the marker and its potential repair is a story all of it's own.

We would like to share information that might be included about the era of George Chambers ownership of the land. George Chambers did not go to Sand Creek. He was a multitalented man: husband, father, co-founder of the Valmont Presbyterian Church, farmer, miner, school teacher, County Commissioner and so much more...

We would hope to be included to share information from oral conversations and research about the Poor Farm era.

We have information to share about the house and outbuildings.

We suggest the name Trail of Remembrance which honors all people and all history. We are concerned regarding some of the quotes in the document that may incite anger and hate.

We are aware of the serious continued vandalism in the Valmont area. We believe that continual monitored security is essential to protect the trail, the interpretive signage, the monument and the property, including the historic home and outbuildings from vandalism. Will there be cameras and a gate? The beauty of the site is spectacular. Folks will want to go there.

Respect and privacy for the contiguous neighbors must be included in the plan.

A lot to talk about. We would appreciate an appointment with you and Mr. Frankel as soon as possible.

Thank you.
Carol Affleck
Shirley Schaller

May 16th, 2026

I have just completed the survey and reading the design proposal. I acknowledge the obvious time, planning, and effort spent on this design as described in the Studio Tectontic document. However, as a White Woman, it strikes me as being limited in perspective; it seems too one sided (that is, too White), oblivious to the overall context of the situation, and unknowing about the timeframes necessary for authentic healing (as implied by the terms Contemplation and Re-Emergence).

Here are some specific comments that occurred to me as I read these sections.

ARRIVAL AREA
- Although this is the Fort Chambers "site," a structure on the order of a century and a half old, the actual context is 10 of thousands of years of indigenous life. I don't get a sense of that Native timescale from the Arrival Zone.
- What is remembered about this land by both White settlers AND Native Peoples?
- History Colorado's Ute Museum in Montrose has an enviable exhibit about Native life and traditions. Something similar would add much needed context to the Arrival Area.

DECOMPRESSION AREA
- Native Americans continued to exist in Boulder County and the state of Colorado after the massacre. The last "nothingness" of the teepee poles in contrast to the sod representation of the fort in the paired walkway reinforces this misperception. The continued existence of Native Peoples in Colorado, even at the time, has to be acknowledged by something tangible in that last position and not just words on a plaque.

DISCOVERY AREA
- Where are the oral accounts of the Native Peoples reactions on these plaques and markers in this area?
- Where is the line item in this document that addresses the oral traditions of Native Peoples in telling their side of the story? Where is the line item that addresses the stories held by descendants of survivors of the massacre? These may be subsumed under "Massacre Victims (sic) Stories", but Native inputs are not explicitly named in any of the Studio Tectonic's text the way the White history is, so my conclusion is that these Native sources have less importance, can be minimized, and thus can be ignored.
- What about the fear of the Native Peoples? Their dismay at the treaty violations? The sinking feeling in the pit of their stomach that their way of life was being destroyed? Their grief at the impending loss of culture? Such accounts are not "prescriptive moral framing" any more than the stories in the written historic accounts of White people are. These fears and reactions need to be included.

Here are two general comments.
- White people are named throughout this exhibit. Massacre victims also have names and those names call out to be part of this exhibit.
- In reference to one of my first comments about timeframes for authentic healing, the "be heard Boulder" website, Fort Chambers/Poor Farm Site Planning page refers to this as a "Healing Trail." I object to this characterization. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa created actual healing in the aftermath of apartheid. I don't think the City of Boulder is prepared to follow this model.

Again, I applaud you all for the time, effort, creativity, and thoughtfulness that went into the planning so far. It's truly monumental. But I can't help but think and feel it emphases the White perspective and loses the Native perspective, Native dignity, and Native presence in the process. And that is a huge loss.

Cecilia Girz

Received May 15th, 2026

I have filled out the questionnaire but needed to write my comments separately. They are attached.

Thank you

Sincerely yours

Tod Smith

Email attachment content

Comments – Proposed Interpretive Experience Questionnaire

Rather than provide comments to each specific design comments in the questionnaire, I am providing this letter to set out my general thoughts and suggestions regarding the entire design proposal. They apply to the entirety of the proposal and are not limited to any specific design aspect. I must start by saying that generally I find the proposal and the language used in describing the proposal to be a whitewash, an attempt to ignore the brutality and illegality of what happened. Unfortunately, it seems to suggest – there were good people on both sides.

