

Erie Final Strategies (updated 7/20/26)

Strategies by Focus Area

BUILDINGS AND ENERGY

Codes & Policies

1. Regularly evaluate and adopt the most recent applicable energy code, at least every three years, to ensure alignment with the state requirements and continuous progress towards healthier buildings. Where feasible, explore the adoption of above-code amendments to reduce carbon pollution and advance community priorities.
2. Continue to participate in DRCOG's Building Policy Collaborative to garner support for energy policy adoption and implementation.
3. Expand building energy benchmarking requirements in Erie by considering a Lead by Example and voluntary program and exploring an equitable approach to phase in commercial buildings 50,000 square feet and under.
4. Explore an at-purchase or at-sale energy use disclosure program for residents selling their homes.

Building Energy Use

5. Continue to explore partnerships with nonprofits and other advocacy organizations like Energy Outreach Colorado to support energy and home upgrades for manufactured homes and low-income households.
6. Expand all current rebate opportunities to include an equity-specific and income-qualified component or offering, and communicate to all residents and businesses what opportunities are available to them.
7. Incentivize commercial building retro commissioning and electrification to increase efficiency and decrease overall energy consumption and operation costs among other co-benefits.

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8. Educate current and future homeowners in Erie about their ability to obtain energy efficiency information on their home from their utility.

Renewable Energy Empowerment & Innovation

9. Continue to identify innovative and equitable funding mechanisms, incentive programs, and partnerships to expand access to energy efficiency, solar, and other clean energy technologies and programs (i.e. thermal energy networks, bulk purchase programs, community solar, etc.) across residential and commercial sectors.
10. Prioritize and incentivize the installation of solar canopies in parking lots for new development.

Municipal Leadership

11. Collaborate with staff and local utilities to continue the implementation of Erie's Beneficial Electrification Plan.
12. Leverage local utilities' efforts and other opportunities to support the electrification transition for Erie residents and income qualified customers in their service territory.
13. Lean into partnerships to regularly evaluate the long-term operational costs and co-benefits associated with renewable energy technologies, resilient infrastructure projects, and energy efficiency projects.
14. Continue working towards powering all municipal buildings with 100% renewable electricity by partnering with Xcel Energy and United Power to provide onsite generation and off-site procurement. Regularly explore state, federal, and organizational funding opportunities to offset installation and retrofit costs.
15. Pursue Platinum-Level SolSmart certification.
16. Continue to require all new government buildings and major renovations be ENERGY STAR certified (or equivalent), and/or carbon positive where possible.
17. Continue to explore the creation of a resilience hub or hubs in Erie that will provide a safe space for residents and will support the coordination of resource distribution and services before, during, or after hazardous events.
18. Support increased platforms for coordination and communication between Erie's Sustainability Division, local utilities, and Town Departments/staff to maximize use of available utility incentives.

TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY

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Mode Shift

1. Continue to prioritize and encourage the use of trails and paths to decrease automobile trips around town.
2. Collaborate with the Regional Transportation District (RTD), Boulder County, and other regional partners to explore transit passes (e.g. EcoPass) that can be provided through employment (or Townwide) to reduce single occupancy vehicle (SOV) trips for Town employees, local businesses, and possible residents.
3. Continue to promote multi-modal connectivity and Transit Oriented Development (TOD) for new commercial development.
4. Continue to implement and pilot travel demand management strategies, such as car and bike share programs, first-and last-mile connections, and transit passes to incentivize people to get out of their cars.
5. Work with RTD, Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT), Boulder County, and other partners to support transit infrastructure, increase transit service frequencies and geographic service, and expand vehicle-sharing opportunities. Prioritize connections to key areas such as schools, grocery stores, and neighboring cities.
6. Continue to support the community wide anti-idling campaign by expanding anti-idling signage, communication, and building strategic partnerships such as with the Saint Vrain Valley School District and Boulder Valley School District. Develop a mechanism to track the impacts of the campaign.
7. Focus on sustainable economic development opportunities and assets that increase the number of employers and jobs in Erie to reduce vehicle miles traveled.
8. Consider impacts on vehicle miles traveled for employees, Town board members, and elected officials with future remote work and meeting policies.

EVs

9. Continue to support and update Erie's EV Procurement Policy to decarbonize the Town's fleet.
10. Pursue Charging Smart Gold certification.
11. Expand public EV charging infrastructure throughout Erie by leveraging funding from Colorado's Fleet-ZERO grant program and the Charge Ahead Colorado program. Commit to supporting 50 public EV chargers in Erie by 2030, with at least 3 of those being Level 3 chargers, and include infrastructure that supports e-bikes and e-bike charging.

