TOWN OF ERIE LANDFILL TASK FORCE
FRONT RANGE LANDFILL RECOMMENDATIONS
NOVEMBER 2024

I. INTRODUCTION AND PROCESS OVERVIEW

The Town of Erie is currently home to four landfills near the intersection of Weld County Road 6 ("CR-6") and Weld County Road 5 ("CR-5"), two of which are owned by Waste Connections. The Denver Regional South Landfill ("DRSL"), located on the west side of CR-5 and south of CR-6, closed in late 2020. The Front Range Landfill ("FRL"), located on the east side of CR-5 and south of CR-6, is an active landfill. Waste Connections is evaluating options to potentially expand its permitted boundaries and extend FRL's operation and receive input on its operations and potential community benefits from neighboring community members.

In January 2024, the Town of Erie solicited applicants to an eight-member Landfill Task Force (LTF) from neighborhoods surrounding FRL. Applicants were solicited from Vista Ridge, Vista Pointe, Erie Highlands, Erie Commons, Colliers Hill, Flatiron Meadows, the Brennan Lifestyle Community, as well as the Ranch Eggs Neighborhood and surrounding residential areas. In the application, prospective task force members were asked to describe their professional experience, qualifications, and interest in participating. Applicants were also asked to provide examples of a situation where they had worked collaboratively to manage disagreements or conflict as part of a group. The selection process considered the length of time lived in Erie and the proximity of the applicant's residence to the FRL.

The selected LTF members represent diverse backgrounds and have varying perspectives on the future of the FRL. The LTF was charged with developing community-based recommendations for Waste Connections to consider implementing as it pursues a potential expansion of its active landfill area. It was understood that working toward these recommendations could strengthen Waste Connection's application to the Town of Erie to expand its permitted boundary and make other operational changes.

A neutral third-party facilitator led the applicant selection and facilitated LTF meetings. The LTF met for two hours on six occasions from April – October 2024. Five LTF meetings were held in person at the Erie Town Hall, and one was virtual. The LTF facilitator created a collaborative environment for the LTF, the Town, and Waste Connections to discuss interests and concerns and collaboratively develop recommendations.

The public was welcome at all meetings and the process was open and transparent. A page on the Town of Erie's website (https://erieco.us/LandfillTaskForce) contained meeting dates, agendas, and summaries; the LTF roster; a place to ask questions and submit comments; and a summary of comments and questions (and responses) on the process and the FRL. Individuals who attended LTF meetings as observers could submit comment cards during each meeting. All comments submitted by the public were summarized and shared with the LTF at the start of

each meeting. The LTF maintained a commitment to read and reflect on the public comments submitted throughout the process.

II. LANDFILL TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS OVERVIEW

During the LTF process, Waste Connections shared details about its desired plans for FRL and Town of Erie staff shared the Town's perspective on each potential initiative. The LTF sought to understand these desired plans from their points of view and the perspectives of the surrounding neighbors, voiced community concerns and priorities related to FRL operations, and asked thoughtful questions to clarify their understanding. The LTF helped Waste Connections understand how it could meet its commitment to be a good neighbor currently and under potential future conditions. The LTF's community-based recommendations reflect these discussions, show an interest in minimizing and/or mitigating impacts from the FRL, and suggest community benefits that extend beyond waste management. The LTF advises that any new permit granted to Waste Connections be consistent with the existing agreements that Waste Connections has with the Ranch Eggs Neighborhood and residents living along CR-6 and CR-7.

The LTF, The Town, and Waste Connections valued the opportunity to engage in transparent, and ongoing discussions about the future of the FRL and found the process to be productive and efficient. Throughout the process, all parties highlighted the importance of continued open and transparent information sharing between Waste Connections and Town residents. The LTF encourages the Town Communications Department to continue sharing information about the relationship between the Town and the Waste Connections, FRL operations, and context for future developments and changes at the FRL.

These recommendations are organized into the following categories:

- **Entrance and Hauling Routes**
    - Relocate the FRL entrance to CR-6 between CR-5 and CR-7.
    - Implement roadway improvements to reduce traffic congestion related to the new entrance.
    - Require certain haulers to use designated routes when accessing FRL.
    - Enforce restrictions on Hauler routes.
    - Implement safety improvements on the roads surrounding the FRL, especially around the new entrance and at intersections along designated hauling routes and adjacent to the new entrance.

