Informe de progreso de las prioridades estratégicas
The Boulder County Board of County Commissioners thanks residents, staff and volunteers for their commitment and support over the past four years. This report is just a small reflection of offered services and investments made to ensure that the county remains a vibrant, welcoming, and aspirational community responsive to the needs of the individuals that live, work, create, learn, and visit Boulder County, Colorado each day.

Steeped in our stated values, the county has made strides toward achievement of the Strategic Priorities established in 2018. With the support and strength of our broader community, we have also navigated significant challenges impacting almost every facet of county operations. As we remain focused on current objectives, we look forward to revisiting the county’s Strategic Priorities in 2023 with an eye on the next five years. This effort will guide and inform future work plans and continue to benefit from the input and perspectives of Boulder County constituents.

The community’s guidance, engagement, and encouragement along with the collective efforts of county elected officials, the county administrator, the local giving community, and our valued state and local partners has and will continue to amplify Boulder County’s resilience and sustainability.

For more information on Boulder County, visit: BoulderCounty.gov

Commissioners Letter

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In 2018, the Boulder County Board of Commissioners (BOCC) prioritized initiatives most likely to “improve social and environmental conditions in our communities” and set goals to be achieved between 2019-2023. This 2022 BOULDER COUNTY STRATEGIC PRIORITIES PROGRESS REPORT provides updates on action toward those goals, and references new pressures experienced by the community.

The BOCC also established five principles to guide decision-making through the five-year period including: Data-driven decision making; Focus on prevention; Equity; Stake-in-the-ground leadership; and Using best-practice tools.

1. INVESTMENT IN TECHNOLOGY, SYSTEMS & SECURITY ARE CRITICAL TO ENSURING THE INTEGRITY OF DATA RELIED UPON IN DECISION-MAKING.

Since 2019, the county has invested $13.7M in systems updates, enhancements, and training to better serve the community. The county domain name migration to .GOV, multi-factor authentication protocol, and improved firewall solutions were implemented to keep the county’s data secure. We also enhanced internal systems in order to accommodate virtual public meetings and perform hybrid, remote, and in-field work. Recent integration of a data analytics team into the cross-department serving IT function will aid analytics, digitization, governance, and data warehousing. Finally, a 2021 survey of departments found that 90% of business with Boulder County can be conducted online. We have and will continue to enhance customer on-line self-service options as part of ongoing efficiency and service improvements.

2. TIMELINES FOR PREVENTION-RELATED GOALS MUST CONSIDER RAPIDLY EVOLVING COMMUNITY NEEDS, EXTERNAL MARKET FACTORS AND, ON OCCASION, THE NEED TO SCALE OR REDIRECT RESOURCES IN RESPONSE TO CRISIS.

The BOCC supports efforts that “empower people and strengthen families by confronting the root causes of crisis and instability.” Since 2019, we have found that meeting the urgent resident needs required service and resource agility, scalability, and flexibility in the face of rapidly evolving conditions. Across the county’s system of services, we recognize the need for flexible project management, role clarity (for staff and vendors/contractors), and shared resources to address access, communications, coordinated scenarios testing and after-action learnings.

3. ADVANCING EQUITY IN THE COUNTY REQUIRES BASELINE EDUCATION, CORE LEADERSHIP AND SYSTEM-WIDE COLLABORATION.

The county is committed to ensuring that “all people have full and equal access to the opportunities they need to survive and succeed.” As a member of the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE), we embrace a race-centered framework to guide county leadership and services. The 2022 creation of the county’s Office of Racial Equity will ensure that the county maintains race as a core consideration and develop standards for racial data aggregation.

4. SHARED LEADERSHIP, ACCOUNTABILITY, AND BEST PRACTICE TOOLS BENEFIT FROM A COUNTYWIDE LENS.

In January 2020, BOCC established the Office of County Administrator, a best practice among county governments of comparable size and scope. Responsible for coordination and facilitation of county operations, that office ensures management practices align with achievement of goals and reflect our values.
County residents are, however, challenged by increasing regional costs of living and low and middle-income housing scarcity only exacerbated by the devastating loss of more than 1,000 homes during the Cal-Wood and Marshall Fire events in 2020 and 2021. These conditions particularly impact low wage earners and those with fixed incomes. Recent real estate studies found that the median home price in Boulder County is up 14.8% year-over-year and that rental rates have increased 6% compared to 2020. The county’s affordability-related goals aim to increase the region’s affordable housing stock and make transit even more inclusive, easy, and reliable.