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12. Continue to support EV best practices in Erie's code including commercial adoption for new buildings and allowing tented electric cords across sidewalks to support older neighborhoods and multi-family housing.
13. Align with Boulder County's regional Transportation Plan for Boulder County communities, aiming to achieve 30% transition to electric by 2030, and continue to support other state and regional goals for EV adoption.
14. Explore used-EV markets and rebate opportunities, and advertise these to Erie residents, focusing on lower-income households. Continue to advertise the used EV rebates available at the State and national level as funds are available.
15. Work with local and state organizations to support the electrification of mobile food vendors in Erie and adopt an all-electric policy for Town events when feasible.

WASTE AND MATERIALS DIVERSION

Recycling & Organics Recycling

1. Update Erie's Unified Development Code to require adequate dimensions in new multifamily and commercial developments for recycling and organics recycling bins.
2. Continue to explore and pilot waste diversion policies for the Town such as enforcing the current Pay-As-You-Throw ordinance, phasing in curbside organics recycling, establishing a communitywide hauler, and developing a universal recycling ordinance.
3. Explore a permanent location for the Erie Recycling Center or formalize the location of the current facility and initiate an expansion timeline and strategy.
4. Continue working with regional organizations to expand the Erie Recycling Center to include additional hard-to-recycle materials, a forestry sort yard, and other opportunities such as in-vessel organics recycling, a re-use barn, and biochar.
5. Continue to explore and support recycling and compost policy at the local, regional, and state level to ensure Erie's local voice can shape future decisions.

C&D Waste

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6. Implement a phased approach that rewards or requires construction and deconstruction waste diversion for Town projects. Explore funding opportunities and continue engaging in regional collaborations.
7. Once internal construction and deconstruction policy is adopted, expand policy to all new construction. Explore funding and resources to help implement and enforce this policy.
8. Foster continued collaboration between the Sustainability Division, other staff, and Boulder County to identify best practice deconstruction and construction principles, such as modular design for residential buildings, and work with the Building Division to explore the feasibility of incorporating into Erie's building code.
9. Explore the opportunity to bring a materials reuse center or additional partnership to Erie that will provide a location for diverting reusable construction and deconstruction materials and create local jobs.

Erie Town Facilities & Events

10. Conduct regular waste assessments at Town facilities and events to capture baseline waste diversion rates, support increased diversion, and track the effectiveness of waste diversion policies.
11. Continue implementing Erie's zero-waste policies for Town events and meetings, focusing on outreach and education by expanding the Zero Waste Champions volunteer program and other waste-related programming.

Erie Businesses

12. Launch the organics recycling pilot program for local businesses and evaluate impacts.
13. Continue administering the Town's waste diversion rebate program for residents and local businesses and work to connect participants to these resources.
14. Coordinate with business community partners and the Colorado Green Business Network of Erie to spotlight socially responsible businesses that work on reducing their GHG emissions and building community.

NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS

Local Food and Agriculture

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1. Support the development of new community gardens and the creation of a standard community garden plan to engage and educate the community. Continue to partner with Community Fruit Rescue and explore plans to plant fruit trees across Town.
2. Explore the development of a vegetable garden bed rebate to support local food connection and production for residents.
3. Continue to pursue designation as a pollinator district through the Butterfly Pavillion.

Natural Resources

4. Continue to fund and implement WaterWise, xeriscaping practices, and pollinator friendly plantings on Town-owned lands to minimize water use and improve resiliency.
5. Continue to use Integrated Pest Management for all town-owned landscaped and maintained areas.
6. Expand Erie's tree canopy and tree health initiatives by continuing to support Tree City USA certification and partnering with the Parks and Recreation Department to grow programs like the Residential Tree Planting Program and Tree Tenders. Utilize an equitable approach, focusing on areas with lower tree canopy and Old Town's more mature trees.

Codes & Policies

7. Ensure this Plan aligns with all Town plans including Erie's Drought and Water Supply Shortage Plan, Water Efficiency Plan, and the PROST Plan to ensure that sustainability practices are advocated for during relevant implementation projects and future updates.
8. Explore updating the Unified Development Code to:
 - a. Require community garden plots or pocket parks for certain multifamily developments.
 - b. Research and explore a one-in, one-out tree policy for all new development and additions as an alternative option to the existing tree mitigation fee. (i.e. if you remove a tree, you must put one back in the ground).
 - c. Support multi-use land strategies such as agrivoltaics and solar-powered covered parking.
 - d. Amend the Unified Development Code to require dark sky compliant outdoor light fixtures.

