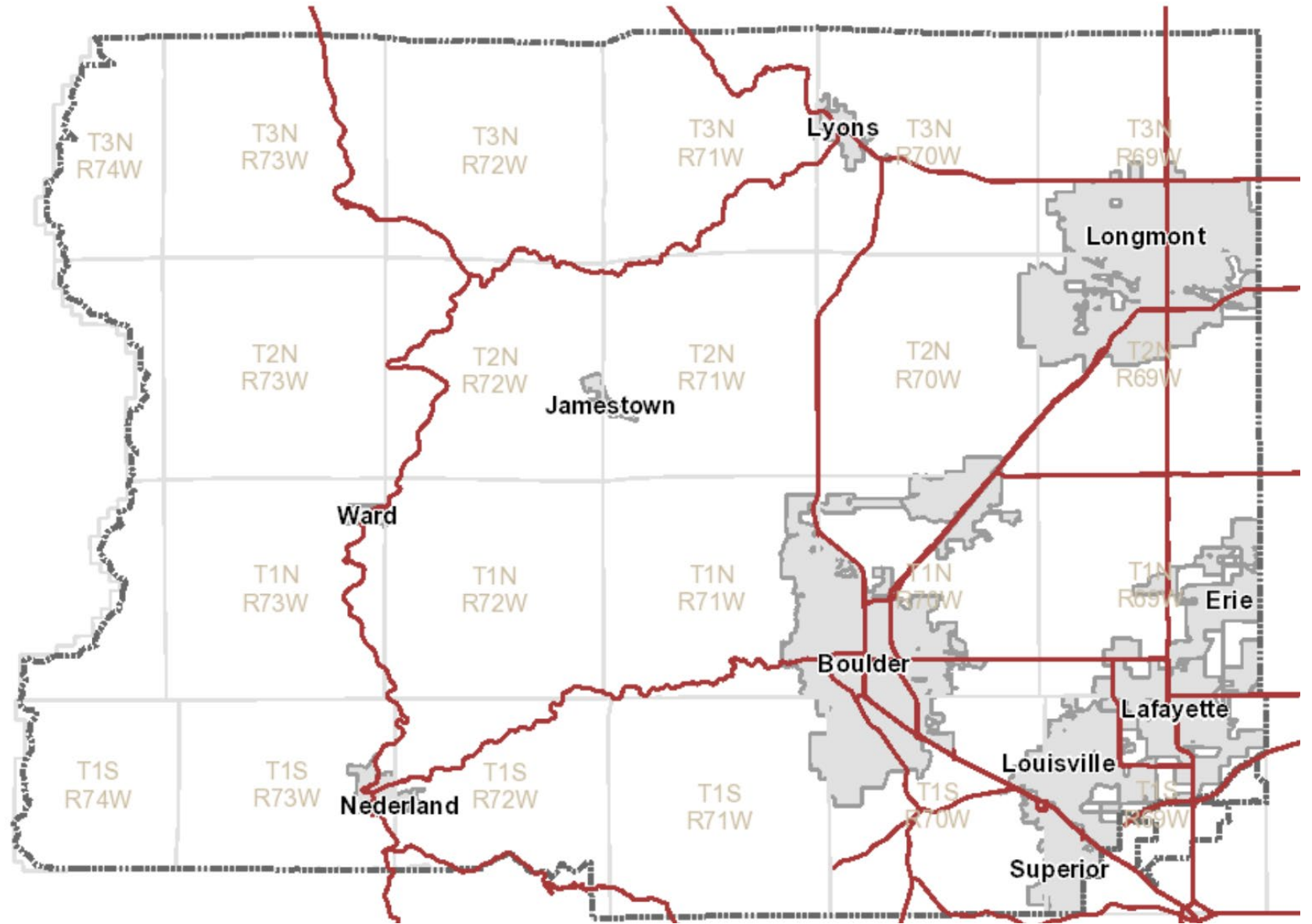


Information Session: Article 4-800, Site Plan Review (SPR)

January 15, 2025

Unincorporated Boulder County



A diverse county...



