



Erie Urban Renewal Authority

I-25 Erie Gateway: Conditions Survey

The Town of Erie, Colorado

169165 | November 18, 2022



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November 18, 2022

Erie Urban Renewal Authority
The Town of Erie, Colorado

Dear Town of Erie Urban Renewal Authority Board of Commissioners,

The following conditions survey report is intended to assist the Town of Erie Urban Renewal Authority (TOEURA) with identifying and cataloguing conditions that may be arresting sound development from occurring throughout a defined survey area. This area tentatively named the “The I-25 Erie Gateway Urban Renewal Plan”.

The proposed I-25 Erie Gateway Urban Renewal Plan will encompass approximately 2,296 acres that includes 92 parcels. The area is characterized by large vacant parcels, agricultural property and pockets of commercial development. The land has agricultural assessments and features four oil and gas wells. This conditions survey evaluates the area in its entirety.

The conditions survey report has been prepared based upon the application of Colorado’s Urban Renewal Law under C.R.S. 31-25 Part I, more specifically §§ 101 to 116 (the “Act”). The report includes a description of each blighting factor for identification pursuant to the Act and an identification of those factors observed, identified, and found to exist within the proposed plan area. Blighting factors have also been mapped to illustrate the location of these observed conditions and the parcels they impact.

Based upon our field observations and analysis, this report finds that the surveyed area meets the Act’s statutory minimum of blighting factors required to designate the proposed I-25 Erie Gateway Urban Renewal Plan as an urban renewal project eligible for urban renewal activities.

Sincerely,

Andrew Arnold, AICP
Economic Development Planner
Short Elliott Hendrickson, Inc (SEH®)

CC: Julian M.D. Jacquin

Executive Summary

The I-25 Erie Gateway Urban Renewal Plan Conditions Survey:

The Town of Erie's Urban Renewal Authority (TOEURA) has begun the process of evaluating an area for Urban Renewal projects and activities. The subject area includes 92 parcels west of Interstate 25. Portions of this area have been considered for urban renewal treatment before, with a previous conditions survey being completed in 2018, but no Renewal Plan has been adopted to date. TOEURA contracted with SEH to begin this evaluation, starting with a conditions survey report.

The conditions survey report is required by Colorado's Urban Renewal Law to examine the existence of specific conditions that contribute to making an area within the community "blighted", and therefore eligible for urban renewal treatment. The conditions survey is the first step in the process of creating an urban renewal plan for a specific geographic area of that municipality.

An urban renewal plan area, also known as an urban renewal project, is defined by state statute to mean "a slum area, or blighted area, or combination thereof, which the local governing body designates as appropriate for an urban renewal project" (C.R.S. 31-25-103). The process to designate an urban renewal plan is organized under Colorado Urban Renewal Law (C.R.S. 31-25-101 to 116).

For an urban renewal plan to be established and adopted, a specific geographic area within the community must be found to exhibit certain conditions. These conditions are described as blighted area factors, or "blighting factors", and these factors must be cataloged before urban renewal projects and activities can commence. The process of surveying for the presence of blighting factors is part of conducting a conditions survey, a report that carefully analyzes an area to determine the existence of factors that, "substantially impairs or arrests the sound growth of the municipality, retards the provision of housing accommodations, or constitutes an economic or social liability, and is a menace to the public health, safety, morals, or welfare." (C.R.S. 31-25-103.2)

A conditions survey does not create a new Urban Renewal Plan or Urban Renewal Project. The conditions survey is merely a starting point for that process, one that is required before TOEURA can designate the Erie I-25 Gateway an Urban Renewal Plan. The conditions survey's purpose is to evaluate the proposed URA plan area and determine if it meets the statutorily required threshold of blighted area factors. Colorado's Urban Renewal Law defines eleven factors, four of which must be identified before an Urban Renewal Project or Plan can be established and adopted. If all property owners and tenants consent to being included in the Urban Renewal Plan, then only 1 blighted area factor need be identified.

The proposed I-25 Erie Gateway Urban Renewal Plan area was carefully surveyed using a holistic analysis. Observations were taken during a multi-day field visit that identified the presence of statutorily defined blighting factors throughout the area. These observations were supplemented with background research on the site and market characteristics. This report thoroughly reviewed both City and County planning documents, as well as assessment information that could help identify blighting factors that were not easily observable during the site visits.

This conditions survey's conclusion is that the proposed I-25 Erie Gateway Urban Renewal Plan area exhibits the necessary number of blighting factors to make it eligible for an urban renewal project or plan area according to state statute. This conditions survey identified eight (8) blighting factors within the area, listed in the table below:

Executive Summary (continued)

I-25 Gateway URA Plan Conditions Survey – Blighting Fac Cataloged	
Blighted Area Factor # (C.R.S. 31-25-103.2 List Label)	Definition
Factor 1	Slum, deteriorated, or deteriorating structures
Factor 2	Predominance of Defective or Inadequate Street Layout
Factor 3	Faulty Lot Layout in Relation to Size, Adequacy, Accessibility, or Usefulness
Factor 4	Unsanitary or Unsafe Conditions
Factor 5	Deterioration of site or other improvements
Factor 6	Unusual Topography or Inadequate Public Improvements or Utilities
Factor 8	The existence of Conditions that Endanger Life or Property by Fire or other Causes
Factor 11	The existence of Health, Safety, or Welfare Factors Requiring High Levels of Municipal Services or substantial Physical Underutilization or Vacancy of Sites, Buildings, or other Improvements

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Erie Urban Renewal Authority

Erie I-25 Gateway: Conditions Survey

Prepared for the TOEURA Board of Commissioners

1 The Erie I-25 Gateway Urban Renewal Plan Summary

1.1 Survey Area

The Erie I-25 Gateway Urban Renewal Plan's proposed boundary encompasses 92 parcels and 2,296.5 acres. The boundary includes both incorporated and unincorporated property. There are 20 parcels within the survey boundary in unincorporated Weld County. Property within the survey boundary is characterized by a mix of large, vacant parcels that have been historically assessed as agricultural, tax-exempt property, and some commercial development. Oil and gas wells are also present.

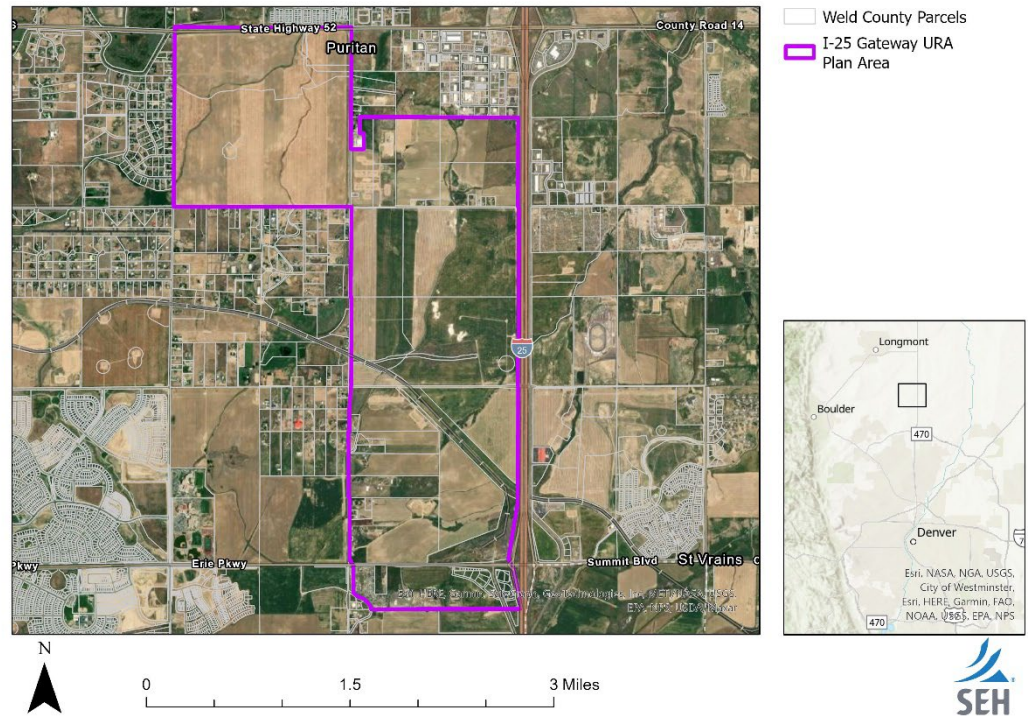
Survey Boundary Description and Background

The proposed Erie I-25 Gateway Urban Renewal Plan area, if approved, will be **the fourth** Urban Renewal Plan area within the Town of Erie. The proposed Plan area will be located at the Northwest corner of I-25 and Erie Parkway. The plan area is bounded by major roadways, including Interstate 25, Erie Parkway and State Highway 52.

The survey area includes parcels within two of the Town of Erie Comprehensive Plan's "Areas of Special Consideration" The survey area's boundary begins south of the I-25 and Erie Parkway intersection, including dozens of incorporated parcels lining the south side of Erie parkway as it travels west to towards the Town's downtown core. At the intersection of Erie Parkway and County Road 7, the survey boundary turns north and follows County Road 7 before turning west again along County Road 12. After reaching the intersection with County Road 5, the survey boundary follows this road north before turning back east along State Highway 52.

State Highway 52 forms the northern boundary of the survey area. The boundary turns south at the intersection of State Highway 52 and County Road 7 and continues south until reaching County Road 12. The boundary then extends east, encompassing the incorporated parcels between County Road 7 and Interstate 25. The survey area boundary finally terminates after reaching the intersection of I-25 and Erie Parkway.

