METZGER FARM

MASTER PLAN

WINTER 2010

METZGER FARM MASTER PLAN

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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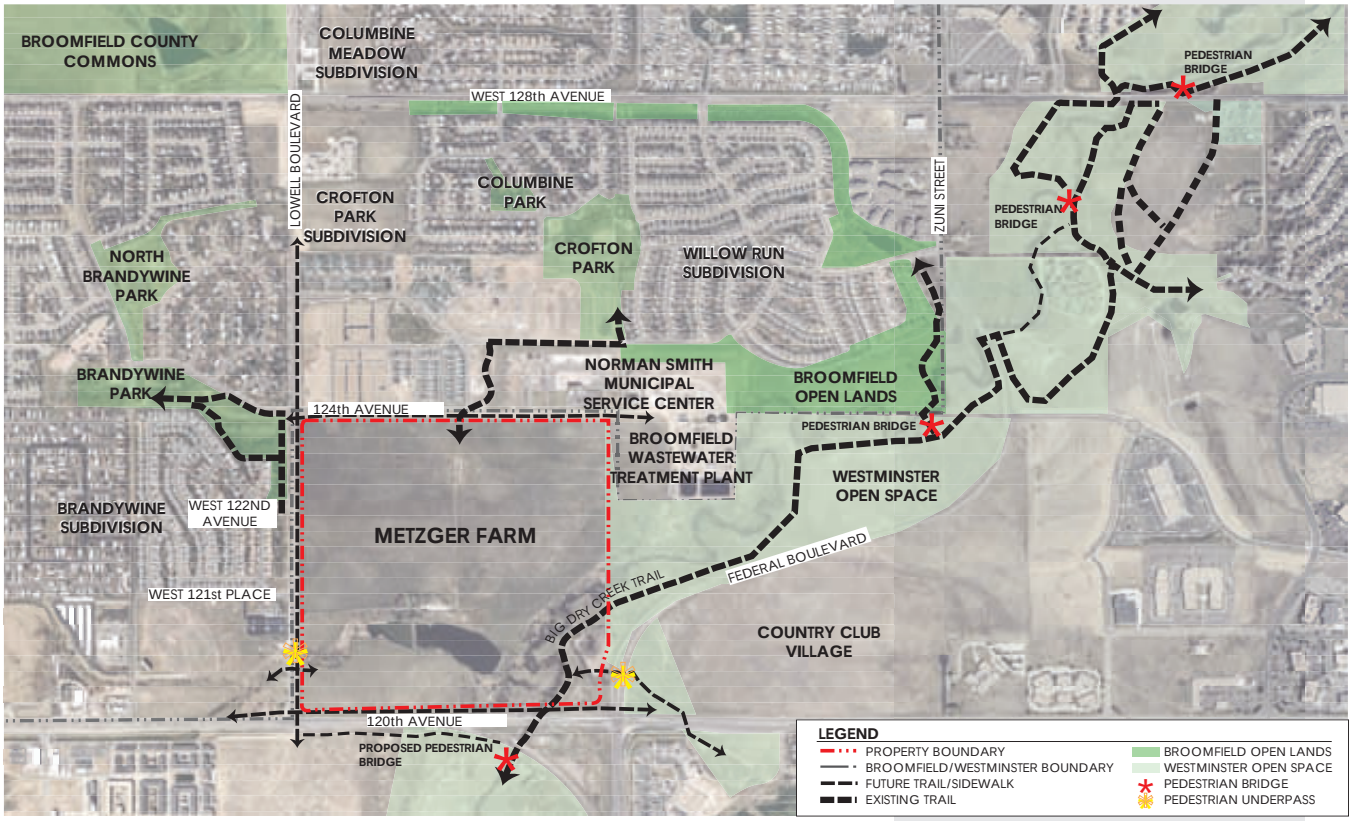
SECTION 1: OVERVIEW

1

Metzger Farm is located at the northeast corner of the intersection of 120th Avenue and Lowell Boulevard in the City of Westminster, and contiguous to the City and County of Broomfield. The farm preserves an important piece of local history, and a unique open space that adds intrinsic value to both communities.

This 152-acre property encompasses two parcels that were originally settled in the late 1800s by members of the Gay family. John Metzger, a former Colorado Attorney General, purchased the property in 1943 and it functioned as a working farm through the 1950s.

The farmstead includes the family home and nine outbuildings, oriented in two east-west lines. The buildings and their spatial arrangement are significantly intact and represent what has been characterized as a "model farm" of the mid-twentieth century. The two man-made ponds, which were originally used for irrigation, stock-watering and firefighting, have matured into a nature preserve and are among the property's most distinctive natural features.



Metzger Farm is an important addition to the regional open space system

A COLLABORATIVE OPEN SPACE INITIATIVE

In 2005, the City of Westminster and the City and County of Broomfield approved an Intergovernmental Agreement to create a foundation for the acquisition, financing, management and maintenance of Metzger Farm. On December 15, 2005, the Broomfield-Westminster Open Space Foundation (hereafter, the Foundation) approved the agreement with the Metzger family for purchase of Metzger Farm as community open space. The total purchase price for the property and water rights was $11 million. Grants received from Adams County and Great Outdoors Colorado funded approximately $2 million, with the cities sharing in funding the balance.

An urban oasis: the farmstead complex, looking north across the lower pond

Metzger Farm offers the opportunity to significantly enhance open space, wildlife habitat, and regional trail connections through Broomfield and Westminster. The unique farmstead complex provides additional recreational and educational opportunities.

The master plan was crafted in 2007-09 through a highly collaborative process between Broomfield and Westminster, and involving both communities' Open Space Advisory Boards and City Councils, City staff, the Metzger family, and members of the general public, who participated actively in a well-attended community meeting in March 2009.

The purpose of the Metzger Master Plan is:

1: to provide for an overall vision that emphasizes compatible public use and preservation of the property's special natural and historical features so that visitors' enjoyment and appreciation of the open space is maximized;

2: to provide visitors, particularly school children with fun educational opportunities such as self-guided tours of the farm, nature/wildlife programs, demonstrations of daily "activities of farm life," and seasonal events like a community harvest celebration;

3: to provide open space amenities that increase visitors' opportunities to enjoy passive recreation such as hiking, fishing, and wildlife viewing to increase their health and refresh their spirits;

4: to coordinate proposed amenities with future Urban Drainage and Flood Control District projects in partnership with Broomfield and Westminster so that funding and implementation are completed efficiently to minimize any site impacts; and

5: to provide recommendations for restoration and management of natural and historic features that will result in high quality stewardship that will protect Metzger Farm for generations to come.

Additional work completed as part of the planning effort included an assessment of the site's vegetation, wildlife, and habitat; an evaluation of the structural integrity of buildings on the site, including prioritization of repair and restoration efforts; and research and documentation of the site's history, through a review of background documents and interviews with the Metzger family.

The planning process also involved coordination with Urban Drainage and Flood Control District projects, in partnership with Broomfield and Westminster. One project involves the installation of an underpass beneath Lowell Boulevard to convey a drainage channel as well as provide a future trail connection to Broomfield's Southeast Community Loop Trail and Westminster's Big Dry Creek Trail.

A second Urban Drainage and Flood Control District project creates the pedestrian connection in the Lowell underpass, and includes repairs to the dam embankment at the east side of the lower pond, and reconstruction of the dam's spillway, which conveys water to Big Dry Creek during a major storm. Plan proposals were carefully coordinated with both projects to ensure compatibility and potential synergy in funding.

KEY MASTER PLAN FEATURES

The total estimated capital cost of master plan improvements is estimated at $779,670, in 2009 dollars, excluding costs to fully restore the historic structures. Highlights of the plan include:

- Stabilization of the historic structures
- Construction of a new entry drive, parking, school bus drop-off area for field trips, portable restroom, and trailhead north of the farmhouse
- A regional trail connection to the Big Dry Creek Trail, which will eventually connect to Broomfield's Southeast Community Loop Trail under Lowell Boulevard

DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Eight core principles guide the development of the master plan.