- **Maintenance Yard Land Exchange**
    - Relocate Waste Connections' off-site vehicle maintenance yard, located on East County Line Road, to the Town-owned parcel of land at the northeast corner of the FRL, with the Town taking ownership of the current maintenance yard location.
    - Implement a land exchange between the Town and Waste Connections to facilitate the relocation of the maintenance yard.

- **Landfill Footprint and Phasing – West Side**
    - Change the FRL permitted footprint on the west side to include the 3.8-acre notch if a satisfactory review of the plugged and abandoned oil and gas well is completed and a monitoring plan is established to ensure health and environmental safety.
    - Accelerate closing the FRL's west side and develop the first phase of a trails system on the site.

- **Landfill Footprint and Phasing – East Side**
    - Change the FRL permitted footprint on the east side to include 36-acres within the FRL property and increase the buffer between the east limits of the waste footprint and County Road 7 by decreasing the permitted limit of waste by 5 acres on the east side for a net increase of ~31 acres.
    - Relocate and increase the storage capacity of the Town of Erie water tanks in the southeastern quadrant of the FRL property.

- **Community Benefits**
    - Expand renewable energy sources, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and introduce waste diversion options.
    - Develop recreational trails and outdoor opportunities, and safe access to them.
    - Plant native vegetation and foster an environment that supports wildlife.
    - Continue to partner with the Erie community for ongoing input into community-facing initiatives.

III. LANDFILL TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS DESCRIPTIONS

1. ENTRANCE AND HAULING ROUTES

There is steadily increasing residential traffic along CR-5 between CR-4 and CR-6, which can create traffic congestion at the existing landfill entrance. The current routes used by haulers create traffic congestion on roadways surrounding the FRL and negatively impact the quality of life for surrounding communities. The current routes also negatively impact the intersection of Erie Parkway and CR-5, which is adjacent to Erie High School. The LTF expressed concerns about landfill traffic near inexperienced youth drivers.

a. NEW ENTRANCE

Recommendations

- **Relocate the FRL entrance to CR-6 between CR-5 and CR-7 on the north side of the FRL.**
- **Implement roadway improvements to reduce traffic congestion related to the new entrance.**

Description

The LTF developed recommendations that would reduce traffic on roads near the denser residential and commercial areas surrounding the FRL, improve safety, and reduce impacts on the surrounding communities. The LTF recommends relocating the FRL entrance to CR-6. This new entrance would provide enough space for customers to queue inside the landfill property, be conveniently located next to existing industrial uses, and be further away from the future Westerly and other residential development. The Town of Erie and Waste Connections will determine the specific location along CR-6. The public will have opportunities to provide input.

During the LTF process, Waste Connections supported the LTF's desire to prioritize safety, understand necessary roadway improvements, and implement improvements where possible prior to opening the new entrance location. The Town is responsible for designing and implementing infrastructure improvement projects and shared the process for analyzing the need for roadway improvements and prioritizing and funding projects. If residents share concerns related to increased traffic because of the new entrance location, Waste Connections has committed to mitigating concerns with increased enforcement and the Town is committed to exploring the feasibility of roadway improvements to improve the flow of traffic.

Roadway Improvements

The LTF recommends completing a detailed traffic study of the area around the FRL that incorporates current and future traffic patterns per the Town of Erie's Transportation Mobility Plan and the proposed landfill traffic routing. Based on those study results, the LTF suggests considering the following roadway improvements:

- Pave and widen CR-6 between CR-5 and CR-7 to accommodate heavy truck traffic.
- Develop a left turn lane onto CR-6 from CR-5 for vehicles entering FRL southbound off CR-5.
- Develop turn and acceleration lanes for trucks entering and leaving FRL on CR-6.
- Provide flexibility for haulers to enter FRL from one direction and exit the FRL in a separate direction.
- Develop a bicycle lane on CR-5 from CR-4 to Erie Parkway to improve safety for bicyclists and pedestrians.