1. A Brief Summary Legal Comment: While I recognize that use the term "Indigenous" has become popular in response to the idea that we should "de-colonize" the history, using "Indigenous," "Indigenous groups," or even "Indigenous Tribes" undermines and threatens the unique legal status of Indian Tribes or Indian Nations (as used in the 1851 Treaty of Fort Laramie) in the United States. The Indian Nations, including the Arapaho and Cheyenne who were parties to the 1851 Treaty, were (and are) sovereign governments, who occupied, controlled, and governed a vast territory which included the lands that were ultimately reserved for their exclusive use in the 1851 Treaty including the Boulder Valley. The United States recognized these Tribes as governments when they negotiated the Treaty with the Tribes. The Tribes or Indian Nations are not simply a group of Indigenous people or an Indigenous group, they are political sovereigns that governed the territory and the people who lived within that territory prior to the arrival of Euro Americans. They controlled and owned the land. And, the 1851 Treaty recognized that the Arapaho Tribe would continue to do so without interference or settlement by Euro Americans.

I do not see any references in the documents prepared by Studio Tetonic to the report prepared by the Sacred Land's Truth, Restoration, and Education Commission (TREC), in particular the portion of the report that addresses "The Legal and Political History of Colorado Tribes." I strongly recommend that the Studio Tetonic staff working on this project review that document and particularly the chapter dedicated to "The Expulsion of the Arapahos from Colorado 1851-1864," which provides a more detailed explanation of the sovereign status of the Arapahos, the terms of the 1851 Treaty, and the establishment of illegal towns and communities barely seven years after the Treaty.

2. The interpretative trail should not start with the initial arrival of Euro Americans; it should start, at the latest, in 1851 with the Treat of Fort Laramie. That Treaty recognized that the Indian Nations, the Arapaho, with respect to what is now known at the Boulder Valley, had exclusive control over their territory, and that Euro Americans could pass through but not settle in that territory. From there you would move on to the invasion by Euro Americans in unfettered violation of the Treaty and the United States' obligation to enforce the Treaty's terms and prohibit the Euro Americans from settling on the land. Chief Nawath (Left Hand) recognized that the Arapahos owned, controlled and governed land when he told the initial wave of Euro Americans looking for gold that they could stay for the winter but then had to leave.

3. Sticks (poles) – I can't imagine a more stereotypical depiction of the Indian people who governed and occupied the land. The questionnaire suggests they depict "Native American structures" – ahh tepees – and ingenuity. Beyond tepees what "ingenuity" is depicted?

4. Reduced quantity of sticks (poles) to represent a "reduced trial presence over time." This depiction is a complete fallacy. Tribal extirpation was immediate. Between 1858 and 1861 (3 years), 100,000 illegal Euro Americans, more that 30 times the entire Arapaho population, arrived at the foot of the Rockies. And, by the summer of 1864 (6 years), the Arapahos in the Boulder Valley were gone, forced south to Sand Creek. See TREC Report.

5. The word "fear" is used 34 times in the "Fort Chambers Interpretative Framework." In every instance it is used to describe the Euro American experience. While there is a recognition that the fear was based almost exclusively on exaggerated or mostly false claims of violence by Indians, it is, in my view, put forth as a justification for the Euro American response to what was (and is here) referred to as the "Indian problem." A more honest description would be that conjured fear was used to justify the removal, and called for extermination of entire Indian Nations so that the settlers (invaders) could insure that the illegal taking of the land would be unopposed and sanctioned by the United States.

6. If you are going to talk about fear, you need to discuss the very justifiable and very real fear of the Arapaho people. They were quickly overwhelmed by a mass influx of illegal settlers. They quickly understood that they had placed their faith, their survival, in the hands of the United States which was not going to enforce the terms of or provide any of the protections required under the 1851 Treaty. It was clear, in fact, that the United States was going to support the illegal taking of the Tribes' land and the displacement of the Indian people. They knew they could not defend themselves from what can only be described as an invasion. And, they watched as a military installation (Fort Chambers) was constructed on their land, without their permission, by the Euro Americans who had illegally occupied and taken their land. Who, one might ask, was rightfully fearful.