- Preserve the historical integrity of the farmstead, including buildings and site organization.
- Preserve and protect existing wildlife habitat areas along Big Dry Creek and the ponds.
- Preserve agricultural use of pastures for grazing or dry land crops.
- Develop a public use program that is compatible with site character, regarding proposed activities and intensity of uses.
- Provide a system of long and short trail loops and make connections to the Big Dry Creek and the Southeast Community Corridor Trails.
- Coordinate Urban Drainage and Flood Control District improvements in adjacent areas to complement Foundation funding for elements of the Master Plan.
- Phase proposed uses and improvements to facilitate implementation in a timely manner.
- Create a plan that is fiscally sustainable, from the standpoint of capital construction as well as ongoing maintenance costs.

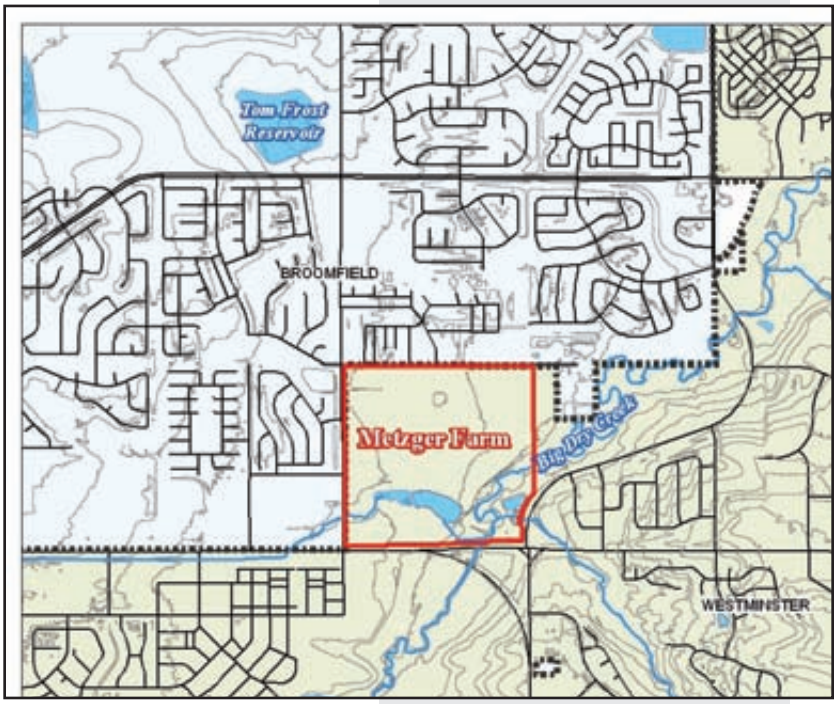
- Two miles of trails through the site
- An overlook/fishing pier and picnic area at the edge of the lower pond
- Interpretive signage at the farmstead, barns, and sheds, for self-guided tours
- An overlook providing views into the Big Dry Creek riparian area for wildlife watching
- Opportunities to experience "activities of daily farm life" or seasonal community events
- Recommendations for future management of the historic buildings and landscape, to ensure that they are preserved as unique amenities for future generations of area residents
- Public art, if joint funding can be obtained to enhance the historic and natural features of the site

SECTION 2: EXISTING CONDITIONS AND ORGANIZING FRAMEWORK

This section describes the farm's natural resources, summarizes the history of the farmstead and salient features of the Metzger family's life on the farm, assesses the current condition of the farm structures, and concludes with the definition of five character zones and public use and restoration activities compatible with each zone.

NATURAL FEATURES AND RESOURCES

Metzger Farm is located in western Adams County in the City of Westminster, and contiguous to the City and County of Broomfield, at the northeast corner of the intersection of 120th Avenue and Lowell Boulevard. The property generally comprises the SW¼ of Section 32 in Township 1 South, Range 68 West of the 6th P.M. Metzger Farm encompasses approximately 152 acres, about one-third of which is comprised of riparian vegetation and two-thirds of which are grasslands. Figure 1 illustrates significant natural features on the property.



Metzger Farm location and context

Waterways, Riparian Corridors And Ponds

As shown in the USGS 7.5 minute quadrangle map to the right, Big Dry Creek, the most significant surface drainage in the area (USGS 1965, photo revised 1994), flows through the southeast quadrant of the property, in a northeasterly direction to its confluence with the South Platte River. The Nissen Reservoir Channel, an intermittent drainage to Big Dry Creek, traverses the lower portion of the parcel and connects the two man-made ponds that are on the site.

Riparian vegetation is the most established along Big Dry Creek and Nissen Reservoir Channel, and primarily includes mixed shrubs and non-native grasses. Native shrubs and trees include snowberry, Wood's Rose, cottonwood, and peachleaf willow. The riparian corridor also includes stands of non-native trees and shrubs, including Russian Olive and crack willow. Wetlands along Big Dry Creek are limited because of severe channel incision and actively eroding banks. Where present, wetlands occur in narrow margins along the creek banks and are dominated by dense reed canarygrass (Phalaroides arundinacea), a non-native species, and sandbar willow.

The riparian corridor along Big Dry Creek provides rich habitat for a variety of species

Wetlands on the Nissen Reservoir Channel and around the east and west ponds, especially those at the upstream end of the west pond, are dominated by cattail, a native species. Other native species present include softstem bulrush (Scirpus validus), sandbar willow, and Baltic rush (Juncus balticus).

A large wetland is also present east of Big Dry Creek near Federal Boulevard. This wetland is dominated by cattails and is likely supported by ground water and surface flows in Ranch Creek, a small tributary flowing northwest under Federal Boulevard toward Big Dry Creek.

The north pasture, once a shortgrass prairie, has been grazed for many years

As indicated above, two man-made ponds are located on the property. Measurements taken during water quality sampling by the City and County of Broomfield indicate that the upper pond is shallow (maximum depth about 9 inches) and has gently sloping banks that support wetlands, especially at the upstream end; cattails are encroaching into the open water areas. The lower pond is larger and deeper (maximum depth about 6 feet) and has a steep shoreline that limits wetlands to narrow margins in most places.

Both ponds likely support a variety of aquatic species such as crawfish, minnows, and insects. Common carp (Cyprinus carpio) were observed in both ponds. Because it is larger and deeper, in addition to carp, the lower pond likely supports other larger fish, such as longnose sucker (Catostomus Catostomus) and green sunfish (Lepomis cyanellus). Water quality data indicate that sport fish (fish large enough and with appropriate behaviors for angling) such as bluegill and bass, could be supported in the lower pond with appropriate management efforts.

Upland Vegetation

Most of the vegetation on Metzger Farm is grassland habitat, the predominant habitat type in the Broomfield/Westminster area. Originally a shortgrass prairie, the site was characterized by native species such as yucca, buffalograss, sideoats grama, and little bluestem. Remnant species of this vegetation community persist in the south pasture and in other pockets.

INSERT FIGURE 1
NATURAL RESOURCES MAP
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METZGER FARM MASTER PLAN

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The former crop fields to the north of buildings and ponds were heavily grazed, and now include a mix of native and non-native vegetation. Native species found in these areas include western wheatgrass, blue grama, and sideoats grama. Non-native species include crested wheatgrass, smooth brome, and downy brome. Opportunities exist to remove these non-natives and restore the prairie ecosystem.

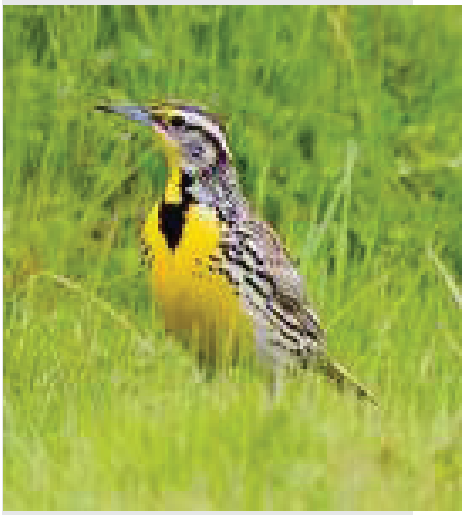
Wildlife

During pre-settlement times, shortgrass prairie dominated the open space and probably supported bison during some seasons of the year. As the urban area along the Front Range has grown, wildlife habitat and many wildlife species have been displaced. This makes the remnant habitat found on Metzger Farm an important component of the larger Big Dry Creek riparian corridor.

