

LAND ACQUISITION CRITERIA

The following criteria are used to evaluate properties being considered for fee, easement, or lease acquisition by Jefferson County Open Space (JCOS). To qualify for JCOS acquisition consideration, a property should meet multiple criteria. If only one criterion is met, the property must have regional, ecological, or strategic significance.

Natural Resource Attributes

The property has the potential to preserve habitat for plant and wildlife species, protect ecological communities, and/or provide opportunities to enhance land and water resources.

Heritage Preservation

The property has known or potential historic sites, archaeological, geological or paleontological resources that represent the County's rich cultural history.

Scenic Quality

The property protects scenic views of natural landscapes and features.

Connectivity

The property is contiguous with public or preserved lands and contributes to landscape scale conservation and greenway enhancement.

Access and Nature-Based Experiences

The property has infrastructure or attributes conducive to public access and enjoyment of federal, state or local lands and waters for nature-based experiences, and/or provides residents a public trail, park or open space within a ten-minute walk in urbanized areas or drive in mountain areas of home.

Financial Considerations

The property can be acquired at or below appraised value and JCOS and partner funding is available. Projected management costs, existing buildings and structures, environmental issues, land restoration, forest management, and risk are also considered.

Plan Congruence

An open space or parkland use of the property is consistent with Jefferson County Plans, JCOS plans and federal, state and local plans.



JEFFERSON
COUNTY COLORADO
Open Space

POLICIES

*Adopted by the
Board of County Commissioners*

PRACTICES

Our business approach

DISCLAIMERS

- ⬡ JCOS cannot pursue land acquisitions on properties that have an active land use application with Jefferson County Planning & Zoning or that are the subject of a legal proceeding in which the County is a named party.
- ⬡ Properties may only be purchased at or below the value of an appraisal performed by a licensed appraiser or a comparative analysis and finding of value performed by staff.

- ⬡ JCOS only negotiates with willing sellers.
- ⬡ Properties considered for purchase are evaluated using our Acquisition Criteria, the Jefferson County Conservation Atlas, Colorado Natural Heritage Program (CNHP) reports, the Front Range Mountain Backdrop/Foreground Preservation Area Study, and other available information.
- ⬡ Condemnation or eminent domain has only been used by Jefferson County to acquire open space or parkland in one instance since 1972. It remains a conservation tool that the Board of County Commissioners may wish to use if circumstances warrant.
- ⬡ Any maps or lists showing specific properties of interest for acquisition are strictly confidential and are not available for public view.
- ⬡ Property acquisition details become public once the landowner and JCOS have agreed to final purchase terms. Documents not subject to public disclosure under the Colorado Open Records Act remain confidential until an acquisition is completed.
- ⬡ Acquisitions must be recommended by staff and the JCOS Advisory Committee and approved by the Board of County Commissioners.

- ⬡ Landscape level maps indicating landforms, features and conservation values do not imply that a property should be or will be pursued for public or conservation purposes nor do they imply this is the only appropriate land use.
- ⬡ Maps produced by JCOS are for planning, evaluation, and illustrative purposes only and have no effect on zoning or property value.