Future URA Plan Area

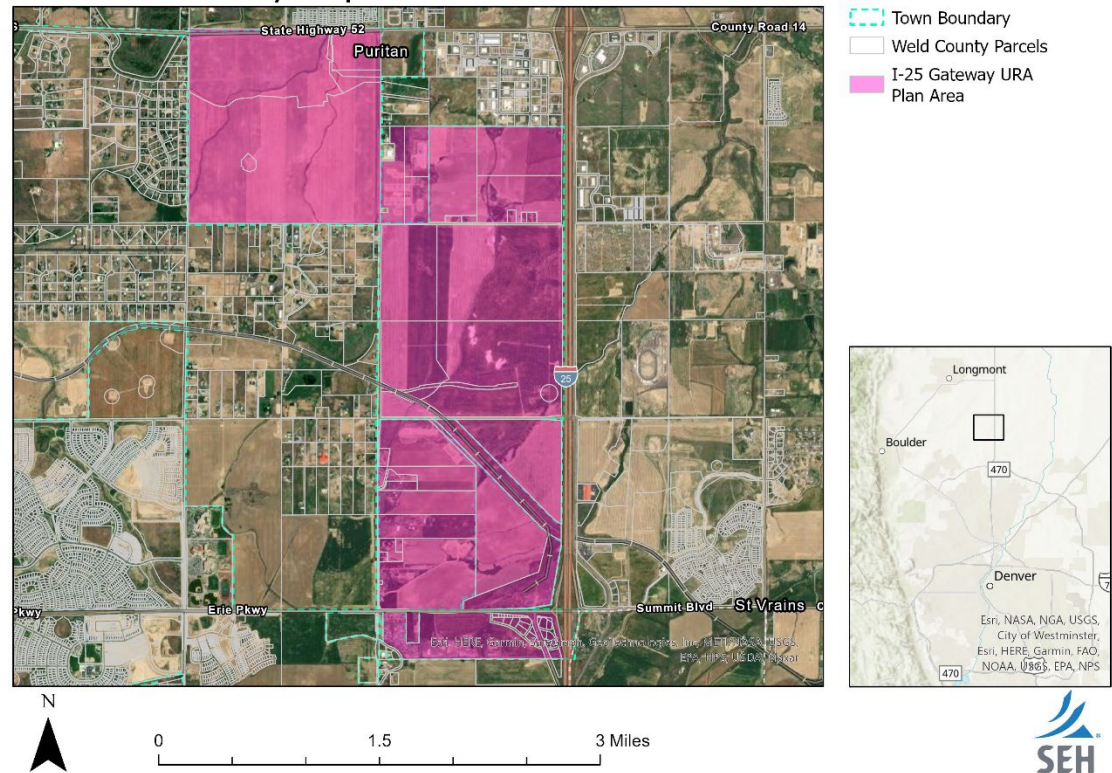


Survey Boundary Statistics

I-25 Gateway URA Survey Boundary	Totals
Number of Total Acres	2,296
Parcel Acreage	2,270
Number of Parcels	92

Survey Boundary Statistics

I-25 Gateway Urban Renewal Plan Conditions Survey Map



1.2 Zoning Districts and Comprehensive Plan

The I-25 Erie Gateway Urban Renewal Plan survey boundary includes 72 incorporated parcels within the Town of Erie's municipal limits. There are four zoning districts within the survey boundary that will dictate future development on these properties. These zoning districts include:

- Planned Development (PD)
- Agricultural and Open Space (AG-OS)
- Regional Commercial (RC)

Each zoning district regulates the land uses on their respective parcels according to the Town of Erie's Comprehensive Plan and municipal code. These zoning districts will regulate the redevelopment that will be permitted throughout the I-25 Erie Gateway Urban Renewal Plan.

In addition to these zoning districts, the town of Erie has also adopted future land use designations for the unincorporated parcels within the survey area. The future land use designations found in the survey area are adopted as part of the Town of Erie's Comprehensive Plan and listed below:

- Low Density Residential (LDR)
- Mixed-Use (MU)
- Business (B)

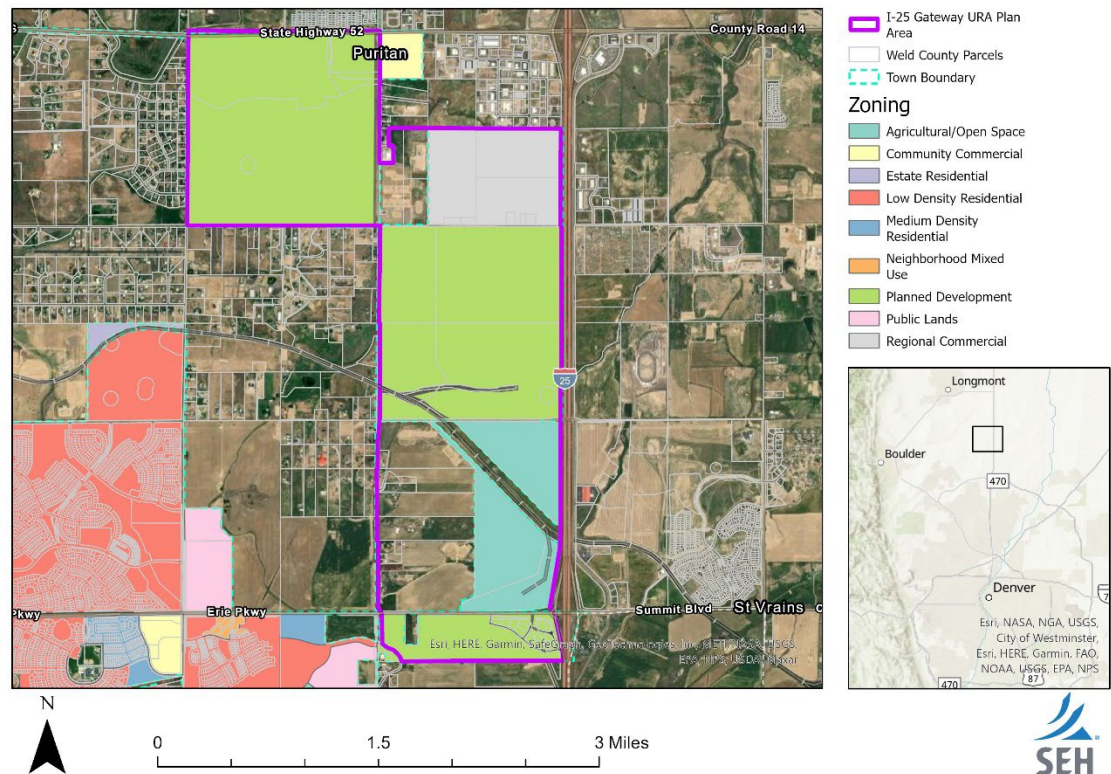
These future land uses designations indicate the zoning these unincorporated parcels will be assigned following annexation. In effect, these land use designations predict the types, densities, and intensities of uses that will eventually be developed within the survey area.

The Town of Erie's Comprehensive Plan cites specific changes to previous comprehensive plan, especially regarding future land uses in the survey area. Section 1-2 of the Town's Comprehensive Plan lists the following *key change*, "The future land use map and corresponding land use categories were updated to reflect the desired new directions for the community, particularly in the area near Interstate 25".

The Town's Comprehensive Plan goes on to outline "Areas of Special Consideration" in section 1-4. These areas include portions of the survey area and proposed Urban Renewal Plan area. They include "Erie Parkway" and "Highway 52", the southern and northern boundaries of the survey area. The Comprehensive Plan identifies these key areas as "Community Gateway Corridors" and outlines specific development standards for each.

The proposed I-25 Erie Gateway Urban Renewal Plan will need to align with the Town's Comprehensive Plan and specifically these Community Gateway Corridors and their development standards.

Town of Erie Zoning Districts Map



1.3 Current Assessment of Survey Area

The survey area includes 92 parcels. The total equalized assessed value (AV) of this parcel, according to the Weld County Assessor's database, is \$1,626,880. The parcels within the survey boundary are assessed as commercial, residential, agricultural, and exempt. The total assessed value is 57% land AV, and 33% building improvement AV.

Assessment Type	Number of Parcels	Acreage	Assessed Value
Agricultural	76	1,802	\$ 652,650
Exempt	11	353	\$ 487,460
Residential	3	15	\$ 132,340
Commercial	2	101	\$ 354,430

1.4 2018 Conditions Survey Summary

TOEURA commissioned a conditions survey of a similar area in 2018. There is significant overlap between the 2018 survey area and this report's survey area. The only parcels excluded from the 2018 Conditions Survey were south of Erie Gateway, nearest the I-25 Interchange, and unincorporated parcels adjacent to County Road 7.

