

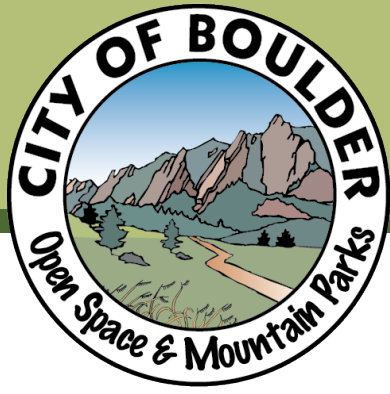
Evaluation of E-bikes on Open Space Trails



OSBT MEETING

JULY 13, 2022

MARNI RATZEL, PRINCIPAL PLANNER



Spring 2022

Preliminary evaluation of alternatives

Summer 2022

Community Engagement

Fall 2022

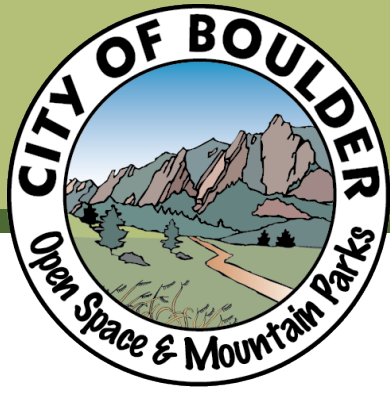
Board Input and Action

Oct: Present summary of public feedback for OSBT input

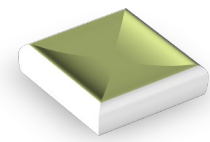
Nov: OSBT action on final staff recommendation

Winter 2022-2023

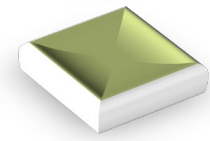
Council Consideration



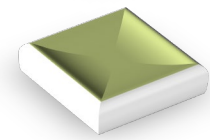
Presentation Outline:



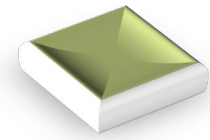
1. About e-bikes



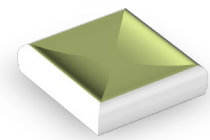
2. Current conditions



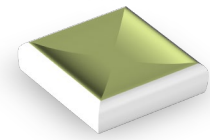
3. Goals and objectives



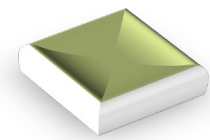
4. Assessment of e-biking as passive recreation



5. Overview of Alternatives analysis and preliminary proposal



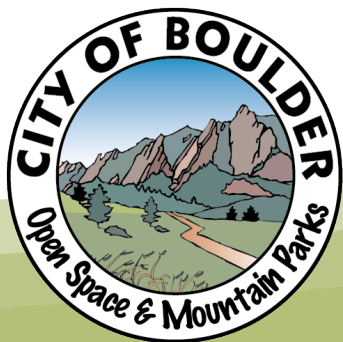
6. Community engagement opportunities



7. Next steps

What is an e-bike?

- Almost identical to a traditional bicycle in appearance
- Has a battery to provide low-power electric assistance





2017 State Law Amendments

3 Classes of E-bikes

1

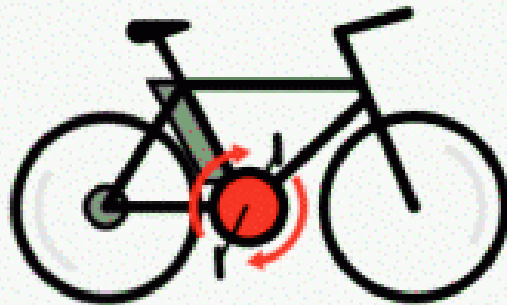
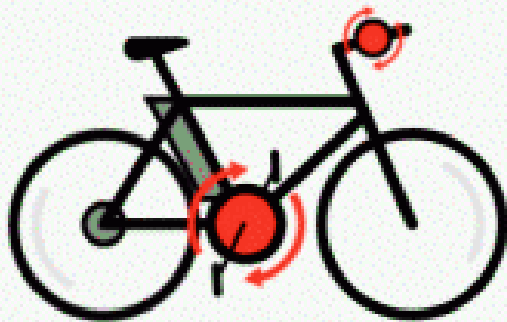
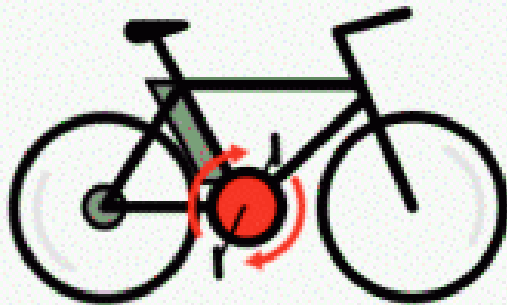
Pedal assist only,
maximum assisted
speed of 20 mph

2

Pedal & throttle
assisted, maximum
assisted speed 20 mph

3

Pedal assist only,
maximum assisted
speed of 28 mph



Pedal-Assist



Throttle

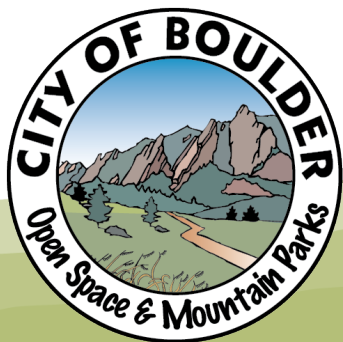


Maximum Speed

20 mph

20 mph

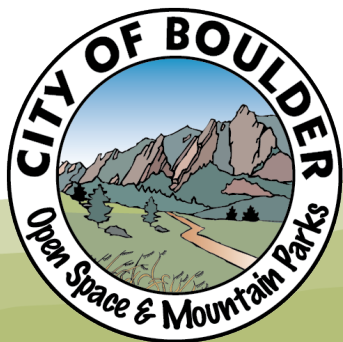
28 mph



Status Quo / Existing Conditions



- E-bikes are not allowed on OSMP trails
- If e-bikes are a desired or envisioned use on a trail located on land managed by OSMP, it requires open space land to be disposed of by selling, transferring, or giving it to another public agency.
- Disposal is not typically a preferred approach.

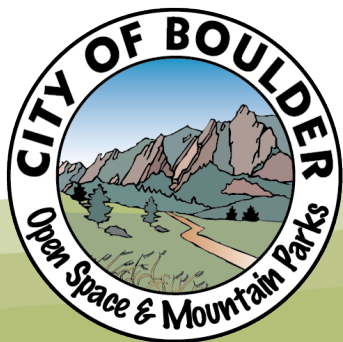


ADA Exception



OSMP allows people experiencing disabilities to use Other Power- Driven Mobility Devices (OPDMDs)

