



Community Planning & Permitting

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Staff Memo for Docket BVCP-25-0001

BOULDER COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

September 16, 2025, 2:00 p.m.

All Commissioners' public hearings and meetings will be offered in a hybrid format where attendees can join through **Zoom** or **in-person** at the Boulder County Courthouse, 3rd Floor, 1325 Pearl Street, Boulder.

Public Meeting – Public Testimony will not be taken

Staff: Hannah Hippely, Long Range Planning Division Manager

Docket BVCP-25-0001: Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan Major Update

Work session on the ten-year major update to the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan

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SUMMARY

Phase III of the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan (BVCP) update, A Boulder Direction, is focused on the development of updates to the BVCP. Staff and the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) last met on May 21, 2025 where the concept of updating the Future Land Use Map and associated Land Use Designations was presented. Staff have pursued this concept and have a first iteration of a conceptual framework for the Future Land Use map to review with the BOCC. Staff is seeking feedback and direction regarding this initial concept.

LAND USE MAP BACKGROUND

The following is an excerpt from City of Boulder August 26 Planning Board Memo (Exhibit A A). This same information was also reviewed by City Council on August 28.

The Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map (Map) depicts a plan of the desired future land use pattern in the Boulder Valley. The city and county use Land Use Designations to define the desired characteristics of different areas, and staff and policy makers also use them to guide zoning and policy decisions. Staff typically consider Map revisions every five years at major and mid-term updates. They can also be brought forward at any time through a map-only update, as part of a subcommunity or area plan process or concurrently with an annexation or rezoning.

The first future land use map was created in 1970 and adopted as part of the 1977 Comprehensive Plan. The map included four classes [bold headings in the lists below] and 11 designations:

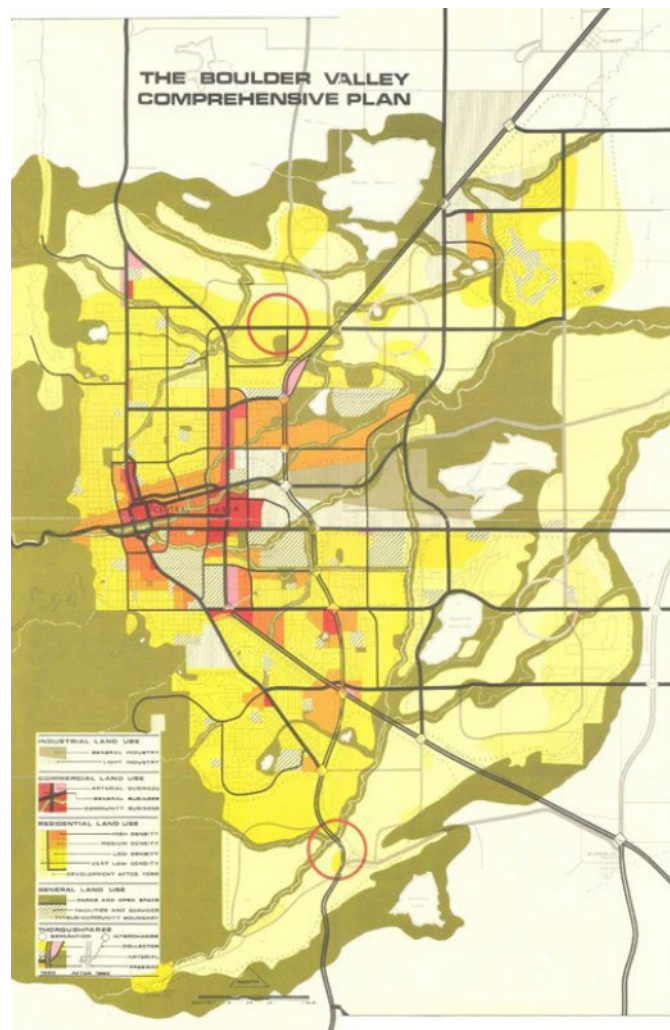


Figure 1. 1970 Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map

Industrial Land Use

1. General Industry
2. Light Industry

Commercial Land Use

- 3. Arterial Business
- 4. General Business
- 5. Community Business

Residential Land Use

- 6. High Density
- 7. Medium Density
- 8. Low Density
- 9. Very Low Density

General Land Use

- 10. Parks and Open Space
- 11. Facilities and Services

Over time, this map has evolved to describe greater specificity as community interests have changed. Land Use Designations are defined in Chapter 4 “Land Use Map Descriptions” of the current Comprehensive Plan. The current future land use map includes six different classes and 26 designations:

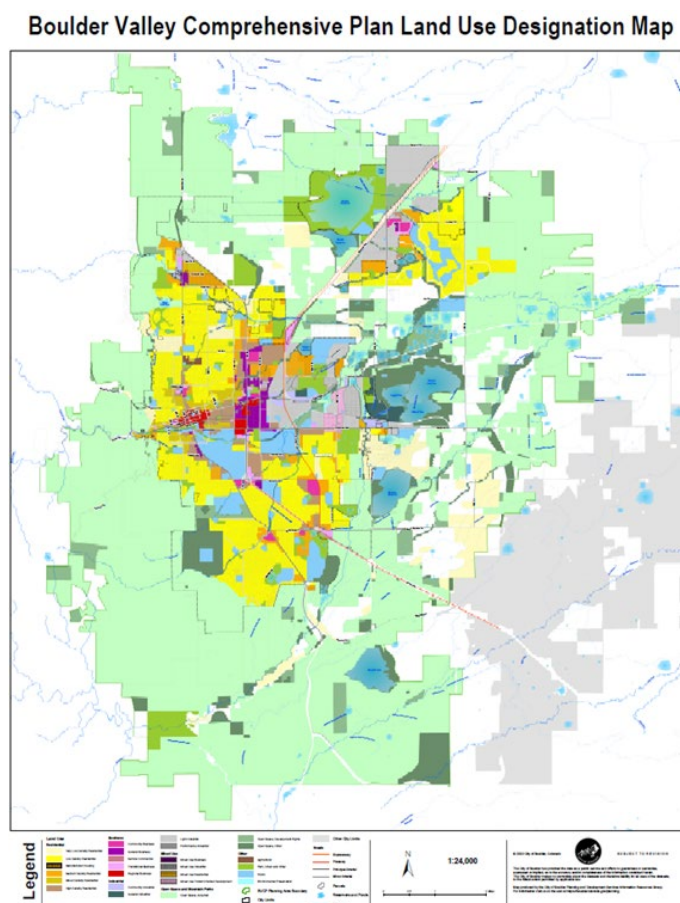


Figure 2. 2024 Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map

Industrial

1. General Industrial
2. Light Industrial
3. Community Industrial
4. Mixed Use Industrial

Business

5. Community Business
6. General Business
7. Service Commercial
8. Transitional Business
9. Regional Business
10. Mixed Use Business

Residential

11. High Density
12. Medium Density
13. Low Density
14. Very Low Density
15. Mixed Density
16. Manufactured Housing
17. Mixed Use Residential
18. Mixed Use Transit-Oriented Development

Open Space and Mountain Parks

19. Open Space, Acquired
20. Open Space, Development Rights (or Restrictions)
21. Open Space, Other

Other

22. Agricultural
23. Park, Urban and Other
24. Public / Semi-Public
25. Environmental Preservation
26. Natural Systems Overlay

Challenges

The Map and associated designations present several challenges related to interpretation and administration:

1. The Map is intended to describe the vision for the future land use of the Boulder Valley over the next 20 years. However, it has evolved to represent a mix of existing land use, future land use and in some cases, land ownership. Many municipalities

create separate maps for Existing Land Use and Future Land Use to avoid this type of confusion.

2. The Map for the Boulder Valley takes a very fine-grained approach to designation, sometimes applying multiple designations on a parcel-by-parcel basis within a single block. This type of application can create confusion about the future of a neighborhood and its intended use. It can also limit potentially desirable outcomes because underlying zoning is directly tied to the individual land use designation and difficult to change without a corresponding Comprehensive Plan amendment. Best practices in citywide and/or regional planning designate land use at a larger scale than individual parcels.

3. Within some classes, multiple designations may express very similar intent for outcomes. This leads to confusion about future zoning/rezoning choices and how they align with different designations. Creating distinct classes and designations can help provide greater clarity for the community and policy makers.

4. The structure of the definitions is inconsistent among the 26 designations. For instance, some designations, but not all, describe a density/intensity range. Including specific density descriptions within designations can also limit potentially desirable outcomes without a Comprehensive Plan amendment.

5. Definitions for some of the 26 designations are outdated, and in some cases, do not align with recent state legislation or advancements in planning practice. For example, the community has not updated the density descriptions for the different residential land use designations since 1977.

Within the unincorporated areas of the Future Land Use Map there are additional challenges.