Affordable Living

Boulder County’s highly regarded quality of life is anchored in our educational institutions, public infrastructure, start-up friendly environment, and natural beauty.

GOAL 1  
Housing

Increase access to a diverse stock of workforce housing and affordable housing for Boulder County’s residents and employees with lower and middle incomes by implementing and supporting Boulder County’s Regional Affordable Housing Plan.

GOAL 2  
Transportation

Increase access to all modes of transportation.

Progress to date

• Approval of The Boulder County Comprehensive Plan Housing and Economics Update (2019).

• Through the Boulder County Housing Authority (BCHA), secured 400+ units of affordable homes for low and middle-income households including Tungsten Village (26 units, 2020), Traditions/Lafayette (133 senior units, 2021), and Copperstone/Lafayette (260 units, 2018) and completed construction at the Spoke on Coffman/Longmont (73 units, 2022).

• Invested $2.4 million completing property rehab improvements and preserving existing BCHA affordable housing. Implemented sustainability and energy efficiency upgrades and installed EV charging stations reducing household utility costs and greenhouse gas emissions.

• Following adoption of the county’s first Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan: Mobility & Access for All Ages and Abilities (2022), continued to improve access for all Boulder County residents regardless of age, ability or income by completing the Peak Ride Volunteer Driver Program Plan (2019) and implementing EcoPass program for all BCHA sites.

• Adopted a US 287 feasibility study (2022) proposing bus service and connection improvements along the 20-mile corridor to Broomfield County faster, more reliable, and convenient. The project identified high priority intersections, potential crossings and bicycle storage enhancements and informs future regional, state, and federal grant pursuits.

• With partners, secured $100+M in funding to provide multimodal improvements along the CO119/ Diagonal corridor connecting Boulder, Longmont, and communities in SW Weld and Larimer counties. Boulder County is leading the development of the CO119 commuter bikeway and supporting the creation of the CO119 transit service in partnership with local communities, RTD, and CDOT.

• Received $34M Federal Transit Administration (FTA) awarded funding for transit efforts in small urbanized areas located within the county, including Boulder, Longmont, and the combined areas of Louisville-Lafayette-Erie.

“Affordable housing and bus transit have let me become whole, whereas previously, parts of me were splintered off, constantly stressed and scrambling—in fight or flight mode—for survival.”

—Joslyn D., Kestrel Resident
- Continue property land banking exploration and community collaboration to enhance diverse stock of affordable housing.

- Break ground on development of Phase 1A and 1B at Willoughby Corner in Lafayette, including 63 Senior Apartments, 129 Multi-family Apartments, a community building, and significant garden and outdoor amenities. Future phases are planned for a total of 400 units in this community, including a mix of rental and homeownership opportunities.

- Complete efforts to preserve permanently affordable housing units at the Casa de la Esperanza conversion project/Longmont (32 units) and at Eagle Place/Lafayette (60 units).

- Prioritize transit access improvements, EcoPass and car share programs at BCHA properties, and RTD bus services that are a significant benefit for low-income residents.

- Focus on regional multimodal mobility and safety improvements and bus service along priority corridors, including CO119, CO7, and US287. Work with agency partners in pursuit of grant funding opportunities for each of these corridors.

- Restore and grow county transit options. Improve opportunities for people of all ages and riding abilities to safely bicycle throughout Boulder County, including the on-going build out of the county’s regional trail master plan, US36/ North Foothills highway bikeway feasibility study, and regional commuter bikeway corridors.

Priorities through 2023

"My life is so much better since I came here, especially once I found out how to schedule rides. The drivers are amazing and helpful. They go above and beyond with things like helping carry in heavy groceries."

-Jenny B., Kestrel Resident
Climate Action

Acknowledging the pace and severity of global climate change, the county prioritized thoughtful planning, example-setting practices, and programs incentivizing climate-friendly private property enhancements.