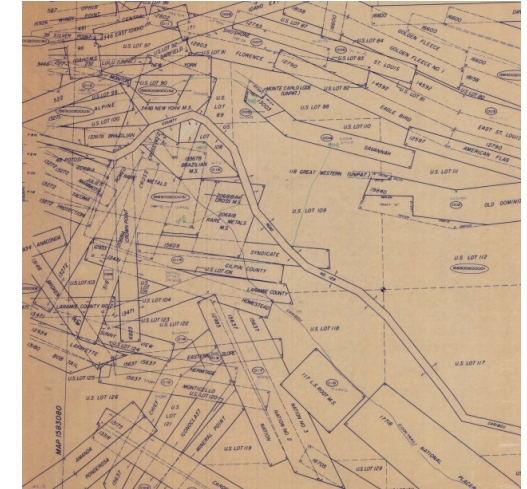
... with
diverse
challenges



Flood Risk



Fire Risk



Old Mining
Claims



Access



Wildlife



Steep Slopes

Brief History of Site Plan Review

1993: Boulder County adopts SPR in mountainous areas

1998: Additional criteria added to address development impacts and neighbor concerns

1994: SPR expanded to plains

2008: Regulations updated to include a size presumed to be compatible with the neighborhood (125% of neighborhood median)

Site Plan Review (SPR) evaluates...

- Bulk
 - Size, massing, height, location, etc.

- NOT design

- Mitigates impacts

... on a site-by-site basis



Applicability

When is SPR needed?

- Development requiring a building permit on vacant land
- Cumulative increase in floor area >1,000 sq. ft. on a parcel (after 9/8/98)
- Increase in Residential Floor Area (RFA) resulting in RFA >125% of the median of the defined neighborhood
- New structures/additions on conservation easements or in Natural Landmarks/Natural Areas (or 500+ sq. ft. in an NLNA buffer)
- Development in the Floodplain Overlay District
- Earthwork over 50 cubic yards
- Development in a Rural Community District
- Change of use of a parcel, except to Vacation Rental.
- Telecom or energy systems over a certain size
- Agricultural sales structures larger than 500 sq. ft., or greater than 12 feet in height

Applicability (Cont'd)

SPR **NOT** required for:

- Earthwork that is part of normal agricultural or mining practices
- Accessory structures less than 1,000 sq. ft., unless:
 - Over the size presumption
 - More than 1,000 sq. ft. cumulative threshold,
 - In an NLNA, NLNA buffer, or on a Conservation Easement
- Restoration of a structure or access that has been damaged/destroyed by causes outside the owner/agent's control
- Development in subdivisions platted after February 22, 1994 (unless required by plat)
- Development in approved Neighborhood Conservation Overlay Districts (if approved NCOD plan covers the relevant SPR criteria in 4-806)
- Development eligible for a General Floodplain Development Permit (FDP)
- Development requiring an Individual FDP so long as Director finds no conflict with SPR standards outlined in Article 4-806

Process

- Pre-Application Conference
- 28-Day Review
 - Site visit
 - Referrals
 - Determination Letter
 - Notice of Determination issued to Adjacent Property Owners
- 14-Day Appeal/Call-Up Period
 - Applicant may appeal conditions of approval
 - BOCC may ratify a call-up from one Commissioner

Approx. 6 weeks from completed application, unless:

- Appealed by the applicant
- Called-up by the County Commissioners
- Put on hold