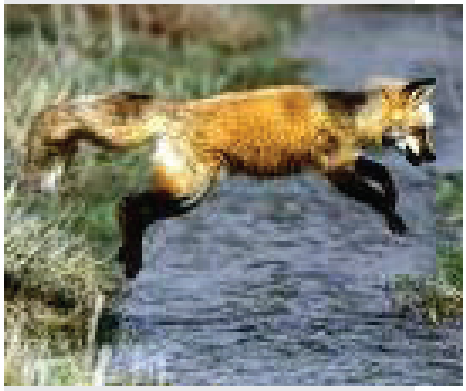
Species most likely found on Metzger Farm, such as striped skunk (Mephitis mephitis), spotted skunk (Spilogale putorius), raccoon (Procyon lotor), red fox (Vulpes vulpes), and coyote (Canis latrans), have adapted well and actually thrive in and near urban areas. These species are often referred to as human "commensal" species or those species that derive some benefit directly from humans and human-altered habitats. A number of potential coyote or red fox trails were observed during the site visits and a fox den is located along the east side of Caulkins Ditch near Big Dry Creek (see Figure 1, natural resources inventory map).

Small rodents that most likely occur along Big Dry Creek and the tributary include deer mouse (Peromyscus maniculatus), prairie vole (Microtus ochrogaster), meadow vole (Microtus pennsylvanicus), house mouse (Mus musculus), and western harvest mouse (Reithrodontomys megalotis).

Snowy Egret



Western Meadowlark



Red Fox

Two Great Blue Herons perch on their nest (center of photo)

Bird species observed during fieldwork included western meadowlark (Sturnella neglecta), European starling (Sturnus vulgaris), redwing blackbird (Agelaius phoeniceus), American robin (Turdus migratorius), black-billed magpie (Pica pica), mourning dove (Zenaida macroura), great blue heron (Ardea herodias), double-crested cormorant (Phalacrocorax auritus), red-tailed hawk (Buteo jamaicensis), and American kestrel (Falco sparverius). The western meadowlark, American robin, and black-billed magpie may nest on Metzger Farm. The European starling is commonly associated with urban or suburban areas and likely nests in adjacent residential areas.

A large stick nest is present along Big Dry Creek. Based on its characteristics, it is likely a red-tailed hawk or other raptor nest. During a June 12, 2007 site visit, a red-tail hawk was observed flying in the vicinity of the nest. A second large stick nest is present in the windmill in the north half of the farm.

At various times, Black-tailed prairie dogs have established scattered burrows on the property. Black-tailed prairie dogs have a significant effect on the pastures because they influence plant and animal communities. Black-tailed prairie dogs are social animals that occur in colonies or "towns" formed by a series of burrows. Species such as black-footed ferret (Mustela nigripes), burrowing owl (Athene cunicularia), prairie rattlesnake (Crotalus viridis), and mountain plover (Charadrius montanus) are closely linked to prairie dog burrow systems for food and/or cover. Prairie dogs provide a prey resource for numerous predators including badger, coyote, fox, golden eagle, ferruginous hawk, and other raptors.

The agricultural areas on the north and south sides of the Metzger Farm have been used for farming or grazing for many years. Prairie dogs have encroached in the agricultural areas at times and have been periodically removed over the years when required: 1) to preserve the farming use and grasses 2) to preserve the agricultural character of the land and 3) to prevent conflicts with adjacent property use. Metzger Farm will be managed as an agricultural site and is not intended for prairie dog colonization.

FARMSTEAD HISTORY AND ORGANIZATION

The farmstead entry drive, viewed from Lowell Blvd., was originally finished with crushed red flagstone

An in-depth historical report covering the Metzger family and development of the farm was an important step in the master planning process because this history helped to shape the master plan. The historical information is summarized below and focuses primarily on the development of the farm for the purposes of the physical master plan.

Metzger Farm once consisted of two side-by-side parcels, owned by relatives Albert and Susan Gay, who homesteaded in the 1880s. One of these, formerly Albert Gay's parcel, included a home that was constructed originally in the late 1800s and modified and expanded in the middle of the next century as the Metzger farmhouse. The other, formerly Susan Gay's parcel, was located along what is now the southeast edge of the farm, at a spot marked by a grove of mature trees just north of 120th Avenue. The Susan Gay house was removed in the 1940s. No foundations or other remnants of her former home were found in this area. In 1935, the Gay family sold the property to James Burke. Burke served as Denver's District Attorney throughout the 1940s. In 1943, Burke sold the farm to John Metzger, who renovated the main farmhouse in the 1950s.

The property is entered by a driveway leading from Lowell Boulevard, which was originally an unpaved county road. From the entry gate along the road, an eastbound driveway leads to the farmstead. The section of driveway running from Lowell Boulevard to the farmstead was finished with crushed red flagstone in the 1940s by John Metzger. In the early 1960s, he had this length of driveway paved. The remainder of the road from the house to the barn, which essentially forms the wider farmyard, was covered with gravel and has never been paved.

The farm buildings are arranged in two east-west lines, according to use

Figure 2 illustrates the organization of the farmstead. Its buildings were mostly oriented toward the south and east to take advantage of the winter sun and to face away from the prevailing northern and western winter winds and weather. For the same reason, few windows, doors or other openings face toward the north and west. The primary exception to this is the main house, which faces toward the west and the property's entrance along Lowell Boulevard.

The main entry of Metzger farmhouse, where a circular drive was once located

The large room along the south elevation of the farmhouse was used as John Metzger's study

A portrait of John Metzger, circa 1948.

The farm buildings were arranged in two east-west lines that run along the northern and southern edges of the farm yard. The north line holds the main house, caretakers' house, garage/shop, vegetable garden, a root cellar no longer present on the site, granary, and milk house. All of these are residential, tool storage/ repair, and food-related uses. The south line holds the machine shed, fuel pumps, chicken house, brooder house, barn, loafing shed, and corrals. These are all animal and equipment uses.

The distinction of these building types and their placement within the farmstead show evidence of planning, even if informal, that likely was related to the idea of how a model farm of the middle decades of the 1900s should be constructed. These concepts would have been accessible to John Metzger through agricultural literature of the period that advised rural residents on the many scientific and engineering aspects of operating a modern farm.

The Metzger farmhouse is a rectangular wood frame building with an overall footprint that measures approximately 32' x 60'. When John Metzger purchased the property in 1943, the house was much smaller than it is today. During the mid-1950s, the family expanded the house to the north and south with additions designed to provide extra living, office, and bedroom space. This expansion was completed by 1957.

Color schemes are not usually associated with farm operations, although many farmers painted their buildings white, a sign of cleanliness, efficiency, and conservative values. However, John Metzger's favorite color was green. He used the color in his home, farm buildings, equipment, and even used green ink in his law practice. This color was offset through the addition of white and red; the buildings were predominantly white with green trim work and roofs, and the main entry road, as noted earlier, was finished with crushed red sandstone.

INSERT FIGURE 2
FARMSTEAD ENLARGEMENT PLAN
11x17

METZGER FARM MASTER PLAN

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Farmstead Landscape And Gardens

Landscaped grounds surround the farmstead. The western, front yard of the main house was originally occupied by a circular drive of crushed red flagstone that entered from a gate near the yard's southwest corner. Flagstone pavers ran from the front porch and circular drive to a gate in the fence along the south edge of the yard at the main road. Eventually, the circular drive was replaced with the sod found there today.

The piñon pine grove, planted by John Metzger, produced nuts that were intended to be sold as a crop

All of the trees on the Metzger Farm were planted by John Metzger. The row of deciduous trees along the west and north edges of the house's front yard are crabapples that produce alternating white and red blossoms. Several years later, John decided to make a windbreak; behind the crabapple trees, he planted a row of 6 foot tall pine trees that have now matured. The landscaping around the house was watered by a pump and piping system from the ponds. The grove of piñon pine trees south of the house and north of the upper pond was also planted by John Metzger, who fancied the idea of selling pine nuts. However, these plans were never realized because wild animals ate too many of them.

The former site of the Metzger family's vegetable garden, located on the north side of the shop and garage

The large open fenced rectangular area that runs from east of the caretakers' house to the fence line beyond the granary on the east held the Metzger family's vegetable garden. The western area contained row vegetables, and the central portion was planted with corn. The eastern area of the garden held vine plants growing produce such as pumpkins and squashes. The entire garden was planted for family consumption.

The garden was irrigated with water from the ponds. The piping system was buried underground for watering the grounds around the houses, but emerged above ground for the garden. Before the irrigation piping was installed, they would flood irrigate the garden when the adjacent alfalfa field to the north was flooded.