The 2018 Conditions Survey was thorough report conducted by Ricker Cunningham. The report identified nine statutorily defined blighting factors within the surveyed area. These blighting factors included:

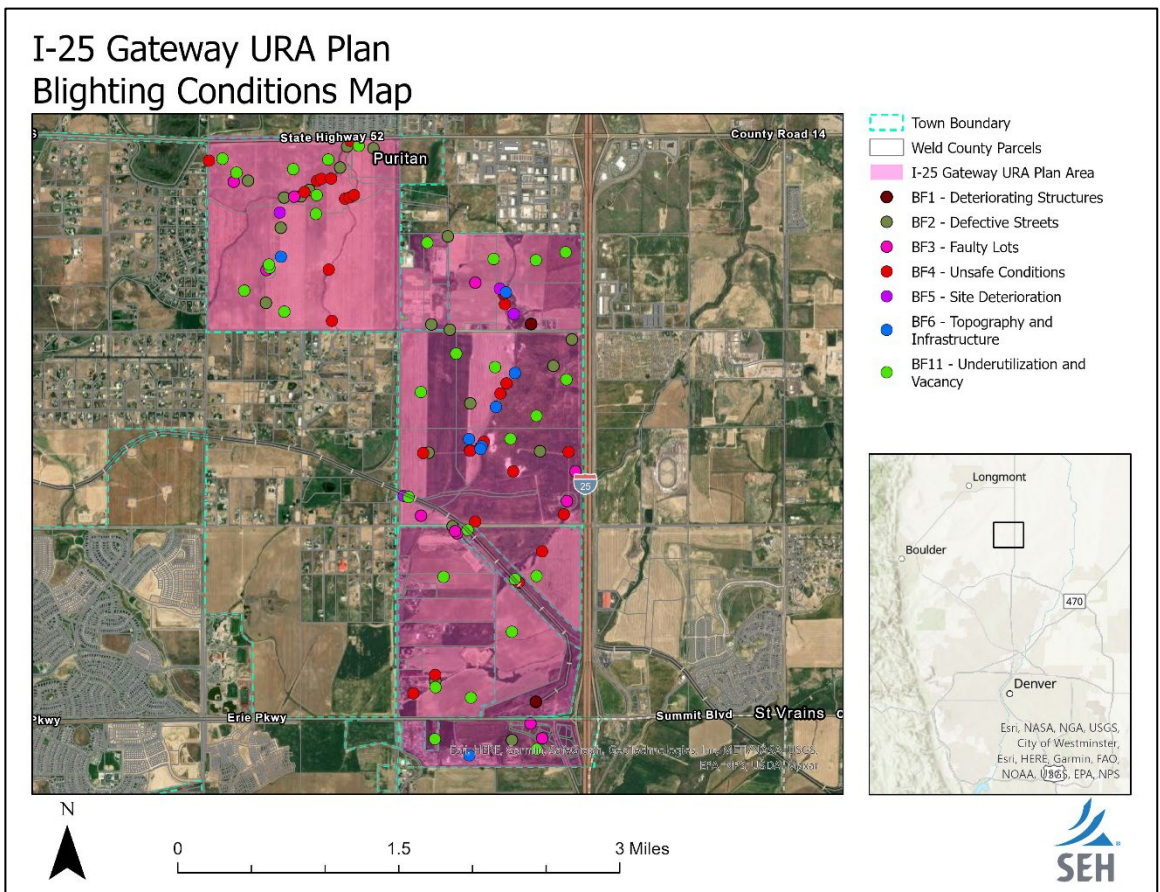
- Predominance of defective or inadequate street layout
- Faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility, or usefulness
- Unsanitary or unsafe conditions
- Deterioration of site or other improvements
- Unusual topography or inadequate public improvements or utilities
- Defective or unusual conditions of title rendering the title nonmarketable;
- The existence of conditions that endanger life or property by fire or other causes
- Environmental contamination of buildings or property
- The existence of health, safety, or welfare factors requiring high levels of municipal services or substantial physical underutilization or vacancy of sites, buildings, or other improvements

The 2018 Conditions Survey identified nine blighting factors in a similar area as the subject of this report. Although this previous study was never adopted as an Urban Renewal Plan by TOEURA, the findings in that 2018 draft support this report's conclusion; that the proposed I-25 Erie Gateway Urban Renewal Plan area exhibits more than four of the statutorily defined blighted area factors and is therefore eligible for Urban Renewal projects and activities.

This report did not find the same number of blighting factors as the 2018 draft Conditions Survey. This report did not identify environmental contamination of buildings or property or defective or unusual conditions of title rendering title non-marketable. This report did find examples of deteriorating structures, however, making its total number of identified blighting factors eight (8).

2 Methodology

This Conditions Survey utilized a holistic methodology in determining whether blighting factors exist within the proposed I-25 Erie Gateway Urban Renewal survey boundary. This methodology included a detailed literature review of adopted plans and reports, an analysis of County Assessor records and GIS databases, and a multi-day field visit. Field work was supplemented by GIS technology that recorded and documented potential blighting factors in real time. Maps were created for each blighting factor identified within the survey area, illustrating which parcels contain, or are in proximity to, statutorily defined blighting factors. These maps represent the layered information gathering approach used in this report to ensure that each blighting factor was thoroughly analyzed.



It is important to note that conditions surveys evaluate an area in its entirety for the presence of blighting factors and are not intended to declare individual properties or separate areas as blighted¹. The maps included in this report illustrate the location and clustering of individual blighting factors as a means of representing this survey's findings. In order for a survey area to be declared blighted, it must exhibit four or more blighted area factors². It is the combination of factors within an area that makes that area eligible for urban renewal activities.

¹ Unless that individual property is in fact the entirety of the URA Plan area.

² Exceptions include property owner consent and eminent domain. A survey area where property owners' consent to inclusion may only require one blighting factor. In order to use eminent domain, five blighting factors must be found.

3 Evaluation of Blighting Factors

Defining “Blighted Area Factors”

Colorado Revised Statutes 31-25-103 states that for an Urban Renewal Plan area to be established, there must exist certain conditions known as “blighted area factors”. State statute defines eleven separate factors for blight. The law indicates that if four or more of these factors are found in an area of the municipality, that area may be declared blighted and qualify for urban renewal treatment.

Blighted Area Factors Defined:

- a) Slum, deteriorated, or deteriorating structures
- b) Predominance of defective or inadequate street layout
- c) Faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility, or usefulness
- d) Unsanitary or unsafe conditions
- e) Deterioration of site or other improvements
- f) Unusual topography or inadequate public improvements or utilities
- g) Defective or unusual conditions of title rendering the title nonmarketable;
- h) The existence of conditions that endanger life or property by fire or other causes
- i) Buildings that are unsafe or unhealthy for persons to live or work in because of building code violations, dilapidation, deterioration, defective design, physical construction, or faulty or inadequate facilities
- j) Environmental contamination of buildings or property
- k) The existence of health, safety, or welfare factors requiring high levels of municipal services or substantial physical underutilization or vacancy of sites, buildings, or other improvements

These eleven factors can also be thought as “conditions”, and the presence of at least four of these conditions can satisfy the state statute defining an area blighted. In addition to this list, C.R.S. 31-25-103(2) lists a twelfth condition. This final condition only applies when there is unanimous agreement among affected property owners that their properties can be included in an Urban Renewal Area. In this rare occurrence, only one blighting factor from the list of eleven needs to be identified to declare the area blighted.

State statute allows for some flexibility in defining what each blighting factor represents. This conditions survey will unpack each blighting factor to describe various real world “conditions” that indicate the presence of said factor. The presence of a condition within the survey boundary alone is not enough to make that area eligible for urban renewal activities. Rather, it is the culmination of four or more blighting factors which indicates that renewal activities should be applied within the proposed project area.

Identifying blighting conditions throughout this proposed project area required an objective analysis. The following sections outline the blighted area factors that this analysis found to be present within the survey area. Blighted area factors that were not identified were excluded from this report.

3.1 Factor One – Slum, deteriorated, or deteriorating structures

Description:

This factor refers to street conditions that negatively impact sound development, redevelopment, or threaten safety. Conditions that would justify the inclusion of this factor in an area may include:

- Abandoned Buildings
- Building Deterioration
- Foundation Deterioration
- Landscape Deterioration
- Fencing Deterioration
- High Vacancy Rate
- Decline in Building Improvement Value Relative to Land Values

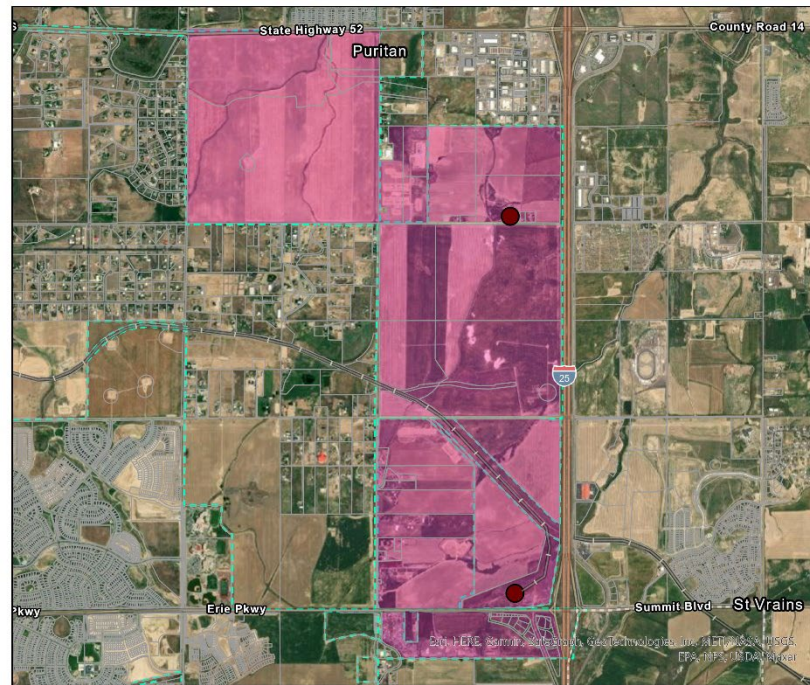
Findings:

The parcels within the site have limited building improvements and is mostly vacant land. Of the buildings that are present, there is evidence of multiple deteriorating structures and buildings.

The field visit identified abandoned structures, landscape deterioration, fencing deterioration and vacancy throughout the survey area. There were deteriorated oil well sites with failing structures that needed to be repaired or replaced entirely found in various locations throughout the survey area. Properties also exhibited deteriorated fencing, as well as overgrown landscaping, in multiple locations within the interior of the survey boundary. There were also warehouses and agricultural buildings that were most likely vacant and in need of repair.

