

Our Parker community will enhance the quality of life by avoiding development in environmentally hazardous areas and by safeguarding the natural environment.



Natural Resource Protection

12

INTRODUCTION

Parker citizens have often affirmed that one of our community’s highest priorities is preserving and protecting the environment. Parker’s distinctive natural resources and environment contribute to our quality of life. Natural resources and the natural environment are not inexhaustible commodities to be exploited, but are valuable assets to be judiciously used and wisely managed for the benefit of present and future generations. These resources are essential components of life including land, air, habitat and water.



The protection and conservation of these distinct and valuable resources is everyone’s responsibility. Environmental stewardship means that Parker has a responsibility to manage local resources, now and in the future, to assure a healthy and productive environment. Being a good steward to the environment requires the Town to work judiciously with our citizens, businesses, surrounding jurisdictions and other interest groups. We also comply with Federal and State mandates such as the Clean Air and Clean Water Acts.

PARKER'S NATURAL RESOURCES

Parker's natural environment is biologically diverse. Riparian areas, shrub-covered hillsides, the pine grove and natural grasslands are all elements that contribute to our scenic community.

Riparian Resources

The Town is situated along Cherry Creek, a dominant geographical feature of the Denver Metropolitan area's southeast quadrant linking the communities, towns and cities in Denver, Arapahoe and Douglas Counties. Several intermittent stream corridors, gulches and their tributaries form linear patterns throughout the Town. Predominant gulches in Parker are; Baldwin, Newlin, Sulphur, Tallman, Oak, Kinney and Lemon Gulches. Figure 12A illustrates the riparian corridors throughout our community.

Significant Natural Vegetation Resources

In addition to our riparian features, the area just north of Hess Road and east of Parker Road is the site of an enclave of the Black Forest, a ponderosa pine community that is indigenous to the lower elevations of the Rocky Mountain Range. Additionally, stands of large Cottonwoods accentuate and frame the riparian corridors throughout the community. Figure 12A depicts these significant natural vegetative resources within our community.

Wildlife

Vegetation provides prime habitat for wildlife while riparian corridors, such as Cherry Creek, also function as movement corridors. Figure 12B maps the primary wildlife habitat found in our community. The wildlife-movement corridors and habitat areas, depicted on this map, will assist the Town in making land use decisions and will be updated as conditions warrant. It should be noted that delineation of movement corridors or wildlife value areas does not preclude development, as mitigation measures may be possible and appropriate in designated areas.





Endangered Species Act

From time to time, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service lists ‘threatened’ or ‘endangered’ species, under the Federal Endangered Species Act. These designations prohibit activities that cause the unlawful ‘take’ of the species. Currently, the Fish and Wildlife Service has listed the Preble’s Meadow Jumping Mouse as a threatened species, which may impact landowners in Parker. While the Town is not responsible for enforcing the terms of the Endangered Species Act, the Community Development Department notifies applicants of these Federal designations through the platting process.

Visual Resources

Parker’s visual environment contributes substantially to the Town’s identity and quality of life. The bluffs provide a geographic buffer, distinguished by steep hills of native grass, pine, scrub oak and rock outcroppings. The bluffs southwest of Parker are among the most spectacular scenic views in this area. Just as important to our community, are the views of Pikes Peak and Mount Evans. These key viewsheds reinforce the sense of place that is Parker. Figure 12C maps the important visual resources within our community.

Environmental Hazards

Although bluffs and floodplains provide the Town with excellent scenic resources, these areas also pose a threat to public safety. Landscapes that are prone to rockfall, slope failure, subsidence and debris flow are classified as Class III geologic hazard areas. These areas should be avoided for development to reduce safety risks and preserve the natural and visual resources of the Town. Figure 12D provides a visual representation of the environmental hazards located within our community.



GOALS AND STRATEGIES

I. Preserve and protect significant natural areas that provide habitat essential for the conservation of plants, animals and their associated ecosystems.

1.A. Encourage and assist efforts by private landowners and others to integrate natural areas into new development and redevelopment through Town review processes.

1.B. Consider the impacts of development on wildlife when evaluating land use applications.