- e-bikes, hand cycles, track chairs
- OSMP has two hand cycles



OSMP Existing Conditions

Current Conditions Status Quo

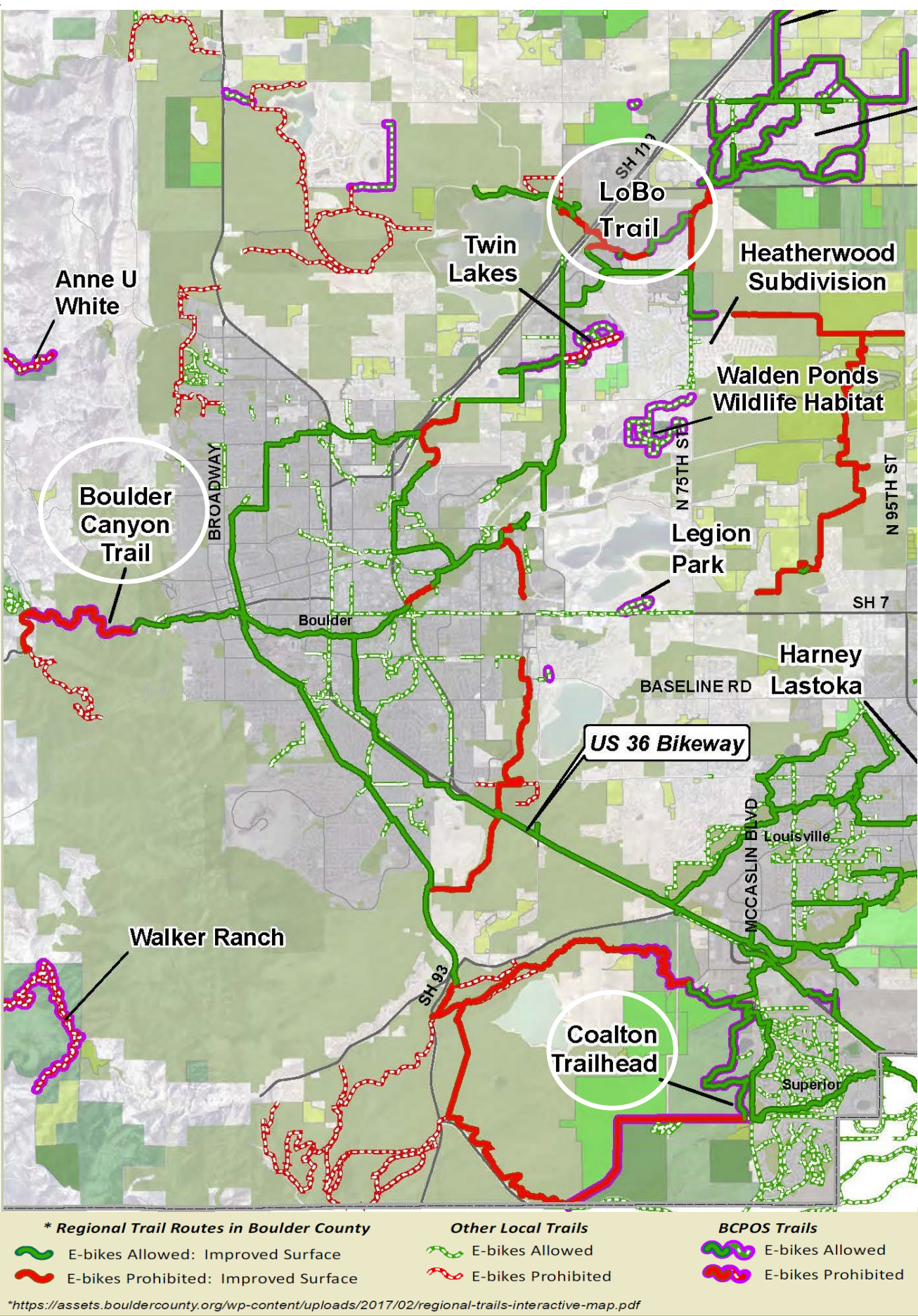
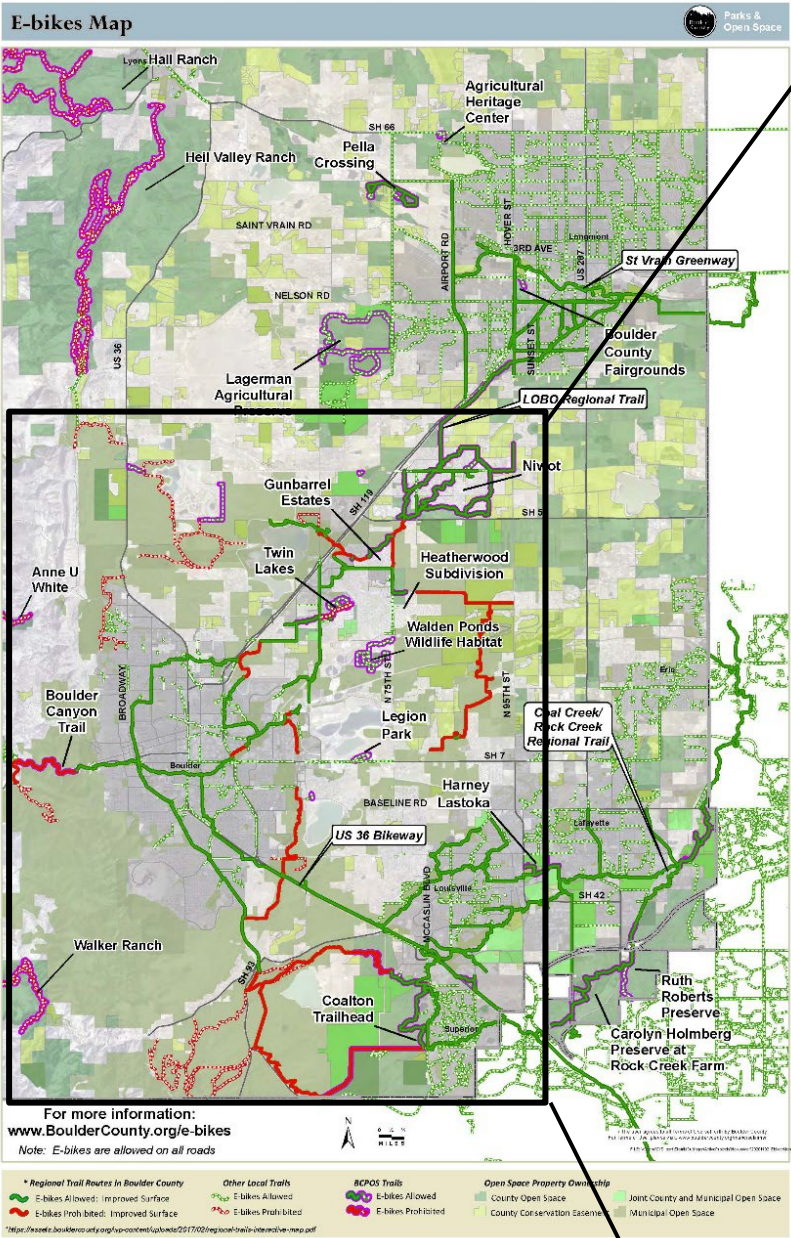
OSMP trails in the regional context



Parks &
Open Space



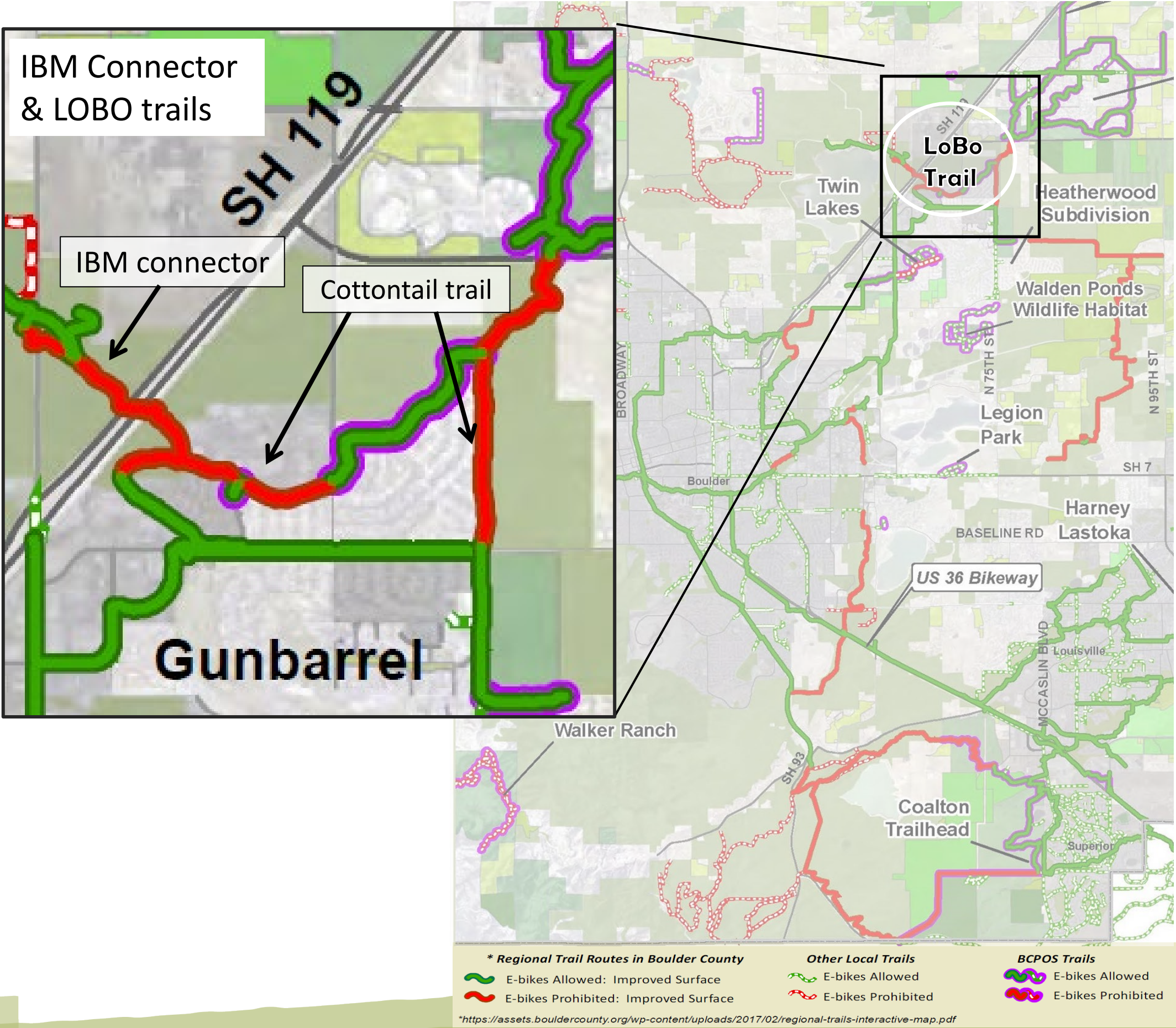
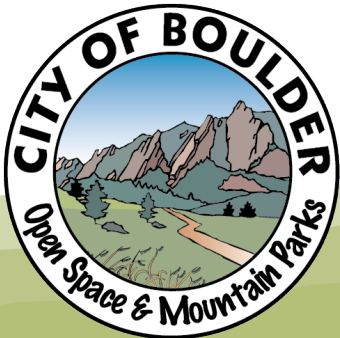
JEFFERSON
COUNTY COLORADO
Open Space