1. Many areas within the Planning Area are undesignated and thus the BVCP does not provide a future vision for these areas to guide land use or zoning decisions.
2. The designations are inconsistently applied. For example, certain portions in the Gunbarrel area are designated Medium Density Residential which may be reflective of the existing development (Habitat) while other areas with a similar existing development pattern (Fountain Greens) are designated Low Density Residential. Three of the four manufactured home parks in the county are designated as Manufactured Housing but the San Souci manufactured home park parcel is undesignated. City on the Hill Ministries, a church located at the northwest corner of Arapahoe and 75th is designated Public while the Westview Church at the southeast corner of Arapahoe Road and Westview Drive is undesignated.
3. The designations often do not reflect the variety and nuance that exists within the rural areas of the Boulder Valley. Examples of this include:

- Designation of the on the west side of the intersection of State Hwy 93 and State HWY 170 as Open Space, Other where business and commercial uses exist.
- The Eldorado Springs Townsite is either undesignated or designated as Very Low Density Residential where a mix of uses reflecting the history of the area exists.
- The Valtec subdivision and the businesses along Arapahoe Road east of 75th Street (located north and south of Arapahoe Road respectively) are designated Open Space, Other.
- The area around the Valmont Townsite is either undesignated or designated as Open Space, Other.

LAND USE MAP INITIAL CONCEPT

Implementation of the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan is supported by the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Development Plan Intergovernmental Agreement (the IGA). Amendment procedures are found in Exhibit B of the IGA. Changes to the Land Use Map within Planning Area I (municipal boundaries of the city) are a city decision and will be decided by the City Planning Board and City Council. Changes to the Land Use Map in Area II (areas eligible for annexation) are also decided by the city, although the Board of County Commissioners does have the ability to call up Area II Land Use map changes when these changes affect areas over five acres in size. There are exceptions to this call up provision for enclaves, city-owned land, and properties along the western edge of the service area below the blue line. Area III (areas not eligible for annexation which are anticipated to remain rural) Land Use Map changes are approved by both the City of Boulder and Boulder County requiring approval by City Planning Board, City Council, County Planning Commission and the Board of County Commissioners.

The Draft Land Use Approach and Designations includes all of the concepts as they have been developed to date. This can be found as Attachment A on page 19 of Exhibit A. We will focus on the five that are most relevant for application within Area II and Area III. The content below does not include the full description for each designation, please refer to Attachment A for the complete details.

Neighborhood 1

Neighborhood 1 includes single-unit homes and backyard cottages or attached apartments (also called Accessory Dwelling Units or ADUs). Within the city, these areas may also allow for a variety of other housing types that include multiple units such as duplexes or cottage courts. All housing types are designed to fit in with the general scale of the neighborhood. Small, neighborhood-scale commercial activities such as dining, personal services, or daycares are encouraged, along with community uses like schools, libraries and places of worship.

Staff anticipate that this designation will be applied to neighborhoods within Area II where existing neighborhoods currently have either a Very Low Density or Low Density Residential designation and to areas with a Manufactured Housing designation. Given variations and limitations in urban services within these Area II neighborhoods and the Boulder County Comprehensive Plan and BVCP goals for new urban development to be located within municipal areas we would anticipate that annexation to the City of Boulder would be required for housing types consisting of more than one primary dwelling to be allowed in these areas. The county's zoning would be used to determine the permitted uses within these areas.

One aspect of this designation for discussion is the question of Accessory Dwelling Units or ADUs. County zoning currently limits ADUs to specific types and requires Limited Impact Special Review for the approval of these. Adopting this neighborhood designation in the Future Land Use Map would support the county's consideration of expansion of the allowances for ADUs in these areas since it would acknowledge ADUs as an acceptable amount of additional development in these areas. The acknowledgement that ADUs in these areas is supported by the BVCP is an important step to the county undertaking any update to the Code related to ADUs in these areas. Since the City is typically the water and sewer service provider in these areas, additional collaboration with the city would be necessary if a Code update were undertaken.

Neighborhood 2

Neighborhood 2 is primarily made up of multi-unit homes, like apartments, condominiums, and townhome clusters, but may also contain other housing types including single-unit houses. Homes here are closer together and often share walls or outdoor spaces. Buildings are usually taller, and the neighborhood is designed to support walking, biking, and transit. Small neighborhood-serving commercial activities such as dining, personal services, or daycares are encouraged, along with community uses like schools, libraries, and places of worship.

Staff anticipate that this designation will only be applied to neighborhoods within Area II where existing neighborhoods currently have either a Low Density Residential or Medium Density designation and have an existing multi-unit development pattern. Given variations and limitations in urban services within these Area II neighborhoods and the Boulder County Comprehensive Plan (BCCP) and BVCP goals for new urban development to be located within municipal areas we would anticipate that annexation to the City of Boulder would be required in order for changes to these neighborhoods to occur. The county's zoning would continue to regulate development in these areas.