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9. Incentivize smart growth practices such as infill, redevelopment, and adaptive reuse to protect Erie's natural resources, agricultural industry, and the environment.
10. Where possible, allow and incentivize the installation of greywater treatment systems in new construction projects to conserve potable water use.
11. Where applicable, update the Landscape Code to require the installation of native landscaping and green infrastructure (e.g., rain gardens, bioswales, green roofs, permeable pavements, and wetlands) to absorb stormwater, reduce flood risk, recharge groundwater, and mitigate the heat island effect.
12. Consider removing lights in certain areas during certain times of the year to protect migratory paths and other ecological processes.

EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

General

1. Develop a communications and behavior change campaign that is multilingual, multicultural, equitable, and inclusive. Use the campaign to encourage and grow participation in sustainability activities and programs within Erie.
2. Continue to participate in and support local, regional, and statewide organizations that are working on our behalf to combat climate change, such as Colorado Communities for Climate Action, the Urban Sustainability Directors Network, and Recycle Colorado.
3. Highlight example projects and programs around Erie to showcase successful sustainability stories. Examples include Erie's pollinator gardens, turf conversion projects, hosting "climate friendly home exhibits", or neighborhood sustainability competitions.
4. Continue to explore collaboration to incorporate more sustainability projects into the existing Erie Neighborhood Improvement Plan, Organized Neighborhoods of Erie meetings, and other Town HOA sponsored programs.
5. Engage and empower youth in sustainability and local climate action by partnering with schools, youth organizations like the Erie Youth Council, and other community programs to expand education and leadership

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opportunities around environmental stewardship. Collaborate with these groups to support efforts like pollinator-friendly gardens, waste diversion, tree planting programs, and more.

6. Collaborate with arts and cultural institutions to educate the community on and showcase sustainability and climate action.
7. Advocate that Town leadership, such as Town Council, Senior leadership, the Sustainability Division, and the Grants team work together to take advantage of regional, state, and federal sustainability initiatives, funding, and programs to ensure Erie residents are benefiting from these resources.
8. Establish processes to support the involvement of the Sustainability Division or sustainability practices more generally early in projects (i.e. transportation master plans, water plans, permitting updates, metro district applications, etc.).
9. Create a sustainability-focused curriculum for Town staff, residents, and business owners. Develop certification pathways with incentives for those who complete the training.
10. Support businesses when applying for available sustainability related grants such as Charge Ahead, Colorado Green Business Network, and more.
11. Research and engage the community on a specific sustainability funding source such as a sustainability tax, permitting fees, real-estate transfer tax (RETT), construction and demolition deposit program, or others to solidify long-term financial resilience.

Buildings & Energy

12. Organize renewable energy and energy efficiency showcases like Clean Energy Home Tours or Solar Block Parties to celebrate and educate on the benefits of community renewable energy adoption.
13. Research, support, and institutionalize best practices and ongoing education to Town staff and industry partners on future amendments to the building code or Unified Development Code that advance sustainability across Erie.
14. Expand outreach to the Erie community about the variety of financial opportunities and programs offered through Xcel, United Power, Erie, Boulder County PACE, Power Ahead Colorado, Colorado Green Business Network, and more to improve energy efficiency in homes and businesses while reducing the overhead costs. Strategize outreach to ensure low-income households are captured.

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Transportation & Mobility

15. Expand education and outreach efforts to encourage the use of public transit such as RTD's JUMP bus route from Erie Community Center to downtown Boulder and Lafayette and Erie's Flex Ride Service.
16. Continue to expand outreach and education to residents around EVs, focusing on health benefits, cost savings, funding opportunities, charging availability, and more. Continue hosting or collaborating on free "ride and drive" events to break down information and cultural barriers to EV adoption.
17. Consider hosting events like a casual 10k or "roll through town" event to promote the use of micromobility options in Erie.
18. Explore partnerships with e-bike advocacy organizations to host e-bike safety trainings.

Waste & Materials Diversion

19. Continue to educate residents on local and regional waste and reuse facilities to ensure materials are optimally disposed of, recycled, and reused.
20. Continue to educate Erie staff on Erie's Sustainable Purchasing Best Management Practice Guide to further reduce waste and promote sustainable purchasing practices. Develop a sustainability training course for staff.
21. Educate businesses in Erie about the Extended Producer Responsibility program so they can tap into the newly funded waste diversion streams as they become available.
22. Collaborate with Erie's Economic Development team to educate businesses on waste diversion tactics and opportunities.

Nature-Based Solutions

23. Create, communicate, and share best practices to manage municipal natural areas, parks, right of ways, and other properties to maximize ecological health and biological diversity. Use Erie's pollinator gardens as educational opportunities.
24. Expand outreach and education to residents, building owners, and HOAs to normalize water-wise landscaping practices. Ensure messaging aligns with Erie's Water Efficiency Plan and Drought and Water Supply Shortage Plan.