OSMP Existing Conditions

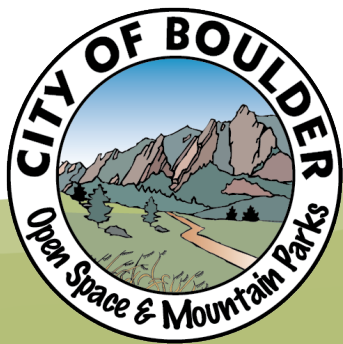
Current Conditions Status Quo

OSMP trails in the regional context



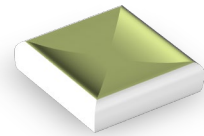
OSMP Existing Conditions

E-bikes are being used on OSMP

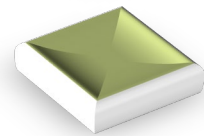


OSMP Existing Conditions

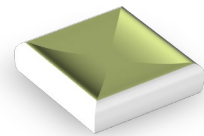
Objectives



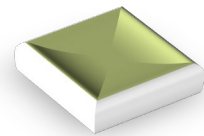
Improve access for community members of more ages and abilities to enjoy open space trails



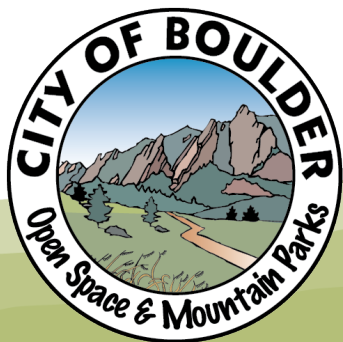
Provide consistent visitor experiences across interconnected trails

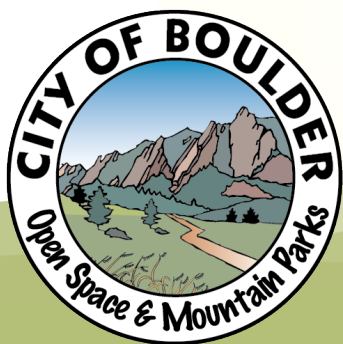
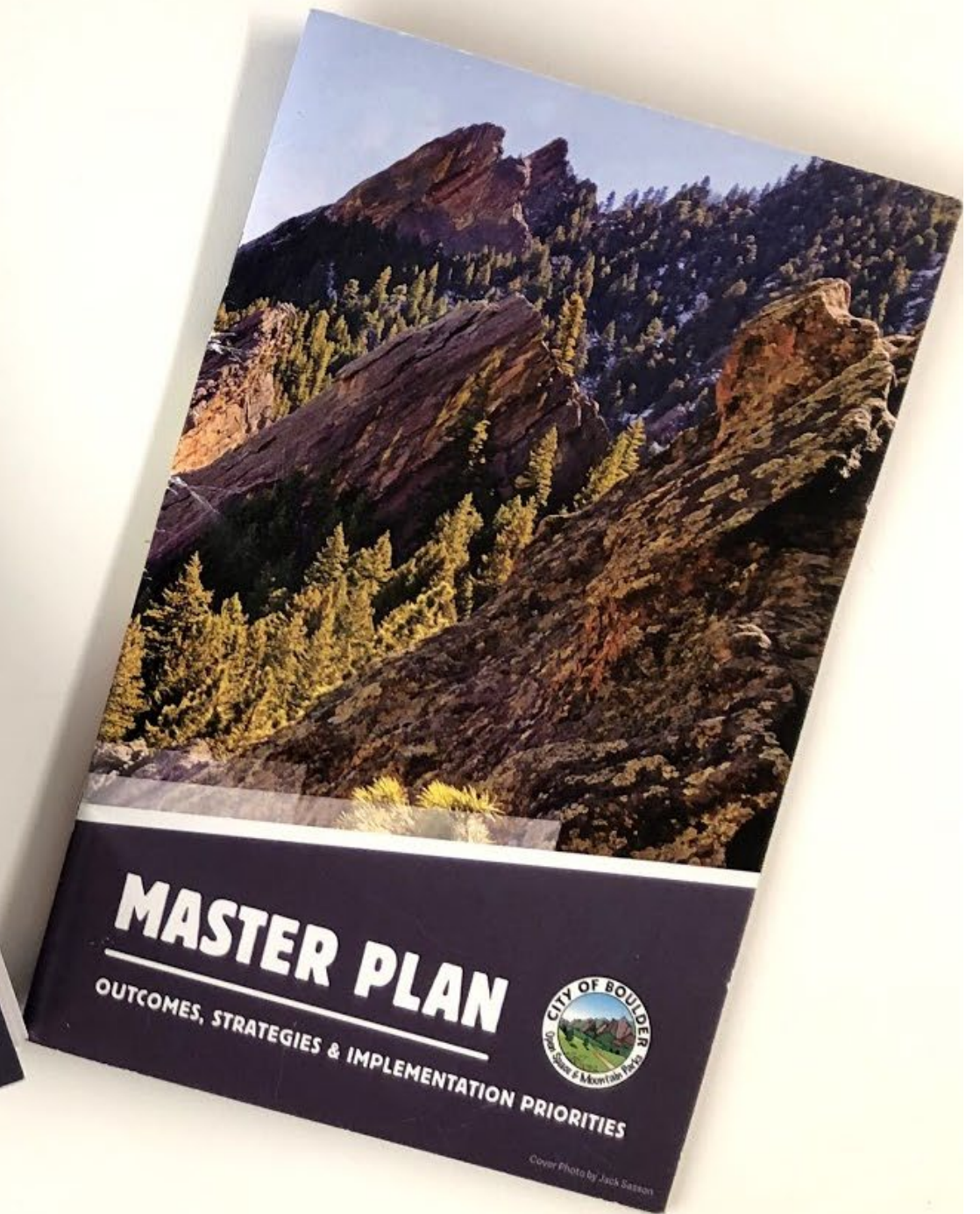
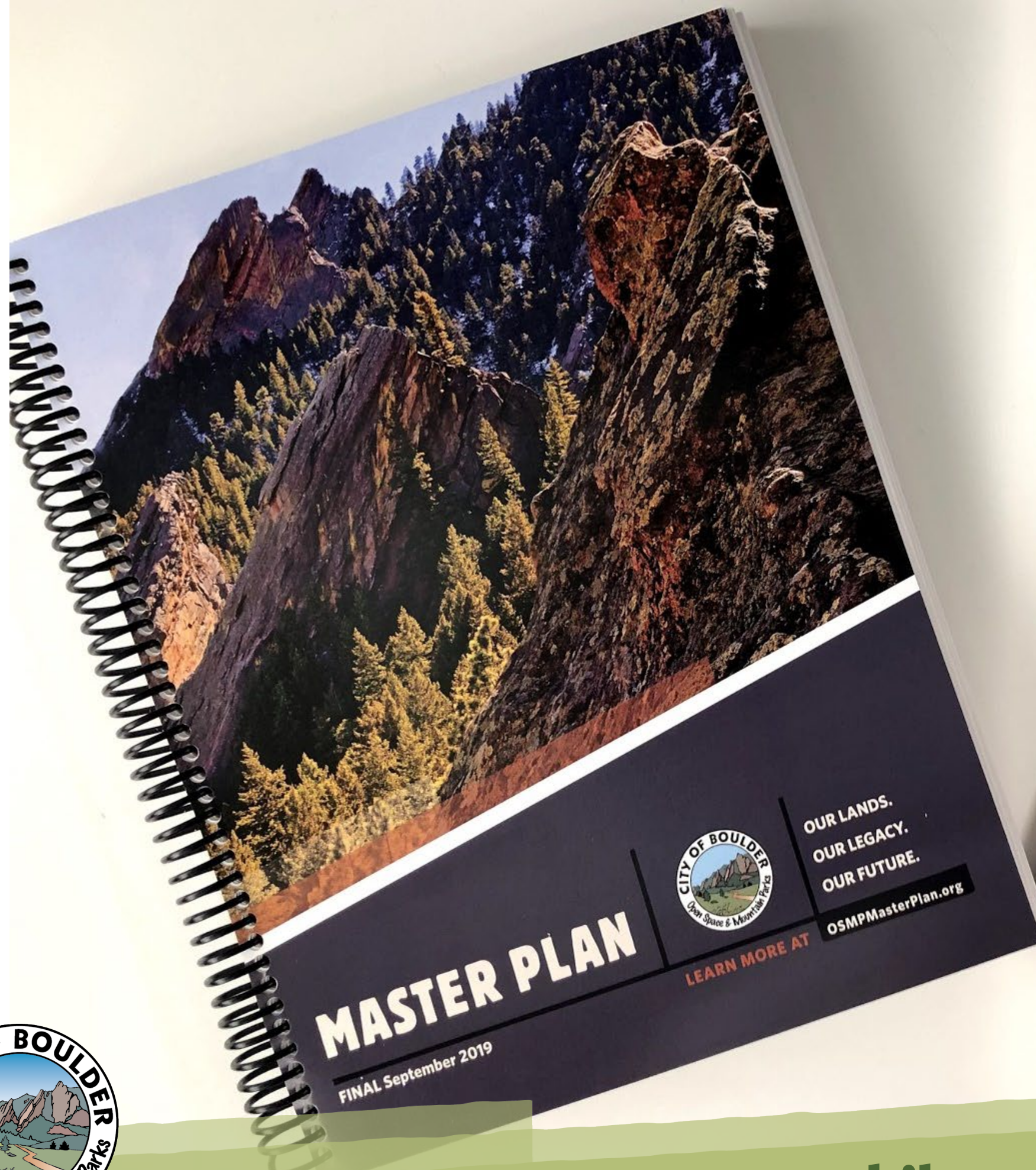