GOAL 1  electricity
Reduce Boulder County’s internal energy consumption and meet all of Boulder County’s electrical needs with 100% renewable energy by 2024.

- Decreased energy consumption over 10% since 2019, achieving the internal energy consumption goal three years ahead of schedule.
- Completed county building energy audits. Registered 18 county buildings in the Energy Star program since its inception achieving a score of 80 or more at six buildings and 90+ at three other locations (Sandspoint, St. Vrain Hub, and Old County Hospital).
- Invested $393k in lighting updates to county buildings over 50,000 square feet in the City of Boulder (2021) and ensured that all Longmont Power provided electricity comes from renewable sources (2019).

GOAL 2  EV transportation
Becoming a GoEV County, pledge to develop a transportation electrification plan and implementation strategies.

- More than doubled the number of battery electric and plug-in hybrid vehicles in the county fleet (now 6% of light-duty fleet vehicles available with hybrid or fully electric charge capability) and added 50 EV charging stations at county-owned parking lots to serve these vehicles, staff and community members at a cost of $580K.
- Established a Recovery and Resilience Division within the Office of County Administrator to aid in longer-term recovery programming as the community navigates natural disasters largely caused by climate change.
- Identified potential sustainability developments, including solar development on agricultural lands, resulting in the county’s first agrovoltaic solar garden at Jack’s Solar in Longmont.

GOAL 3  climate change
Prevent and mitigate negative impacts to Boulder County’s community, economy, and environment due to climate change and other shocks and stresses.

- Launched the Climate Justice Collaborative exploring enhancements with BIPOC communities toward co-created projects and strategies that build and support greater awareness and environmental information exchange with underrepresented and underserved communities.
- Established the Climate Justice Collaborative of Boulder County (CJC) strengthens and supports a movement in Boulder County to build and organize for climate justice, led by the communities most impacted by climate chaos. The CJC is striving to create cohesion to advance and achieve racial, social, economic, and environmental equity as we address climate change. During the current founding phases of the CJC, we have partially funded a disaster preparedness program for a local mobile home community and created allies with The Hive from Naropa, local governments, and other diverse organizations.

GOAL 4  policy support
Continue and expand support for statewide policy, administrative, and regulatory efforts to reduce climate change.

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Priorities through 2023

- Complete construction for a Southeast Community Hub, a $22.4M investment which will be the fourth county-owned facility deemed energy efficient by the U.S. Green Building Council.
- Continue implementation efforts identified in the Boulder County Climate Plan.
- As resources allow, continue fleet transition to battery electric vehicles (EVs) and plug-in hybrid vehicles (PHEVs) for light-duty vehicles.
- Update the county’s Facilities Master Plan identifying consolidation and energy efficiency opportunities.

“Charging at work makes the choice of driving an EV even easier, because I am confident I can charge at work if necessary, which eliminates range anxiety. Providing EV charging as an employee perk is a concrete example of Boulder County’s dedication to its employees and to supporting EV use. I use the chargers regularly and look forward to continuing to share them with an expanding population of employee EV drivers!”

- Stephanie A. and Olivia L., Office of Sustainability, Climate Action & Resilience
Equity & Justice

Community services must work for and respond to the needs of all residents. The county has and continues to prioritize enhancement of culturally responsive and inclusive services, criminal justice reform, and access to mental health services to serve all residents.

**GOAL 1**
**equity**
Increase equity, diversity, and inclusion at Boulder County by implementing Boulder County’s Cultural Responsiveness and Inclusion Roadmap.

**GOAL 2**
**reform**
Implement criminal justice reform best practices to decrease recidivism and crime, diverting people with low criminal justice involvement risk to appropriate programming and utilizing incarceration for people with high criminal justice risk to ensure public safety.

**GOAL 3**
**mental health**
Increase access to effective mental and behavioral health services in Boulder County.

Juan was couch-surfing and struggling to find work due to his significant background and his extensive tattoos, including face and eye tattoos. The Resource Engagement/Probation Navigator team supported Juan in his job search. His performance was so good the organization chose to keep him on as an intern and advocate with employers across the Denver metro giving him an even greater chance.

