



Planning Action to Transform Hughes Sustainably

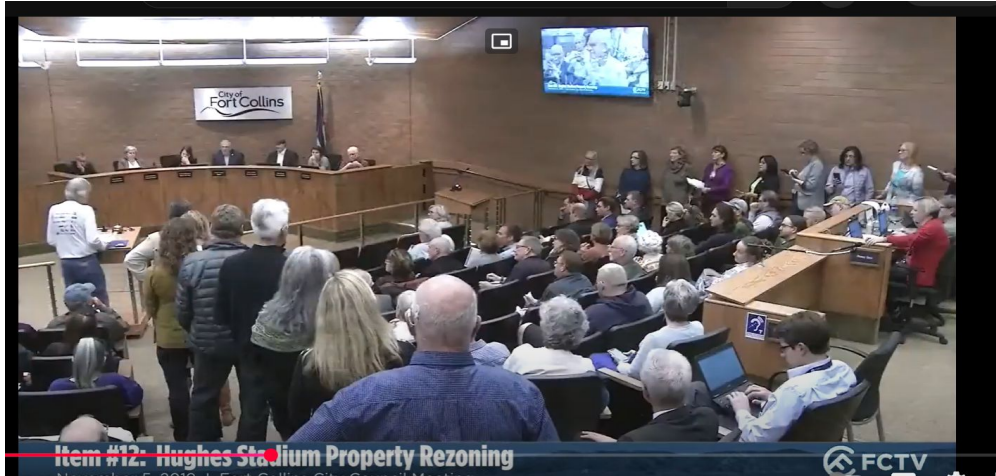


Exceedingly Brief History of the community driven effort to save Hughes as protected Open Space



VERY BRIEF History of Grassroots Effort to Protect & Preserve Hughes

- After a City meeting in 2017, a few energized people began to come together to organize against development and for preservation of Hughes as a protected open space.
- Met regularly and organized the community.
- Informed the community about City Council and Planning and Zoning Meetings.
- PATHS officially formed as a nonprofit organization in 2020 to run a citizen initiative to protect Hughes.
- Began doing outreach by tabling at community events.
- Majority of feedback at all outreach events was to keep it as protected Open Space
- Fort Collins does not define Open Space in their code the way many other cities and communities do in Colorado. There is no real definition as pointed out yesterday by city staff.



VERY BRIEF History of Grassroots Effort to Protect & Preserve Hughes

Many Fort Collins residents participating in City and CSU outreach did NOT feel they were being listened to.

- So, PATHS Organized the community to use DIRECT DEMOCRACY as a legislative tool
- PATHS organized a citizen’s initiative which was approved by 69% (28,492) of the voters in 2021 election.
- Legislative Intent was to conserve Hughes as protected & preserved Open Space. The most protective zoning in the Land Use Code is “P-O-L” and it is what the voters zoned the parcel upon passing of the ballot measure
- A Natural Area is the most protective permitted use under the P-O-L zoning designation

Proposed Citizen-Initiated Ordinance (relating to the former Hughes Stadium property)

Shall the City enact an ordinance requiring the City Council of the City of Fort Collins to immediately rezone upon passage of the ordinance a 164.56-acre parcel of real property formerly home to the Hughes Stadium from the Transition District to the Public Open Lands District, and requiring the City to acquire the property at fair market value to use said property for parks, recreation, and open lands, natural areas, and wildlife rescue and restoration, and further prohibiting the City from de-annexing, ceasing acquisition efforts or subsequently rezoning the property without voter approval of a separate initiative referred to the voters by City Council, and granting legal standing to any registered elector in the City to seek injunctive and/or declaratory relief in the courts related to City noncompliance with said ordinance?

[Read complete ballot language](#)

Yes - 27,787 (68.61%)

No - 12,714 (31.39%)

PATHS VOLUNTEERS ENGAGED WITH OVER 8600+ FORT COLLINS VOTERS OVER 60 DAYS IN 2020



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- If you don't know how a petition works, this is what signature collectors **MUST** interface and observe every single person that signs the petition.
- We collected over 8600+ signatures!
- That means that PATHS volunteers dutifully interacted with and listened to the voices of over 8600+ people in a 60 day period!
- And believe us, people wanted to have their voices genuinely heard and their input taken seriously by our local government more than anything!
- We **KNOW** what the community at large said they wanted for Hughes more than anyone.
- And it was not heavy development, high-impact recreational activity, buildings and offices for private interests, and it wasn't selling or swapping the land to private interests, nonprofit enterprise or otherwise