7. The Questionnaire states that the Discovery Area is "located near where Fort Chambers likely stood." It appears that the proposal now relies upon the marker placed in 1959, which, quite simply, states a lie, to represent the Fort. I suggest that after the entry area (Decompression Area), a wall with an entry door is constructed that clearly

represents the Fort. It is the Fort that represents the immediate and overwhelming destruction and loss suffered by the Arapaho Nation. It represents that the power the Tribes had placed their trust in was not there to enforce the 1851 Treaty but to enforce the removal of the Indians in completely disregard of that Treaty. A marker, created in 1959, does not represent either the purpose or the message of the Fort. You would then walk through the entry into the "Discovery Area."

8. The 1959 marker should be a part of the Discovery Area. But, rather than trying to utilize an interpretative tool (lying at an angle in what looks like a manger) to claim that it is now being reinterpreted – how do you reinterpret a lie – place another marker next to it which provides a truthful explanation of why the Fort was constructed. I suggest you consider the language from the City of Boulder website https://bouldercolorado.gov/fort-chambers-and-sand-creek-massacre: "'100 Boulder County Residents mobilized into Company D of the Third Colorado Cavalry at Fort Chambers. The Company drilled at Fort Chambers until the 16th of September 1864.' As stated by a participant in the Sand Creek Massacre "At the time the 3d Colorado regiment was raised, the idea was very general that a war of extermination should be waged; that neither sex nor age should be spared; and women held to these views in common with men.'" Additionally, an interpretive stop should state, as noted on this website: "U.S. accounts from the Sand Creek Massacre indicated Company D men killed at least 25 people and participated in the killing of women, children, elders and children."

9. If my understanding of the proposal is correct, after walking on the Contemplative Trail, people will walk back through the Decompression Area (now called the Re-Emergence Area) where, viewed in reverse, the sticks (poles) will increase in number showing "the increase of Native American voice and the continuity of the Tribes." I'm not sure what this means. It seems designed to just make people feel good as they leave. As you entered, the Indians disappeared and as you leave, they are back or, at least their voices are back? Where do you indicate the status of the Arapaho after the were displaced and removed, after many including Chief Nawath were killed at Sand Creek. Those who survived the slaughter ran and hid but most were subsequently corralled and forced onto reservations in Oklahoma now known as the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes of Oklahoma or the Wind River Reservation in Wyoming. There descendants live there today with no land in Boulder County.

10. Finally, please do not call this a Healing Trail.

Sincerely

Tod Smith

Received May 15th, 2026

Dear OSMP and Studio Tectonic Friends (note that we don't have email addresses for Studio Tectonic consultants, so we'll rely on OSMP staff to forward this message -- thanks!):

Please see the attached letter with feedback from Right Relationship Boulder on the proposed design of the Fort Chambers so-called "healing trail." Note that we hope to meet with OSMP staff and Studio Tectonic consultants as soon as possible to talk about the issues we address here. We look forward to hearing from you.

With much appreciation for your work on this important project,

Jerilyn DeCoteau, Marrton Dormish, Tim Harmos, Paula Palmer, Laurie Rugenstein
(Representing Right Relationship Boulder)

Email attachment content

Date: May 16, 2026
To: OSMP Staff and Studio Tectonic Consultants: Dan Burke, David Ford, Seth Frankel, Kacey French, Hailey Malone
CC: Tribal Representatives: Crystal C'Bearing, Fred Mosqueda, Chester Whiteman
City of Boulder Equity Officer Aimee Kane
From: Right Relationship Boulder: Jerilyn DeCoteau, Marrton Dormish, Tim Harmos, Paula Palmer, Laurie Rugenstein
Re: Feedback and Recommendations on Fort Chambers Design Proposal

Right Relationship Boulder members met with Hailey Malone during the open feedback session on May 6. We request a follow-up meeting with Kacey French, Seth Frankel, and David Ford at your earliest convenience. Some Right Relationship Boulder members may have filled out the online survey, but the survey questions are very limited in scope. For that reason, we are addressing our serious concerns about some elements of the Design in this memo.