- Joined the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE).
- Conducted baseline and progress-related employee Racial Equity awareness and feedback surveys (2020 and 2022 respectively).
- Adapted countywide policy (Policy 1.6 – Fully Inclusive, Anti-Racist & Multicultural Organization). Established a countywide Office of Racial Equity to advance racial equity outcomes across the organization.
- In partnership with the Boulder Valley and St. Vrain school districts, trained six staffers as QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer) trainers building suicide prevention internal organization capacity (2021); completed three QPR trainings for county and community partner staff.
- Implemented a Cross-Agency Alignment process (2021) with Youth Advisors and BCPH staff from Community Health Division (CHD) Programs, the Community Mental Health Initiative, and Healthy Eating Active Living (HEAL) initiating ten collaborative projects on youth mental health (2022).
- Managed $790k in criminal justice programs investments. In collaboration with the Colorado Division of Criminal Justice Office of Research and Statistics, conducted an analysis of disparities by race and ethnicity in the 20th Judicial District. Improved reporting, real-time analyses, dashboards and other data visualization tools to study, communicate and make decisions addressing public safety, recidivism, case management, and pre-trial reform.
- To aid community-based services, completed the design, concept and site planning phases for an Alternative Sentencing Facility expected to launch construction in 2023.

Commissioners continue to prioritize community outreach and engagement for all residents and segments of the community.
• Expand services and access to behavioral health through new and existing programs including the Mental Health Diversion Program, Pretrial Navigation Program, BRIDGES Court Liaisons, Behavioral Health Assistance Program, and the Clinical and Resource Engagement Program.

• Continue implementation of opioid settlement Intergovernmental Agreement, including creation of a regional plan, and facilitating decision-making on use of settlement funds that supports equity, justice, and services for community members.

• Continue to train staff in the Courageous Conversations About Race protocol from the Pacific Education Group as the foundational framework for advancing racial equity at Boulder County.

Priorities through 2023

“BHAP is helping me, along with a couple of other agencies, to be able to get housing, and helping me get out and stay out of confinement.”

-Mike L., BHAP participant
Land and Water Stewardship

One of our greatest responsibilities is care for our natural lands and waters. The county identified a “critical need for the preservation and stewardship of open space lands in the county, with preserved open space being a fundamental shared value of the people in Boulder County” whether in support of conservation, area biodiversity, sustainable agriculture, or recreational use.

GOAL 1
acquisition

Acquire interests in real property that significantly protect natural areas for flora and fauna, maintain buffers that preserve community identity, preserve important agricultural lands, and contribute to the creation of a recreational trail system.

GOAL 2
stewardship

Demonstrate excellent stewardship of open space, including protection of natural resources, community access, and quality of life, through improved planning, engagement, and implementation on Boulder County Parks & Open Space land.

GOAL 3
water

Expand and maximize utilization of Boulder County’s water portfolio to support sustainable agriculture and healthy riparian and aquatic ecosystems.

GOAL 4
agriculture

Enhance soil health and increase carbon sequestration using the best available science and technology to improve agricultural production and protect native ecosystems.

Progress to date

- Acquired 32 properties (2,040 acres) and secured 615.6 shares of priority water rights.
- Completed a Cultural Responsiveness and Inclusion Strategic Plan (CRISP) enhancing engagement and access for underserved communities in Parks & Open Space areas (2021). Revisited language standards through inclusion of Spanish on wayfinding, brochures and interpretive signs. Participated in countywide interagency Indigenous Peoples Partnership and engaged the native American community in management of Southdown Indian Mountain.
- Achieved 10% completion on priority trail connection projects (including 5+ miles of trail at Toll property)
- Completed the Management Plan for Mayhoffer Farm (2021) and Carolyn Holmberg Preserve at Rock Creek Farm Management Plan (2021). Protected seven acres at Zapf property for riparian restoration.
- Quantified carbon sequestration benefits of the Niwot Ditch Fish Passage project on St. Vrain Creek and partnered with Colorado State University to initiate field sample testing as part of a five-year sequestration pilot study.
- Issued draft of 2022-2027 Hazard Mitigation Plan and proposed a ballot measure (2022) to enhance coordination and action responsive to wildfire risk and healthy forestation.
- Maintained 600+ monitors critical to data accuracy informing emergency response, planning, assessment, and open space management functions.