Provide more adaptive management approaches by considering alternatives to disposal



Support broader city climate goals





MASTER PLAN STRATEGIES

(check all that apply)

- EHR.1 ☐ Preserve and restore important habitat blocks and corridors
- EHR.2 ☐ Update and continue implementing system plans guiding ecosystem management
- EHR.3 ☐ Address the global climate crisis here and now
- ATT.1 ☐ Reduce maintenance backlog for agriculture and water infrastructure
- ATT.2 ☐ Increase soil health and resilience
- ATT.3 ☐ Address conflicts between agriculture and prairie dogs
- RRSE.1 ☒ Assess and manage increasing visitation
- RRSE.2 ☐ Reduce trail maintenance backlog
- CCEI.1 ☐ Welcome diverse backgrounds and abilities
- CCEI.2 ☐ Enhance communications with visitors

TIER 1

- EHR.4 ☐ Reduce undesignated trails
- EHR.5 ☐ Extend on-trail requirements
- EHR.6 ☐ Control invasive species
- EHR.7 ☐ Develop a learning laboratory approach to conservation
- ATT.4 ☐ Protect water resources in a warmer future
- ATT.5 ☐ Encourage diverse and innovative agricultural operations
- RRSE.3 ☐ Update guidelines and standards for quality trail design and construction
- RRSE.4 ☒ Encourage multimodal access to trailheads
- RRSE.5 ☐ Manage passive recreation activities requiring a permit
- CCEI.3 ☐ Connect youth to the outdoors
- CCEI.4 ☐ Support city-wide engagement with federally recognized American Indian Tribes and Indigenous Peoples

TIER 2

- EHR.8 ☐ Reduce impacts from noise, light and nearby land uses
- EHR.9 ☐ Reduce and offset OSMP greenhouse gas emissions
- ATT.6 ☐ Support the success of ranchers and farmers
- ATT.7 ☐ Integrate native ecosystems and agriculture
- ATT.8 ☐ Further reduce or eliminate pesticide use
- ATT.9 ☐ Enhance enjoyment and protection of working landscapes
- RRSE.6 ☒ Support a range of passive recreation experiences
- RRSE.7 ☐ Build new trails as guided by past and future plans
- RRSE.8 ☐ Provide welcoming and inspiring visitor facilities and services
- RRSE.9 ☐ Develop a learning laboratory approach to recreation
- CCEI.5 ☐ Foster wellness through immersion in the outdoors
- CCEI.6 ☐ Inspire environmental literacy and new involvement in OSMP
- CCEI.7 ☐ Cultivate leaders in stewardship
- CCEI.8 ☐ Heighten community understanding of land management efforts
- CCEI.9 ☐ Preserve and protect Boulder’s cultural heritage

TIER 3

Boulder City Charter

Authorizes open space purposes to include passive recreation use such as hiking, photography, or nature studies and if specifically designated, bicycling, horseback riding or fishing. Charter Sec. 176(c)

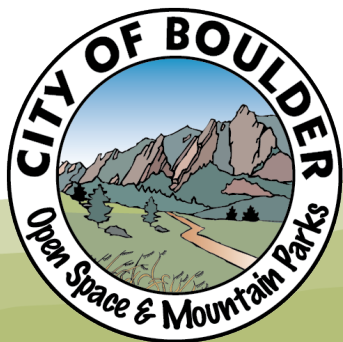


Passive Recreation

2005 Visitor Master Plan

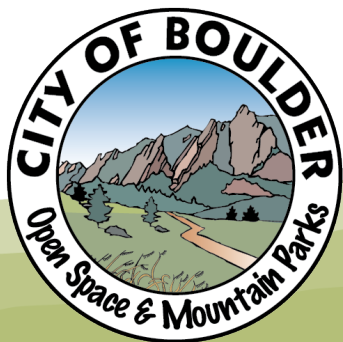
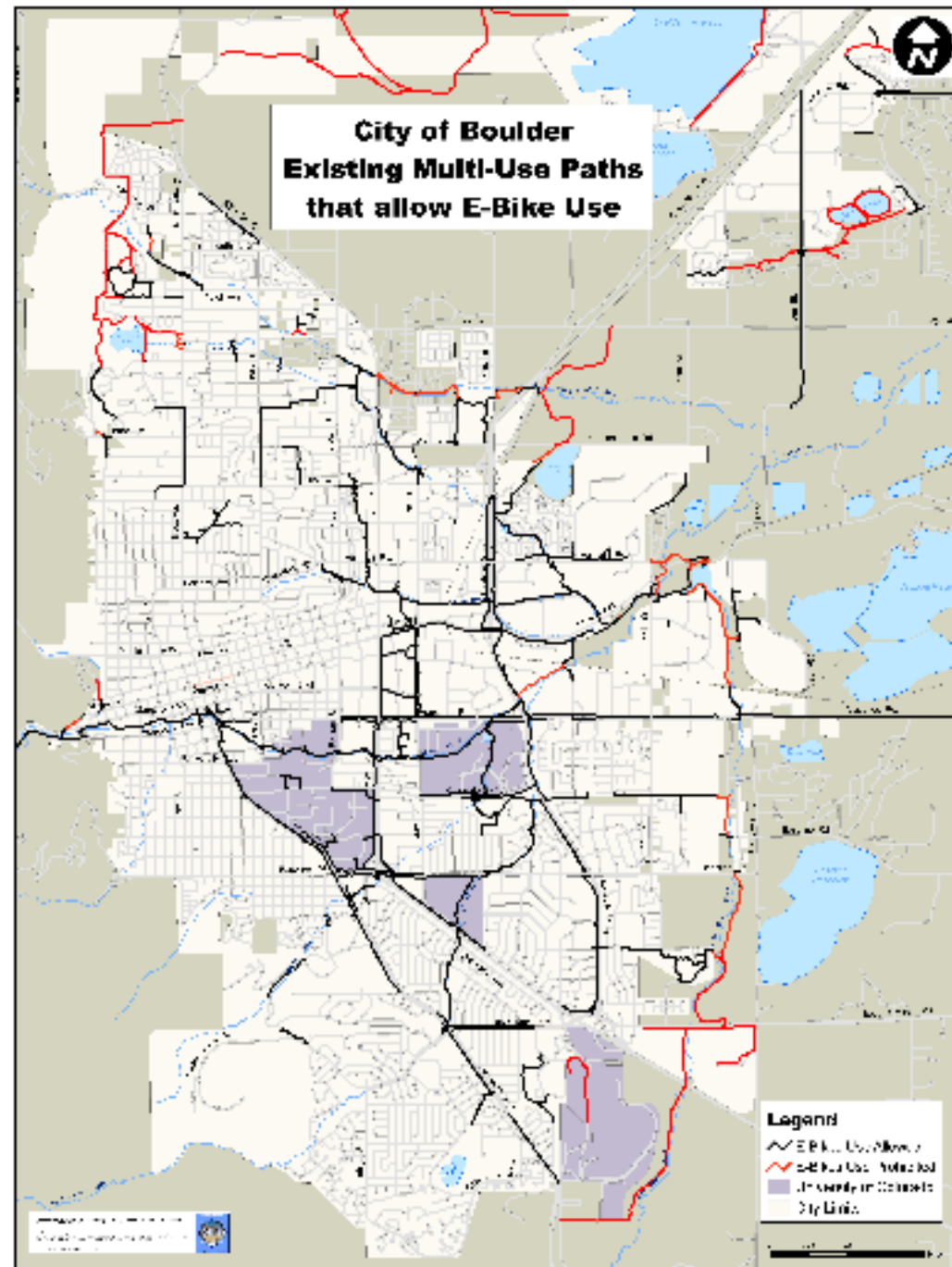
Includes a definition of passive recreation as non-motorized activities that:

- Offer constructive, restorative, and pleasurable human benefits that foster an appreciation and understanding of Open Space [and Mountain Parks] and its purposes
- Do not significantly impact natural, cultural, scientific, or agricultural values
- Occur in an Open Space and Mountain Parks setting, which is an integral part of the experience
- Require only minimal facilities and services directly related to safety and minimizing passive recreational impacts
- Are compatible with other passive recreational activities



Passive Recreation

Background



2014

- City adopts local ordinance to allow e-bikes on paved paths.
- OSMP interprets e-bikes as “motorized”.