Neighborhood 3

Neighborhood 3 encompasses existing rural residential neighborhoods established before policies were put in place to preserve rural areas and limit subdivision and new urban

development outside the city boundary. They include single unit detached housing, typically on larger lots in the unincorporated county. These neighborhoods will maintain their current housing type and continue to offer rural living options in unincorporated Boulder County. The county's zoning would be used to determine the permitted uses within the areas.

Staff anticipate that this designation will be applied within Area III where areas are currently undesignated or have a Very Low Density Residential designation. Typically, these areas are subdivisions that were approved through a county subdivision process prior to the adoption of the BVCP.

As with Neighborhood 1, the concept for Neighborhood 3 may open the door for ADUs in these areas where county planning efforts determined them to be appropriate.

Open Space

The county's Open Space network is protected by the city or county either through direct ownership or by conservation easements held over private lands. Open Space is managed for specific open space purposes, including conservation and restoration of natural habitat, water resources, scenic views, agriculture, and passive recreational uses. Some of these areas serve as the foundation of the Boulder Valley's local agriculture community. Trail networks within these areas serve as important recreation areas for the community and support activities such as hiking, biking, and climbing in designated areas.

This designation would be applied where City Open Space and Mountain Parks (OSMP) or Boulder County have an interest in land intended to protect it and where the use of the lands are defined by charter, conservation easement, or county open space sales tax ballot language, or open space program standards. Preservation of open space has been a fundamental aspect of the BVCP since its inception and this designation continues that philosophy and demonstrates how these goals have been implemented. This designation would be applied to primarily to areas currently undesignated or designated as Open Space, Acquired or Open Space, Development Rights.

Rural Lands

Rural Lands are areas of the Boulder Valley that contribute to the open lands character, scenic vistas, and definition between the city and rural surroundings. They are primarily designated for rural uses including farming and ranching along with uses related to and in support of these activities.

Rural Lands support local food systems, land based economic activities and cultural heritage. They also help preserve open space, reduce sprawl, and maintain our regional identity through policies that limit over-intensive rural development. Rural lands may also host regional infrastructure systems such as power generation or transmission and water and wastewater system elements. These lands include community uses such as churches

or schools as well as business and light industrial uses and settlements which reflect the development of the area before the adoption of formal land use processes or the Comprehensive Plan. Rural Lands are not suitable for uses that may be limited by space within municipal boundaries, but primarily serve the urban population, due to the lack of adequate existing infrastructure and services in the unincorporated county.

Within Area III, a rural lands designation would be applied to those areas which are not otherwise designated as Neighborhood 3 or Open Space. Precluding inappropriate development in rural areas means the county is not a competing location for development and reinforces the BCCP and BVCP intention that urban development should be located in urban areas. The uses and development patterns in these areas is diverse and there is a balance to be struck between allowing existing uses and communities to adapt and thrive into the future and precluding new subdivisions, inappropriate new development, over-intensive redevelopment or expansion of existing uses in these rural lands. County zoning would continue to define permitted uses in this area but a Rural Lands definition and designation could support decision making during land use reviews and guide future county planning efforts.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

The following are questions intended to begin a discussion but, we are interested in any and all feedback the BOCC has at this time. The intent of this discussion is to understand if we are on the right track and feedback received will help us course correct and/or take the next steps in more fully developing the ideas presented here.

1. Does the BOCC support this concept of updating the Land Use Map and designation definitions?
2. Does the BOCC have any feedback on the draft definitions for Neighborhood 1, Neighborhood 2, Neighborhood 3, Open Space, and Rural Lands?
3. Does the BOCC support the language regarding ADUs in Neighborhood 1? Neighborhood 3?
4. Is the concept of where these designations would be applied on the map the right approach?
5. Is there anything missing from this concept that staff should consider?

NEXT STEPS

Phase III, A Boulder Direction, is anticipated to continue through early 2026. The public change request process opened on August 11 and requests can be submitted until October 3. A statistically valid survey will run from September 15 through October 17, with results expected in November. Community Assembly activities conclude on October 18, and staff anticipates that these outcomes will be shared in December. Scheduled meeting with the BOCC includes a public meeting on December 16th where staff will bring forward a next iteration of the Land Use Map concept and policies, and on January 27, at a public hearing, the BOCC will be asked to decide which of the public change requests should move

forward for further analysis and potential inclusion in the draft plan. Staff anticipate a draft plan to be published in March 2026, with initial City adoption hearings held in June. County adoption hearings would follow City approvals of the plan in mid 2026.