“Heil Valley Ranch is one of the most scenic areas, in my view, that Boulder County offers. The wildlife here is unbelievable. And so I can definitely understand people’s appreciation of the park because we all share that as park staff.”

- Jason V., Boulder County Park Ranger
Priorities through 2023

• Update Community Wildfire Protection planning and community engagement effort.
• Continue to acquire key parcels for preservation as open space and complete agricultural water assessment determining needed efficiencies and reducing water use.
• Continue participation on steering committee for the State of Water Conservation project quantifying potable water sold to residents, businesses and institutions throughout the state and gauging efficacy of water conservation programs and technologies.
• As part of State network initiative called Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI), quantify forest carbon stocks and identify best practices.
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• Continue Campbell and Quicksilver property cover-crop research project aimed at studying the efficiency of carbon sequestration and improving soil conditions through the controlled use of composting and other land treatments.

“When park visitors realize there are rangers that speak their language, they immediately light up, and it’s obvious to see this is something they have been craving but were unaware they could find.”

- Juan O., Boulder County Park Ranger
Organization and Financial Stewardship

Boulder County is committed to the effective use of taxpayer funds through efficient and sustainable organizational and financial practices. The county’s governance initiatives prioritize transparency and emphasize our ability to attract and retain a qualified, engaged workforce capable of serving residents now and in the future.

GOAL 1  
sustainability  
Ensure adequate and sustainable resources and appropriate scaling of county government for effective public services.

GOAL 2  
inclusivity  
Ensure a thriving, effective, inclusive, and diverse county workforce to provide public services.

GOAL 3  
financial  
Increase efficiency and transparency of the county financial system and process through online access to Boulder County’s budget, expenditures, and financial management system.

GOAL 4  
administration  
Ensure that administrative functions are consistent, equitable, and efficient across county departments.

Progress to date

- Implemented a financial transparency online system to provide timely information to the community regarding investments of federal dollars from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (2020) and American Recovery Plan Act (2022).

- Completed a countywide language access assessment (2022), implemented an inclusive hiring process and a bilingual pay policy expending roughly $500k annually to compensate staff utilizing language skills to improve access for residents with limited English proficiency.

- Conducted employee engagement surveys (2019 and 2022) with 72% of respondents expressing a high level of engagement and job satisfaction and specifically favorable on impressions of their team and supervision.

- Enhanced employee learning and development access through online education platforms, and substantial investments in the county’s tuition reimbursement program.

- Conducted employee engagement surveys (2019 and 2022) with 72% of respondents expressing a high level of engagement and job satisfaction and specifically favorable on impressions of their team and supervision.

- Enhanced hybrid work scheduling options for some county positions and adopted an updated livable wage for the lowest employee pay band keeping the county’s employment practices competitive in a tight talent market.

“...”

I decided to take advantage of the tuition reimbursement and enroll in the Certified Administrative Professional program through Front Range Community College. FRCC offers several Adult Education courses for professional and personal development. The online option allows me to study at my own pace with complete flexibility, I’m strengthening my skills and learning what’s new and interesting in the administrative world.”

- Kate M., Housing & Human Services

Commissioners are committed to attracting and retaining a qualified and engaged workforce dedicated to providing support for residents, such as the the opportunity to learn about job services and training from Boulder County and its partners.
Priorities through 2023

- Maintain adequate county reserves and complete new budget and finance system aiding transparency of the budget process and county resource allocation.

- Initiate Racial Equity Impact Assessment of county policies.

- Upgrade the county payroll system.

- Streamline administrative processes and approvals in alignment with CFO and County Administrator organizational structure.

"For me, the Infant at Work Program was integral to me returning back to Boulder County after my first maternity leave and maintaining my involvement in the work force. The Infant at Work program allowed me to find a sense of work/life balance that included my whole self, not just a compartmentalized version of my professional identity that didn’t take into account all the things that come along with being a parent to an infant - like the lack of sleep, feeding, etc. To me, the benefits of the program are endless."

- Rory T., Housing & Human Services

"The outcome of the equitable hiring process has given our department a more diverse pool of applicants that more closely meet the needs of our vacancies."