One area in particular that exhibited this blighting factor's conditions was the old railroad spur in survey area's southwest quadrant. This portion of the survey area exhibit large railroad infrastructure that was abandoned and deteriorating. Large concrete blocks were scattered throughout the area, and former railroad structures were left unused. Future development may find removing this abandoned infrastructure challenging, which underscores the inclusion of this blighting factor within the plan area.

Blighting Factor 1 - Deteriorating Structures



3.2 Factor Two – Predominance of Defective or Inadequate Street Layout

Description:

This factor refers to street conditions that negatively impact sound development, redevelopment, or threaten safety. Conditions that would justify the inclusion of this factor in an area may include:

- Inadequate street widths, lack of streets, dead ends or overall faulty layouts that impede vehicular access and internal circulation
- Streets that exhibit high degrees of traffic or accidents
- Streets that are in need of repair or reconstruction
- Poor emergency access or active transportation

Findings:

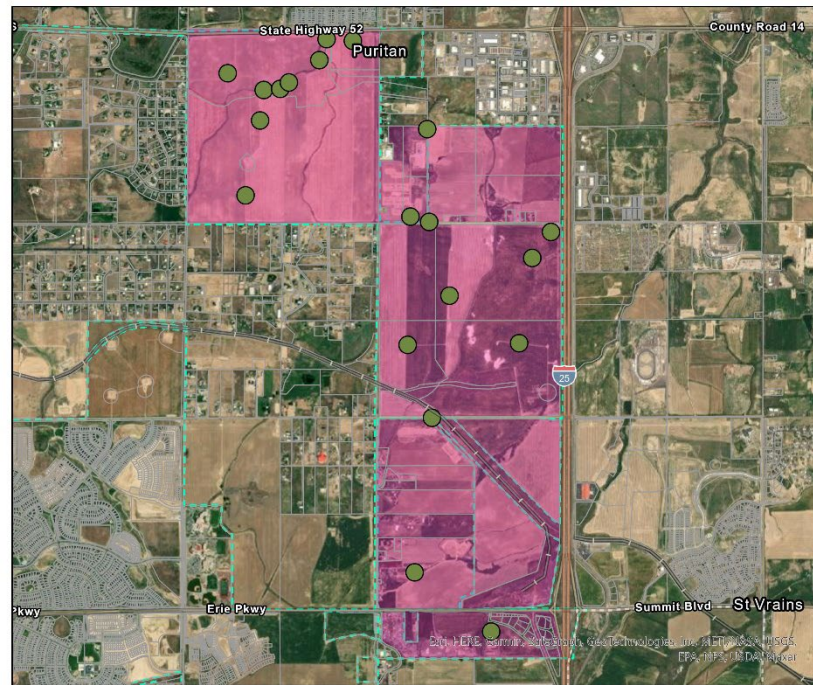
This report identified multiple conditions that are examples of this blighting factor. The surveyed area exhibited inadequate street networks, road surfaces in need of upgrade or repairs, poor emergency access, and a complete lack of active transportation infrastructure.

The surveyed area is large, representing over 2,000 acres. However, this area had an inadequate street network, one that absent of interior roads that could access interior parcels. Despite being bounded by major highways and county roads, this lack of internal street network represents a significant challenge for development. New internal road networks would be required to unlock the development potential of the surveyed area. These road networks are expensive to construct, and their absence represents significant lack of infrastructure. Access, including emergency access, is lacking or absent to many of the parcels included in the survey area. There was an overall lack of streets that made it difficult to navigate the survey area, with gravel roads often leading to an oil well and dead-end.

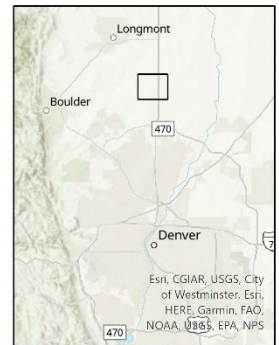
Roads that are present would need to be repaired and upgraded. The SEH survey team identified multiple dirt roads that could not handle the level of service required to support the development types and densities outlined by the Town's future land use designations and zoning districts.

This report did not find any examples of active transportation infrastructure throughout the survey area. This is significant in light of the Town's 2015 Comprehensive Plan goal of "pedestrian connections" along Erie Parkway. A lack of active transportation infrastructure can also create unsafe conditions for multi-modal users.

Blighting Factor 2 - Defective Streets



- Town Boundary
- Weld County Parcels
- I-25 Gateway URA Plan Area
- BF2 - Defective Streets



3.3 Factor Three – Faulty Lot Layout in Relation to Size, Adequacy, Accessibility, or Usefulness

Description:

This factor refers to shapes, layout and sizes of lots that complicate sound development and the usefulness of the property. Conditions that would justify the inclusion of this factor in an area may include:

- Narrow or odd shaped lots
- Impractical lot layouts
- Lot configurations that yield unproductive conditions on the land as exhibited by misuse or nonuse

Findings:

Multiple examples of this blighting factor were identified throughout the survey area. There are 92 parcels within the survey area, and many exhibit characteristics indicative of this blighting factor. Parcels nearest to the I-25 and Erie Parkway interchange were narrow, oddly shaped or irregular. These lot configurations yield unproductive conditions for development, which may help explain why many of the properties remain vacant. The shape of these parcels, coupled to the fact that utility lines require large easements and that the Erie Comp Plan encourages significant setbacks to protect “view corridors” along the parkway, contribute to unproductive development conditions. These conditions support the inclusion of this Blighting Factor.

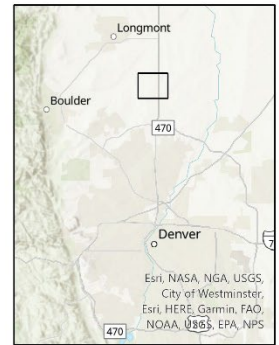
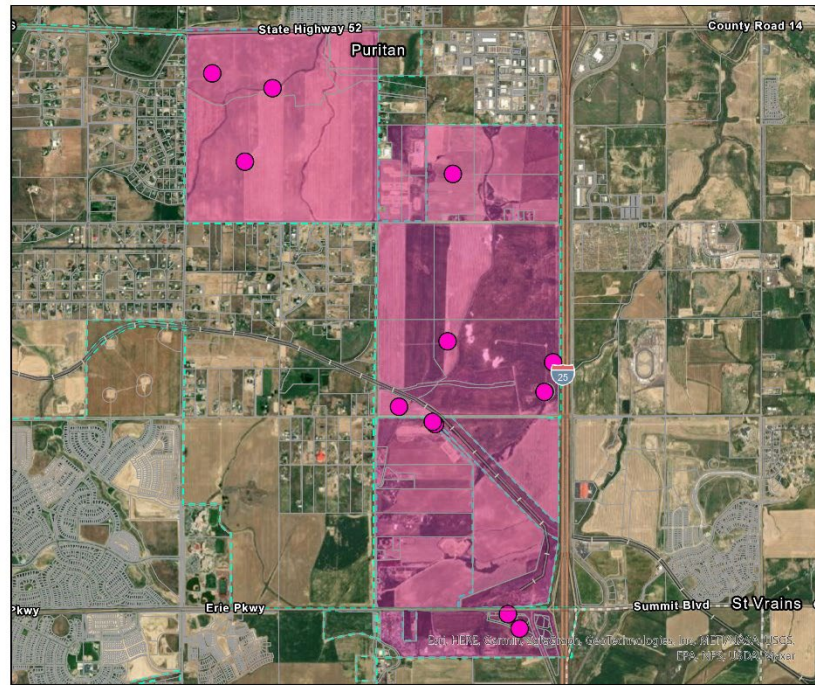
In addition to these irregularly shaped parcels in the southern portion of the plan area, there were also numerous examples of large parcels that were vacant despite having commercial and mixed-use zoning districts assigned to the properties. In some cases, these parcels were over 100 acres in size. Parcels of this size can present a barrier to sound development. In most cases, the parcel requires subdivision before it can be properly marketing for new development. This lot configuration therefore creates an unproductive condition that requires additional processes and time before development can commence.

Although vacant land is typical at the outskirts of municipalities, the parcels within the survey area are unique. These properties are not examples of fringe parcels far from urbanized zones. These parcels are near a major interstate with traffic counts that would support new development. In addition, the I-25 Erie Gateway area is adjacent to neighboring communities such as Dacono and Frederick, and both are seeing significant development activity along the I-25 Corridor. The fact that a majority of these parcels remain vacant and underutilized, indicates faulty lot layouts.

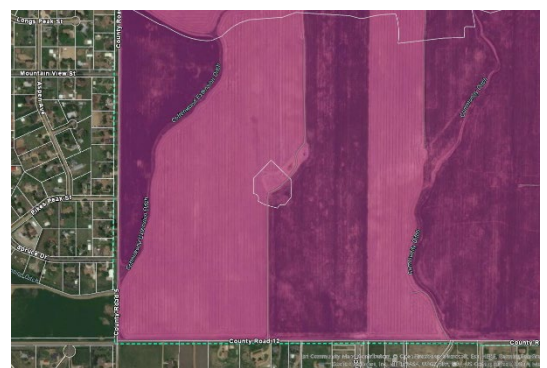
There were also examples where parcels were completely surrounded by other parcels, preventing the interior parcel from being accessible without an easement through the larger parcel.

These impractical lot layouts and unproductive conditions as exhibited by nonuse on the land support the inclusion of this blighting factor.