2017

- E-bikes treated by state statutes and local ordinance as bicycles
- Law supports e-bikes as non-motorized

2019

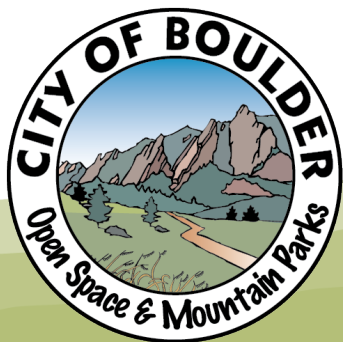
- Boulder County adopts regulations that allow e-bikes on Plains trails.

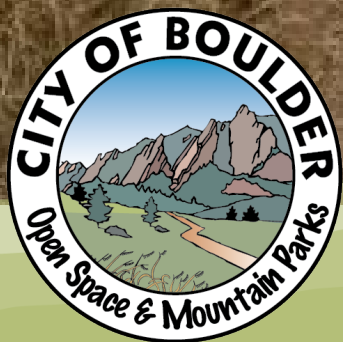
OSMP interpretation

- Electric-assist meets the intent of passive recreation of “non-motorized” definition in the 2005 VMP.

Activity Assessment Criteria

- 1) compatibility with other recreational activities,
- 2) compatibility with resource protection,
- 3) compatibility with existing facilities and services, and
- 4) their relationship to the natural setting.





Alternatives Considered

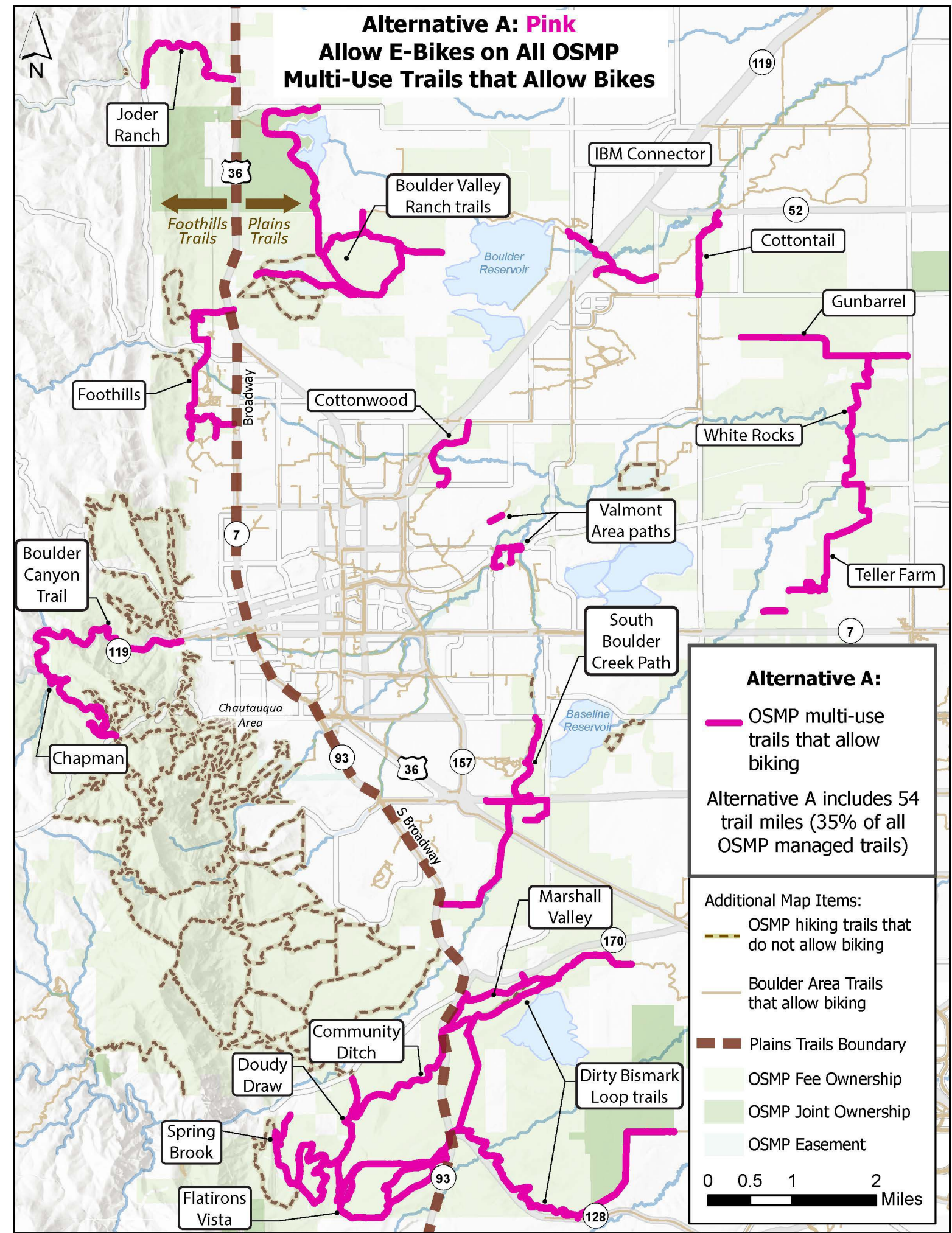
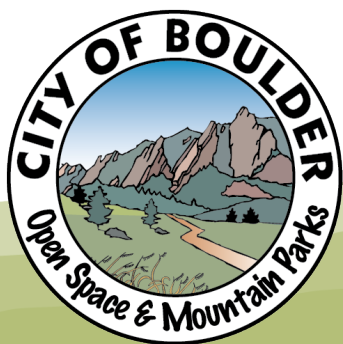
Alternative A

Allow e-bikes on all OSMP multi-use trails that allow bikes

- About 54 miles of trails on OSMP are designated for use by bicyclists.
- These trails would allow e-biking