PATHS VOLUNTEERS INTERACTED WITH OVER 8600+ FORT COLLINS VOTERS IN 60 DAYS IN 2020

Our own extensive community outreach indicated that the grand majority of residents unambiguously want the parcel to be :

- PUBLICLY-OWNED, PROTECTED & PRESERVED OPEN SPACE IN PERPETUITY (A CITY NATURAL AREA),
- WITH MINIMAL, LOW-IMPACT RECREATION,
- CONSERVED WILDLIFE HABITAT FOR WILDLIFE UTILIZING AND RETURNING TO THE LAND, AND MIGRATING THROUGH THE PARCEL AND FOOTHILLS ECOTONE,
- PUBLICLY-OWNED LAND THAT IS FREE & ACCESSIBLE TO ALL AGES, ABILITIES, AND BACKGROUNDS,
- NO PERMANENT BUILDINGS, AND NO LIGHTS AS TO PRESERVE THE DARK SKIES



WHAT'S THE ANSWER FOR HUGHES OPEN SPACE?

VOTE YES 

**Hughes
Public Open Lands**



APRIL 6, 2021



Keep Hughes Open Space

Paid for by Friends of Hughes Open Space

HughesOpenSpacePetition.com



WHAT'S THE ANSWER FOR HUGHES OPEN SPACE?

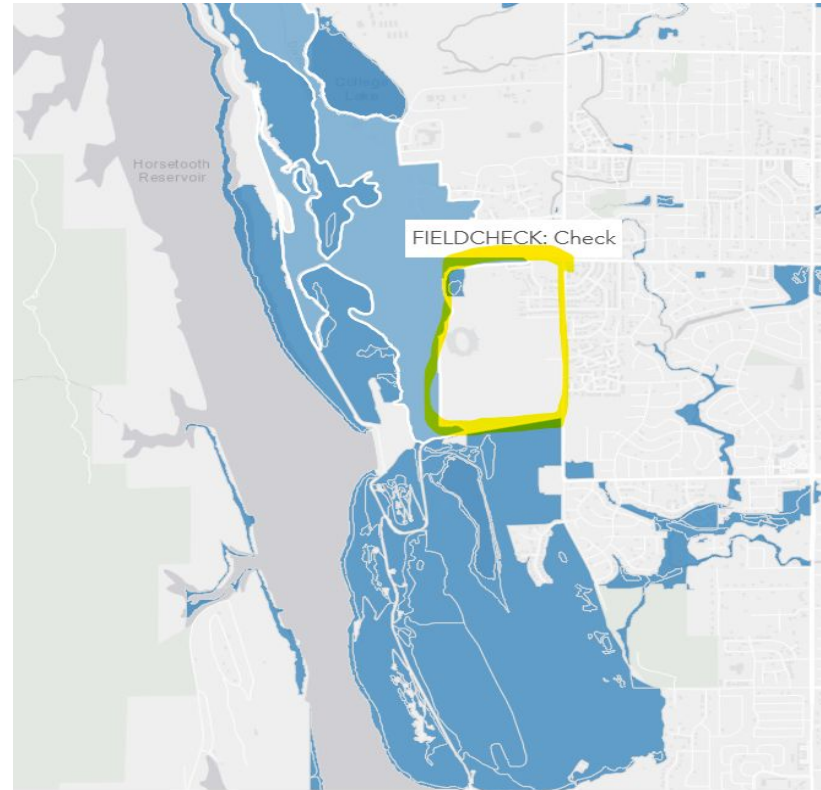
THE ANSWER IS SIMPLE.

The broader community wants a protected, PUBLICLY-OWNED, THAT IS, A CITY NATURAL AREA at Hughes.

A Natural Area is TRULY the ONLY UNIFYING, EQUITABLE, and INCLUSIVE use for this land that also aligns with the legislative intent of the ballot measure.