Blighting Factor 3 - Faulty Lots



0 1.5 3 Miles



3.4 Factor Four – Unsanitary or Unsafe Conditions

Description:

This factor refers to a multitude of unsafe or hazardous conditions. The commonality is that these conditions contribute to hazards that could have an adverse effect on the health, safety or wellbeing of the public. This factor shares similarities to conditions one (1), five (5), eight (8), nine (9) and ten (10). Conditions that would justify the inclusion of this factor in an area may include:

- Floodplain or flood prone areas
- Poor storm water drainage areas
- Cracked or uneven sidewalks
- Hazardous materials
- Hazardous Geology
- Dangerous traffic or pedestrian conditions
- High crime statistics
- Facilities are prone to fire dangers
- Environmental contamination
- Inadequate utility systems
- Water scarcity and lack of water and sewer infrastructure
- Evidence of vandalism or homelessness
- Steep topography
- Trash, debris and noxious weeds

Findings:

Blighting factor four exhibits many conditions that were identified within the survey area. The survey area lacks infrastructure, and therefore creates circumstances that lead to the inclusion of this factor.

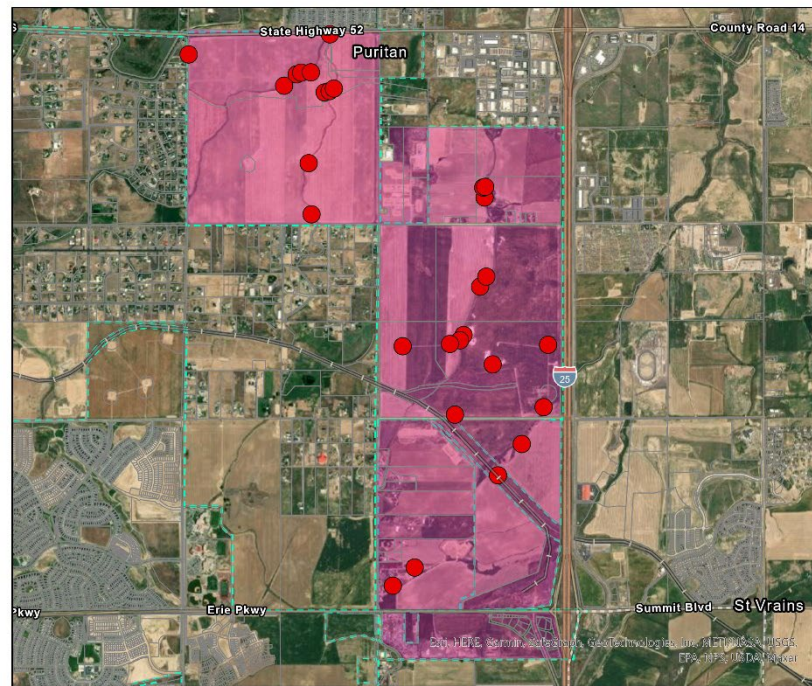
The absence of internal road networks identified in blighting factor two also contributes to a lack of stormwater facilities and utilities throughout the survey area. The area's absence of infrastructure and utilities throughout the survey area contributes to conditions considered unsafe and unsanitary by state statute.

Whereas infrastructure was lacking throughout the survey area, trash, debris and weeds were abundant. In multiple locations there was overgrown noxious weeds, and there were multiple findings of abandoned furniture that were most likely illegally dumped there. Construction debris was also found in multiple locations throughout the survey area during the field visit. Large amounts of broken up concrete and brick were discarded in piles in random locations. There were also large piles of dead trees and limbs scattered throughout the site and resembled flood debris runoff.

These debris piles and high grasses and weeds can contribute to fire hazards throughout the survey area. Another hazard identified by this survey are the abandoned Eagle Mine that exists under the proposed plan area. A 2021 Lithos Engineering study commissioned by the Town of Erie identified low to high hazard risks within the survey area. These risks are explained in detail in Blighting Factor eight (8)'s findings. However, their presence also constitutes a condition under Blighting Factor four (4).

These combination of conditions supports the inclusion of blighting factor four within the survey area.

Blighting Factor 4 - Unsafe/Unsanitary Conditions



0 1.5 3 Miles



3.5 Factor Five – Deterioration of Site or Other Improvements

Description:

This factor is similar to factor two (2) and four (4), in that its focus is on the deterioration of structures and infrastructure. The decline of public infrastructure is an example of this factor. Private land and/or structures that have fallen into disrepair or are damaged also exhibit this factor. Conditions that would justify the inclusion of this factor in an area may include:

- Poor condition of streets or sidewalks
- Signage, such as billboards, that has fallen into disrepair
- Neglected Landscaping
- Damaged or missing public utilities
- Abundance of trash, debris or noxious weeds.

Findings:

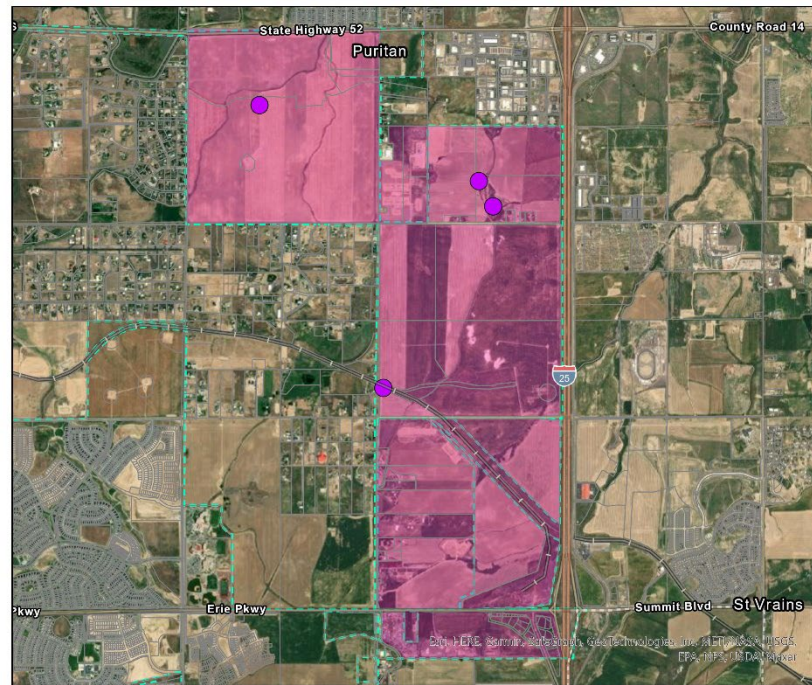
This blighting factor focuses on conditions which contribute to a negative perception throughout the survey area. These conditions include trash and debris, neglected landscaping, and poor condition of public infrastructure.

The site visit found examples of these conditions throughout the survey area. Trash piles, which were identified as evidence for Blighting Factor 4, were frequently found throughout the survey area. In addition to the trash, debris piles featuring old machinery or abandoned rail road infrastructure, were also identified in the survey area. It was evident that landscaping was neglected throughout areas.

Public utilities and infrastructure appeared damaged or unused. The survey area's streets were in very poor condition when present, and altogether absent in the interior of the site. Weeds and other thorn bushes were overgrown, and could be found growing up and over the dirt roads in many areas along the site. There were also examples where public utilities were damaged within the survey area, such as electrical utilities.

The neglected landscaping, debris and trash piles throughout the survey area justified its inclusion of this blighting factor.

Blighting Factor 5 - Site Deterioration



- Town Boundary
- Weld County Parcels
- I-25 Gateway URA Plan Area
- BF5 - Site Deterioration



0 1.5 3 Miles



3.6 Factor Six – Unusual Topography or Inadequate Public Improvements or Utilities

Description:

This factor refers to unusual topography or lack of public infrastructure that have the effect of arresting sound development in a study area. Areas that exhibit steep grades which cause development to be incompatible or unprofitable would fall under this factor. Properties that are lacking public infrastructure, or are served by deteriorating public infrastructure, would also fall under this factor. This factor shares aspects of factors two (2) and four (4). Conditions that justify the inclusion of this factor in an area may include:

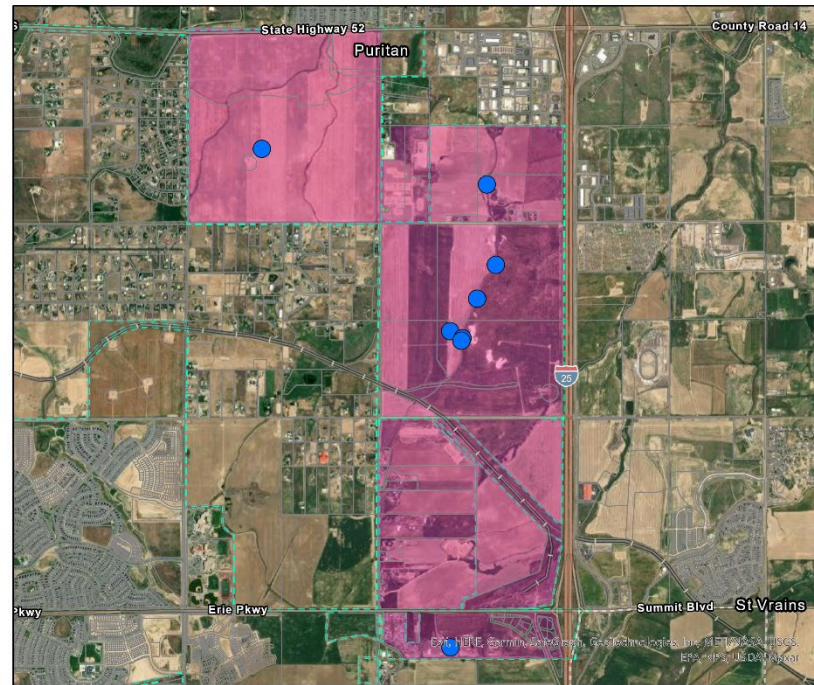
- Steep slopes or unusual terrain
- Overhead utilities in need of repair
- Deteriorating parking lots, street surfaces, sidewalks
- Poor storm water drainage facilities
- Lack of central sewer or water
- Lack of internal street network
- Broken or inadequate street lighting

Findings:

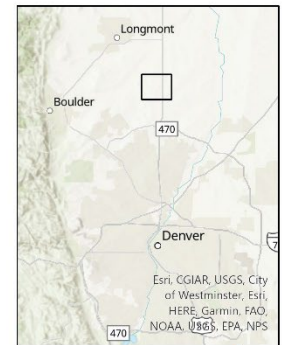
Blighting factors two (2) and four (4) identified conditions that also underscore the presence of blighting factor six (6) within the survey area. Inadequate public improvement or infrastructure, such as the missing road networks identified in factor two (2), and the missing public utilities identified in factor four (4), are both examples of blighting factor six (6).