Alternative A would allow e-bikes on

- 54 miles of open space trails
- 35% of the 154 miles OSMP trail network



Alternative B

Allow e-bikes on OSMP Plains trails and Boulder Canyon trail

Plains trails are located east of

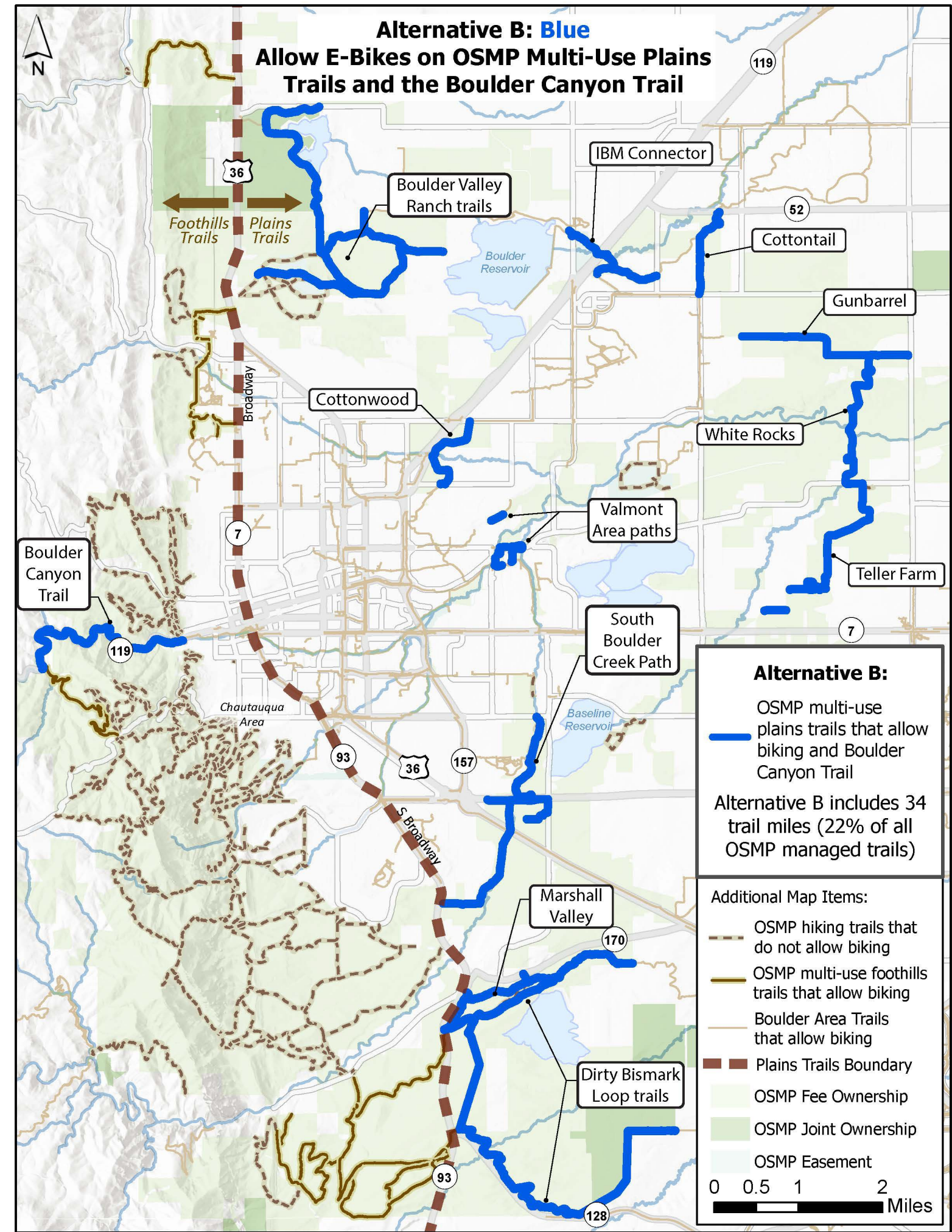
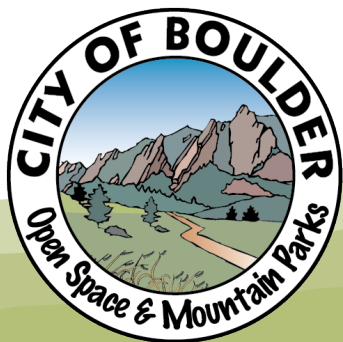
- **Broadway within the city of Boulder limits**
- **North Foothills/US 36 corridor to the north, and**
- **CO 93 to the south of city limits**

Boulder Canyon Trail

- **A regional trail west of Broadway with a segment on OSMP lands.**
- **Maintained by COB Transportation & Mobility within city limits**
- **Maintained by Boulder County in unincorporated Boulder County.**

Alternative B would allow e-bikes on

- **34 miles of open space trails**
- **22% of the 154 miles OSMP trail network**



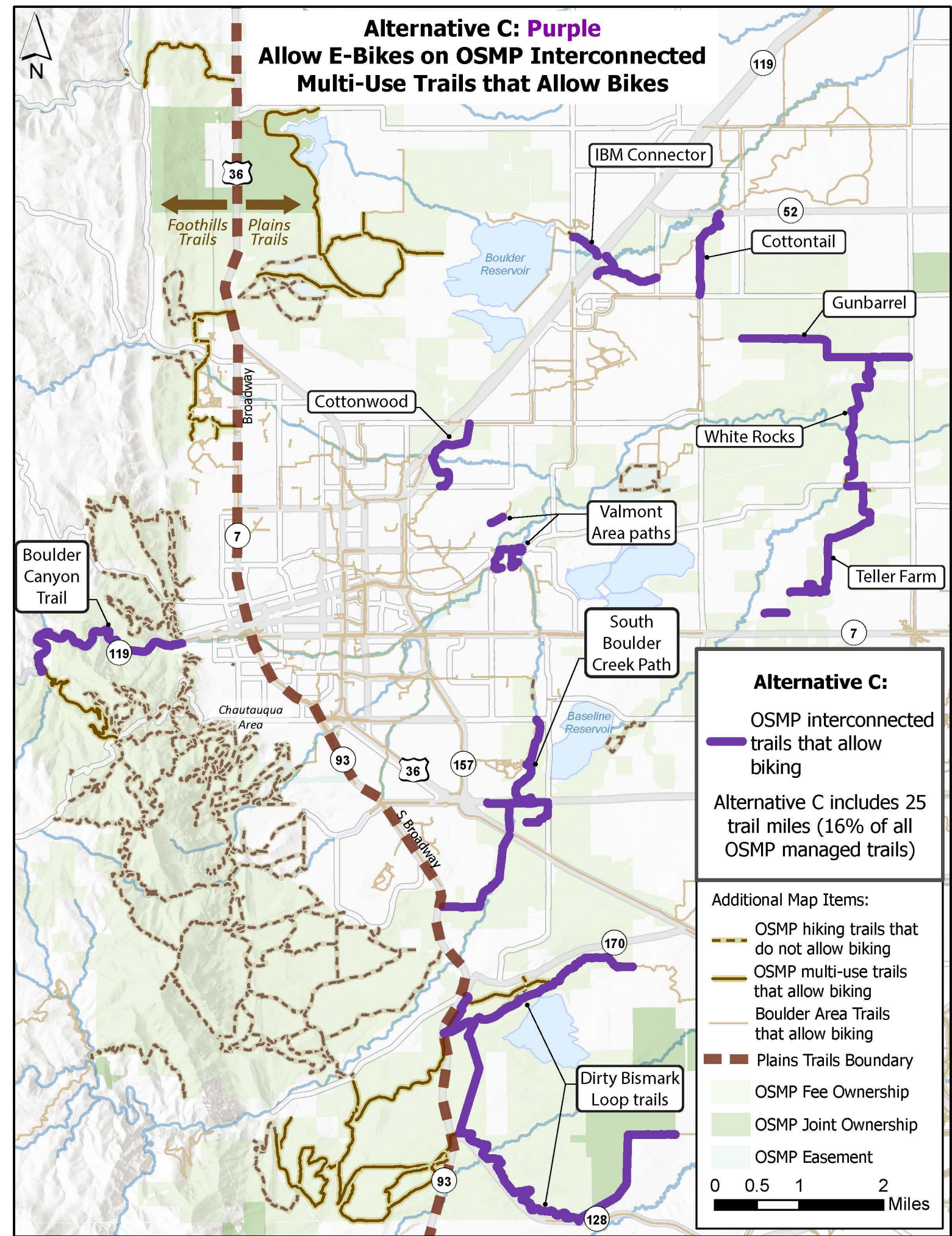
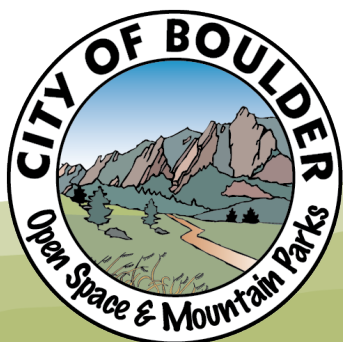
Alternative C

Allow e-bikes on OSMP Interconnected multi-use trails that allow bikes

- Alternative C includes OSMP trails that are part of the great Boulder County Regional Trail Network.

Alternative C would allow e-bikes on

- Approximately 25 miles of open space trails
- 16% of the 154 miles OSMP trail network