FRL Operations

- Develop a truck staging area within the FRL property for haulers waiting to access the check-in facilities to ensure no customers back up onto CR-6.
- If the entrance is east of the FRICO ditch intersection with CR-6, bridge the FRICO ditch, based on an engineering analysis, to allow haulers to enter FRL from CR-6. Ensure that the bridge does not impact access to, or quality of, water in the FRICO ditch. (If the entrance is on the west side of the ditch, such a bridge would be unnecessary.)

b. HAULING ROUTES

Recommendations

- **Require certain haulers to use designated routes when accessing FRL.**
- **Enforce restrictions on Hauler routes.**
- **Implement safety improvements on the roads surrounding the FRL, especially around the new entrance and at intersections along designated hauling routes and adjacent to the new entrance.**

Description

The LTF recommends that haulers, including all tractor-trailers and semi-tractor-trailers, be restricted from using the following routes to access FRL. Further, all other commercial haulers not serving local neighborhoods would be discouraged from using these routes **(see Appendix A)**:

- Sheridan Parkway between SH-7 and CR-4
- CR-4 between Sheridan Parkway and CR-5
- CR-6 east of CR-7
- CR-7 between CR-6 and SH-7 (honoring the existing agreement between Waste Connections and the Ranch Eggs Neighborhood and residents living along CR-6 and CR-7)
- Hamilton Road leading into Alpine Drive

The LTF recommends that all tractor-trailers and semi-tractor-trailers and most other commercial haulers use the following routes for access to and from the FRL:

- To and from I-25
    - Erie Parkway and then either CR-7 (preferred) or CR-5 (alternate) to CR-6.
- To and from Hwy 7
    - I-25 north to exit 232 (Erie Parkway), and then access CR-6 via CR-7 (preferred) or CR-5 (alternate).
- For customers west of the FRL on Erie Parkway
    - Erie Parkway to CR-5 (preferred) or CR-7 (alternate) to access CR-6.

Community member safety is a priority. The LTF recommends the following safety improvements to the roads surrounding FRL as well as additional enforcement.

Roadway Design and Adaptation

- Conduct a safety study, including an analysis of bicycle and pedestrian travel, of the designated routes and roadway improvements to understand if new potential traffic will negatively impact community members (Town of Erie).
- Conduct a traffic analysis once new traffic patterns are established and adapt the roadway configuration on the designated routes to prioritize safety and accommodate increases in hauler traffic, if needed (Town of Erie).

- Implement improvements and traffic control measures as needed per the traffic analysis and safety study (Town of Erie).
- Consider the use of the recommended hauler routes when planning future residential and commercial development on parcels of land adjacent to the routes (Town of Erie).

Communication

- Inform haulers of which roadways are restricted; and enforce roadway restrictions with operational penalties (Waste Connections).
- Increase roadway signage directing certain haulers to use specific routes and to notify haulers of roads that are off-limits to hauler traffic (Town of Erie).
- Inform Town law enforcement of which roads are off-limits to haulers (Town of Erie).

Community Partnerships

- Involve the community around CR-6, east of CR-7, and on CR-7, south of CR-6, in planning proposed roadway improvements (Town of Erie).
- Create a mechanism for the local community to report haulers seen using the restricted roadways (except for haulers serving local neighborhood needs) with the understanding that the Hauler routes do not apply to all landfill traffic and some landfill traffic may continue to use these roadways. (Waste Connections).
- Continue patrols and enforcement of route restrictions so long as the landfill is in operation (Waste Connections).
- Use a similar process to collaborate with communities to address traffic from future industrial and residential developments (Town of Erie).

2. MAINTENANCE YARD LAND EXCHANGE

The Waste Connections maintenance yard is currently on a ~3-acre parcel of land. The maintenance yard is located five miles away from the FRL on East County Line Road. The Town owns a ~10-acre parcel of land at the northeast corner of the FRL. Waste Connections and the Town would like to exchange these parcels of land to satisfy their respective interests.