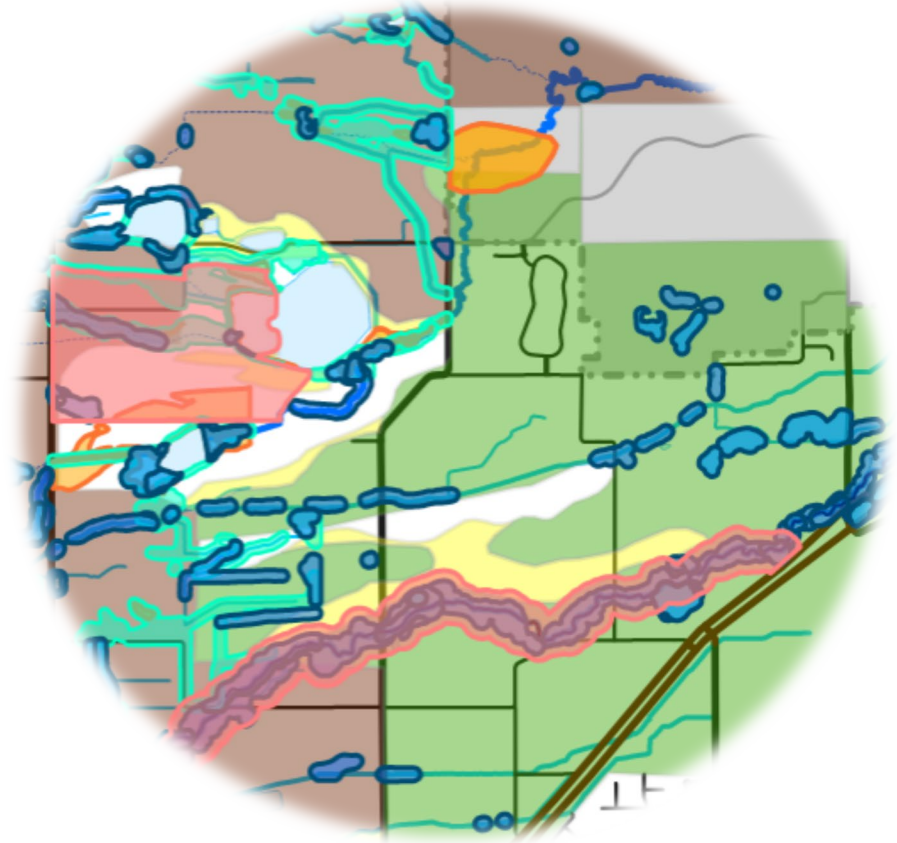
Site Plan Review “Waivers” (Expedited SPR)

Projects eligible for waiver:

- Additions < 2,000 sq. ft. that result in RFA less than 125% of the median for the defined neighborhood (includes instances where SPR would be required because floor area exceeds the cumulative threshold)
- Non-residential accessory structures
 - < 2,000 sq. ft. in the mountains
 - < 5,000 sq. ft. in the plains
- Earthwork/grading greater than 50 cubic yards, but less than 500 cubic yards
- Ground-mounted solar energy systems less than .5 acres
- Accessory solar energy systems that cannot go directly to building permit
- Wind energy systems under height limit for zoning district

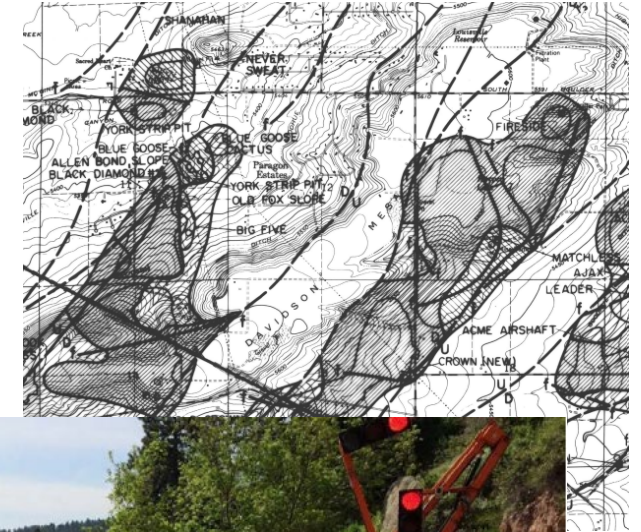
Review Standards: Environmental

- Compatibility with topography and vegetation
- Will not cause unnecessary or excessive site disturbance
- Will not have adverse impacts on:
 - Riparian or wetland areas
 - Plant communities or wildlife habitats
 - Migration corridors
 - Sensitive plant or wildlife ecosystems
 - Agricultural Lands