Right Relationship Boulder has been collaborating with the Arapaho and Cheyenne people on many projects since 2016. We have been educating the Boulder community about the history of Fort Chambers and the many questions it raises since 2018. We urged the City to develop the Fort Chambers property as a Site of Conscience in 2023, and we are gratified that the City's Equity Officer and OSMP pledged to follow this course.

These are our concerns and recommendations:

1- "Healing Trail." There was strong consensus against this term during the Fall 2025 Community Consultation. No one is healed by walking this trail. Healing is a much longer process. Emphasis should be on learning the full truth of what happened on this land, and asking ourselves how our community needs to respond and change. What would "right relationship" with Native peoples, and specifically the Arapaho and Cheyenne, look like in Boulder today?

2- Focus should be on the goals of Sites of Conscience: Truth, Justice, Reconciliation. These three things occur in sequence, not all at once. The Fort Chambers site should focus on the first of these: Truth. It should also raise questions about what Justice would look like. Bringing about Justice and Reconciliation is a long-term process.

3- The Big Idea (and throughout the document):
The Design's message is that fear was instilled in settlers, manipulated by leaders, and this led to the violence at Sand Creek. But fear is not the starting point. Before fear there were forced removals of entire tribal nations, military attacks on Native

peoples, Settler violations of treaties and laws that prohibited settlement, shrinking of Native nations' land base, betrayal of Chief Nawath by miners in Boulder, rape of Nawath's wife and daughter in Denver, etc. The violence at Sand Creek started with Settler/US government violence against Native peoples. The Settlers who came to the Boulder Valley were well aware of all these crimes against the Arapaho and Cheyenne. They were well aware of the treaties and laws that prohibited their invasion and occupation of treaty land. But they saw the Native people as "savages" and they saw themselves as "rightful" owners of this land. All this is well documented. They feared that the Arapaho and Cheyenne would return Settler violence with violence against them. The current Design risks "excusing" Settler violence by explaining that Settlers were afraid, representing them as "innocent victims" of manipulation by Evans and the Rocky Mountain News.

Missing from the Design: The Arapaho and Cheyenne were also afraid. What were their fears? Losing their homeland. Losing the land where their ancestors were buried. Losing access to essential hunting grounds in the Boulder Valley and the foothills (facing hunger). Losing their freedom. Losing their whole way of life. Losing their lives.

The Design presents "parallel" stories of Settlers and Native Peoples. These are <u>false equivalencies</u>. It reminds us of the first exhibit on the Sand Creek Massacre at History Colorado, which presented the massacre as a "clash of cultures." That exhibit was taken down because Sand Creek was not a "clash of cultures." It was an intentional massacre of innocent people by murderous perpetrators. Similarly, the Fort Chambers site is a site of violence and injustice committed by Settlers against the Arapaho and Cheyenne. This needs to be clearly stated throughout the Design. Settler descendants who visit the site need to unequivocally own this truth. Native people who visit the site need to see their ancestors' experience of forced removal from the Boulder Valley, rape, betrayal, and murder reported accurately, giving no excuses to the Settler perpetrators. Truth is the only path toward justice and reconciliation.

4- Arrival:
The chronology of the Design should start with 13,000 years of Native life in the Boulder Valley. Then Settler/US government crimes and violence against Native peoples. Then the 1859 Settler invasion of the Front Range. Then Settler fear and manipulation, leading to more violence at Sand Creek.

5- Decompression:
This segment should <u>not</u> be parallel depictions of Native and Settler lives. The path should begin chronologically, first showing 13,000 years of Native presence on this land prior to Settler Invasion. Along this path we need to hear Arapaho and Cheyenne languages (add an audio element). We need to be able to imagine Chief Nawath's winter camps and the traditional activities of women, men, and children. We need to see buffalo, elk and other game in the Boulder Valley. The exhibits should show Arapaho place names in the Boulder Valley and foothills.

The images of gradually increasing Settler presence and gradually decreasing Arapaho and Cheyenne presence are inaccurate. The Settler invasion was not

gradual. When gold was discovered, within 6 months 100,000 Euro-Americans poured into the Front Range in violation of existing laws and treaties. Bam! And the removal of Nawath's band of Arapaho also was not gradual either. Nawath led his people out of the Boulder Valley to avoid conflict with the Settlers. They were here in the Boulder Valley for hundreds of years, then they were gone.