The site visit found an overall lack of infrastructure throughout the survey area that made it inadequate to facilitate new development as-is. The survey area lacked internal road networks, stormwater drainage facilities, central water and sewer services, and street lighting. The future land use designations and zoning districts would mandate the provision of public infrastructure. Its absence represents a challenge to sound development and justifies the inclusion of this factor.

Blighting Factor 6 - Topography or Infrastructure



- Town Boundary
- Weld County Parcels
- I-25 Gateway URA Plan Area
- BF6 - Topography and Infrastructure



0 1.5 3 Miles



3.7 Factor Eight – The Existence of Conditions that Endanger Life or Property by Fire or other Causes

Description:

This factor refers to conditions that can endanger lives or property, including buildings that are structurally unsafe, but it also focuses on natural hazards. This factor shares similarities with factors two (2), four (4) five (5) and eleven (11). Conditions that would justify the inclusion of this factor in an area may include:

- Buildings or property not in compliance with current fire codes
- Buildings or property not in compliance with building codes
- Areas that are in a floodplain or flood prone area
- Areas near burn scares, in debris fans or prone to dangerous mud flow
- Areas exhibiting geological hazards
- Areas that exhibit a high crime rate
- Areas with buildings or land that violates environmental regulations (this can range from findings of asbestos or brownfield sites.)

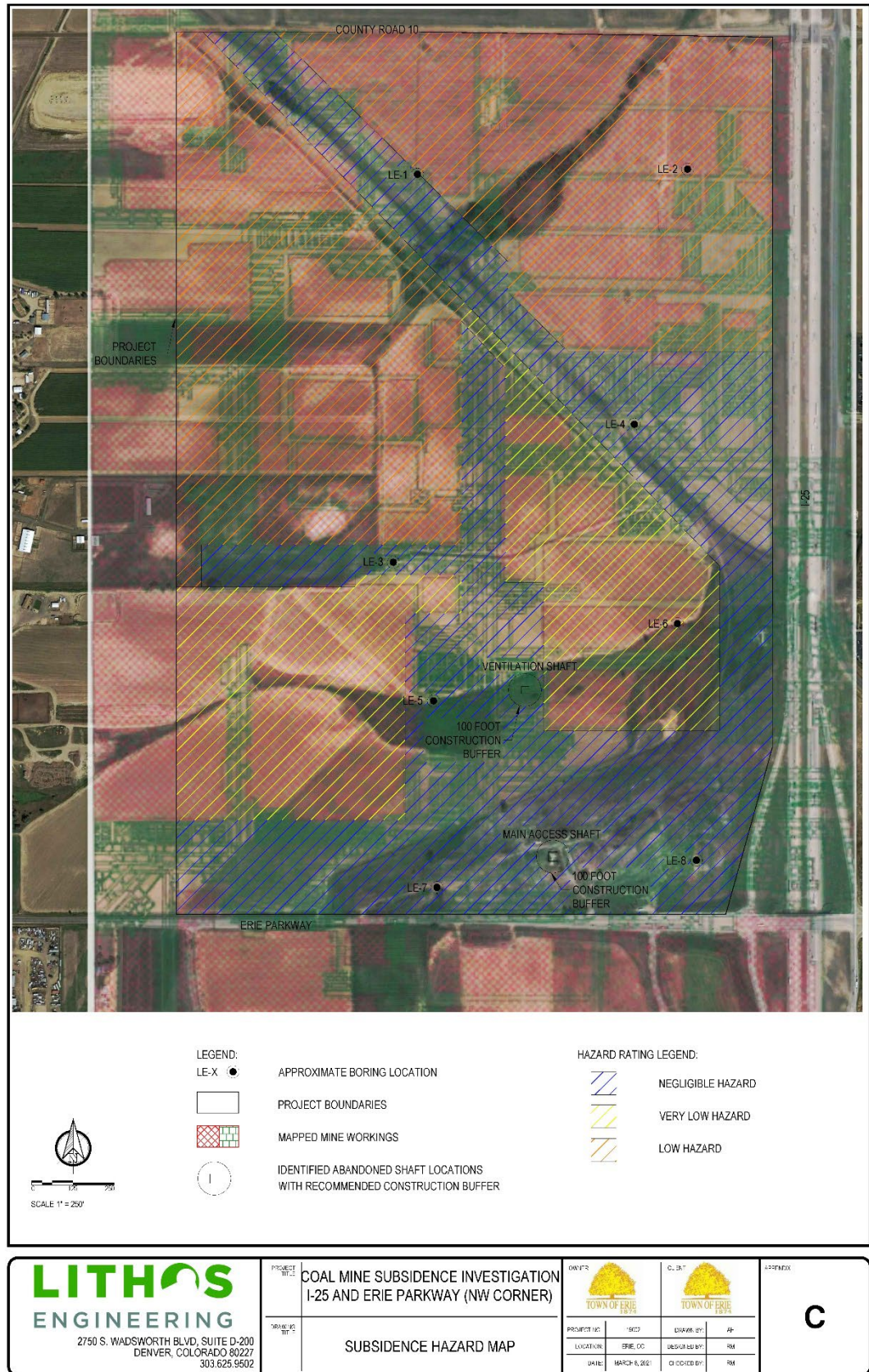
Findings:

The Town of Erie has experienced regional mining since the 1860's. The mining operations were focused on coal extraction, and significant undermining occurred throughout the Boulder-Weld coal field. This coal field extends throughout the survey area and presents conditions that constitute the presence of this blighting.

In 2021, the Town of Erie commissioned a Coal Mine Subsidence Investigation on the area being considered for the I-25 Erie Gateway Urban Renewal Plan. The report identified critical risks related to historic coal mining in the area which might impede future development of the site.

The study found that a significant portion of the survey area sits above the abandoned Eagle Mine. The study found that area above this mine has a low to negligible risk of being influenced by surface subsidence due to existing mine workings. However, the identified mine shafts within the project did represent a high hazard. The report does not recommend construction within 100 radial feet from each shaft.

This low hazard rating throughout the survey area, as well as the presence of high hazard mine shafts, represent a condition that could endanger life or property. The 2021 study by Lithos Engineering supports the inclusion of this blighting factor within the proposed renewal plan area. The geological hazards from historic mining operations are a condition that new development within the proposed survey area will need to contend with, making it eligible for renewal treatment.



3.8 Factor Eleven – The existence of health, safety, or welfare factors requiring high levels of municipal services or substantial physical underutilization or vacancy of sites, buildings, or other improvements

Description:

This factor references a broad category of health, safety and welfare factors. The common conditions for this factor to be present are instances where high levels of municipal service are required, substantial physical underutilization of property is exhibited, or high levels of vacancy are common. Vacancy can include land, buildings, or tenancy. This factor shares similarities with many of the factors on this list. Conditions that would justify the inclusion of this factor in an area include:

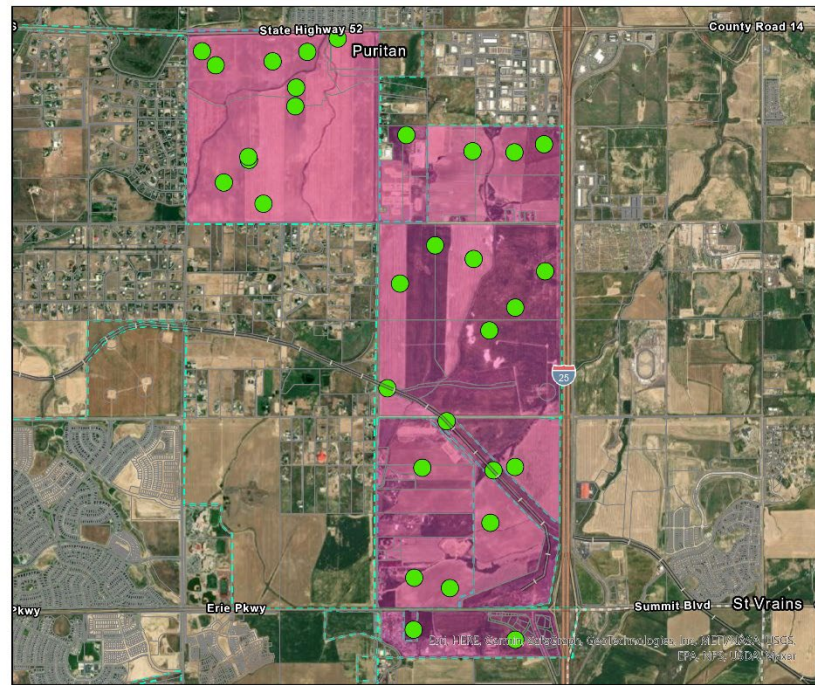
- Numerous vacant buildings or property throughout the area
- Evidence of underutilized buildings
- Underutilized or vacant sites

Findings:

The survey area's underutilization and vacancy warranted the inclusion of blighting factor 11. As was described in blighting factor three (3)'s findings, this survey area is located in a fast developing area. The parcels are either zoned or given a future land use designation that supports greater density and intensity of uses. The survey area is bounded by I-25, one of Colorado's fastest growing corridors. And the vacant parcels within the survey area are juxtaposed against developing parcels in nearby Frederick and Dacono.