Criteria

Community support

Equitable access to open space lands

Consistency with Boulder County and other City inter-connected trails

Disposal of open space

Effectiveness of regulations

Safety / Conflict

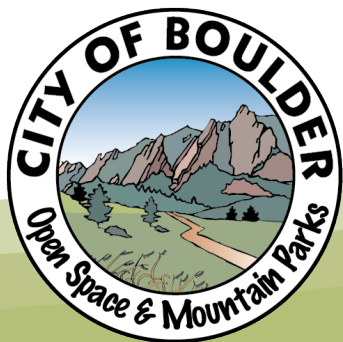
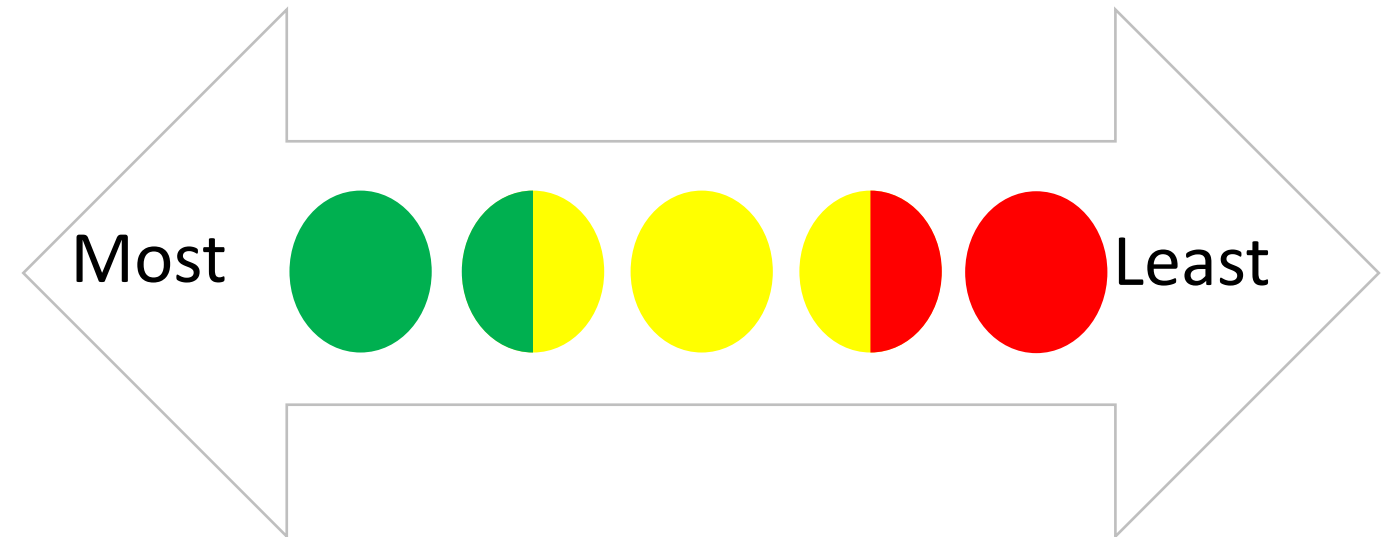
Aligned with city climate initiatives

Protection of natural resources

Visitor displacement

Trail maintenance

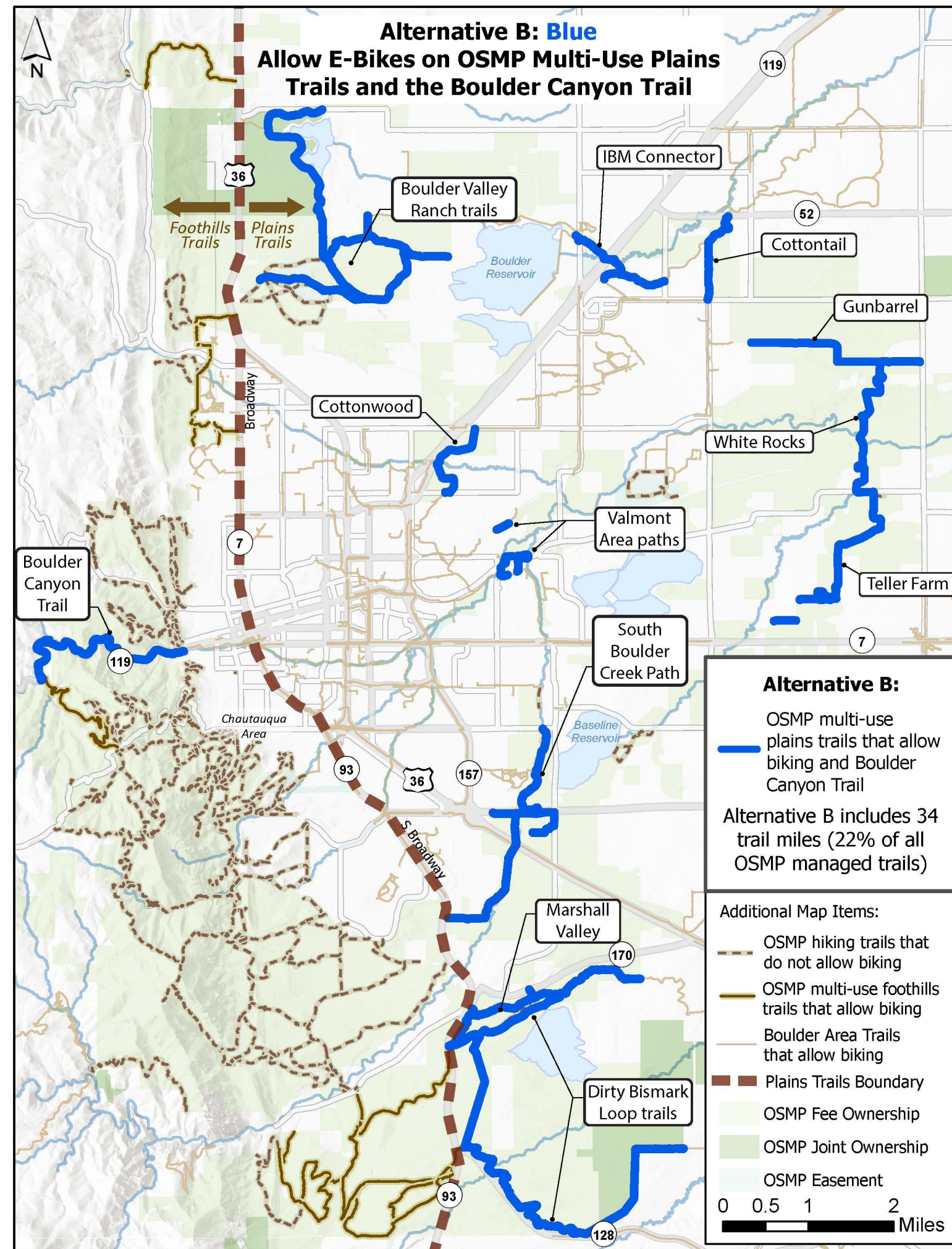
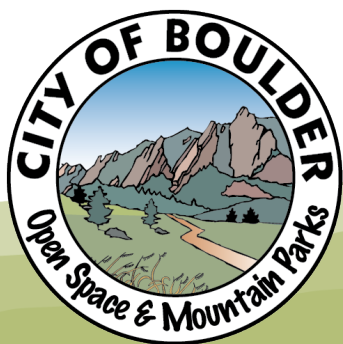
Visitation



Alternative B *Preliminary Staff Proposal*

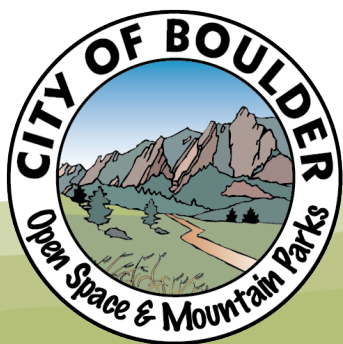
OSMP Plains trails and Boulder Canyon trail

- Consistency with e-biking regulations interconnected trails.
- Effectiveness of regulations.
- Significantly increases equitable access to open space.
- Create an adaptive approach and alternative to disposal.
- Minimal impacts to natural resources, visitor experiences, visitor safety, and the trail system.
- Supports broader city climate goals.



Proposed Monitoring

- E-biking activity added as a new category
- Track changes, if any, attributed to e-biking
 - ☐ Visitor experience
 - ☐ Conflicts between user groups
 - ☐ Medical incidents and summons
 - ☐ Visitor demographics
 - ☐ Percent of visitors that e-bike and how they get to open space



Visitation Data Explorer

Quick Stats

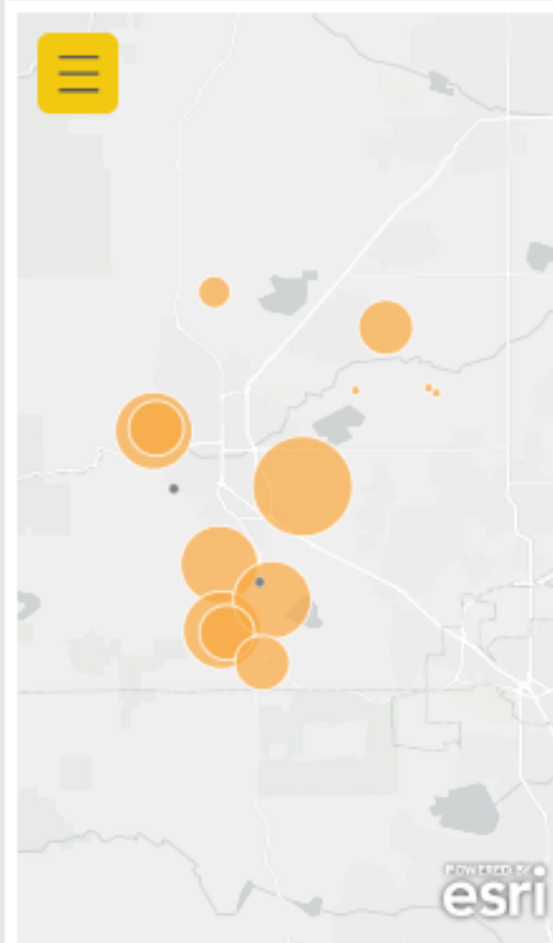
Data Table

Status Update: The Eagle & Foothills South trail counters have been experiencing technical issues

