

# Quincy Farm: Possibilities & Opportunities

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Prepared by

Cherry Hills Village Staff

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# Background

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## *Site*

Quincy Farm is a 17.5-acre property located in the heart of Cherry Hills Village that spans both sides of the High Line Canal. The Farm is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and the well-preserved buildings and pastures are a picturesque part of the region's past. The Farm is a traditional agricultural parcel in a suburban setting. The Property consists of nine structures: three houses, a detached garage, two barns, horse stalls, a chicken coop, and a pumphouse. These buildings are surrounded by pastures, an irrigation pond, and a diversity of trees and shrubs. The Farm's open lands are important natural areas. The Property's mature trees, riparian zones, wetlands, and pond create an urban wildlife habitat, providing food, shelter, breeding grounds, and migration corridors. The High Line Canal Trail bisects the Property. It is used by hundreds of people every day for walking, jogging, hiking, bicycling, and horseback riding. Trail users can experience this refuge of nature remaining in an urban space, often spotting wildlife from the trail in and around the Farm.

## *History*

Quincy Farm was generously gifted to the City of Cherry Hills Village in 2008 by its previous owner, Catherine ("Cat") H. Anderson, with the intention that it become an amenity for the whole community. She granted a Conservation Easement on the Farm to Colorado Open Lands, a Colorado non-profit organization, to ensure the continued preservation of its natural landscape. The Conservation Easement is attached as Exhibit A. Cat deeded the Property to the City via a Special Warranty Deed subject to a life estate. The City owns Quincy Farm in fee simple, and the life estate terminated upon Ms. Anderson's death on June 2, 2016.

Since Cat Anderson donated the Property to the City, the City has involved its citizens and staff in an ongoing effort to develop planning and management guidelines for the Farm. The Quincy Farm Visioning Committee and the Quincy Farm Committee commissioned a 2012 Pond Assessment Report, prepared a 2014 Visioning Report, and a 2017 Management Plan. The Quincy Farm Committee had been working over the past three years to compose a draft Master Plan. In that draft, which has not been formally approved, the Mission Statement for the Property decided upon by the Committee was, "Enriching the lives of youth, adults, and families through conservation, educational opportunities, and the experience of a historic Colorado farm in a natural setting".

## *Timeline of Recent Events*

- 2019 - 2020 – Quincy Farm Master Plan (draft)
- Sept. 2020 – Master Plan process and Quincy Farm Committee paused; letter of interest from Anderson family
- Oct. 2020 – Natalie Anderson submitted a draft Management Plan for consideration by Council
- May 2021 – Request for Proposals published
- July 2021 – Request for Proposals closed; two submittals received
- August 2021 – Council voted to amend RFP process, removing consideration of transfer of title

In May 2021, the City published a Request for Proposals for Quincy Farm Management and Programming. The RFP closed on July 14<sup>th</sup>, and the City received two responses: one from Natalie Anderson, Catherine Anderson's granddaughter, and one from the Cherry Hills Land Preserve. At the August 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting, City Council discussed a process to evaluate the proposals they received. Council determined that proposers will give presentations at the September 21<sup>st</sup> City Council meeting. Council also requested that staff present two possible options for Quincy Farm that the City could consider as well – one higher cost and one lower cost.

At the August 31<sup>st</sup> meeting, City Council voted to modify the process for the Quincy Farm Management and Programming RFP. Under the updated RFP, the City will not consider proposals that contemplate transfer of title to the property. City Council further moved that any proposer that wants to modify its proposal to eliminate transfer of title to the property and propose an alternate plan may submit a revised proposal by Sept. 14, 2021.