1.C. Preserve riparian corridors and wetlands.

1.D. Work cooperatively with the Colorado Parks and Wildlife and US Fish and Wildlife Service.



2. Locate development in areas free of environmental hazards and constraints.

2.A. Prohibit development within the 100-year floodplain unless associated with wildlife management, nonpolluting recreational uses, drainage improvements, or maintenance.

2.B. Continue to prohibit development on slopes of 20% or greater and limit development on slopes of 15% or greater.

2.C. Minimize disruption to the natural topography through creative site planning and through design and sensitive construction practices.

2.D. Encourage development that respects the natural features of the landscape, including trees and other vegetation.





3. Promote local and regional efforts to improve air quality.

3.A. Minimize air pollution generated by current and future development and maintain air quality levels at or above standards set by the Colorado Department of Health and Environment.

3.B. Encourage clean, non-polluting businesses to locate in the Town.

3.C. Encourage development patterns that reduce the vehicle miles traveled by residents and support alternative modes of transportation as an option.

4. Maintain high water quality and protect water resources.

4.A. Cooperate and participate in regional water-quality planning activities.

4.B. Continue to collaborate with regional stewardship organizations such as the Cherry Creek Water Basin Authority and the Cherry Creek Stewardship Partners.

4.C. Ensure development maintains water quality in accordance with all applicable local, state and federal clean water regulations.

4.D. Ensure that development adequately incorporates effective measures to protect groundwater and surface water from contamination.

4.E. Ensure that development adequately incorporates design and engineering practices that minimize pollution of water resources from non-point sources (pavement water run-off) and point sources (discharge that can be linked to a specific source).

4.F. Control short and long-term drainage and surface erosion or sedimentation problems.

4.G. Require that development within watersheds not pose a potential hazard to alluvial water quality.

4.H. Encourage the use of new technology to improve existing facilities.

4.I. Implement stabilization and restoration projects to ensure natural drainageways are protected from the damaging effects of erosion.

5. Provide a healthy environment through limitation of excess noise and lighting levels.

5.A. Minimize exposure to excessive noise.

5.B. Discourage industrial or commercial land uses that generate loud or obnoxious noise off-site.

5.C. Continue to require the use of efficient lighting to minimize light trespass and pollution, and reduce glare.

6. Protect our community's scenic resources.

6.A. Preserve scenic views and viewsheds by preserving the visual integrity of significant ridgelines, horizon lines and views of the mountain backdrop from places accessible by the public, where appropriate.

6.B. Preserve and protect significant geological features and key natural areas.

7. Promote proactive environmental programs and water conservation practices.

7.A. Implement responsible creation of landscaping that utilizes the seven Xeriscape principles: proper planning and design; irrigation systems (e.g., Netafim); use of mulches to reduce evaporation; use of soil amendments; grouping of plant materials of similar water needs together (e.g., hydrozoning); limiting of turf areas; and appropriate maintenance of the landscape.

7.B. Continue to educate the public on Xeriscape principles and appropriate landscape maintenance practices through outreach programs.

7.C. Continue to control noxious weeds.

8. Promote energy conservation.

8.A. Encourage the commercial and residential sectors to consider energy conservation in design and construction.

8.B. Promote the use of viable renewable energy resources, such as solar energy.