The image of a bunch of poles representing the Arapaho and Cheyenne people is offensive (harkens back to the "wooden Indian" stereotype). The gradually decreasing number of poles harkens back to the false narrative of the "Vanishing Indian." Please don't represent the Arapaho and Cheyenne people with wooden poles.

It would be better to have the first segment of the path representing 13,000 years of Native presence in the Boulder Valley. Then an entry through the gate of the fort (as Fred Mosqueda suggested), marking the abrupt arrival of Settlers in 1858. Here we need to learn about the Settlers. Who were they? Why did they come? What were their beliefs about Native people, "savages"? What were their beliefs about Manifest Destiny, white supremacy, their own "entitlement"? How did Settler violations of laws and treaties and violence against Native peoples produce fear in them, leading to construction of the fort?

6- Throughout -- Use active voice, not passive terms like "westward expansion, agriculture, mining" – these are faceless concepts that hide the fact that <u>people</u> did these things. Say: miners, farmers, land speculators, railroad builders, did x,y,z, etc.

"Westward expansion" is not neutral language. It is Settler language. The Indigenous experience of "westward expansion" was "Invasion." Point this out. Make it explicit. Include "Invasion" every time you mention "westward expansion."

7- Discovery:
This circular area needs to be much larger to accommodate more important information. There is room to the north to expand this area.

Make clear that the city of Boulder and other Front Range cities were founded in violation of treaties. Property deeds for land that was stolen from the Arapaho and Cheyenne were sold to the Settlers.

We need to see what actually happened at the fort (troops drilling, muskets, bayonets, make it real that they were preparing to kill Indians (exhibit the poster for "Indian Fighters," Evan's Proclamations calling for killing Indians, etc.)

Be explicit about what happened at Sand Creek and how the Cavalry's "victory" was celebrated in Boulder.

Name names. Real people were killed. Real people killed them. We have their names. Exhibit both sets of names to make this real. (Consider the power of the names of US soldiers on the Vietnam monument in Washington DC).

Show comparative outcomes/consequences for Native People and for Settlers: What did the Arapaho and Cheyenne lose? Where did they go? They were forced onto reservations and their children were removed to boarding schools. They have struggled to sustain their language and culture. What are their current economic and health statistics in OK and WY? (NOTE: For an important assessment of the economic losses to tribes that were removed from Colorado, please include information from the TREC reports posted at **[link to People of the Sacred Land website]**)

Contrast the Arapaho and Cheyenne data to the outcomes for the Settlers and their descendants who live in Boulder today. Note that some of the Sand Creek perpetrators became wealthy and "honored" civic and business leaders in Colorado (name them). Contrast the current value of Boulder land and economic and health stats for Boulder County residents vs. Arapaho and Cheyenne stats in OK and WY. Show clear comparative data.

8- Re-emersion:
The image of decreasing sod walls (purportedly portraying decreasing Settler presence and dominance) and increasing poles (purportedly portraying increasing presence and influence of Native people in the Boulder Valley) is pure fantasy, totally inaccurate. Boulder has not returned one inch of land to the Arapaho and Cheyenne and there is no plan to do that. What is the Native population in Boulder County (maybe .01 percent)? Are Native people represented on City and County boards, commissions, staffs, and elected positions? No—and why not? We need to ask ourselves these hard questions, not congratulate ourselves for supposed progress toward justice and reconciliation. Visitors to the site should leave feeling challenged by these questions and motivated to make changes in their lives and in the community. The current "feel good" design is self-serving and offensive.

Walking back to the parking lot, visitors should be asked a series of questions to think about and to write about (cards, pens and a box, and/or audio recording equipment should be provided, and there should be a process for OSMP/City staff to continually review the submissions). Possible questions:

What feelings came up for you during your visit to this site?

Why is it important to understand this history?

How are you connected to this story?

What would justice for the Arapaho and Cheyenne look like in the Boulder Valley?

What would reconciliation look like in the Boulder Valley?

How would you like Boulder to be different in 5 years? in 10 years?

9- Provide visitors a card or a QR code taking them to recommended resources so they can continue learning. Include resources for different age groups. Right Relationship Boulder can help you put this together.