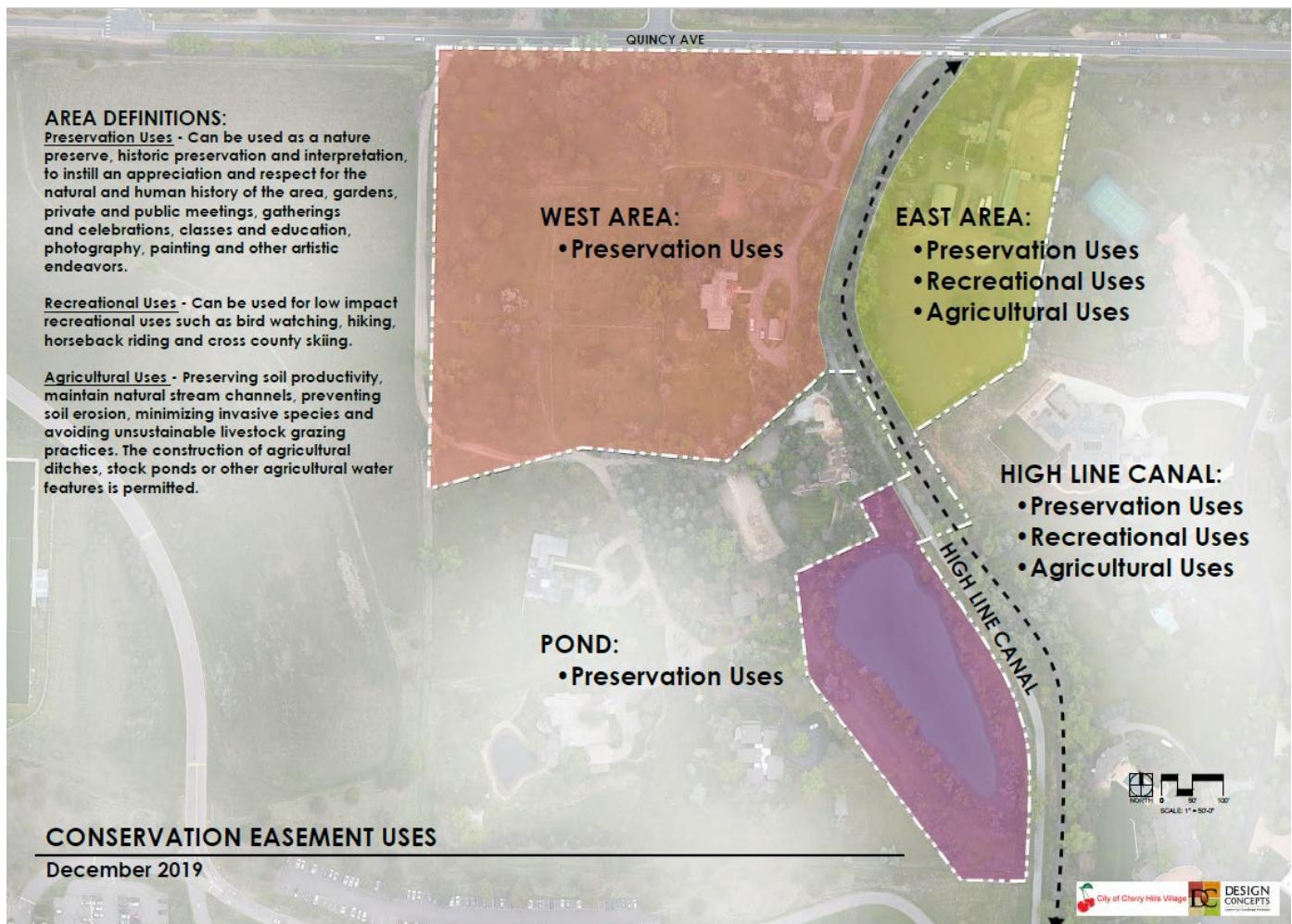
## *Guide to this Document*

Rather than present two binary options, staff has prepared a range of possible scenarios for the Farm. Varying levels of investment are presented for:

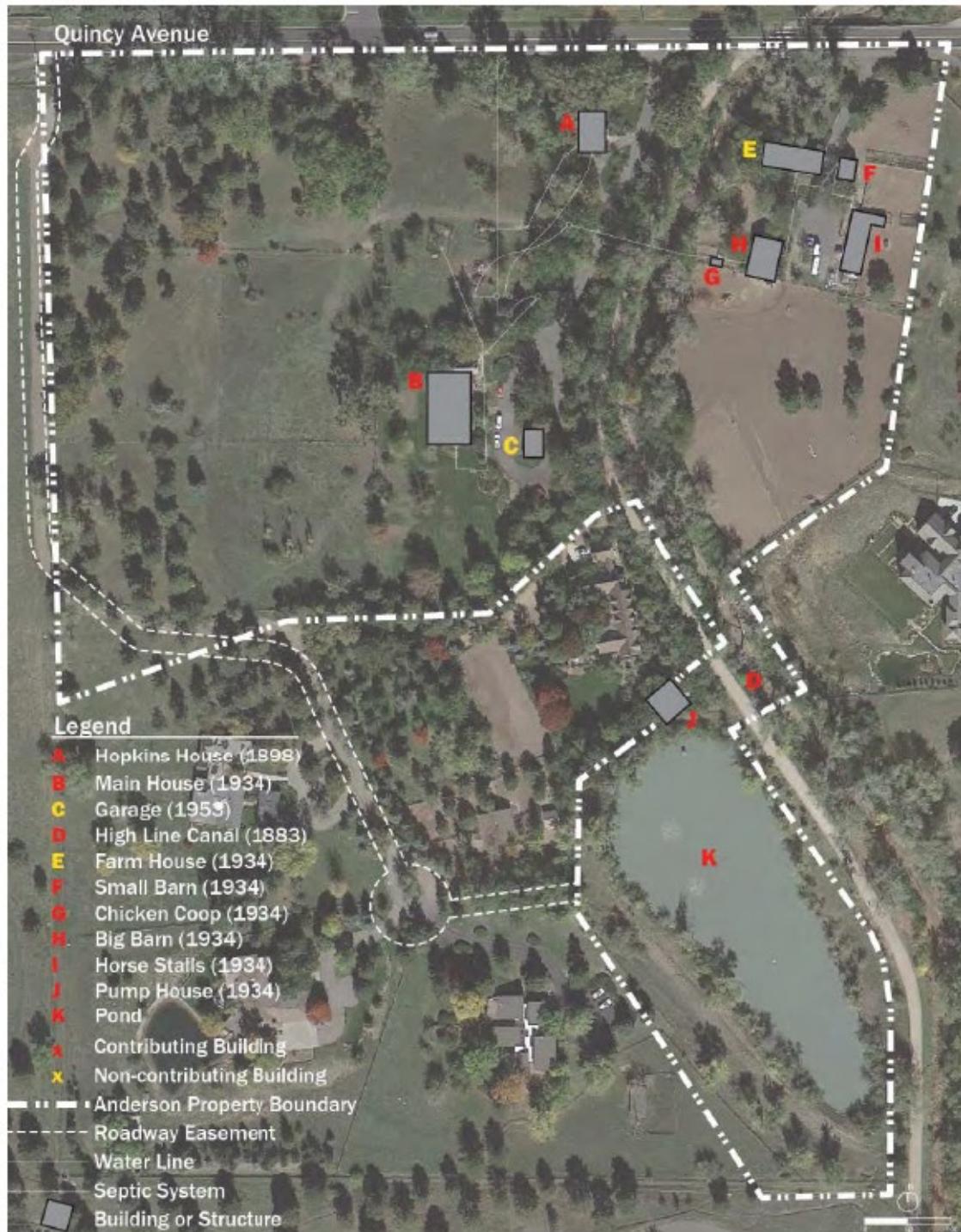
- Capital Costs: Buildings
- Capital Costs: Site Improvements
- Maintenance

These should not be taken as guidelines to choose Option A, Option B, or Option C. While the options presented are possible combinations of work, they are not recommendations or suggestions. There are more possibilities for the Farm than are outlined in this document; each category can be broken down further to determine work on interiors versus exteriors of specific buildings, for example. **This document provides a framework to assist in the decision-making process.**