Recommendation

- **Relocate the Waste Connections maintenance yard to the Town-owned parcel of land at the northeast corner of the FRL with the Town taking ownership of the current maintenance yard location.**
- **Implement a land exchange between the Town and Waste Connections to facilitate the relocation of the maintenance yard.**

Description

The LTF recommends that the Town and Waste Connections exchange ownership of the two parcels subject to Waste Connections and the Town negotiating a fair price to transfer

ownership of the ~3-acre parcel of land near County Line Road to the Town (this is also known as the "Blue Jungle") and the ~10-acre parcel of land at the northeast corner of the FRL to Waste Connections. The LTF recommends that Waste Connections conduct a full environmental review of its existing ~3-acre parcel and complete any site clean-up at its cost before closing and transferring the land to the Town. It is noted that Waste Connections would need to complete the construction of its new facilities and begin operations on the 10-acre parcel before vacating the Blue Jungle. By relocating the maintenance yard to the FRL property would reduce Waste Connections vehicle traffic on Town of Erie roads and reduce vehicle tailpipe emissions in and around Erie neighborhoods from Waste Connections vehicles. Based on discussion with the Town and with the goal of achieving the greatest community benefits available, the LTF recommends the land exchange subject to the Town incorporating the ~3-acre parcel into the Town's open space plan to complete trail connectivity.

The LTF recommends that Waste Connections develop a roadway internal to the FRL so that trucks can access the maintenance yard without leaving the FRL property. This would further reduce hauler traffic on Town of Erie roads.

3. LANDFILL FOOTPRINT AND PHASING – WEST SIDE

The 3.8-acre horseshoe-shaped notch on the west side of the FRL, directly south of the FRL entrance, is currently owned by Waste Connections though it is not part of the permitted landfill boundary because it is the site of a plugged and abandoned oil and gas well. Waste Connections would like to extend its permitted boundary (within the property it already owns) to include the notch **(see Appendix B).**

Recommendation

- **Change the FRL permitted footprint on the west side to include the 3.8-acre notch if a satisfactory review of the plugged and abandoned oil and gas well is completed and a monitoring plan is established to ensure health and environmental safety.**
- **Accelerate closing the FRL's west side and develop the first phase of a trails system on the site.**

Description

a. WESTERN "NOTCH"

The LTF recommends changing the FRL's permitted footprint on the west side to include the 3.8-acre notch directly south of the current FRL entrance as part of the overall effort to accelerate closing the FRL's west side. Incorporating this portion of the FRL property into the permitted footprint would result in a continuous slope on the western side once the FRL is closed. The LTF recommends shaping the completed western side of the FRL with a more natural contour and adding native vegetation plantings to resemble a naturally occurring formation.

The notch includes a plugged abandoned gas well. Waste Connections would use the notch for landfill operations and waste deposits. The Colorado Energy & Carbon Management Commission has confirmed that the abandoned well is plugged and abandoned ("P&A") to standards that exceed current regulations. With future waste deposits located upon the P&A well and the landfill membrane preventing access to the well, some LTF members expressed concerns about possible future risks with a failure in the plugging and abandonment of the well and leaking of oil, gas, or other hydrocarbons into the surrounding soil and water. Therefore, the LTF recommends that Waste Connections perform a mechanical integrity assessment of the top plug of the well before developing the area, and that the Town and Waste Connections develop a plan to monitor the abandoned well and address potential future issues. This plan would be reviewed and approved by the Town of Erie, the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE), and the Energy and Carbon Management Commission (ECMC), as part of the technical permitting process.

WEST SIDE PHASING

The LTF recommends accelerating the completion of the west side of the FRL. This phasing plan would call for capping the completed west side of the FRL and eventually developing amenities for the community. The LTF desires to achieve community benefits of the landfill property as quickly as possible. Based on discussions with Waste Connections, by prioritizing the completion of the western portion of the FRL, the LTF understands that community benefits such as hiking and biking trails and revegetation with native plants can occur while the remainder of the FRL continues operation.