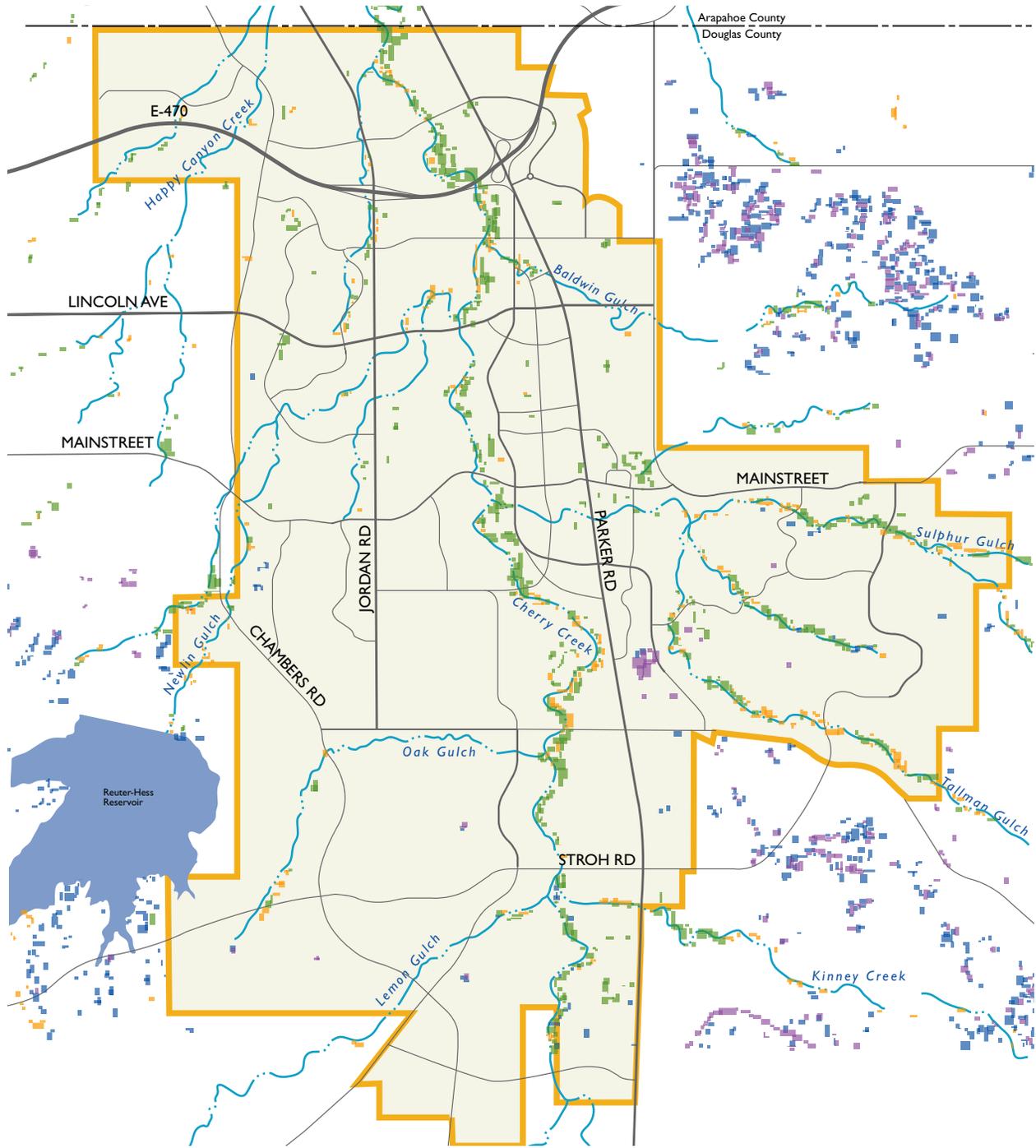
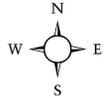


Figure 12A: Riparian and Significant Native Vegetation Resources

Source: ERO Resources

LEGEND

-  Urban Service Area
-  Existing and Proposed Roads
-  Creek Corridors
-  Cottonwood
-  Herbaceous Riparian
-  Pine/Gambel Oak Mix
-  Ponderosa Pine



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Disclaimer: The property boundaries, titles, legends, scale, reference to individual parcels and any and all other data shown or depicted on this map is for visual representation only and may not be accurate. Further studies and surveys, on a site specific basis are required to verify this data.