# Map of Conservation Easement Uses

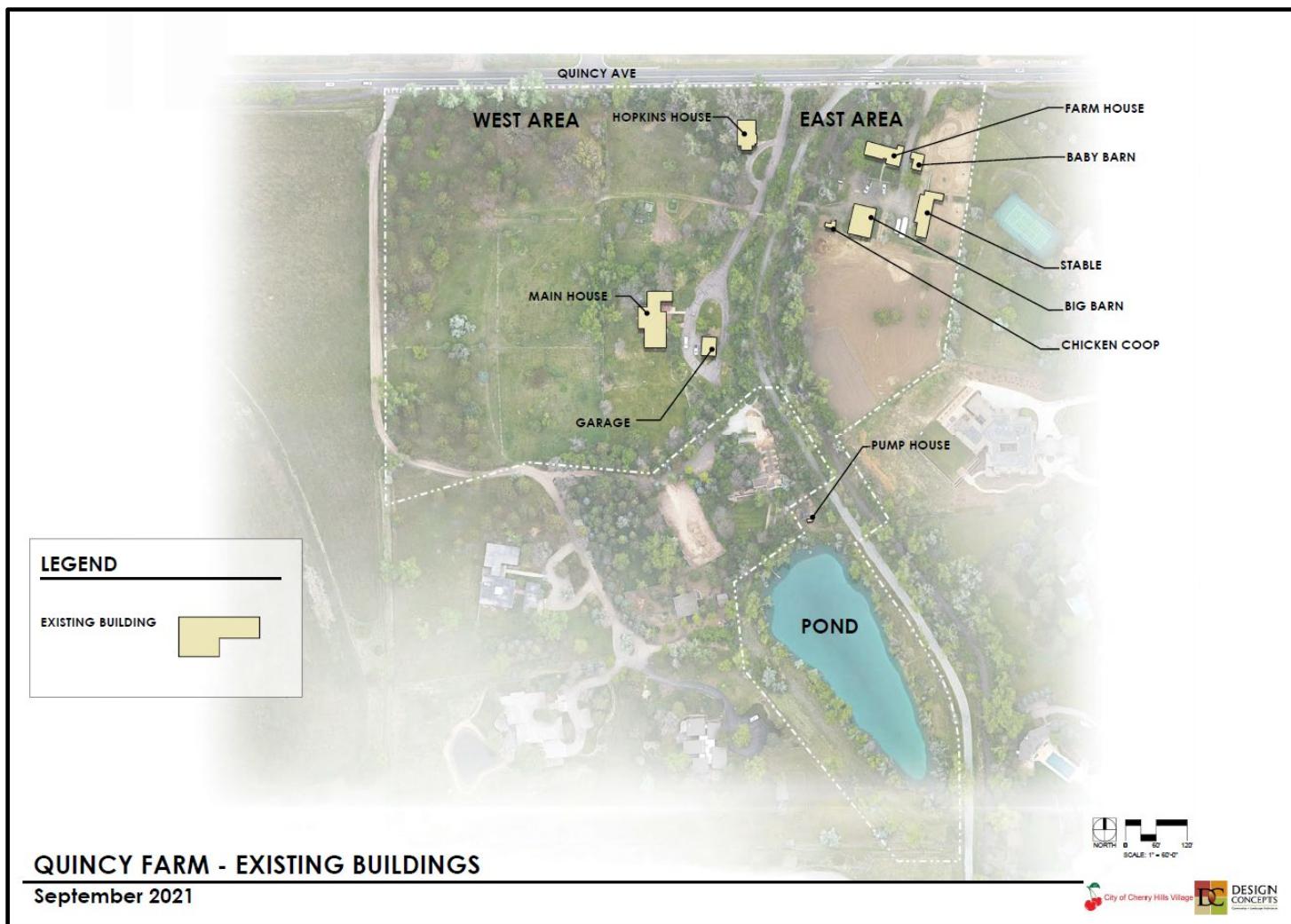


## Detailed Site Map



## Capital Costs: Buildings

Three scenarios are described below as possibilities for the Farm's nine buildings. Under the least-cost scenario, all buildings permitted to be removed under the Conservation Easement are demolished. The Farm is converted largely to open space with no interior spaces or amenities for programming. Under stabilization, all buildings are maintained with the exception of the garage and East side Farm House (neither of which contributes to the historic designation). Maintenance work is performed on the exterior of all historic buildings to stabilize all structures and keep them safe and preserved. No interior work is contemplated in this scenario. The full rehabilitation option includes all possible work to all buildings, which is likely beyond what is necessary, but gives a snapshot of what the most expensive change entails.



## Least-Cost

This option is presented in response to the question: “What is the least cost and least maintenance option available for Quincy Farm?” This scenario is certainly the least cost and maintenance, but certainly is in conflict with much public input to date.

More specifically, Quincy Farm is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Seven structures on the Farm contribute to the National Historic Register designation. This designation is important in its own right because it affirms the historic importance of the Farm; it also qualifies Quincy Farm for grants from the State Historical Fund. However, the Conservation Easement on the Farm does not hold the City to following the standards for historic buildings for all the designated structures, only for the Hopkins House. It permits all other structures on the West side to be torn down. On the East side, the Conservation Easement stipulates that the Big Barn must be preserved, but all other East side structures could be removed. A chart detailing the requirements of the Conservation Easement and the National Historic Register designation for each building is attached as Exhibit B.

The Least Cost Option follows the limits only of the Conservation Easement, and would demolish all structures on the property besides the Hopkins House, Big Barn, and pumphouse. (The pumphouse would be maintained as it is a functional structure protecting the pump at the pond.) Exterior work would be performed on the Hopkins House and Big Barn to stabilize and preserve both structures. No interior work is contemplated, as the structures are not anticipated to be used for programming in this option.

## Stabilization

All historic buildings are maintained under this option. The two buildings that do not contribute to the National Historic Register designation, the garage and the East side Farm House, would be demolished. Exterior work as recommended in the Historic Structure Assessments would be performed on all other structures. This ensures that the buildings are protected from the elements and can remain in place to be enjoyed for many years into the future. Interior work for inside classroom space or occupancy is not contemplated, and as a result, no real interior programming could be utilized. To reiterate, this combination of building treatments is not a recommendation or proposed option; it is an exercise to help understanding what a stabilization scenario could look like.

## Full Rehabilitation

This option includes **all possible building improvements**, with costs for renovating every single structure inside and out, which would create more activity space than the Farm likely needs. It is therefore likely a higher estimate than is practical, but gives a snapshot of what the capital costs for buildings might be with significant investment and improvements.