This context reveals that these parcels are underutilized relative to their location and market forces. This underutilization is evidence for blighting factor eleven (11), and represents an additional condition for Urban Renewal treatment.

Blighting Factor 11 - Underutilization and Vacancy



- Town Boundary
- Weld County Parcels
- I-25 Gateway URA Plan Area
- BF11 - Underutilization and Vacancy



0 1.5 3 Miles



4 Conclusion

This conditions survey catalogs the presence of statutorily defined blighting factors within the proposed I-25 Erie Gateway Urban Renewal Plan area. This report was designed to assist the Town of Erie Urban Renewal Authority (TOEURA) in determining whether this area is 1) eligible for urban renewal projects and activities, and 2) that the proposed boundary is drawn as narrowly as possible.

This Conditions Survey identified eight (8) blighted area factors as defined by Colorado's Urban Renewal Law, within the survey boundaries of the proposed plan area. The presence of eight blighted area factors meets the requirements outlined in C.R.S. 31-25-103(2), in which at least four blighted area factors must be present for that area to be declared "blighted" and therefore eligible to be designated as an Urban Renewal Plan area.

The proposed boundary also meets the statutory recommendation of "being drawn as narrowly as possible". The eight blighting factors were not clustered in one vicinity, but rather, spread across the entirety of the survey boundary.

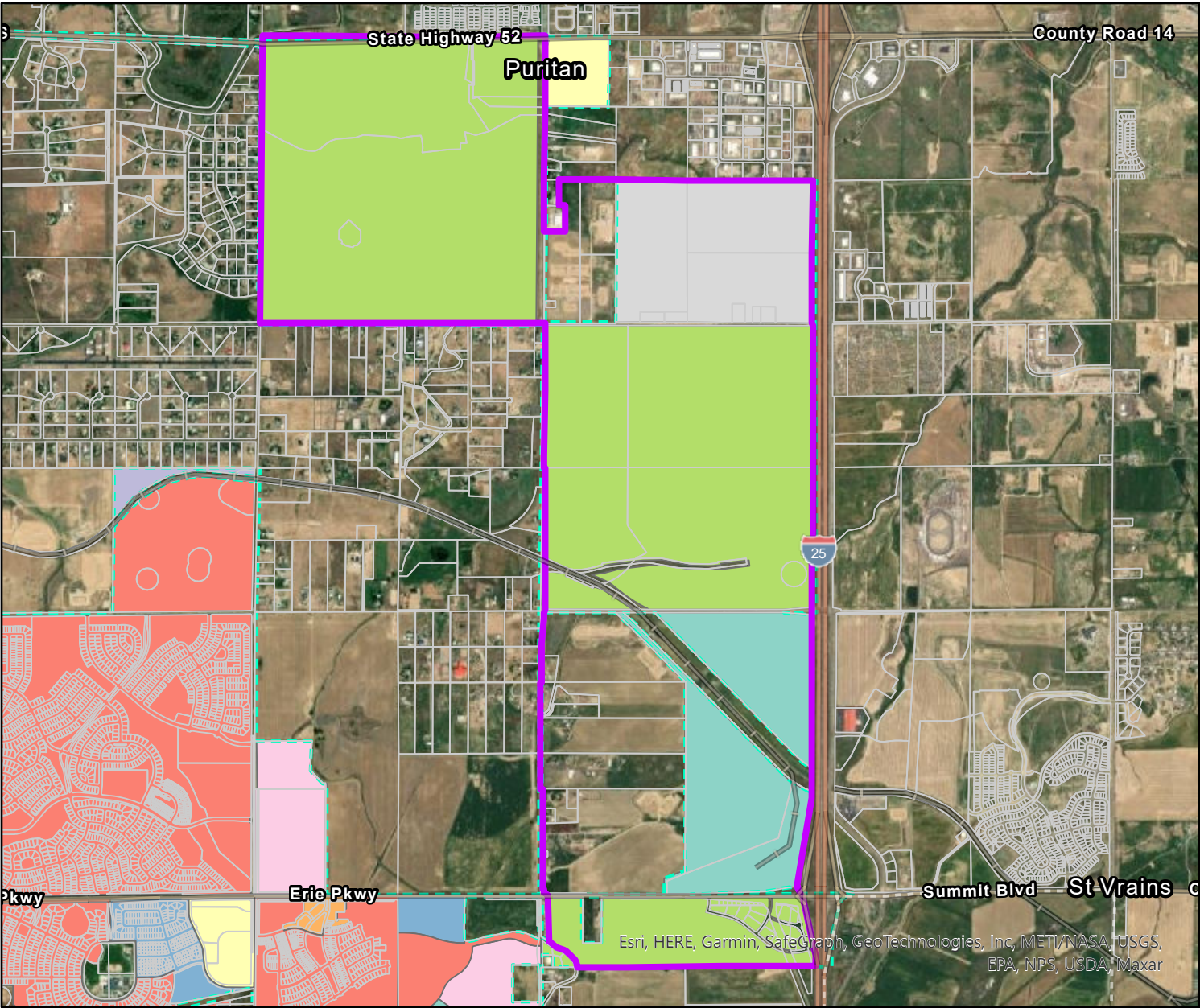
This Conditions Survey finds that the proposed I-25 Erie Gateway Urban Renewal Plan area can be declared a "blighted area" as defined by Colorado's Urban Renewal Law and therefore qualifies for urban renewal treatment.

Conditions Survey Maps

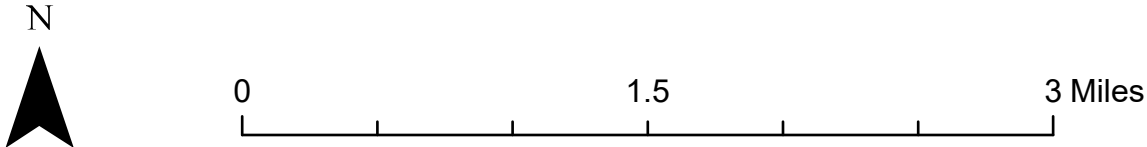
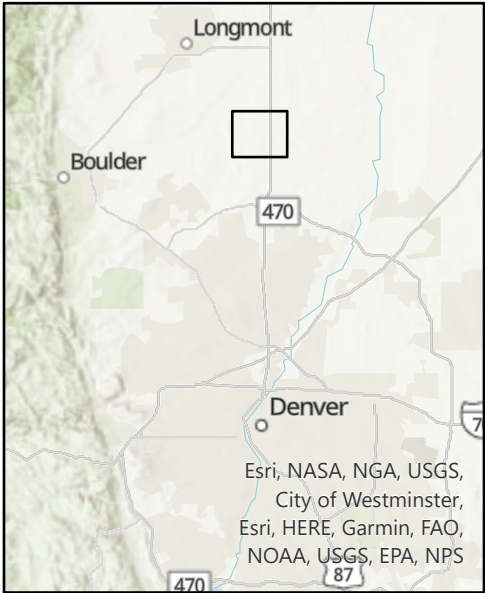
Appendix A

Zoning Map

Town of Erie Zoning Districts Map



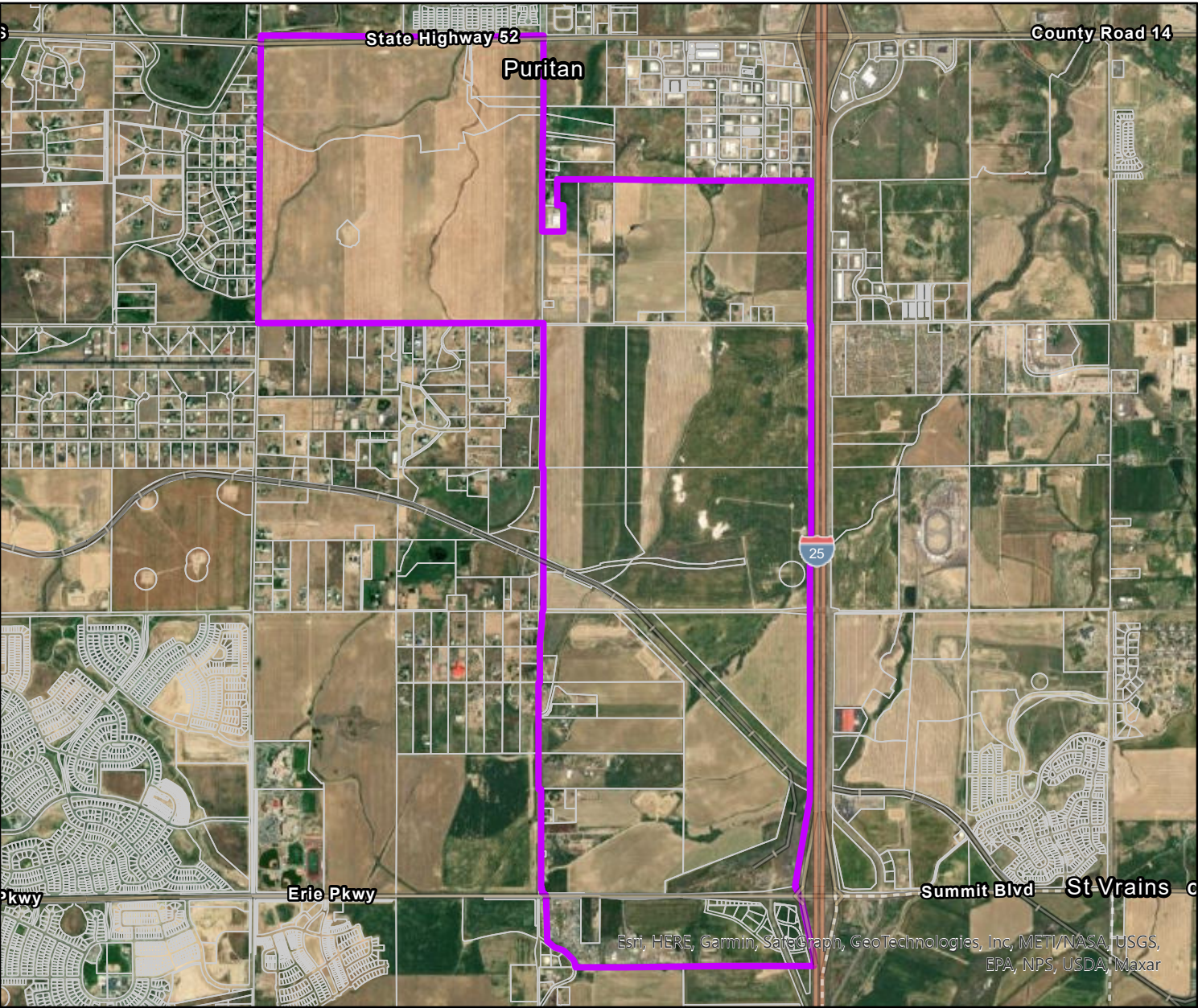
- I-25 Gateway URA Plan Area
- Weld County Parcels
- Town Boundary
- Zoning**
 - Agricultural/Open Space
 - Community Commercial
 - Estate Residential
 - Low Density Residential
 - Medium Density Residential
 - Neighborhood Mixed Use
 - Planned Development
 - Public Lands
 - Regional Commercial