- Atilana R., Office of the County Administrator

Housing & Human Services employees Rory T., with son Reid, and Naomi S., with daughter Nora, in 2017
Addressing Public Health Emergencies & Natural Disasters

The county strives to provide the best in public service and continuously explores opportunities to make Boulder County more resilient. The capacity of staff, partners and community has been significantly tested by the challenging experiences faced since establishment of our Strategic Priorities in 2018, including impacts arising out of the COVID pandemic, a tragic mass shooting in 2021 and both the Cal-Wood and Marshall Fires.

First reported in Boulder County in March 2020, the COVID pandemic stressed health services with heightened hospitalizations and community concerns. Businesses of all types and sizes temporarily shuttered, educational institutions moved to on-line platforms, tourism largely halted, and institutions took immediate action to aid social distancing and address the urgency of rising income, shelter, and food instability. While our community was still absorbing the impact of the pandemic, the Cal-Wood Fire (October 20, 2020) destroyed 20 homes in unincorporated Boulder County, ten people were murdered in a mass shooting in Boulder (March 22, 2021) and, on Dec 30, 2021, the Marshall Fire destroyed another 1,084 homes in our community.

County staff and leadership continues to learn from these and prior experiences. The county is fortunate to benefit from the expertise and counsel of Boulder County Public Health who, operating under an independent board, has and continues to shepherd public health matters for the community. In addition to ensuring the sustainability of the county’s other operations, we respond to community needs in mitigating disaster impacts.

• Consistent with trusted scientific sources and federal guidance and prioritizing the health and safety of community members, Boulder County Public Health provided guidance and coordination of testing and vaccination services.
• Conducted extensive outreach and engagement identifying community needs that could benefit from investment of pandemic-related relief provided by the federal government. Invested more than $16 million in Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funding and allocated $63 million in federal American Rescue Plan (ARPA) funding to address health, social and economic impacts of the pandemic, with an emphasis on services for the most vulnerable members of the community.
• Supported the creation of the Boulder Strong Resource Center and victim supports for the families of those killed in the mass shooting, employees of the King Soopers, and residents of south Boulder where the shooting occurred, as the Boulder County District Attorney’s Office works to prosecute the case.
• Utilized local, state and federal resources valued at $40M to address Marshall Fire response and recovery to date, all providing public-facing webpages to ensure community awareness of resource allocation and prioritization to meet community needs.
• Implemented the successful Private Property Debris Removal program aiding 566 properties impacted by the Marshall Fire. This program was completed ahead of schedule in just four months and at a cost lower than originally estimated. Boulder County coordinated, administered and funded the program which is subject to a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) negotiated partial reimbursement and additional state of Colorado support.
• Coordinated planning staff of Superior, Louisville and unincorporated Boulder County to provide similar processes and timelines for rebuilding. Created a sales tax rebate program to support rebuilding of residences destroyed by the Cal-Wood and Marshall Fire events.
• Created the RebuildingBetter.org website, led by the county’s Office of Sustainability, Climate Action & Resilience, to provide incentives, discounts and financing for fire survivors who want to rebuild high-performance homes.
• Partnered with the Community Foundation of Boulder County (CFBC) and Elevations Credit Union to distribute more than $9 million in immediate cash assistance in the first three months after the fire, and continued the CFBC partnership to establish a Recovery Navigation service that is free for survivors assisting the application process for federal, state and local public funding sources, and other resources including mental health support.

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Boulder County Guiding Values

Inclusion.
We value, respect, and support all individuals by being an inclusive, culturally responsive county government.

Stewardship.
We honor our county’s past and work in partnership with our community to ensure a thriving, healthy quality of life for present and future generations.

Service.
We work with passion and integrity in a supportive, positive environment to ensure accountability, responsiveness, efficiency, and justice.

Engagement.
We listen to and provide opportunities for all community members to actively collaborate and engage with us in order to continually improve our services.

Sustainability.
We are committed to environmental, social, and economic sustainability and build partnerships to help make the broader community more sustainable.

Innovation.
We are motivated, progressive, and visionary. We continually challenge ourselves to lead with innovation, collaboration, and creativity.

Resilience.
We plan for the future and forge strong partnerships that allow us to adapt quickly to challenges and manage community impacts.

As trusted stewards of Boulder County’s future, we provide the best in public service.