## West Side

Both the Hopkins House and the Main House will have all recommended exterior work performed to stabilize the buildings. The Hopkins House would be restored to its early historical appearance, both interior and exterior. The Main House would also be updated inside within the parameters of the historic designation and asbestos mitigation performed.

## East Side

All buildings on the East side would have exterior work completed. The Farm House interior would be renovated as well to accommodate a caretaker.

## Cost Summary: Buildings

A more detailed cost breakdown for buildings is attached as Exhibit C.

Least Cost Option	\$1,645,945	Demo all eligible buildings rehab exterior of Hopkins and Big Barn and reclaim disturbed areas
Stabilization	\$2,878,249	Exterior work on all buildings; demolition of non-historic buildings
Full Rehabilitation	\$5,151,242	Exterior and interior restoration of all buildings

## Capital Costs: Site Improvements

Three levels of improvements are presented below, ranging from only completing pond maintenance to higher estimates with amenities added on both sides of the property. A list of improvements appears as Exhibit D. This list could be viewed as a menu of options that can be chosen in any combination; the three levels below are for descriptive purposes only.

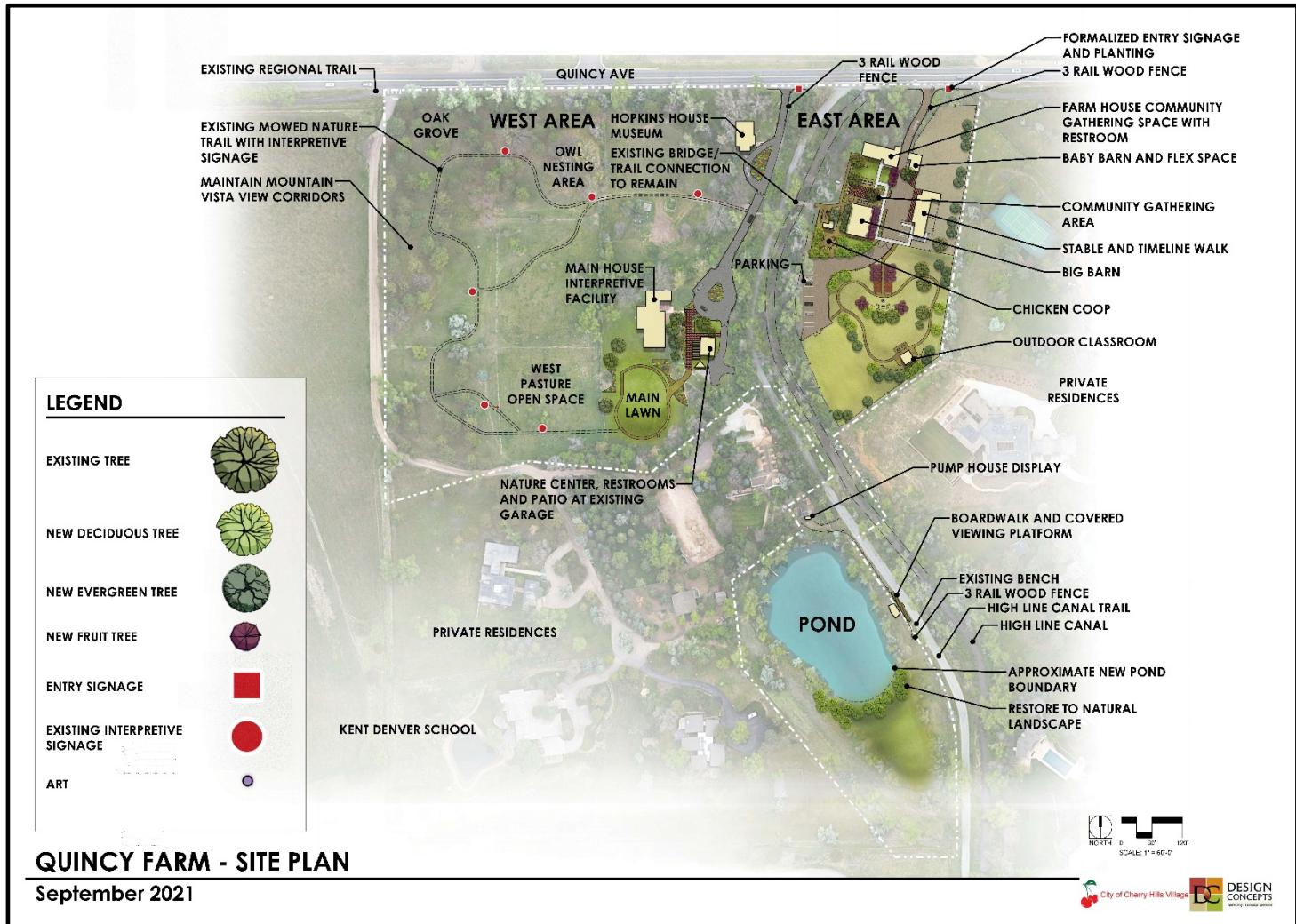
## Minimal Improvements

An example of adding minimal improvements to the site would be to only complete dredging and stabilization work at the pond. Any areas that need restoration following demolition of buildings could also be improved with landscaping and irrigation. No improvements would be constructed or added to the site.