Thank you for your work on this very important project and for considering our concerns, criticisms, and recommendations. We look forward to meeting with you in person as soon as possible.

May 15th, 2026

Hi Kacey,

Thank you so much for getting back to me so promptly. I am sorry for my late response-your email got lost in the shuffle!

The photos were extremely helpful! Thank you for sending these to me !

In Photo #1 Ecological restoration I noticed the ponds, former gravel mines, do you know what gravel mine it was? The reason I am asking is because there once was a gravel pit in that general area that was owned by the Pastore Family, and I have been trying to locate it. Rumor has it that there was a "park" there named after the family. I am not sure how big it was, and assume it was pretty small. There might have been a plaque there.

In Photo #2, I noticed Sawhill ponds, near a property line. I know the Sawhill's owned a great deal of property from 61st to 75 th at one time. The Keeter Family is a descendent of the Sawhill's. I am wondering if the property line is the property line of the Keeter Family. Do you know if this is the case?

We are family friends of the Keeter's, and I wonder if their property will be affected by this. Do you have any info on this?

Thanks again for all your help !

Received May 6th, 2026

G ood Afternoon Kacey,

I have a few questions regarding proposed 'Healing Trail' on the Fort Chambers / Poor Farm property. Where will the trail start, and how far is the trail going to be? Looks like it will extend to the east, and I am curious where the loop will end. I know some of the property owners on Valmont, and wonder if their properties will be affected. From what I understand, the Fort Chambers stone marker will be placed there, but will it be changed since it inaccurately states that Fort Chambers was used in "Indian Uprising ".

I look forward to seeing future plans and someday visit the finished trail!

I looked over the completed Planning Guide and completed the questionnaire, but forgot to ask the above questions. Thank you for your time and have a great day!

Annie Rieker

Received May 6th, 2026

Dear Kasey;

I sent you a copy of the Congressional Report. I think this statement should be highlighted in a display.

“All the testimony goes to show that the Indians, under the immediate control of Black Kettle and White Antelope of the Cheyennes, and Left Hand of the Arapahoes, were and had been friendly to the whites, and had not been guilty of any acts of hostility or depredation. The Indian agents, the Indian interpreter and others examined by your committee, all testify to the good character of those Indians. Even Governor Evans and Major Anthony, though evidently willing to convey to your committee a false impression of the character of those Indians, were forced, in spite of their prevarication, to admit that they knew of nothing they had done which rendered them deserving of punishment. “

I think it’s important in the exhibition to highlight the psychological use of what’s in modern day called “gaslighting” where untrue tales like the Rocky Mountain News article I sent you became “fact” and the Congressional investigation was erased from memory, along with the Cheyenne people who lived in East Boulder.

Chief White Antelope had received a peace medal from President Lincoln for his efforts in what’s now East Boulder. I think there should be a display of this, perhaps one of the City historians visiting the Lincoln Presidential library in Springfield Illinois to get the original information.

Of course why did prominent men led by Grandville Berkley Sr. orchestrate what led to the massacre? Why? That’s for Robert Batchelder to explain. I think there should be an exhibit on why the prominent people orchestrated this and how. We can get all of that for you.

Catherine Sundvall

Received May 5th, 2026 from Robert Batchelder

Ft Chambers is the location where 100 US 3rd Calvarl Company D were trained how to build a makeshift fort, aim and fire 12 lb. Howitzer cannons and practice military maneuvers. Most importantly the soldiers were indoctrinated by their military commander Colonel John Chivington, Cap David Nichols troop recruiter,and future CU Alum and Cap George Laird Shoup, artillery instructor and future first Governor of Idaho Territory and first Idaho Senator and only Senator to have two statues in Statuary Hall in the DC Capitol. The indoctrination included dehumanizing the Cheyenne People by falsley declaring Cheyenne attacks on Boulder civilians and calling all Native Americans Savages. Gov.John Evans issued two proclamations in July and in August first saying you can murder any native if you suspect they are Hostiles and the second saying anyone can hunt down a Native American and murder them. This is after Chief White Antelope made two trips to Washington DC to seek peace. On the second trip Chief White Antelope was given a Peace Medal by Abraham Lincoln. He was murdered at Sand Creek wearing the Peace Medal. It was decided at Ft Chambers 3rd Calvary Company D to terrorize the Cheyenne and remove them from Boulder City per
manently.