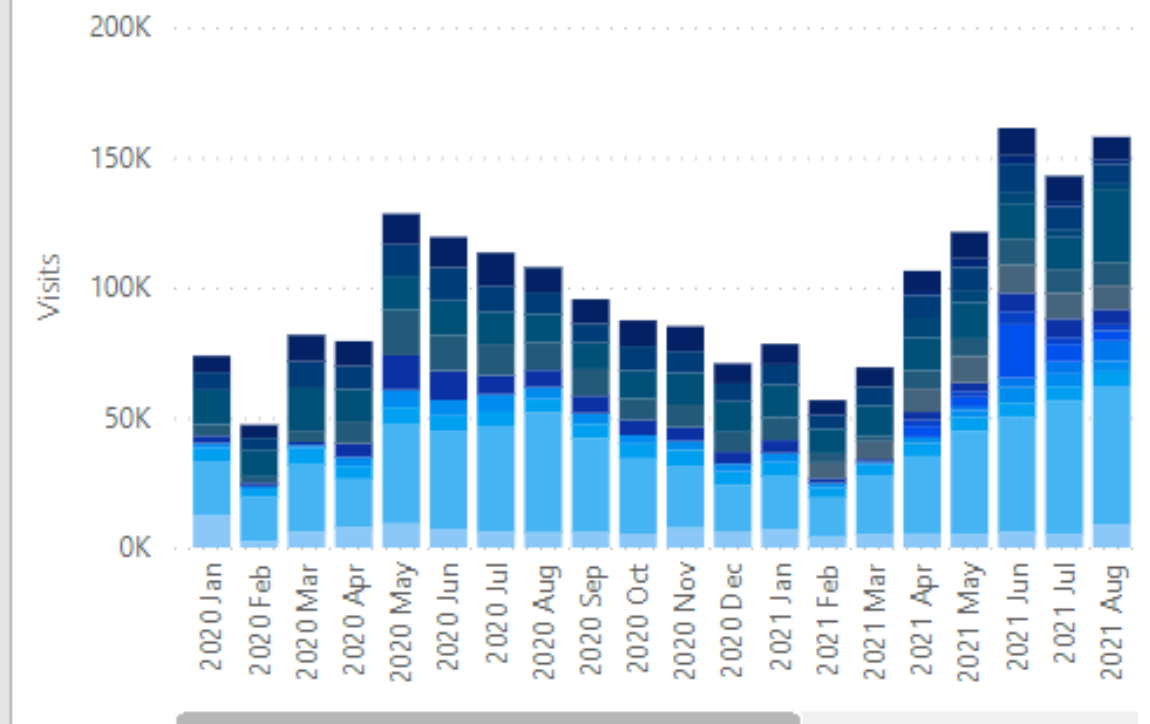
Quick filter

Region, display name

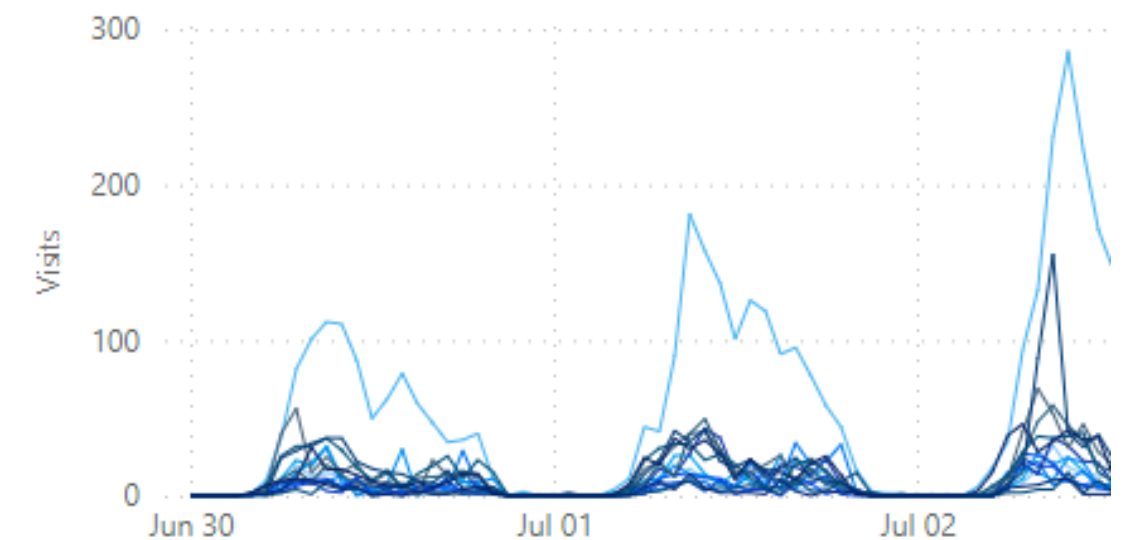
- ☐ Select all
- ☒ East
- ☒ North
- ☒ South
- ☒ West



Total monthly visits for monitored locations ⓘ



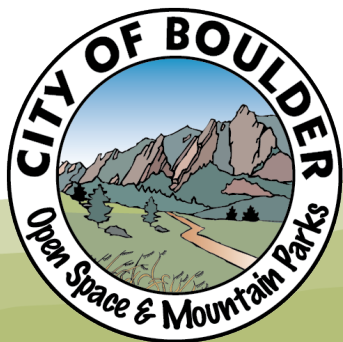
Last 7 Days: Total hourly visits by location



Engagement Opportunities

- Online questionnaire
- Drop-in office hours at OSMP Hub
 - Wednesday July 20st from 12 – 2 p.m.
 - Tuesday July 26th from 4 to 6 p.m.
- E-bike intercept survey

The screenshot shows the 'be heard' website for the City of Boulder. The page is titled 'E-Bikes on Open Space Trails'. It includes a breadcrumb trail 'Home » E-Bikes on Open Space Trails'. The main content area contains a paragraph about the City of Boulder Open Space and Mountain Parks (OSMP) inviting community input on a staff evaluation of e-bikes on city open space and a preliminary proposal to allow them on 34 miles of designated trails. It also mentions that current city policy prohibits e-biking on any city open space trails. A photo of a paved trail winding through a grassy field is shown. Below the photo, it states that the input from the following questionnaire will be used to help develop a final staff recommendation for the Open Space Board of Trustees (OSBT) and Council. It also mentions that consideration will be given on if and how to allow e-bike use on open space trails later this year or early 2023. More information on how staff will use your input and next steps are below. A section titled 'Need help with the questionnaire? Or would like to speak to OSMP staff?' lists drop-in office hours: Wednesday, July 20 from noon to 2 p.m. and Tuesday, July 26 from 4 to 6 p.m. An 'About E-Bikes' section defines an e-bike as a bicycle with an integrated electric motor not exceeding 750 watts of power. It also defines two classes of e-bikes: Class 1 (low-speed pedal-assisted) and Class 2 (low-speed throttle-assisted). The right sidebar contains 'Important Links' (OSMP Evaluation of E-Bikes on Trails Webpage), 'Related Documents' (E-Biking Activity Assessment.pdf (733 KB) (pdf)), 'Who's Listening' (Marni Ratzel, City of Boulder, Email: ratzelm@bouldercolorado.gov), and 'Key Dates' (Drop-In Office Hours July 20 2022 and Drop-In Office Hours July 26 2022).

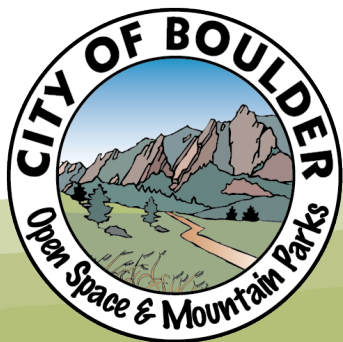


Communications Strategies

- Project web page
- BeHeardBoulder
- Press Release

Social media alerts on...

- All OMSP.org pages
- OSMPTrails.org
- OSMP Field Notes
- City e-newsletters
- NextDoor
- Twitter
- Facebook





Spring 2022

Preliminary evaluation of alternatives

Summer 2022

Community Engagement

Fall 2022

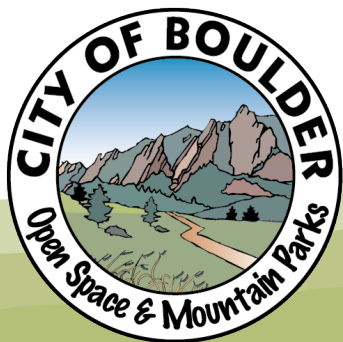
Board Input and Action

Oct 8: Present summary of public feedback for OSBT input

Nov 13: OSBT action on final staff recommendation

Winter 2022-2023

Council Consideration



Board & Council Consideration

Thank You!



Questions?