The upper pond, looking south, is shallow and includes a large wetland

Ranching, Grazing, And Irrigation

John Metzger kept his herd of prized Scottish Shorthorn cattle in the barn and corrals and the adjacent loafing shed until he sold them in the early 1950s. His veterinarian for these very expensive animals was from Brighton and was affiliated with Colorado Agricultural College (later renamed Colorado State University) and later became head of the state veterinary board.

The open fields have been planted with a variety of crops since the late 1800s. During the late 1800s and early 1900s, the property included water rights to Tom Frost Reservoir, located at the intersection of Midway and Lowell Boulevards in Broomfield, along with rights to water from the Golden Ralston Church Ditch Company, Equity Ditch Company, and the Farmers Reservoir and Irrigation Company. These rights were transferred every time the property was sold. In addition, an 1899 map of the site shows that the eastern acreage on the farm was bisected from southwest to northeast by the Wilbur Ditch, which ran along the west side of Big Dry Creek.

The lower pond, looking west, is deeper; a dam and land bridge with many large cottonwoods, separates the two ponds

While these various surface water rights were developed and exercised as an early source of irrigation for crops and livestock, the availability of adequate water for the farm became increasingly problematic during the post-WWII years of suburban development. It was becoming increasingly difficult by the 1950s to bring irrigation water to the northern alfalfa and corn fields from the Tom Frost Reservoir.

In the 1940s and 50s, two man-made ponds were created for irrigation purposes as well as fire-fighting and stock-watering. The west, or upper, pond is shallower than the east and used to freeze so solidly that the Metzger children ice skated on it in the winter months.

In the 1940s and early 1950s, the east, or lower, pond was just a small pond located in what is now the eastern portion of the current body of water. The area between the west pond's dam and the pond was occupied by a low swale, or marsh, filled with cattails. John Metzger launched a project to enlarge the east pond. He brought in earth-moving equipment to build up the dam wall for the east pond and made it sturdy enough to hold a sizable amount of water. The swale, or marsh, was excavated to bring the pond to its current size. The spillway from this pond transports its water to the east into Big Dry Creek.

A well was dug in the north crop field to provide livestock with a source of drinking water. A Dempster No. 12 windmill, manufactured in Beatrice, Nebraska, marks this location. Water was pumped from the ground by the windmill into the adjacent stock tank.

The windmill in the north pasture was used to pump water from a well into the adjacent stock tank

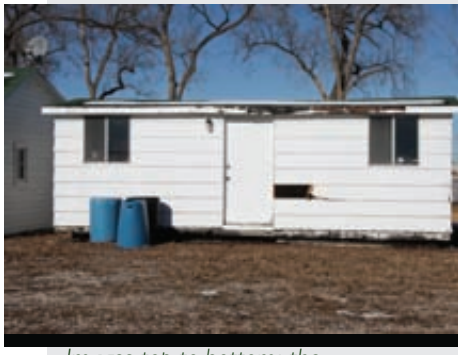
John Metzger worked with the Colorado Agricultural College to plant test crops on the property and staff from the school would periodically visit the farm. This may be what led to the property being described as, or possibly designated, as a "model farm" in the late 1940s. President Eisenhower visited the farm in the 1950s and walked through the corn field where test varieties were being grown. The southern 16 acres south of the ponds were used to grow wheat. This area was supplied with water from a well in the southwest corner of the property.

Gip Wilson on the International Harvester tractor

The crop fields were plowed under in 1955 and planted with several types of grass so they could be used for grazing horses and cattle. Since then, the fields were good for one or two cuttings of dryland (non-irrigated) grass hay each growing season and the family leased the land to a cow-calf operation.

One of the most beloved caretakers for the Metzger Farm was Gip Wilson. Gip and Betty Wilson lived in the caretaker's house just east of the main farmhouse for several years in the early 1950's. Gip also was the first Broomfield Public Works Department employee and was very knowledgeable about the complex system of irrigation ditches and water rights throughout the area. Gip along with the Metzger children, Karen and Bill were instrumental in teaching the two city staffs about the farm's maintenance needs. One of Gip's dreams was to see the preservation of Metzger Farm. And sure enough, Gip was able to attend the community celebration held to commemorate the purchase of the farm on May 19, 2006. Gip passed away on June 18th, 2006.

Betty Metzger, Karen Metzger Keithley, Bill Metzger and his daughter Julia, with Broomfield Open Space and Trails Advisory Committee and Council at a presentation at the Metzger Farm House Lawn



Images top to bottom: the caretaker's house, shop and garage, pump house, granary, and storage shed

Every task John Metzger took on for the remainder of his life was pursued with vigor, enthusiasm, and a passion for self-education. John Metzger's esteemed legal career is an example of his robust energy and work ethic in action. John Metzger became a "people's attorney" who based his general legal practice upon the varied needs of his clients, many of whom were common people. His attitudes about the law and politics were clearly shaped by his experience as an orphaned child, his struggle to survive as a young adult, and his coming of age during the difficult years of the Depression. A very notable accomplishment was his service as Colorado's Attorney General from 1948 to 1958.

The Metzger family continued to live at the farm, John Metzger until he died in 1984 and his wife Betty until 2005; she passed away in 2008. John Metzger was energetically involved in numerous pursuits throughout his adult life. Their father's and mother's varied interests encouraged Bill and Karen to involve themselves in many activities during their school years. Betty made sure that throughout John's pursuits in law, politics, cattle raising, dairy farming, mining, and other activities, the domestic life of the family ran smoothly. In addition to caring for her husband and two children, Betty was an accomplished pianist and organist, acting as church organist at St. Catherine's parish in Denver and St. Mark's parish in Westminster. She also owned and ran the Trianon Museum & Art Gallery in downtown Denver for many years. John was a powerful force and he brought the family into every one of his adventures.

The Metzger children mirror their parents' devotion to family, work, and community service. Karen Metzger pursued a career in law and served a total of 25 years as a judge on the Denver County and District Courts and the Colorado Court of Appeals. Bill Metzger works in the film and education industries. During the 1970's Karen married and moved to Denver and Bill moved to New York, then Los Angeles and now Florida, but both children have continued to be involved with the Metzger Farm throughout their lives and they maintain the pioneer spirit learned on the Metzger Farm with their own families. Karen and Bill attended the public open house on the project in March 2009 so that citizens could learn more about the farm's history directly from them, which added a personal touch to the presentation. In the coming years, Karen and Bill plan to continue their involvement through their much-appreciated participation in the Metzger Farm Preservation Committee.

HISTORIC BUILDING SURVEY

As part of this planning effort, an Historic Building Survey was completed for the ten buildings on the Metzger Farm. An architectural and structural engineering

team visited the site three times to survey, measure and photograph the buildings between February and April 2007. The attached survey provides brief descriptions, conditions, and stabilization recommendations for the ten buildings. It does not cover the interiors of the buildings, nor does it address costs associated with building renovations that might be necessary to support interpretation.

Needed improvements are commonly categorized into three levels — high, medium, and low priority — as described by the Colorado State Historical Fund. Additional guidelines in the restoration and stabilization of buildings and structures are delineated in the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Historic Buildings. These guidelines can be found at http://www.coloradohistory-oahp.org/publications/guide.htm. These guidelines and standards were adhered to in completing these preliminary assessments.

Building code evaluations for this property were preliminary in nature and did not include evaluation of the structures for wind and snow loads. The probable cost of construction is based on year 2007 costs and should be updated for subsequent years to reflect changes in prices of materials and the changing condition of the buildings.

Highest Priority Improvement

These improvements are imperative in the sustainability of the buildings. They are of the highest priority because the item has either caused or will quickly cause deterioration of the historic fabric, cause structural damage or weakness, or create life safety issues. Most of these items are identified as serious or critical deficiencies. These items should be completed as soon as is practicable to prevent further damage to the building.

Examples of work items classified under this category are the following:

- Repair of structural elements, including foundation stabilization, roof structure stabilization, and wall framing stabilization.
- Roof replacement necessitated by deteriorated roofing materials.
- Life safety issues. Normally these do not include accessibility issues, as in most cases the owner may choose to provide an alternate method for visitors to experience the site and any associated interpretive programming.

The buildings that are in the most threatened state and should be of the highest priority are the brooder house, implement shed, and the pump house. These work items should be completed as soon as is practicable and financially feasible, to prevent further deterioration or possible collapse. As an alternative, the Foundation may choose to complete temporary stabilization until funding for more permanent stabilization measures is available.