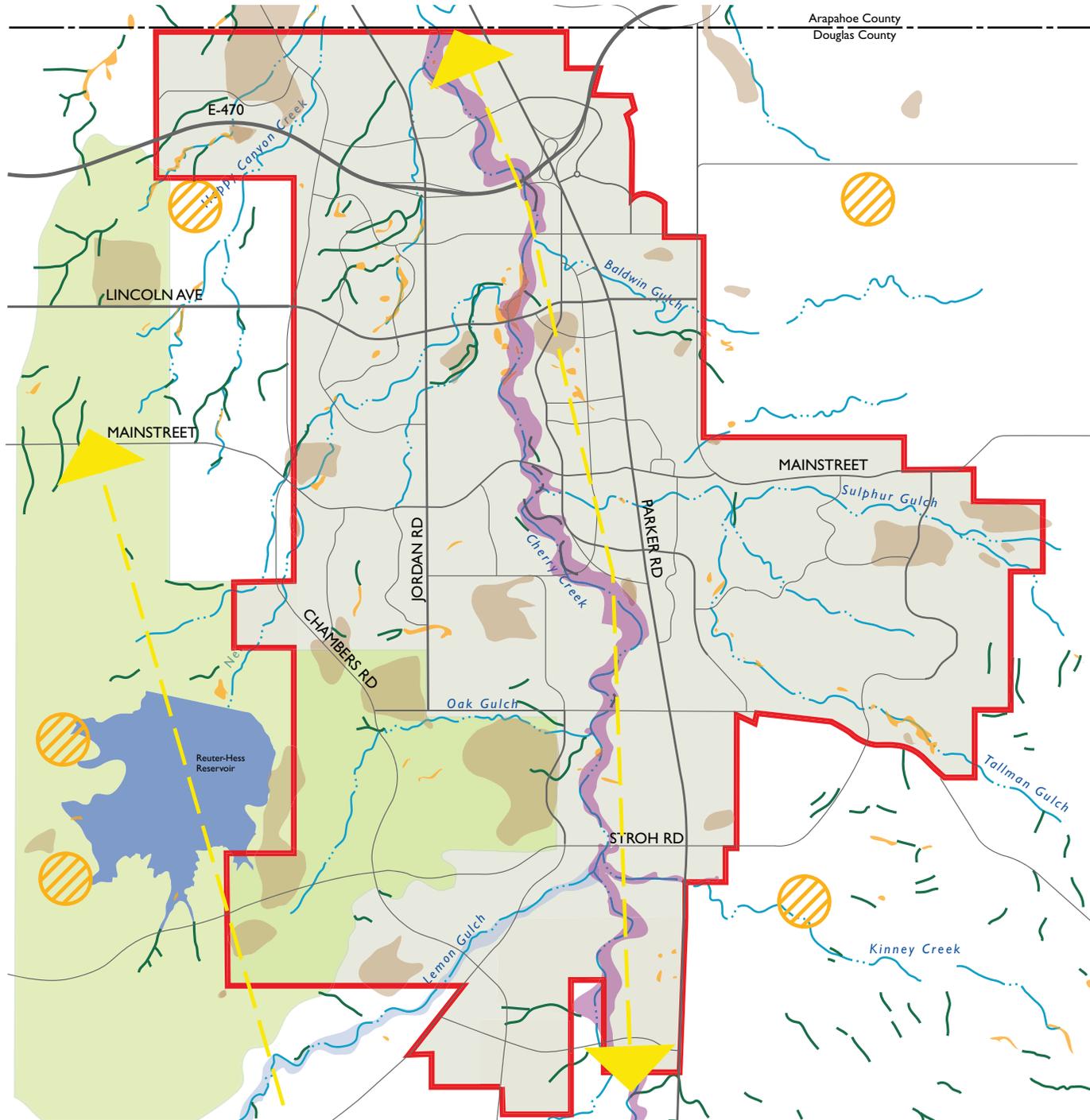
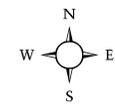


Figure 12B: Wildlife

Source: Colorado Parks and Wildlife, Town of Parker and Douglas County

LEGEND

-  Urban Growth Area
-  Existing and Proposed Roads
-  Creek Corridors
-  Wildlife Corridor
-  Prebles Habitat
-  Wildlife Habitat
-  Riparian Areas
-  Conservation Study Areas
-  Sensitive Wildlife Habitat
-  Prairie Dog Habitat