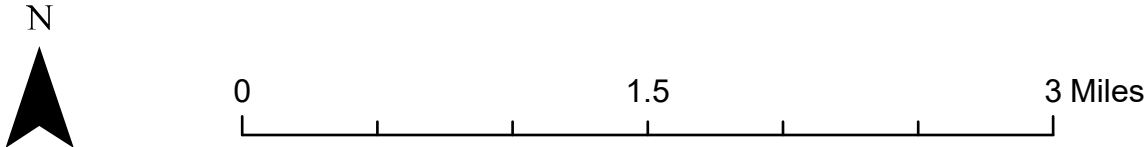
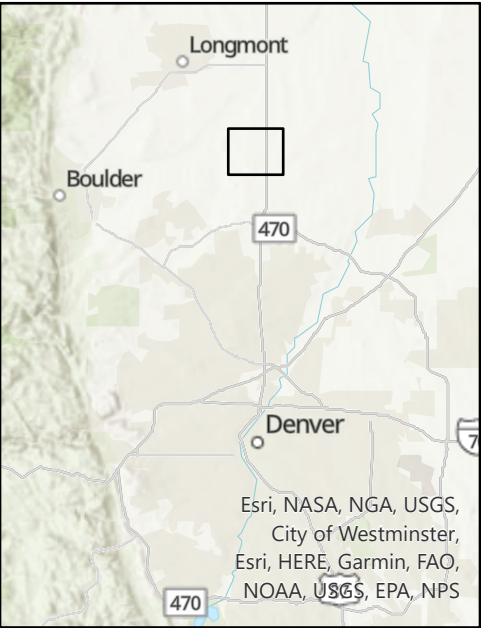
Appendix B

Existing URA Plan Area Map

Future URA Plan Area



- Weld County Parcels
- I-25 Gateway URA Plan Area

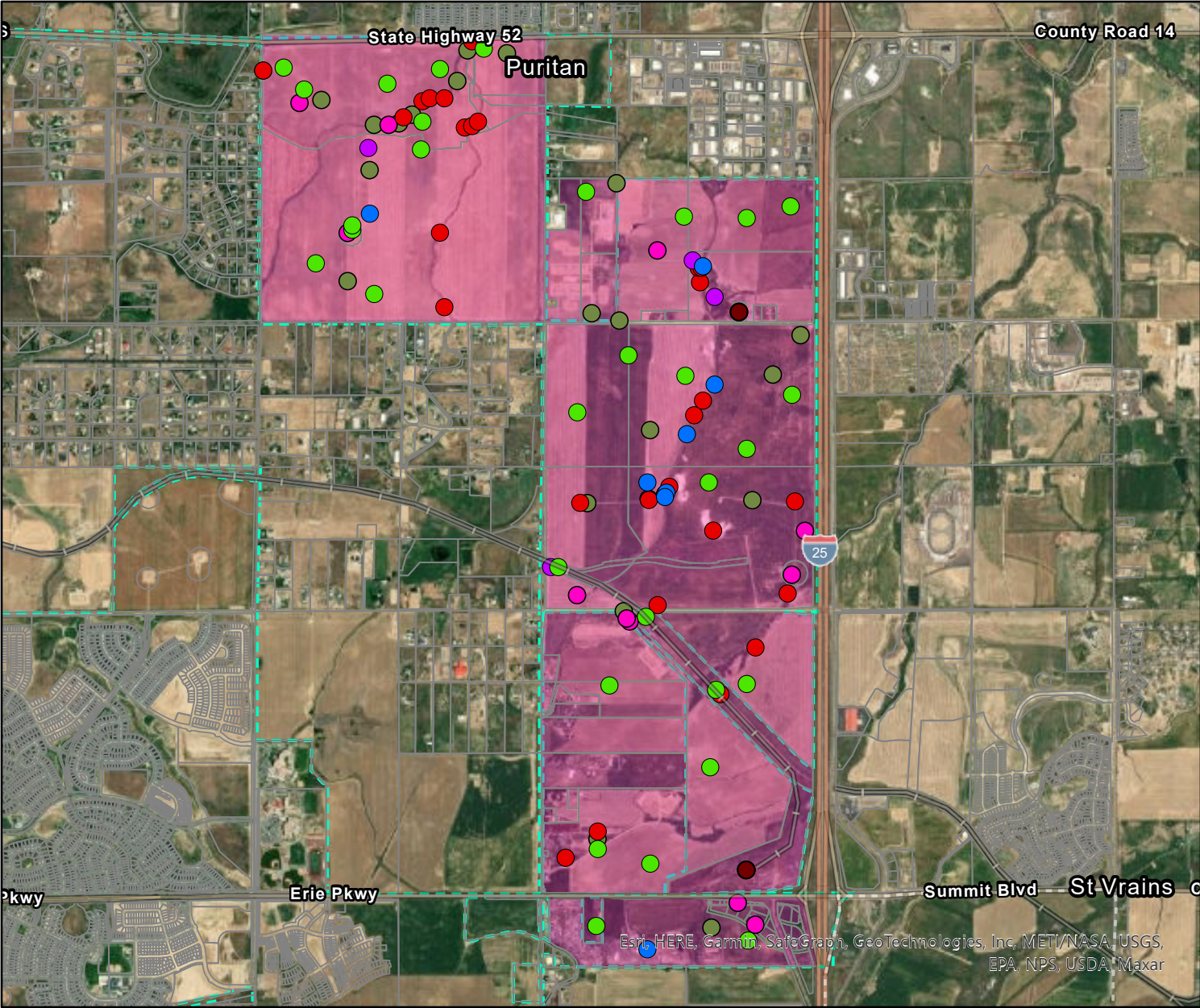


Appendix C

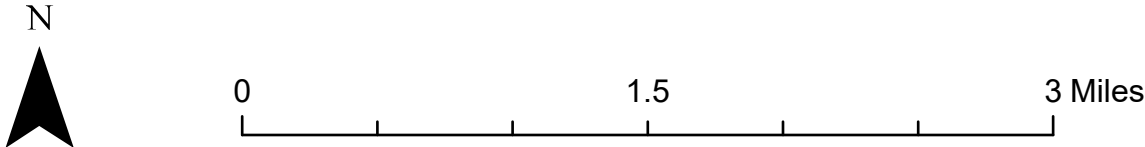
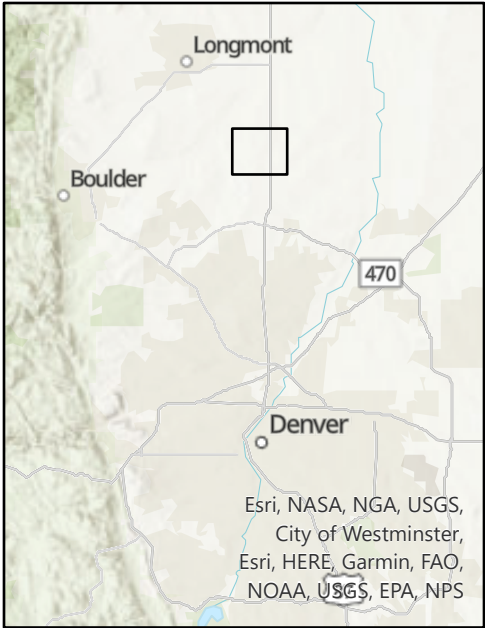
Conditions Survey Field Work Map

I-25 Gateway URA Plan

Blighting Conditions Map



- Town Boundary
- Weld County Parcels
- I-25 Gateway URA Plan Area
- BF1 - Deteriorating Structures
- BF2 - Defective Streets
- BF3 - Faulty Lots
- BF4 - Unsafe Conditions
- BF5 - Site Deterioration
- BF6 - Topography and Infrastructure
- BF11 - Underutilization and Vacancy





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