Images top to bottom: the implement shed, brooder house with barn beyond, chicken house, barn and corral, stock standing shed,

2

DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Eight core principles guide the development of the master plan.

- Preserve the historical integrity of the farmstead, including buildings and site organization.
- Preserve and protect existing wildlife habitat areas along Big Dry Creek and the ponds.
- Preserve agricultural use of pastures for grazing or dry land crops.
- Develop a public use program that is compatible with site character, in activities and intensity of uses.
- Provide a system of long and short trail loops and make connections to the Big Dry Creek and the Southeast Community Corridor Trails.
- Coordinate Urban Drainage and Flood Control District improvements in adjacent areas to complement Foundation funding for elements of the Master Plan.
- Phase proposed uses and improvements to facilitate implementation in a timely manner.
- Create a plan that is fiscally sustainable, from the standpoint of capital construction as well as ongoing maintenance costs.

Medium Priority Improvements

Although these repairs are important, they may not result in damage to the structural elements of the building or the associated building features are not in as poor a condition as those of the highest priority. Most of these items are identified by poor condition with minor deficiencies. Examples of work items classified under this category are the following:

- Door restoration
- Window restoration
- Concrete refinishing
- Painting of exterior of buildings
- Minor structural stabilization
- Assessment of potential lead paint and asbestos hazards, and implementation of appropriate mitigation measures

The priority items in this section include the structural stabilization of the implement shed, brooder house and dairy barn. It is difficult to place a time table on this type of work because deterioration will continue to occur until the deficiency is reversed.

Lowest Priority Improvements

These improvements are not required to prevent damage to the structure. They are listed to provide improvements to return the building to its original appearance or are minor repair items. Most of these items are identified by fair condition descriptions. These items may be completed at the convenience of the Foundation or could be included in the controlled maintenance budget or as existing materials or finishes wear out or become damaged.

When a more detailed interpretive plan is prepared and associated building uses are identified, cost estimates should be further refined to incorporate any associated rehabilitation, restoration and adaptive reuse costs. It is recommended that an architectural and structural consultant experienced in the restoration and rehabilitation of historic farm structures be utilized to complete the next phase of work, which might include an interpretive master plan, a full-scale State Historical Fund Historic Structures Assessment, and restoration/rehabilitation drawings.

USE ZONES, POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSIDERATIONS

Based on the historic organization and function of the farmstead and the natural resources present on the property, Metzger Farm can be organized into five "use zones" that can help guide development of a program for compatible public use as

INSERT FIGURE 3
ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES
MAP
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METZGER FARM MASTER PLAN

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well as a plan for managing the farm's resources. These are described below and illustrated in Figure 3. Eight design principles, described earlier in this section, were also formulated to guide the plan.

The Farmstead Core (Buildings, Gardens and Entry Drive)

This area includes the farmhouse and nine outbuildings, as well as the associated entry drive, landscapes, and gardens, representing approximately two acres. The landscapes and buildings create wonderful spaces that are anticipated to be one of the most visited parts of the farm, due to its interpretive and educational potential and the relatively easy accessibility of buildings and gardens.

One of these spaces, at the front of the home where the circular entry drive once was, now functions as an intimate scale "outdoor room." Conceivably, the lawn area could serve as a focal area for interpretive presentations and docent talks.

A second "outdoor room" is located at the rear of the farmhouse, where Betty Metzger's circular rose garden once flourished. The garden had a birdbath in the middle surrounded by rose bushes, with irises around the perimeter. The roses are gone, but some of the irises still remain. This area could also function as a gathering space for interpretive activities.

The upper pond

A row of mature Siberian Elms frames the northern edge of this zone, providing long views of the pastures beyond. The driveway between the two rows of outbuildings provides long, expansive views across the pasture and to the Big Dry Creek valley to the east.

Activities potentially compatible with the character of this area include:

- Self- or docent-guided interpretive tours
- Seasonal displays of livestock near the dairy barn or loafing shed
- Demonstration activities (spinning, soapmaking, etc.)
- Small community events
- Reintroduction of garden areas

The lower pond, looking northwest toward farmstead

The Upper Pond

The upper (west) pond is shallow and sheltered by mature trees and a vigorous shrub understory on the north, west, and south sides. The shallowness of the pond and its gently sloping banks have supported the establishment of a significant cattail marsh. The pond provides valuable habitat that should be preserved and protected. As budget allows, Russian Olive trees

Bill and Karen Metzger's dock on the upper pond

Looking east, toward the Big Dry Creek Open Space

The north pasture in summer

in this zone should be removed and replaced with native trees such as cottonwoods and willows.

Accordingly, physical access to this area should be limited; trails should be routed around this area with a significant buffer, and "cues" provided to the public, such as boulders or other fencing, that will minimize the incidence of "social" trails. Opportunities for wildlife and bird watching may be provided along the trails at selected vantage points.

Incompatible activities that should be avoided at the upper pond include fishing, as the pond is too shallow to support most species, and any form of access at the water's edge, given the sensitive nature of the habitat.

The Lower Pond

By contrast, the lower (east) pond has a more open, expansive quality and in some areas, farm uses have extended to the water's edge. Because this pond is significantly deeper, uses such as small-scale warm water fishing could be compatible. Overlooks and a small picnic area would also be appropriate. Because this edge is already accessible, trails might be routed closer to the water's edge, providing that natural barriers or signs are placed to prevent people and dogs from getting into the water, thus avoiding safety and water quality impacts.

As budget allows, Russian Olive trees in this zone should be removed and replaced with native trees such as cottonwoods and willows. Incompatible activities might include boating or other recreational uses of the water surface, or large scale events held close to the water's edge.

The Big Dry Creek Corridor

Activities compatible with existing landscape character include a trail connection from Lowell Boulevard to the existing Big Dry Creek regional trail, preferably through the already-disturbed area near the existing spillway. Trails, overlooks, and wildlife-watching areas could also be provided along the embankment, on the west side of the creek, along with suitable interpretive displays.

As budget allows, Russian Olive trees in this zone should be removed and replaced with native trees such as cottonwoods and willows. In addition, the existing spillway, which is in poor condition, should be replaced for safety reasons.

Incompatible uses would include:

- Extensive public access to the Creek, given its relative isolation and high quality wildlife habitat, and the presence of the existing Big Dry Creek trail on the east side.
- Gathering spaces near the creek, which could raise maintenance and security concerns as well as disrupt habitat.

Bill Metzger walking with a Broomfield citizens' group through the south pasture

The North and South Pastures

The north and south pastures constitute the fifth character and use zone. The south pasture contains fairly high quality native grassland, and provides a nice visual buffer/separator from 120th Avenue. This area should remain undeveloped to preserve the long views into the farmstead from 120th Avenue. Selective restoration and landscape management efforts might be undertaken to enhance the quality of the grassland.

The north pasture is more expansive and provides long views to the east. A farm road extends north through the pasture to the windmill. Near views are of residential development to the north and west, and to Broomfield's wastewater treatment plant. The open character of this zone should be preserved, but compatible activities such as grazing or dryland farming could be undertaken. A small number of cows — to provide for sustainable grazing — or horses might be kept in the north pasture. A loop trail around this zone, with a connection to the historic windmill and the Crofton Park neighborhood to the north, could be provided. More extensive development, and new uses and structures that would affect the visual quality of this zone, are discouraged.

Mature cottonwoods along the lower pond dam edge; plans for reconstruction of the dam should be sensitive to their preservation

Additional Considerations

An evaluation of the structural stability of the pond embankments, and the capacity of the existing spillway, was completed by GEI Consultants in 2006. Their report indicated that the embankments had suffered damage from wave action, overtopping, and rodent activity. The emergency spillway channel for the lower pond also displayed significant vegetation and debris, which hinders outflow and may contribute to dam overtopping. The report recommended the reconstruction of the dam embankment and spillway to address these issues, and provided a schematic concept for each area.

As part of the planning effort for Metzger Farm, the team evaluated a variety of options with the participating cities' engineering departments, the Urban Drainage and Flood Control District, and State Engineers' Office. Options exist

for constructing a new, improved spillway that would provide the needed capacity and conveyance, while causing fewer impacts to the site. Options also exist for reconstructing the dam embankment so as to preserve the large cottonwoods at the east edge of the lower pond; one such option would entail constructing a new embankment within the footprint of the pond, outside the drip line of the existing trees. Similar approaches were implemented successfully at the McKay Lake dam in Westminster and at Broomfield's Plaster Reservoir.