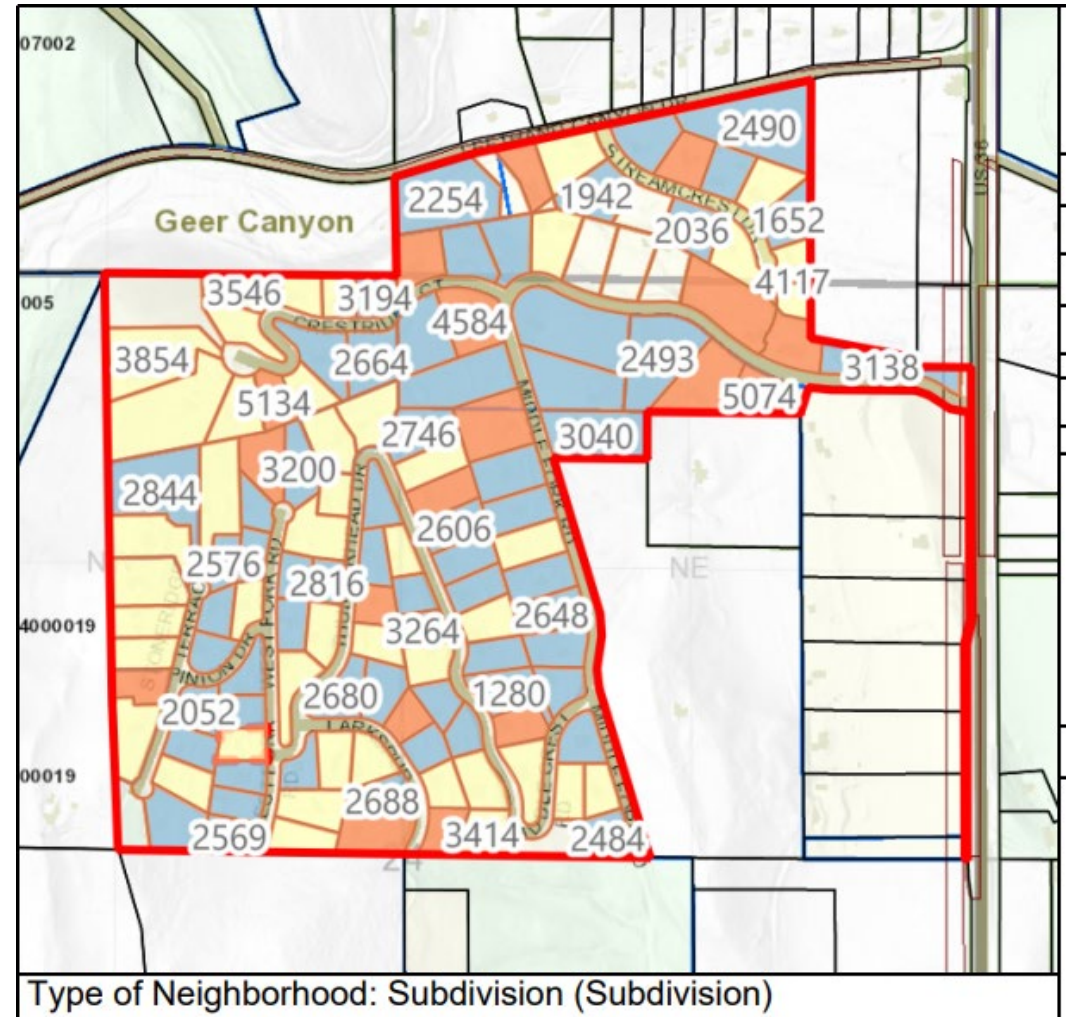
Review Standards: Safety

- Mitigate geologic and natural hazards (using best available information)
 - Soils
 - Landslides
 - Slope
 - Rock falls
 - Flash flood corridors and floodplains
 - Avalanches
 - Wildfire risk
 - Abandoned mines
- Safe access/emergency vehicle access



Size Presumed to be Compatible

- Way for staff to measure how compatible proposed development may be with a defined neighborhood.
- Varies by neighborhood.
 - 1,500 square feet of Residential Floor Area (RFA) in townsites.
 - 125% of the median RFA for a defined neighborhood or 2,500 square feet, whichever is larger.