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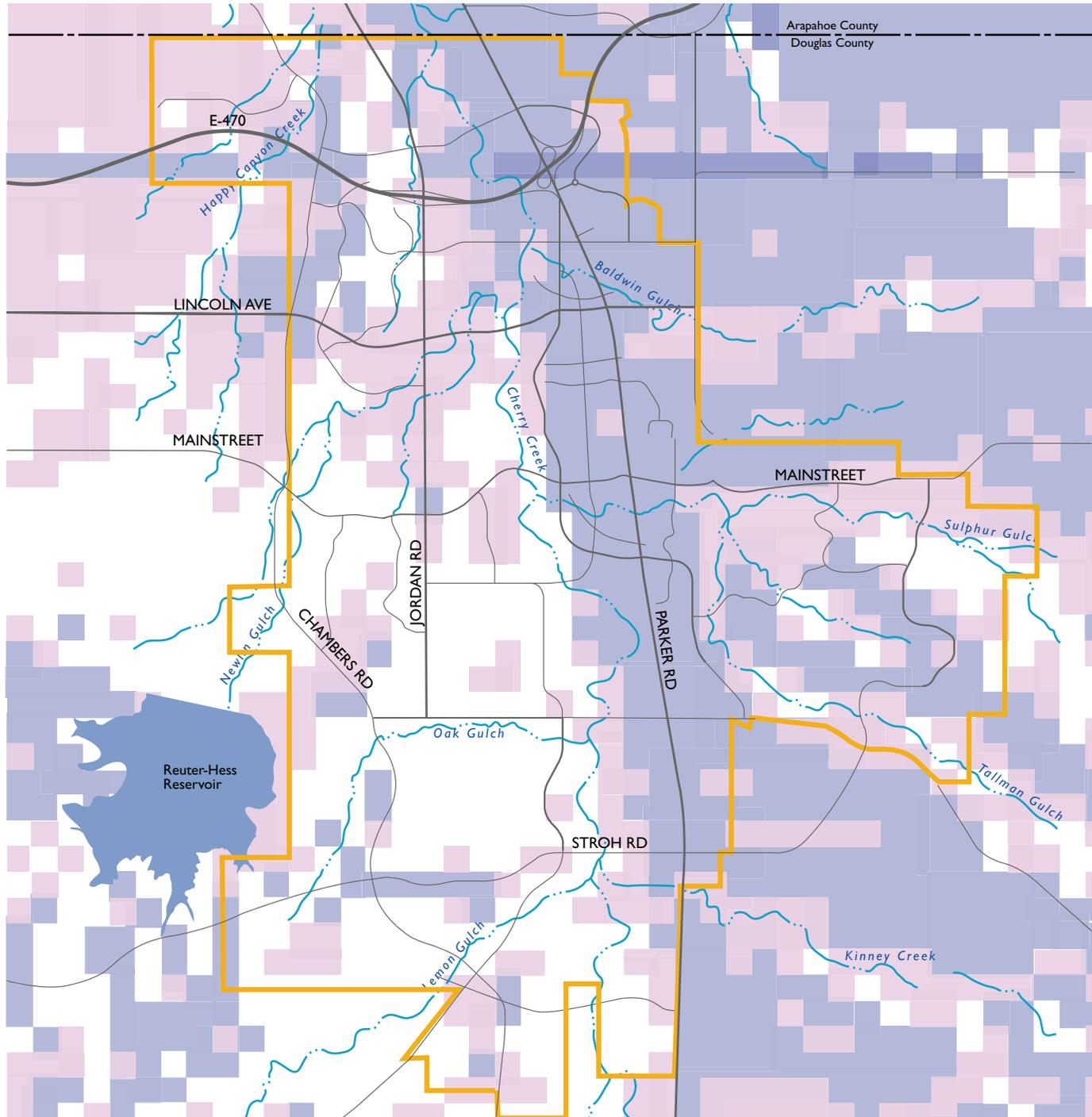
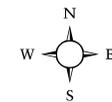


Figure 12C: **Visual Resources**

Source: Town of Parker

LEGEND

- Urban Growth Area
- Existing and Proposed Roads
- - - Creek Corridors
- Viewshed**
- Medium
- Medium/High
- High