## Moderate Improvements

A middle option for improvements could include adding some features, in addition to completing the pond work of dredging and restoration. A Nature Center with a restroom could be created in place of the garage. Landscaping, including trees and gardens, could be added on both the East and West sides.

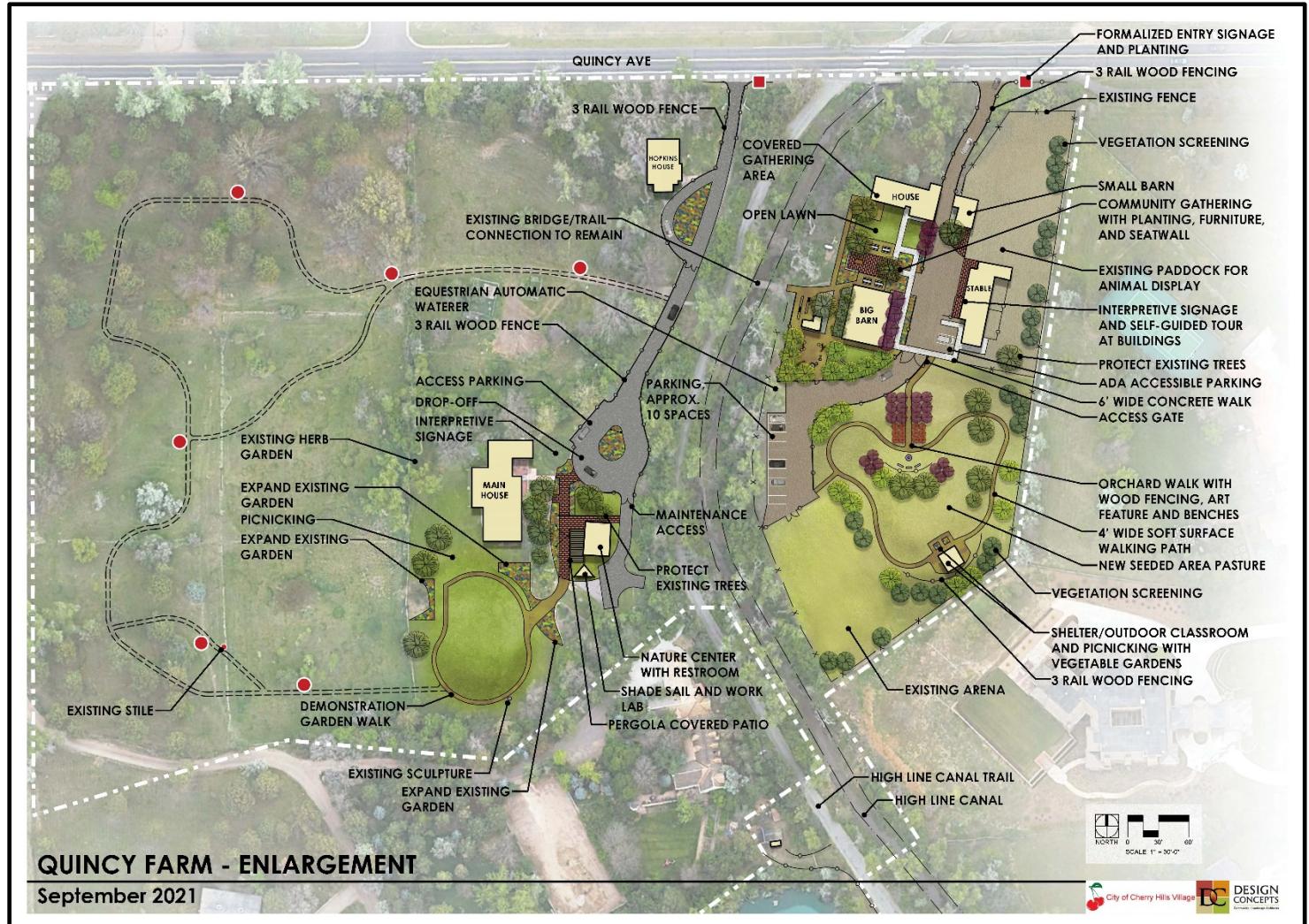
## Multiple Improvements



*Site Plan map above is also included as Exhibit E, please see that exhibit for a larger view.*