4. LANDFILL FOOTPRINT – EAST SIDE

Waste Connections would like to expand its permitted footprint within the property it already owns to continue landfill operations on the southeast side. Expanding the permitted footprint would add ~31 acres to the current footprint, extending the FRL's lifespan. The change would require relocating Town of Erie water tanks located onto FRL property **(see Appendix B).**

Recommendation

- **Change the FRL permitted footprint on the east side to include 36-acres within the FRL property and increase the buffer between the east limits of the waste footprint and County Road 7 by decreasing the permitted limit of waste by 5 acres on the east side for a net increase of ~31 acres.**
- **Relocate and expand the capacity of the Town of Erie water tanks in the southeastern quadrant of the FRL property.**

Description

Based on the following discussions and recommendations some members of the LTF do not oppose, while other members of the LTF support Waste Connections' request to expand the FRL permitted footprint to include a net of ~31 acres in the southeastern quadrant of the FRL property. Located within the proposed expansion area are two Town of Erie water tanks. If the

expansion were approved, Waste Connections would construct two new water tanks and distribution infrastructure further southeast on the FRL property and grant the Town of Erie an easement to use the land.

If the Town approves the expansion, the LTF recommends that Waste Connections fills in this expanded area in a way that minimizes visual impacts to the surrounding areas including adding screening berms and vegetation.

The LTF understands the benefits of upgrading and modernizing the water infrastructure currently located on the proposed expansion area and recommends that the Town water infrastructure in the area be improved when/if the water tanks are relocated. This includes replacing the current water tanks (1.5- and 4-million-gallon capacities) with larger tanks (two 4-million-gallon capacities) and addressing tank pumping issues.

The LTF discussion of this potential permit expansion centered around potential impacts to residents, increases in FRL operations, and benefits to the Town. The LTF desires to accommodate future landfill use for the residents while mitigating the adverse impacts of any expansion.

- Waste Connections indicated that the potential impacts from the proposed expansion, within Waste Connections' property boundaries, would be mitigated by filling in a way that seeks to minimize visual impacts to the surrounding area by adding berms and screening vegetation.
- The proposed expansion would not add height to the FRL but would make the top of the FRL wider.
- The expansion would also not likely result in increased hauler traffic to the landfill, as the expanded section would not be opened until other sections were complete. The phased approach to completing the landfill means that Waste Connections would fill in sections of the existing permitted site before opening new areas.
- Rejecting the permit application to expand the permitted boundary would not result in the landfill closing sooner, as Waste Connections would adjust operations to maximize the existing permitted space.
- Waste Connections also agreed to pull in 200' of permitted space on the eastern side of the landfill along the FRICO ditch, to reduce the total permitted footprint **(see Appendix B).**
- The Town confirmed that relocating the water tanks is of great benefit to the Town's infrastructure and provides an opportunity to expand capacity and improve the existing pumping system.

5. COMMUNITY BENEFITS

Waste Connections intends to invest in the community by developing amenities in, on, or around the FRL property. LTF members discussed amenities and community benefits.

Recommendations

The LTF recommends forming a community committee in conjunction with the Town to oversee the feasibility evaluation, planning, and implementation of the community benefits. Funding for the proposed improvements would be provided, in part, by Waste Connections.

- **Expand renewable energy sources, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and introduce waste diversion options.**
- **Develop recreational trails and outdoor opportunities, and safe access to them.**
- **Plant native vegetation and foster an environment that supports wildlife.**
- **Continue to partner with the Erie community for ongoing input into community-facing initiatives.**

Description

The LTF recommends that portions of the FRL and DRSL properties be used for community benefits both while the FRL is operational and once it is closed. Development depends on the rate at which areas of the permitted footprint are closed, but the LTF recommends obtaining community benefits as quickly as possible and prioritizing trail development on the Western and Southern portion of the FRL. Potential community benefits to consider are presented below.

Renewable Energy and Greenhouse Gas Reduction

- Develop renewable energy on closed portions of the FRL and DRSL properties.
- Expand the current methane gas recovery system at FRL, increase the percentage of methane and other gases captured, and increase the portion used for renewable energy.
- Evaluate the potential to enhance the efficiency of the methane capture system by identifying potential leaks, finding areas where methane is uncaptured, and replacing flaring (the burning of unused methane) with actual use, either in CNG Waste Connections vehicles or input into the electrical grid.
- Develop an information center, either on or off site, or website where the public can see the amount of methane captured and how it is used.
- Convert as many Waste Connections vehicles as possible over to electric power, or compressed natural gas (CNG), and ensure the new on-site maintenance shop meets specifications to house and maintain these vehicles.