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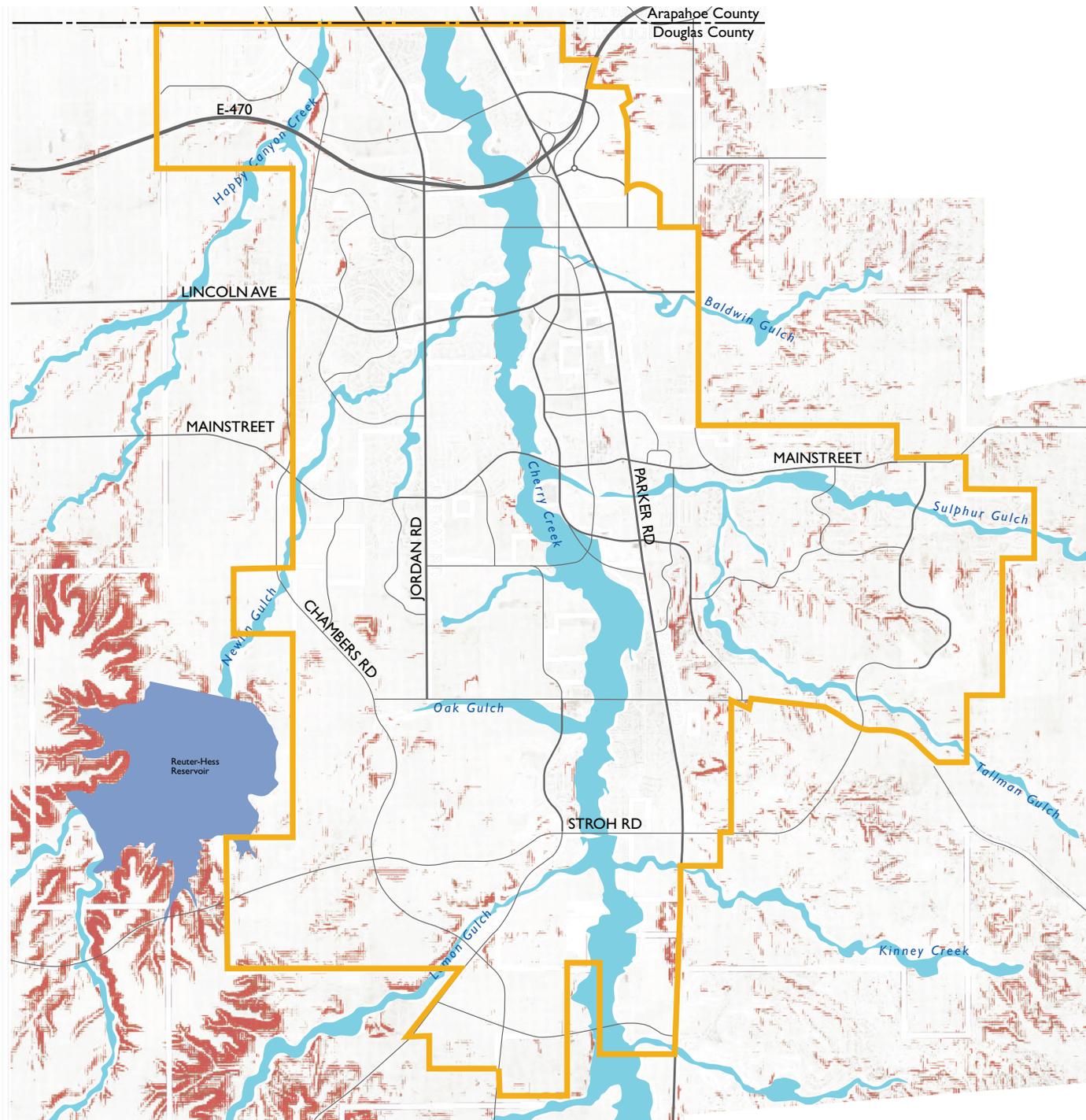
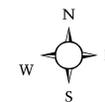


Figure 12D: **Environmental Hazards**

Source: Town of Parker, FEMA

LEGEND

- Urban Growth Area
- Existing and Proposed Roads
- 100 Year Flood
- Slope %: 15 to 19
- Slope %: 20 and Up



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