In implementing future improvements to the dam and spillway, this plan encourages solutions that minimize impacts to the site and landscape, while providing necessary levels of protection from flood events.

SECTION 3: MASTER PLAN AND ESTIMATED CAPITAL AND MAINTENANCE COSTS

The Metzger Farm master plan was crafted in 2007-09 through a highly collaborative effort between Broomfield and Westminster, and involved both communities' Open Space Advisory Boards, City Councils, City staff, the Metzger family, and the public. Major elements of the master plan are described below and illustrated graphically in Figure 4. The total estimated capital cost of master plan improvements is estimated at $779,670, in 2009 dollars, excluding costs to fully restore the historic structures.

MASTER PLAN AND ESTIMATED CAPITAL CONSTRUCTION COSTS

Farmstead Core Improvements

The farmstead core will serve as an important venue for education and interpretation of Metzger Farm's cultural and historic significance. Improvements have been planned to facilitate use of the site for school groups, demonstrations of farm life, small-scale events, and self- or docent-guided tours. Improvements within the farmstead core, and associated costs in 2009 dollars, include the following elements.

View of farmstead across lower pond

- Creation of a 40-space gravel parking lot and trailhead west of the existing farmstead, with the potential for a future 40-space expansion. The parking area includes a bus drop-off to accommodate visiting student groups, a san-o-let enclosure and landscaping. A new vehicular entry drive serving the parking area would be created and aligned with 121st Place. The existing entry drive would be converted to pedestrian use, with emergency and service access retained. *[Item #1, estimated capital cost $97,492]*
- A connection to an existing reuse water line running along Lowell Boulevard, to irrigate and preserve the historic landscapes within the farmstead. This will allow for restoration of the turf areas and Betty Metzger's gardens, as well as provide supplemental irrigation for the trees. *[Item #2, estimated capital cost $45,188]*
- Site amenities, including benches and trash receptacles. *[Item #5, estimated capital cost $5,843]*
- First level (high priority) building stabilization on all structures except the pumphouse. This would address structural or life safety issues including foundations, building framing, and roofing, and would allow the structures to be viewed from a short distance, though not occupied at this time. Interpretive displays and demonstrations would be provided at the entrances to the structures. *[Item #6, estimated capital cost $143,315]*

Winter view of pond and fence

- Entry, regulatory, and some interpretive signage. Entry markers would be placed at the entrance to the farmstead, and interpretive signage placed along the trails. *[Item #7, estimated capital cost $5,194]*
- Interpretive displays at the farmstead (plaques on structures) to facilitate self-guided tours. *[Item #8, estimated capital cost $3,246]*
- Perimeter decorative fencing, such as wrought iron fencing, around the farmstead. The farmstead is envisioned as being open to the public from dawn to dusk, with a lockable gate that can prevent unauthorized access during hours of closure. *[Item #16, estimated capital cost $42,851]*

Subtotal: $343,129

Lower Pond Improvements

The lower (east) pond area is deep enough to support a warm water fishery that would be targeted toward families with young children. Improvements could be supported by a "Fishing is Fun" grant from the Division of Wildlife. In conjunction with fishing, a small picnic area could be provided. Motorized uses at the pond (such as remote controlled boats), as well as nonmotorized boating (canoes, kayaks, paddle boats) would be prohibited. Improvements proposed at the lower pond include the following elements.

Geese on the lower pond

- A fishing dock that also serves as a small overlook structure at the lower pond, with benches and trash receptacles. *[Item #13, estimated capital cost $40,124]*
- A small picnic structure, picnic tables, benches, and trash receptacles. *[Item #15, estimated capital cost $26,100]*

Subtotal: $66,224

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METZGER FARM MASTER PLAN

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Trail Improvements

Over two miles of trails will be constructed at Metzger Farm. Improvements will include a regional trail connection to the Big Dry Creek Trail, which will eventually connect to Broomfield's Southeast Community Loop Trail under Lowell Boulevard, and two miles of walking trails throughout the farmstead. Key segments of the trail system include the following.

A regional trail connection will be made to the Big Dry Creek Regional Trail

- A crusher fines trail from Lowell Boulevard and the main trailhead parking lot to Big Dry Creek. Improvements include a bridge at Big Dry Creek and wetland restoration at Lowell Boulevard and along the Big Dry Creek Trail. *[Item #3, estimated capital cost $185,206]*
- A crusher fines trail connection from Lowell Boulevard to the east side of the lower pond. A future underpass at Lowell Boulevard, provided through a separate Urban Drainage and Flood Control District project, will provide a link to Broomfield's Southeast Community Loop. *[Item #4, estimated capital cost $27,242, trail only]*
- A crusher fines trail connection from the farmstead to Crofton Park on the existing historic farm access road to the windmill. *[Item #10, estimated capital cost $2,118]*
- A crusher fines trail from the farmstead to Caulkins Ditch Overlook. Improvements include an overlook, benches, and trash receptacles. *[Item #11, estimated capital cost $67,878]*
- A crusher fines trail from Big Dry Creek to the existing Federal Boulevard underpass. *[Item #12, estimated capital cost $2,370]*
- Fencing along the north pasture. This will be installed to prevent unauthorized access and to contain animals in the event that grazing is reintroduced to the site. *[Item #14, estimated capital cost $30,155]*
- A "North Loop Trail" along the perimeter of the site. *[Item #17, estimated capital cost $55,348]*

Subtotal: $370,317

As noted earlier, the master planning process has also coordinated its design with two future Urban Drainage and Flood Control District projects that will carry water through the proposed underpass beneath Lowell Boulevard and through the two ponds to Big Dry Creek. Both projects are sponsored and partially funded by Broomfield and Westminster. A part of the Urban Drainage project will be to analyze how to minimize as much as possible any potential impacts to the wetlands adjacent to the upper or west pond.

SUMMARY OF IMPROVEMENTS

Farmstead core: $343,129
Lower pond: $66,224
Trails: $370,317
TOTAL: $779,670

A trail connection from the corner of Lowell Boulevard and 120th Avenue that extends north to the Metzger Farm trailhead entry is incorporated into the Lowell underpass construction project and budget. In addition, sidewalks along the east side of Lowell Boulevard and the north side of 120th Avenue will be incorporated into street improvement projects for both corridors.

PUBLIC ART

If joint funding can be obtained by both Westminster and Broomfield, a public art project may also be incorporated into the site that will respect and enhance the open space and historic qualities of the property.

ESTIMATED ANNUAL MAINTENANCE COSTS

Annual maintenance costs were also estimated in support of the planning effort. Maintenance costs will be shared by Broomfield and Westminster. The types of maintenance activities that are anticipated on an as needed basis include:

- Annual grading of the parking lot to remove ruts
- Weekly san-o-let servicing
- Annual flushing of the irrigation system
- Pruning and trimming of all plantings, as needed to maintain health
- Trail maintenance and grooming, replacement of crusher fines
- Mowing at the edge of the trail and within the farmstead core
- Trash removal, assumed at twice per week
- Snow removal at the entry drive and steps
- Opening and closing of the entrance gate to the farmstead
- Miscellaneous repairs (distinct from stabilization) to the structures
- Minor repairs to signage, graffiti removal
- Prairie dog management
- Noxious weed control
- Minor repairs to the gates and fencing
- Minor repairs to the fishing dock

Estimated annual maintenance costs	$26,900
Estimated annual operating costs, including water usage and utilities	$ 7,323
TOTAL	$34,223

SUMMARY OF PRIORITIES AND PHASING

If the timing of the preliminary design for the two proposed Urban Drainage and Flood Control projects will be completed before the project is constructed, the entire Metzger Farm project may be possible to complete in one construction phase. The preliminary design work may show that the entire trail system can be built in such a way that it will not be impacted by the construction of the future drainage improvements. However, if the flood control projects are not designed before the Metzger Farm improvements, the project could still proceed by phasing the construction in the following manner:

Phase 1 Improvements:
Farmstead Core $343,129
Trail Improvements* $117,234
Lower Pond $66,224
TOTAL: $526,587
*Excludes the trail on the dam embankment and trail on the south side of the ponds from Lowell Boulevard to Big Dry Creek/Federal Boulevard

Phase 2 Improvements:
Phase 2 improvements could occur once the preliminary design work for the Urban Drainage and Flood Control District improvements has been completed so that Phase 2 trail alignments can be finalized to avoid the proposed flood control project construction. However, the Phase 2 Trail construction may need to occur at the same time that the Urban Drainage and Flood Control District improvements are constructed to minimize disturbance to the site and to make sure that significant portions of the Phase 2 trails will not be impacted. For example, until the spillway is designed and constructed, it may not be feasible to construct the trail from the lower pond to Big Dry Creek and Federal Boulevard.