This scenario imagines improvements to the East side, West side, and Pond area. On the West side, entry and interpretive signage is added. Gardens are expanded and the driveway is shortened to improve safety around the Nature Center. On the East side, a gravel parking area would be created with accessible parking spaces and walkways between buildings. An outdoor classroom with interpretive signage could be constructed, with classes related to a new orchard with heirloom varieties and demonstration vegetable garden. An accessible gathering area in front of the Big Barn

completes the improvements on the East side. In the Pond area, a boardwalk and covered viewing platform provide an inviting place to birdwatch and serve as a barrier to keep visitors out of sensitive wildlife habitat.



*Above map is also included as Exhibit F, please see that exhibit for a larger view.*

## Cost Summary: Improvements

A detailed list of site improvements and costs is included as Exhibit D.

Minimal Improvements	\$316,723	Pond dredging + restoration
Moderate Improvements	\$836,070	Includes Pond improvements, Nature Center w/ restroom, landscaping
Multiple Improvements	\$1,248,161	Includes all shown improvements

# Maintenance

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The following section contains annual costs anticipated for Quincy Farm depending on the level of maintenance desired. Estimates include tree care, weed management, ongoing pond maintenance, and general maintenance items such as minor repairs to buildings. The estimates do not include City staff time.

## Low Maintenance

In this option, maintenance will be performed on a minimal basis meeting all requirements of the Conservation Easement and City ordinances. Mowing, weed management by City staff, pond care, and tree maintenance are expected. No additional landscaping or features are planned.

## Medium Maintenance

In this option, the City would increase staff hours on regular maintenance items, increase pond maintenance, and increase tree care. Weed mitigation services would be contracted out to a third party.

## High Maintenance

This option anticipates significant improvements to the site's landscaping that would need to be maintained accordingly. It contemplates more tree care, general maintenance, and contracted weed management.

## Cost Summary: Maintenance

The numbers below are annual averages for six years, based on increasing costs over time. For a detailed breakdown, please see Exhibit G.

Low Maintenance	\$49,000	Per year
Medium Maintenance	\$75,250	Per year
High Maintenance	\$87,125	Per year

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# Additional Considerations

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## Programming Opportunities

### Activities

Various types of programming have taken place at Quincy Farm over the past five years. Kent Denver has held summer camps at the Farm for their students, the Cherry Hills Land Preserve has

held beekeeping, stargazing, and nature activities, and the Audubon Society holds an annual Christmas bird count at the Farm (a tradition started by Cat Anderson and Candy Gray). All information below anticipates programming being provided by third-party organizations.

Continuing similar programming could involve the following activities:

- Nature-based summer camps
- Beekeeping classes
- Bird walks
- Stargazing

Programming could continue to take place within the limitations that the Farm currently has in terms of restrooms and available space. Restoration of buildings, increasing accessibility of existing spaces, and the addition of site improvements expand the possibilities for different programs. A brief list of possible future programming appears below, followed by more detailed descriptions of possibilities based on specific buildings and areas of the Farm.

Future programming could include:

- History of Cherry Hills Village
- Tree tour of Quincy Farm
- Plein air painting
- Community gardening
- Wildlife tour of Quincy Farm
- Life in Colorado in the 1930's
- An explanation of conservation easements
- Nature journaling
- 4-H programs

## West Side

### Nature Center (Garage)

The Nature Center could be made into a welcoming space with interior finishes and furniture that stand up to active use and will readily accommodate creative exploration related to agriculture, art, and nature (such as making leaf prints or working with clay or paints). The design of the Nature Center can take advantage of the use of indoor/outdoor space and be able to open to the outdoors during good weather. The interior can include signs about plants and animals on the Farm. One specific possibility is to set up a live feed of nesting owls or pond wildlife to be broadcast to a screen in the Center.

### Main Residence

The Main Residence could be used as a meeting and event space and information resource for land conservation, nature study, and local historical information. The first floor of the Main Residence

could contain information about nature, as well as the history of Quincy Farm and the area, from homesteading in the 1800's to the Blackmer period in the 1930's to the Pony Club. The first level of the Main Residence could be used to host conservation, historical, horticultural, agricultural, and other similar educational activities. The main rooms downstairs can be made available for reservation for public and private meetings relating to land and nature conservation, historic preservation, and artistic endeavors. This programming could focus on families and/or adults. There can also be space for an office for staff in this building.

