

# 1 Chapter 1

## Introduction



*Figure 1-1: Snow on area mountains*

The Jamestown Comprehensive Plan is an official public document adopted by the Town of Jamestown Board of Trustees as a formal definition of the Town's aspirations for its future. It sets forth policies and programs in order to guide the physical development of the community. This plan describes the way Jamestown wants to develop as it grows and recommends guidelines in order to achieve the desired results.

This plan is comprehensive in that it takes a broad look at a wide range of issues that exist in the community and that should be considered as the Town evolves.

This plan is general in that it does not indicate specific location or detailed regulations. However, it does provide recommendations for the development of regulations if they are determined necessary by the community.

The plan is also long range because it attempts to look beyond the foreground of current issues to the possibilities of the future.

It should be noted that even the most soundly based plan has a limited life span. As time, technologies, and philosophies change, the plan should be revised to reflect the changing situation.

### The Need for a Comprehensive Plan

To become a more resilient community in the face of adversities – whether natural or man-made – Jamestown intends to build a stronger and more flexible physical and social infrastructure that can better adapt, evolve, and thrive through the inevitable changes that may occur.

Many residents have been attracted to Jamestown due to its environmental assets, its small size, and because it is isolated, but within easy reach of Boulder, Longmont, and Denver. In respect to land use and development, to ensure Jamestown the ability to guide its own future; make decisions about land use and growth; and have influence on what occurs on land within close proximity to the Town, a comprehensive plan is the State and County recognized tool to do so.

The potential for growth in the region – including Jamestown – continues due to the high population and economic growth of the Front Range. This pressure is significant due to several factors:

- County development policies in the mountains have essentially stopped further subdivision with the exception of those subdivisions already platted. This has made platted lots within town more desirable due to the general scarcity of mountain lots.
- Significant vacant land remains within the town limits. Sixty-four vacant platted lots and mining claims (totaling approximately 121 acres) exist<sup>1</sup>.
- Jamestown is a very desirable place to live due to the growing trend of people moving to small towns that tend to have cleaner air, a community atmosphere, and recreation opportunities.
- Jamestown is in close proximity to the City of Boulder where the cost of living continues to rise.

With the pending growth pressure, the Town acknowledges that development in Jamestown is constrained - specifically due to the terrain. Steep slopes, floodplains, and other natural hazards exist. These aspects pose difficulties in ensuring safety of lives and property. The rugged terrain also creates hurdles for the installation and maintenance of roads, water infrastructure, wastewater treatment, and utilities as well as for the provision of services to the community. These aspects of the community should be considered along with the overall community vision as time moves forward.

<sup>1</sup> Boulder County Geographic Information Systems and conveyed in the 2015 Land Use and Housing Study.

### The Need for an Update to the 1981 Comprehensive Plan

Jamestown's original comprehensive plan was adopted in 1981. Over the decades, it served the Town adequately. However, changes in events, technology, philosophies, and land use tools, as well as changes in residents' opinions on the vision for Jamestown, has led to the need for the first update to the 1981 version.

A major catalyst for the 2016 update to the Jamestown Comprehensive Plan was the flood event of 2013. The flood resulted in loss of life and property, and powerfully impacted and altered the terrain of the natural environment and the watersheds across the Front Range of Colorado. A large percentage of the community's homes, roads and water distribution system were destroyed. The greater Jamestown area also suffered significant housing damage and roads were severely impacted and completely destroyed in several critical areas.

The flood resulted in impacts to land use, natural systems, utilities and, initially, the availability of housing for those displaced by the flood. These impacts also affected the Town budget through increased costs to Town systems and a decrease in revenue. To recover from the impacts, a community discussion began on what the identity of the community is, what the vision should be, and where appropriate areas for development might be.



Figure 1-2: Easter egg hunt

Various planning efforts were conducted in Jamestown in terms of recovery from the 2013 flood event. These studies were consolidated to inform this update of the comprehensive plan. These studies include the:

- **Jamestown Area Long Term Recovery Plan (2016)** – The *Jamestown Area Long Term Recovery Plan* is intended to guide the Town government and community in its rebuilding as well as to enhance certain aspects of the greater Jamestown area community to both mitigate the impacts of, and become more resilient to, future disruptive events. The themes of the plan are based on nine guiding principles identified by the community. They include: a healthy local government and civic culture; safe community; supportive community services; getting around town; living with nature; land use and housing; and vibrant communities.

The plan was prepared between September 2014 and April 2015. The planning process for the *Jamestown Area Long Term Recovery Plan* included several community meetings, work sessions with six Community Planning Groups. A Plan Implementation Group was formed to ensure that the concepts and actions of the plan become a reality.

- The **Jamestown Hazard Investigation and Risk Assessment (HIRA)**: The *2015 HIRA* was developed to better identify and assess a variety of hazards that the community may face due to its physical setting. The report also provided recommendations that the Town should consider to better mitigate the impacts of the identified hazards. The process included public review of the findings and included an advisory team made up of community members.
- The **2015 Land Use and Housing Study**: A companion to the *2015 HIRA*, the *2015 Land Use and Housing Study* analyzed the housing and land use opportunities for the community based on the information provided in the *HIRA*. It identifies the parcels within town limits that are more promising for development and conveys issues that the Town should consider before reviewing development proposals in and around Town limits. The report also contains a housing survey that gauges the community's attitude toward future development. The process included an advisory team, community housing survey, community meetings, and updates to the Board of Trustees.

## Policies

The issues raised in this document are not new - most of them existed in the 1981 edition. Many of those issues were reconfirmed through the planning processes for the *Jamestown Area Long Term Recovery Plan*, the *Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment and Land Use and Housing Study*, or during one of the many town meetings held between 2013 and 2016. A number of new issues were also identified in these processes. These issues have been incorporated and addressed in the policies that follow.

The policies are considerations for the Town Board to apply when making decisions about the future of Jamestown. They are formed in order to help guide the development of the town in a manner that upholds the vision of the community. Also included are suggested programs and actions that should be carried out in order to help implement the policies.