Chief White Antelope was making good news in the Boulder Valley News of Valmont. My great great uncle Junius Betkley stole the newspapers printing press to slander all Native Americans. The Cheyenne don't care about Ft Chambers as an historical location. The have been wondering why this genocide happened and what were the soldiers thinking. Maybe we can find out through Truth and Reconciliation in a peacful meditative Boulder Botanical Gardens. Thank you all for reading this short presentation. This was the first historical event of its kind and will make a relevant statement about learning from history.

Received April 29th, 2026

Good morning, Dan,

Since Katie Knapp is no longer with your department as the Poor Farm contact, who should we be talking with about the current status of the plans there?

I met the consultant who is designing the trail at the last public meeting. I requested that Valmont descendants would be able to review and offer ideas on the plan. The property is connected to our history – we have knowledge of the history of the property and past physical association with property that the general public attending meetings and offering input does not have. We have not been contacted by the consultant or staff.

Much has been said about the "healing trail". No interpretation of the site would be complete if the entire history of the site is not included.

What is the plan for the marker? Is the marker still protected and in storage in the house?

What are the plans for the historic house and the outbuildings which I listed on the National Register of Historic Places? The marker is also included in that listing. My listing was informed by long association with the owners of the property, oral history from those owners, and many hours spent at the property, both on social visits and in a lengthy examination of the property for the listing document.

Looking forward to your response.

Thank you,
Carol Affleck
Shirley Schaller

Two e-mails received in April and May have been removed from this compendium as their content cannot be made accessible according to Colorado House Bill 21-1110. These emails discussed webinars hosted by the NSF's 'Navigating the New Arctic' program.

April 6th, 2026

I have been working with the Soldier descendants represented by Robert Batchelder. I have also been working with N. Cheyenne tribal members, led by Traditional N. Cheyenne Chief Phillip Whiteman. Chief Phillip spoke at a recent Parks and Rec. Advisory Board Hearing.

Chief Phillip Whiteman at 31:50 -38:10 , followed by Nicole Schubus. Both are compelling speakers in favor of the land and the Cheyenne, and the botanic garden proposal at Hogan-Pancost. Both mention Ft. Chambers.

[link to private Youtube video - inaccessible]

Received April 6th, 2026

Dear Kasey;

My nsme is Catherine Sundvall. I have talked several times with Katie Knapp about my work with Sand Creek Massacre Soldier descendants represented by Robert Batchelder and N. Cheyenne Chief Phillip Whiteman.

I am encouraging the interpretive trail talk about the efforts of Robert's ancestor Grandville Berkley Sr to orchestrate Boulder to become a magnet for prominent people to concentrate their wealth around a State University to be built in Boulder. Competing with this aspiration was the lived experience of pioneers who had experienced the Cheyenne at Ft Bent.

When settlers first came to Valmont, they co-existed with the Cheyenne who were established in the high water table Cottonwood bottoms of East Boulder near the East Boulder Rec Center. Evidence of the hydrology that supported the dense cottonwood grove for the horses and encampment is seen in flooding basements today.

During the Ft. Chambers training period, Grandville Berkley Jr. had cannons that were not standard issue. These might not have been located at Ft. Chambers. I was told by Soldier descendants and Cheyenne historians that the cannons were shot at cottonwood trees to scare the Cheyenne and their horses. These cannons were later taken to Sand Creek.

There were many "fake news" accounts from the campaign against the Cheyenne at the time and later. Those who knew that Chief White Antelope had been given a medal of peace by President Lincoln were likely confused by the accounts at the time because there were people in Valmont especially who had been working with the Cheyenne, including Chief White Antelope.

I am hoping that the interpretive trail talks about how the Soldiers became prominent, and spun a tall tale that is still in the minds of many today. The interpretive trail should follow the careers of the Soldiers in their formation of CU, and in other real estate promotions like the following article in 1890 in the Rocky Mountain News.

[link to Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection – Rocky Mountain News Volume 32, dated May 4, 1890]

It answers "Why?"

Kind Regards;

Catherine Sundvall