Trail on the dam embankment: $67,878
Trail from Lowell Boulevard to Big Dry Creek/Federal Boulevard: $185,205
TOTAL: $253,083

METZGER FARM MASTER PLAN

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In addition to the physical plan for public use improvements, management goals and action steps were also developed for interpretation and education, building stabilization and preservation of the site's historic fabric, and management of the site's landscape, with an emphasis on noxious weed control.

Farm tractor and brooder house

CREATING A MORE DETAILED INTERPRETIVE PLAN

The Metzger Farm planning process has identified a number of themes and strategies that could form the foundation for a more detailed interpretive and educational program, that could be further developed with participation of project partners that might manage or supply program content. Examples of such partners might include area historical societies, 4-H or agricultural organizations, area nature/naturalist programs, Colorado State University, local government historical committees, and/or the Colorado Division of Wildlife.

This section summarizes preliminary interpretive themes and strategies, and identifies next steps.

Potential Themes

Five core themes were identified as potentially suitable for interpretation.

Long view of stock standing shed and barn in summer

- The physical organization of the farm, including the unique color pattern for the buildings and entry drive; the spatial organization of buildings according to use and function; experimental and scientific research undertaken by John Metzger, in conjunction with CSU (for example, his test crops); the "model farm" concept; the reuse of materials to be thrifty and creative.
- The importance of water in sustaining farm and ranch activities; the numerous agricultural uses on the site; the irrigation features, including the pump house, lakes, wells, and Caulkins Ditch; and the cessation of farming as water was needed to support other uses.
- Elements of daily farm and ranch life. including the garden, care and feeding of the animals, seasonal activities, weed management, and unique stories.
- John Metzger as a farmer and entrepreneur: his experiments with test crops; the Scottish Shorthorn cattle; his efforts to establish a hunting club on the farm; milk and egg production; piñon nut production; and mining.
- John Metzger's legal and political career: this is not as central a theme as aspects of life on the farm, but might be explored in relation to Broomfield/

The weed burner (top photo) along with other farm equipment (lower photo) could be featured in a self-guided interpretive tour

Westminster history and Colorado history.

Potential Interpretive Strategies

Potential strategies for interpretive displays and other media were also identified.

- Interpretive panels or plaques might be placed near the exterior of farmstead buildings, describing their function, orientation, and possibly illustrating activities undertaken within.
- A brochure could be developed that numbered and described activities around a perimeter trail in the farmyard for a self guided tour. This brochure could also point out other significant locations on the property outside of the immediate farmstead.
- Another strategy might include allowing visitors to view the interiors of selected buildings from a Plexiglas-covered window, or through an open Dutch door, but visitors would not be allowed to enter the structures until required building restoration has been completed and public health and safety issues have been addressed. Corral gates would remain locked around structures like the loafing shed or equipment shed, until public health/safety issues have been addressed.
- Once public health and life safety issues have been addressed, selected buildings could be opened for self-guided or guided tours. The best opportunities include the loafing shed and dairy barn, which are both spacious enough to accommodate a tour. The brooder house, chicken house and granary may not need to be opened, as they could be viewed/ experienced from a window, and in some cases (e.g. brooder house) are too small to accommodate groups of visitors.

Potential Interpretive Program

Structures and features suitable for interpretation include the following.

- Loafing shed – this large, open area would be suitable for demonstrations, and could house picnic tables. It would likely need an accessible path and pad to accommodate a wheelchair.
- Barn – visitors could pass through the central corridor, allowing viewing of unique barn features without having to open all areas to the public.
- Chicken house and brooder house – these are best viewed from outside as they are too small to accommodate groups of visitors.
- Granary – this could also be viewed from outside.
- Site of milk house, the root cellar – while it would be cost prohibitive to reconstruct these features, their location and function could be noted through a display
- Pump house – this feature would be very expensive to stabilize, but its

function and significance could be noted through a display.

- Kitchen garden – this feature could be reconstructed subject to available funding and someone to maintain the garden.
- Main farmhouse – exterior displays could describe the architectural evolution of the house, the function and significance of key rooms. Subject to the two City Councils' approval, funding availability and staffing, the first floor of the house could be made accessible for guided or self-guided tours. ADA access could be provided by wrapping a ramp around the north side of the house and entering on the east side.
- Foundations for the original Gay family homes – these elements could be indicated with displays.
- Caulkins Ditch, the windmill, wells, and other irrigation features could be interpreted.

The site of former kitchen garden could be restored as part of the interpretive program

Next Steps in Refining the Interpretive Strategy

Action steps necessary to realize this interpretive vision include the following:

- Reaching agreement on specific themes and the uses and facilities needed to support these themes. These could include formal programs developed in conjunction with partners, like Colorado State University Extension, 4H, and cultural heritage organizations.
- Formal identification of programming partners. Because it is not envisioned at this time that the Foundation would hire dedicated staff to operate programs, providers should be identified as part of the interpretive plan, and potential financial and/or in kind arrangements structured.
- Prototypical exhibit design, identity elements (including logos and graphic design), and communications tools (such as a website) should also be covered in the interpretive master plan.

Potential Operating Partnerships

The principal assumption is that interpretive activities will likely need to be operated by a partner agency – like an agricultural organization, or a to-be-formed "Friends of…" group, or local historic groups. Boulder County is a good model as it operates a very solid docent program. Opportunities also exist for partnering with other historic preservation organizations, or to involve student interns, perhaps from CSU or neighboring schools such as Front Range Community College, CU-Boulder or Denver, or local high schools.

Wells on the property could also be featured in a self-guided tour

Priority stabilization measures would address structural integrity of the farm buildings, like the brooder house, above

An on-site caretaker is recommended for the property. It would be advisable to look for a caretaker that has background in agriculture, environmental issues, historic preservation, and/or educational/interpretive skills. For example, Boulder County was able to find a caretaker with interpretive skills that now works at one of their historic farm sites, MacIntosh Farm in Longmont.

IMPLEMENTATION OF BUILDING STABILIZATION MEASURES

The recommendations below provide some action steps that can facilitate implementation of building stabilization measures, including funding of preservation and rehabilitation projects.

Implement Historic Structures Assessment

It is recommended that a full Historic Structures Assessment be completed because it will allow for more detailed investigation of some of the structural and preservation issues at the farm buildings, as well as allow the Foundation to subsequently apply for larger grants, There are several options in completing this task.

Stabilization measures would also address necessary roof repairs to structures, such as the implement shed, above

- Apply for a State Historical Fund (SHF) Historic Structures Assessment. These grants have no cash match requirement and can be applied for at anytime during the year. It takes approximately thirty days to get approval and another thirty days to get a contract in place with SHF. The maximum amount of the grant is $10,000, is non-competitive and the building does not need to be landmarked or designated. The scope of work for historic structure assessments is at: http://www.coloradohistory-oahp.org/publications/pubs/1424Scope.pdf.
- Since there are multiple buildings that require assessment, it is likely that a $10,000 grant would be insufficient to assess all of the buildings. These assessments could be phased over time or a larger competitive grant could be requested as described below.
- Apply for State Historical Fund Acquisition and Development grants to assist with critical preservation and rehabilitation projects. This type of grant is only offered twice a year in April and October and requires a 25% cash match. It takes approximately four months for approval and two months for contracting. This grant is a competitive grant and the property/building must be landmarked or designated. Designation can be through Westminster, state, or national procedures. Grants can pay for construction plans and preservation planning as well as improvements to the structures. A

recommended approach is to prepare construction plans before applying for construction funding for a particular project.

- In order to obtain competitive grants, the Foundation should consider either local landmarking through the City of Westminster or an application to the State Register of Historic Properties. Either designation would make the property eligible for grant funding and both procedures are faster and less costly than seeking a listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

Second-level repairs would include restoring or replacing windows and doors

It is recommended that the partner cities obtain a consultant estimate and apply for a non-competitive Historic Structures Assessment grant for the highest priority buildings, including the main house and the caretaker's house, as well as the pump house.