The Main Residence kitchen could house cooking classes, canning demonstrations, farm-to-table food preparation, and butter and ice cream making, as well as serving as the kitchen for gatherings that take place in the house or on the lawn in the summer. During warm months, numerous group activities relating to conservation and appreciation of nature, art, and agriculture can take place on the lawn. Some suggestions that came from residents during the 2018 Open House were star gazing, an ice cream social, and family picnics.

### Hopkins House

Following restoration, volunteer-led tours of the Hopkins House could be provided to educate visitors about the history of Quincy Farm and Cherry Hills Village.

### Art

Cat specifically included art and art programming in the Conservation Easement, noting the Farm could be used for photography, painting, and other artistic endeavors. The property is already home to a large sculpture by Robert Mangold, located on the Main House lawn. The Cherry Hills Village Art Commission will be a valuable resource for the possible installation of additional sculptures or art both outside and within the buildings. Future art programming can also be coordinated with the CHV Art Commission.

## **East Side**

### Agriculture

A demonstration vegetable garden could be planted on the East side. Rather than a traditional community garden with plots, the garden could be maintained by the City with opportunities for community members to volunteer.

### Barns, stable, and chicken coop

A significant amount of construction work, including roof replacement, is necessary for the Farm buildings before animals could be kept at Quincy Farm. These could include horses, sheep, goats, and miniature cattle.

If animals are located on the Farm, costs of maintenance will increase. According to Four Mile Park, their Livestock Program (consisting of 4 horses, 3 goats, 5 chickens, and 1 rooster) costs are approximately \$16,000.00 per year for feed, care, and veterinary expenses. Cherry Hills Village

should take these costs into account (plus the possible costs of preparing the existing barns) prior to beginning a livestock program.

## Funding Opportunities

Future grant opportunities will depend on what is ultimately determined for the future of the Farm; certain grants are available for historic preservation, agriculture and education activities, etc. Below is a brief list of possible options. This list can be clarified and expanded once firm decisions are made regarding the status of buildings and future activities.

### **Arapahoe County Open Space (already received: \$221,231)**

The City has already received three grants from Arapahoe County Open Space for planning, irrigation, and tree work at Quincy Farm. The City is eligible to apply for the County's Standard Grant, for amounts ranging from \$100,001-\$500,000.

### **State Historical Fund (already received: \$10,000)**

To complete the Archaeological Assessment of the Farm, the City applied for and received a \$10,000 grant from the State Historical Fund. If the buildings on the Farm are maintained so that the historic designation remains, the City is eligible to apply for SHF's Competitive Grant, for amounts between \$50,001-\$250,000. It is important to note that SHF is aware that projects often span multiple years, and projects can be phased so that entities can apply across multiple years for the same structure.

### **Great Outdoors Colorado**

The City is eligible to apply for GOCO's Community Impact Grants (\$100,000 - \$1,000,000). This funding is available "...to develop and revitalize parks, trails, school yards, fairgrounds, environmental education facilities, and other outdoor projects as identified and prioritized by the communities they serve".

Additional grants may be available for reconstruction of the pond and other capital improvements.

## Summary

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This document endeavors to provide context to Council in considering the future of Quincy Farm. As stated above, varying levels of investment are possible for:

- Capital Costs: Buildings
- Capital Costs: Site Improvements
- Maintenance

Each of the scenarios presented are possible combinations of work, but they are not recommendations or suggestions. Details for each set of categories are included in the attached

Exhibits. The estimates for each level of building investment, site improvements, and ongoing maintenance are summarized in the table below.

<b>Summary of Costs</b>		
<b>Capital Costs</b>		
Building Costs		
Least Cost Option	\$1,645,945	Demo all eligible buildings rehab exterior of Hopkins and Big Barn and reclaim disturbed areas
Stabilization	\$2,878,249	Exterior work on all buildings; demolition of non-historic buildings
Full Rehabilitation	\$5,151,242	Exterior and interior restoration of all buildings
Site Improvements		
Minimal Improvements	\$316,723	Pond dredging + restoration
Moderate Improvements	\$836,070	Includes Pond Improvements, Nature Center w/restroom, Landscaping
Multiple Improvements	\$1,248,161	Includes all shown improvements
<b>Ongoing Maintenance</b>		
Maintenance Costs*		
Low Maintenance	\$49,000	Per year
Medium Maintenance	\$75,250	Per year
High Maintenance	\$87,125	Per year
*Maintenance costs do not include City staff time.		

## Exhibits

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- A. Conservation Easement
- B. Understanding the Conservation Easement and Historic Designation
- C. Capital Costs: Buildings
- D. Capital Costs: Site Improvements
- E. Quincy Farm – Site Plan (Improvements)
- F. Quincy Farm – Enlargement (Improvements)
- G. Maintenance Costs