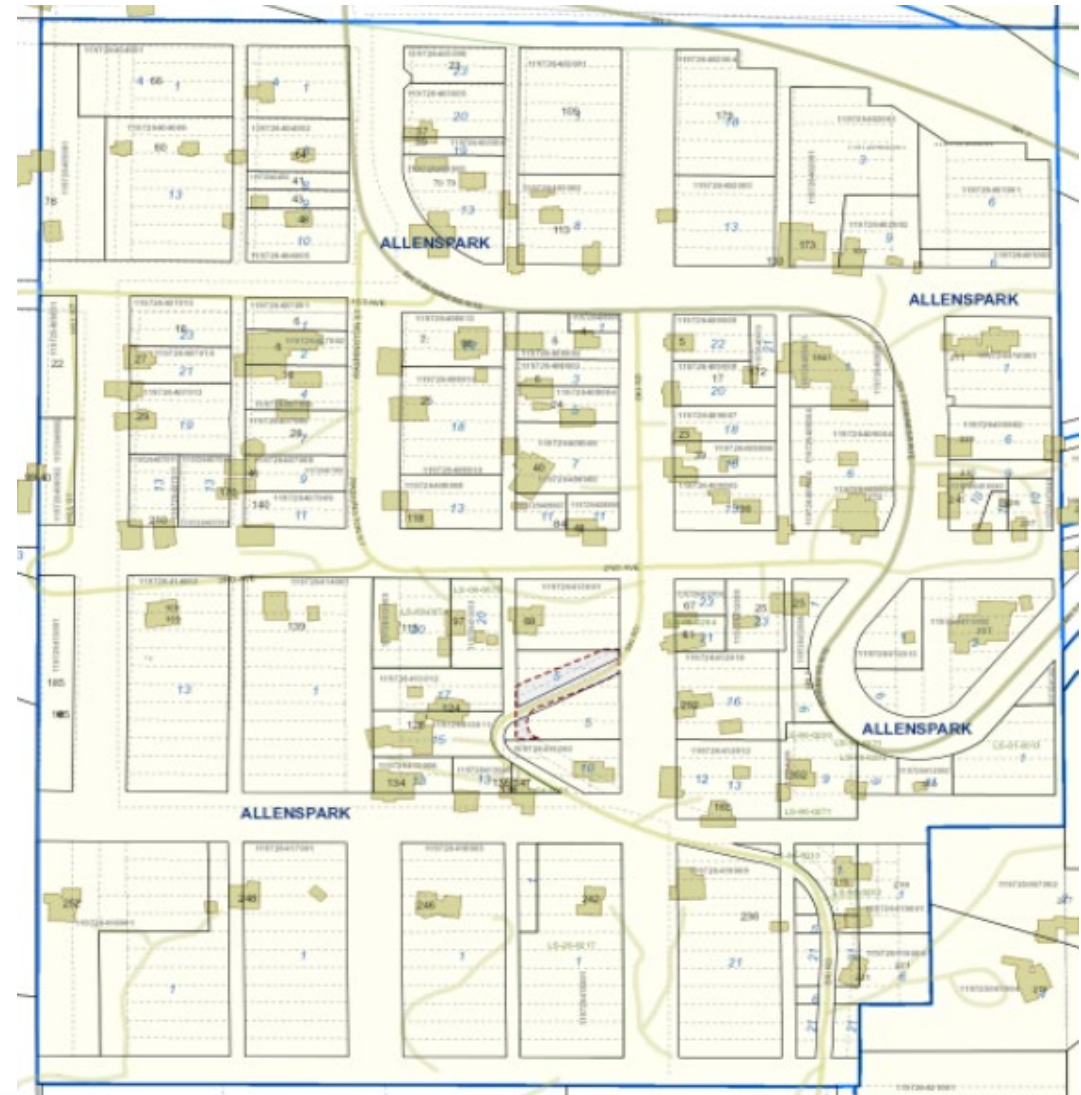
Defined Neighborhoods: Subdivision

If more than 7 developed lots, the platted subdivision is the defined neighborhood.



Defined Neighborhoods: Historic Townsite

The mapped historic townsite is the defined neighborhood.



Residential Floor Area

Includes all attached and detached floor area on a parcel used, or customarily used, for residential purposes. Structures / spaces like...