Reconstruction and Alteration of Historic Buildings and Site Features

In order to protect the historical integrity of the Metzger Farm site and grant eligibility to plan for and preserve the site and structures, professional advice should be sought prior to making decisions such as exterior alterations, demolition, reproduction of structures, moving existing structures and adding new structures to the site. Examples of actions that could potentially have an adverse effect on the historical integrity of the site and should not be undertaken without a full understanding of the potential financial consequences. Examples of this type of action might include:

- Building a new building on-site to look like an old building.
- Moving a building into the historic farm configuration. However, building a new modern building or bringing a building in from another site may be acceptable if the new or relocated building is placed at some distance away from the existing farm structures so as to not imply that it was part of the historic farm configuration. This could be a visitors' center or interpretive pavilion. Denver's Four Mile House is an example of how this was handled successfully.

Repair and replacement of corral and property fencing would also be completed

Preservation decisions should be guided by the federal Secretary of Interior Standards (http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/tax/rhb/stand.htm), which include concepts that have been well-developed and applied across the country for fifty years. A historic preservation architect should be engaged to assist with planning, so that major decisions are made in a manner that preserves the Foundation's future options concerning historical designation and grant funding.

LANDSCAPE, HABITAT AND WEED MANAGEMENT

Landscape, habitat and weed management considerations at Metzger Farm include:

- Restoring degraded plant communities (e.g., south pasture grasslands).
- Active and consistent management of noxious weeds
- Maintaining habitat for populations of targeted animal species (e.g., waterfowl and sport fish).

The sections below summarize strategies and action steps. A more detailed series of recommendations is presented in a companion document, titled Natural Resource Assessment — Metzger Farm Open Space (September 2007), prepared by ERO Resources Corporation as part of this planning effort.

Landscape Restoration

Because at least some desirable species are present in both the north and south pastures, the best approach to restoration would be to control noxious weeds, mow remaining vegetation, and then seed into bare areas and areas of mowed vegetation. It is not necessary to completely remove existing vegetation. Although it would have to be carefully planned and executed by experienced staff, using a controlled burn in the south pasture would be a very effective method to control weeds, encourage native species, and clear litter prior to interseeding.

Active And Consistent Management Of Noxious Weeds and Invasive Trees and Shrubs

An Integrated Weed Management (IWM) plan should be developed and implemented for Metzger Farm by the open space maintenance staffs of Broomfield and Westminster. IWM plans include specified annual activities such as mapping weed and invasive tree/shrub infestations, choosing control methods, and documenting the success for control methods. Having a plan will allow resource managers to prioritize control activities, document success, and track costs. Typically, the first several years of implementing an IWM plan require the most effort. It takes time to map, prioritize, and effectively control infestations. Once effective site-specific control methods are identified, activities become more routine.

The following goal and objectives are recommended to address noxious weeds and invasive species at Metzger Farm.

Goal: Protect and enhance native vegetative communities and habitat for wildlife through noxious weed management.

Management Action Recommendations

Objective 1: Control noxious weeds and invasive tree/shrub species on Metzger Farm.

Action: Implement a weed and invasive tree/shrub management plan for Metzger Farm.

Action: Ensure weed management plan complies with State Weed Management Act, as well as County weed management objectives.

Action: Ensure chemical control is undertaken by state-licensed applicators and is done in strict accordance to product labels.

Objective 2: Plan trails to minimize the risk of weed introduction and spread.

Action: Control weeds prior to constructing new trails in the north and south pastures.

Action: Avoid creating a trail corridor that travels from a weed-infested area into an area with little or no weed infestation, if possible.

Action: Keep trails out of wet areas and away from wetlands on Metzger Farm.

Objective 3: Implement trail construction and maintenance with weed strategy in mind.

Action: Use weed-free materials in trail construction and maintenance.

Action: Clean all equipment used in trail construction and maintenance before it is used on a new project.

Action: Minimize ground disturbance and soil compaction resulting from construction and maintenance activities by limiting trips by equipment across an area and turnaround sites for equipment.

Action: Reclaim disturbed areas as soon as possible to reduce the chance of weed infestation.

Action: Control noxious weeds in a mowed buffer along roads and trails to reduce spreading during mowing operations.

Objective 4: Educate staff and visitors about noxious weed control, so that weeds are not spread throughout the site.

Action: Require the use of weed-free forage or pelletized feed for livestock before and during visits to Metzger Farm.

Removal of invasives, such as Russian Olive, shown at the upper pond, is a priority

A snag on the south side of the upper pond provides habitat for raptors.

Objective 5: Implement noxious weed management with a regional perspective.

Action: Apply for a grant through the Colorado Noxious Weed Management Fund (if available) for control efforts on Metzger Farm.

Action: Explore additional funding options through the Colorado Division of Wildlife (CDOW) and the Natural Resources Conservation Service for weed management.

Habitat Management

The following goal and objectives focus on wildlife habitat in and near riparian and wetland areas and the ponds.

Goal: Protect and enhance native vegetation communities and wildlife habitat.

Management Action Recommendatio

Objective 1: Protect and/or enhance important specified wildlife habitat in the wetlands, riparian areas, and the ponds.

Action: Implement habitat enhancement programs such as removal of invasive species such as Russian Olive trees, restoring native plant communities, improving wetlands, or enhancing cottonwood regeneration.

Action: Maintain standing dead (snags) and down cottonwood trees on Metzger Farm.

Action: Identify and project aesthetically valuable trees from beaver.

Objective 2: Consider the protection or enhancement of wildlife habitat in all management actions on Metzger Farm.

Action: Identify how management actions could negatively impact wildlife habitat. Avoid or mitigate these impacts whenever possible.

Action: Identify management actions that can provide opportunities to support or improve wildlife habitat or the migration corridor, such as developing a native vegetation planting program in areas of the site that have adequate water.

Objective 3: Integrate wildlife population and habitat protection into other resource management objectives and actions.

Action: Conduct prairie dog management to protect agricultural use and character of the farm and to prevent conflicts with adjacent properties. Management will be carried out in accordance with applicable state and local regulations and guidelines.

Action: Locate trails at the edges of plant communities where possible to minimize habitat fragmentation.

Action: Locate trail 30-50 feet away from the south edge of the lower pond and 225-250 feet way from the south edge of the upper pond.

Action: Limit access to the land bridge between the ponds.

Action: Locate the western crossing of the Nissen Reservoir Channel as far to the west as possible to avoid fragmenting wetlands and to reduce visibility of the trail to waterfowl in the west pond. If possible, incorporate trail into new Lowell Boulevard crossing of Nissen Reservoir Channel.

Action: Continue Broomfield Open Space Foundation and Westminster Open Space Volunteer Program quarterly trash pickup volunteer work days; identify other needs that could be met by volunteer groups.

Broomfield Open Space Foundation Clean-Up Day at Metzger Farm, January 31, 2009

METZGER FARM MASTER PLAN

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Below are a number of key next steps that are intended to facilitate public enjoyment of Metzger Farm:

1) Investigate and submit the following grant proposals:
   a. Adams County Open Space grant for construction of improvements
   b. A "Fishing is Fun" grant for construction of the dock/overlook
   c. State Historical Society grant for Historic Building Assessment and rehabilitation of the structures
   d. Grants for weed management

2) Complete design drawings for the proposed improvements and incorporate phasing in the construction plan if required by the timing of preliminary design for the Urban Drainage and Flood Control District improvements.

3) Select a caretaker prior to the opening of the site to the public, ideally as soon as the appropriate individual can be identified.

4) Develop an interpretive plan for self-guided tours of the property, and create an accompanying website that can provide background information, as well as information on tours and activities.

5) Develop the Integrated Weed Management Plan, establish maintenance responsibilities between Broomfield and Westminster Open Space maintenance staff, and initiate maintenance activities.

6) Once the property is open to the public, host at least one community event/ celebration per year to showcase the history and natural resources of the site.

7/ Continue working in a coordinated manner with the Broomfield Open Space and Trails Advisory Committee and Westminster Open Space Advisory Board to discuss the on-going use and other issues related to Metzger Farm that may arise over time.

8) Continue to support the Broomfield Open Space Foundation and Westminster Open Space Volunteer Program quarterly clean-up at Metzger Farm, and identify new opportunities for volunteers to support Metzger Farm.

Full moon over Metzger Farm