Waste Diversion

- Develop new systems to divert construction and demolition (C&D) waste away from the landfill to recycle (e.g., cement, scraps, building materials).
- Create a compost drop-off and processing facility.
- Create a drop-off site for hard-to-recycle materials (e.g., mattresses, metal, cardboard).
- Offer increased free drop-off or bulk item disposal days for Erie residents.
- Create a local curbside composting program for Erie and unincorporated Weld County residents.
- Ensure that the new diversion site on the FRL property does not create additional negative impacts for surrounding communities (e.g., noise, odors, visual impacts).

Multimodal Trails

- Develop a network of accessible trails for pedestrian, equestrian, and non-motorized use on the FRL as soon as possible.
- Evaluate the feasibility of developing a network of single-track trails on Denver Regional South Landfill.
- Ensure that all the relevant accessible trails and related infrastructure comply with federal accessibility regulations.
- Create safe crossing points on the eastern side of the property for people accessing the trails from CR-6 and CR-7 and connecting the north side of CR-4 to CR-7.
- Develop a complete network of sidewalks and pedestrian and bicycle paths, with consultation with the Erie Parks and Recreation Department, around the FRL property that connects CR-4, CR-5, CR-6, and CR-7, with connections to Erie Parkway and access to nearby multimodal trails such as the Coal Creek Trail, surrounding neighborhoods, as well as future trail systems and residential developments. There should be emphasis on constructing trails along the western and southern boundaries of the FRL and connecting them to the existing and planned trail network as quickly as possible.
- Incorporate the current site of the Waste Connections vehicle maintenance yard into the Town's Open Space & Trails program once the land exchange is complete.
- Include benches, shade structures, interpretive signage, an interactive educational scavenger hunt trail, waste bins, restrooms, and compostable pet waste bags along the trail system where appropriate.
- Include bicycles on-site that visitors can rent to use on the trails.
- Develop a plan for trail system funding and maintenance.
- Plan a connection to the future Erie Parkway underpass.

Outdoor Amenities

- Develop dark sky areas at the FRL and Denver Regional South.
- Design a viewpoint for the public to watch the landfill movement over the years.
- Develop a frisbee golf course on the site.
- Develop a sensory park and bus parking for special education programs.
- Consider the development of feasible winter recreational opportunities.
- Use the Sunset Open Space parking lot as the primary lot for visitors accessing the FRL amenities.