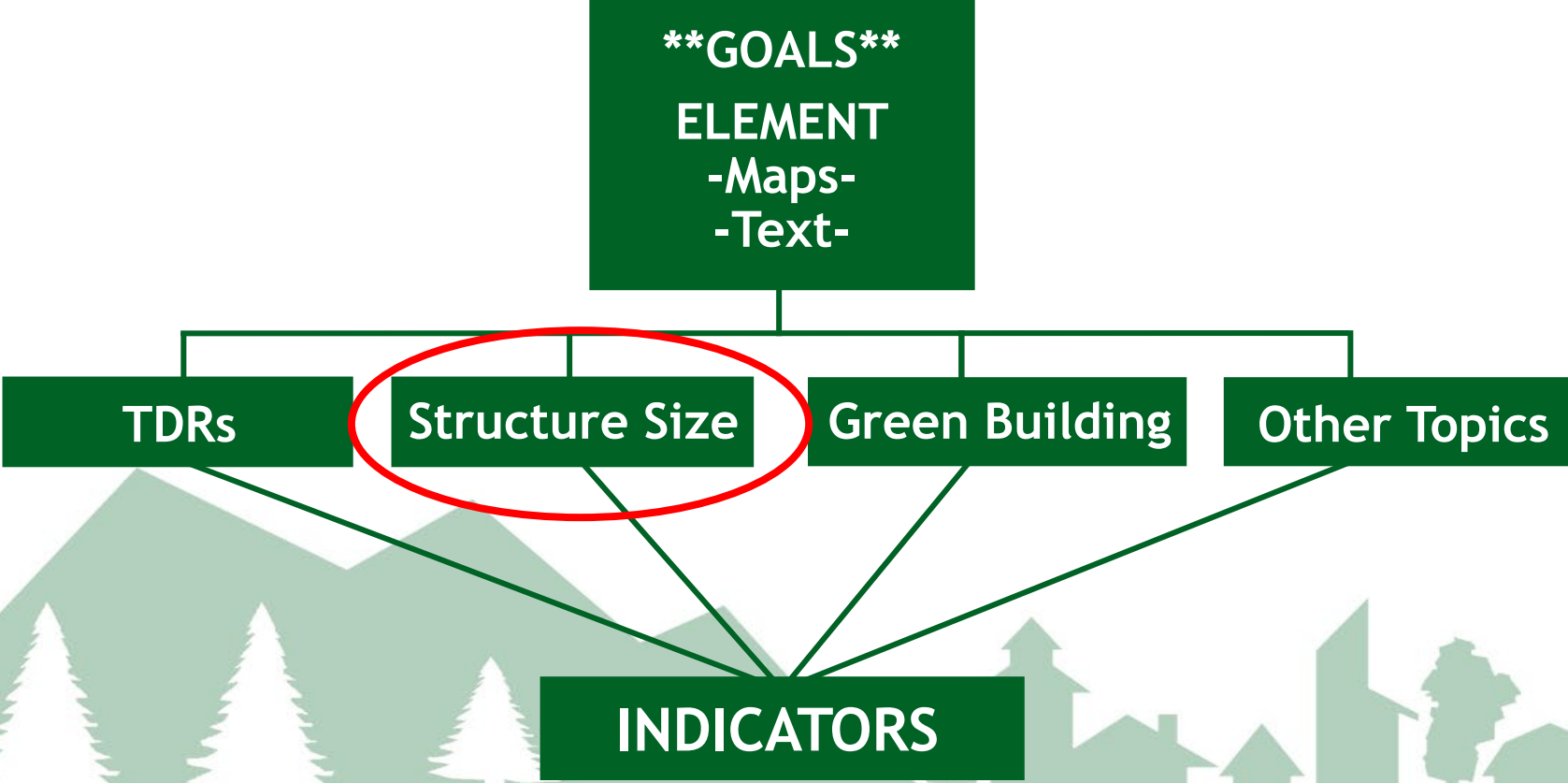
- Home
- Shed
- Detached garage
- Pool house
- Workshop

Up to 400 sq. ft. exempt for gazebos, carports, solar parking canopies, detached greenhouses, renewable energy storage facilities, and hoop houses.

Factors to Rebut Size Presumption

- Proposed floor area is minimally visible
 - ✓ Use of natural topography
 - ✓ Underground construction (to screen); existing may be considered
 - ✓ Distance from private parcels and public views
- Distribution of home sizes in the neighborhood
 - ✓ Consider house sizes most closely adjacent/“cluster”
 - ✓ Resulting RFA may not exceed the median RFA of adjacent properties
- Boulder County Conservation Easements
 - ✓ Allowable house size previously defined
- Demolition and rebuilding of legally existing RFA
- Retrofitting for energy efficiency improvements
- Historic structures that are landmarked or protected
- One-time 200 sq. ft. allowance if already over PSM & not previously limited

Sustainability Element



Site Plan Review and the Sustainability Element

Structure Size and Sustainability- A set of policies that encourage smaller structure sizes, promotes the development of mitigation measures to offset the consumptive impacts of larger homes, discourages the demolition of otherwise habitable dwellings, and promotes the preservation of rural communities with their typically smaller homes, will enable the county to meet many sustainability objectives.

Site Plan Review: Location Makes a Difference



Breaks the Ridgeline



Conforms to Ridgeline



Note the Difference



Color Makes a Difference



Balance



Questions?