WHY SHOULD HUGHES BE A NATURAL AREA

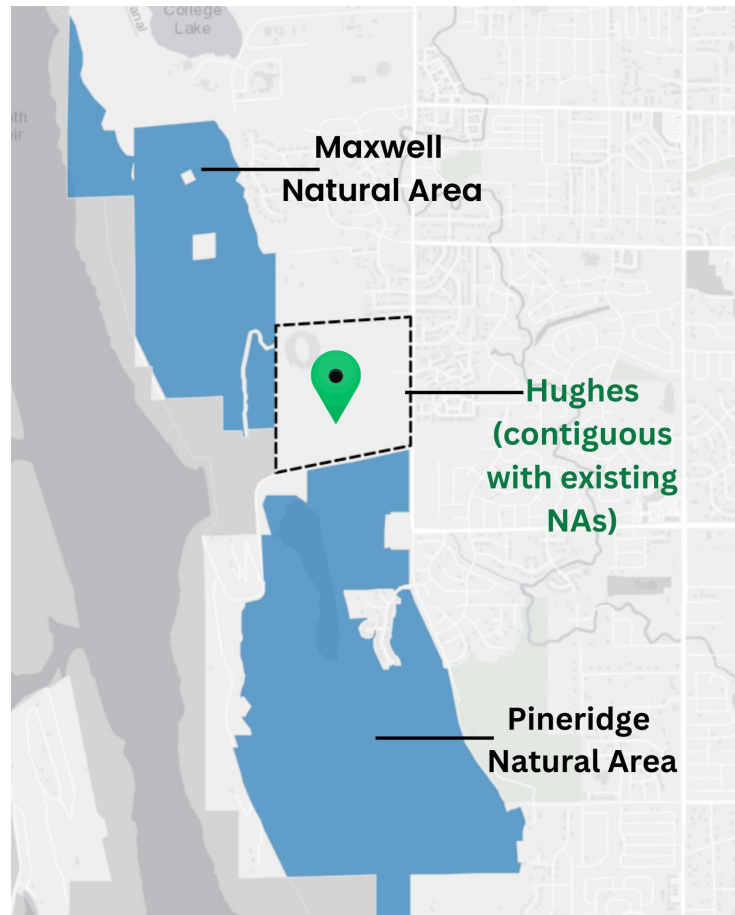


Why Should Hughes Be A Natural Area?

Hughes Lies between Maxwell and Pineridge Natural Areas at the base of the foothills in an ecotone (foothills to prairie)

- Hughes offers continuity of a protected wildlife migration path
- Unique ecotone – transition from foothills to plains, and unique, once-in-a-lifetime chance to extend protected Natural Area parcels
- A living example of nature reclaiming habitat after human encroachment
- A place of quiet and dark skies for wildlife and humans to enjoy which community members have been saying for years.

A Natural Area is the most unifying and inclusive use for this parcel.



A Natural Area Includes a Use for EVERYONE!

A Natural Area is the most unifying and inclusive use for this parcel.

It serves the most diverse needs of people in the community, no matter their

- Socio-economic background
- Health
- Age
- Mobility
- Disability
- Includes our local wildlife

How can a Natural Area at Hughes be funded?

- Open Space YES! ballot tax funds
- People have been giving willingly to this tax for over 30 years. In the current economy this tax is still bringing in seven to ten million dollars annually
- 80% of the money is to be used to purchase and protect open space
- There is value in purchasing lands within city limits which is more easily accessible than traveling to Estes Park or near the Wyoming border

A Natural Area aligns most with the voters

A Natural Area is the only use presented that is consistent with the legislative intent of the ballot measure. It offers multi uses without placing any infrastructure or breaking up the land. It also shows our youth of today how to promote stewardship of our lands and the value in conservation.

A Natural Area provides something for everyone

A Natural Area allows for the activities that have been mentioned to you in all of the presentations you have heard this weekend.

- Ceremonies with temporary structures for our Indigenous Communities
- Low-impact trails for walking, hiking and running
- Continuation of a biking trail from the Foothills and Maxwell trails
- Release site for rehabilitated wildlife
- Seasonal sledding
- Disc golf course
- Connection to nature for our mental well being
- Nature educational stations and information signs about the area/foothills
- It is inclusive to everyone and the land remains in the hands of the public.

AGAIN. THE ANSWER IS SIMPLE. AND IT ALWAYS HAS BEEN.

**The broader community
wants a protected,
PUBLICLY-OWNED, CITY
NATURAL AREA at Hughes.**

**A Natural Area is truly the
most UNIFYING,
EQUITABLE, and INCLUSIVE
use for this land.**



THANK YOU FOR LISTENING!