Ecological Benefits

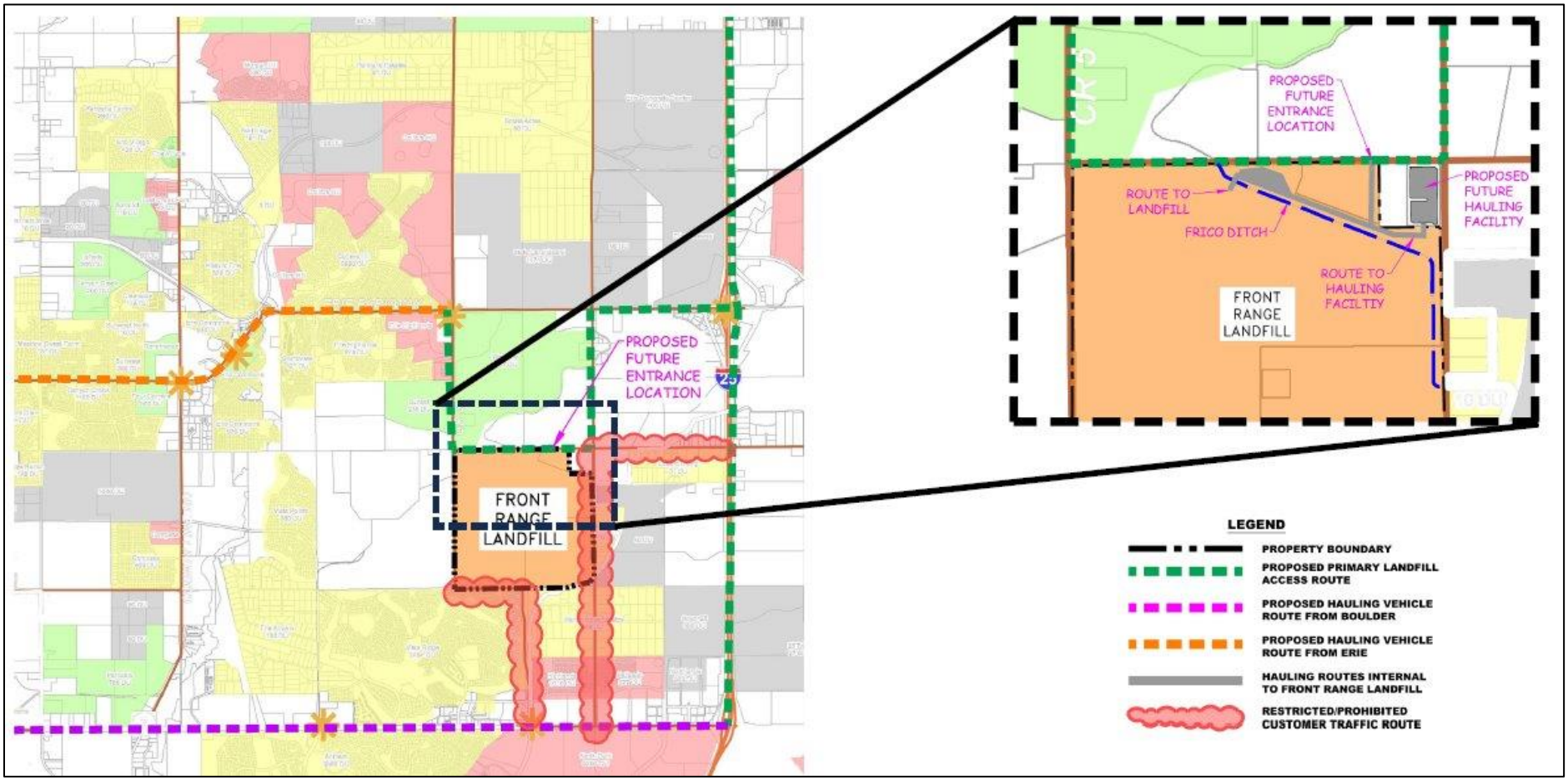
- Create an apiary and greenhouse.
- Revegetate the capped landfill with native grasses and flowers to support pollinators and help the landfill blend in with the natural surroundings.
- Construct raptor stands and bat boxes.

- Introduce goats onto the capped landfill to manage vegetation. Careful management will be required to ensure that there are no impacts to the final cover system.
- Collaborate with the Butterfly Pavilion to create a butterfly garden along the trail system.
- Coordinate with Colorado Parks and Wildlife, and other potential agencies and nonprofits, on recommendations to restore native ecosystems on the FRL site.

Shared Space and Community Partnerships

- Develop a community meeting space and education center (e.g., "Waste Diversion Center"), potentially in partnership with the St. Vrain Valley School District, with courses on recycling procedures, sustainability, how landfills impact weather and climate, how the Town sources water, and other topics.
- Sponsor field trips for each Erie student to visit the FRL at least once during their K-12 education.
- Educate the Erie community on landfill operations and host more tours.
- Incorporate the Town's mining history into educational resources.
- Develop a program for local youth to learn skills to rebuild and reuse items such as bicycles.
- Maintain a comment form on the Town of Erie website for residents to share questions, concerns, and comments about the FRL.
- Add telecommunications infrastructure to the top of the closed landfill to improve cellular service for Erie residents.
- Consider a process like the Erie Community Center Phase 2 to move the community benefits public discussion forward.
- Work with other industry partners in Erie to identify funding sources for community benefits and amenities.

IV. APPENDIX A. PROPOSED RECOMMENDED HAULING ROUTES



V. APPENDIX B. PROPOSED CHANGES TO PERMITTED LANDFILL FOOTPRINT



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