City of Boulder

Planning Board Agenda Item

Meeting Date: August 26, 2025

Agenda Title

Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan Conceptual Future Land Use Framework
& Preliminary Policy Choices

Staff Contact

- Kathleen King, Principal City Planner, Planning & Development Services
- Brad Mueller, Planning & Development Services Director

Executive Summary

The purpose of this item is to gather Planning Board feedback on staff's preliminary concepts for potential updates to the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan (Comprehensive Plan or Plan) future land use designations and a few key policies. These initial proposals aim to respond to Planning Board and City Council's direction from the May 22 Special Meeting, to make the plan more effective and flexible to better address the Boulder Valley community's evolving needs.

Planning Board members will review the concepts, weigh in on potential benefits and challenges of various options and provide direction on areas for continued exploration. Staff will consider this input alongside feedback from several boards and community engagement to guide the development of recommended policies and land use changes. Staff will then present a whole set of recommendations in December for consideration prior to development of the full draft Comprehensive Plan update.

Questions for Planning Board

- 1) Does Planning Board support the preliminary concept for revisions to the Comprehensive Plan future land use designations?

- 2) Which preliminary policy options does Planning Board support exploring further?
- 3) What community feedback does Planning Board need to inform future decisions about substantial changes to policy and future land use?

Alignment with City Plans

Sustainability, Equity, and Resilience (SER) Framework and Citywide Strategic Plan Alignment

SER Framework Goal Area

The update to the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan is aligned with all the city's SER Framework. The Plan will establish overall citywide and/or valley-wide policy direction related to all seven SER goal areas. Staff continue to explore how we can reorganize the plan to directly reflect the SER Framework and more clearly translate down to the Citywide Strategic Plan and individual department work plans.

Citywide Strategic Plan

The policies and land use strategy included in the Plan are also guided by the Citywide Strategic Plan. As a 20-year vision document, the Comprehensive Plan will further inform how the Citywide Strategic Plan evolves over time, so the city can operationalize and implement various Comprehensive Plan policies over the 4-year Strategic Plan time frame.

Staff Notes

N/A

Alignment with Additional City Plans

As the city's primary planning document, the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan provides the overarching vision, goals, and policies that guide all other city plans, including subcommunity and area plans and department plans, Boulder municipal code updates, the budget, and the Capital Improvements Program

Item History

This item is a continuation of conversations with Planning Board and City Council beginning in October 2024 to advance the major update to the Comprehensive Plan, a City Council priority. Staff have been consistently providing project updates and getting direction at each phase to move forward with subsequent steps.

Previous Memos & Study Session Summaries

- Jun 1, 2023 Information Item: [June 1, 2023: Information Item C - Schedule for Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan Major Update](#)
- Jul 25, 2024 Matters Item: [Item 5A - Training & Pre-Update Overview of the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan](#)

- Aug 22, 2024 Study Session: [Item 1 - Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan Update: Draft Scope, Schedule, Engagement Strategy](#)
- Sep 19, 2024 Study Session Summary Memo: [Item 3E - Study Session Summary: Comprehensive Plan Update: Draft Scope, Schedule, Engagement Strategy](#)
- Nov 7, 2024 Matters Item: [Item 6A - Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan Update Process Subcommittee Representative](#)
- Feb 5, 2025: 4-Body Working Session Memo: [Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan Update – Existing Conditions and Focus Areas](#)
- Feb 5, 2025 4-Body Working Session Summary: [4-Body Policy Makers Working Session Summary](#)
- Feb 27, 2025 Council Mid-Term Priority Projects Check-in: [Council Midterm Check-in](#)
- Mar 20, 2025 Information Item: [Information Item A: Project Progress Update – Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan Major Update](#)
- May 22, 2025 Joint Special Meeting: [Item 1A - 2025 BVCP Major Update Joint Working Session With Planning Board](#)
- Jun 26, 2025 Joint Special Meeting Summary Memo: [Item 2C - May 22, 2025 Study Session Summary](#)

Analysis

Following direction to further explore bold revisions to the Future Land Use Map and Land Use Designations at the joint Planning Board and City Council meeting on May 22, 2025, the project team has conducted a preliminary analysis and explored options for potential changes. This conceptual approach may result in new or revised policies to more meaningfully address evolving community needs and move the community toward shared goals for housing affordability, climate resilience, transportation options, food systems and social connection.

Land Use Map Background

The [Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map](#) (Map) depicts a plan of the desired future land use pattern in the Boulder Valley. The city and county use Land Use Designations to define the desired characteristics of different areas, and staff and policy makers also use them to guide zoning and policy decisions. Staff typically consider Map revisions every five years at major and mid-term updates. They can also be brought forward at any time through a map-only update, as part of a subcommunity or area plan process or concurrently with an annexation or rezoning.

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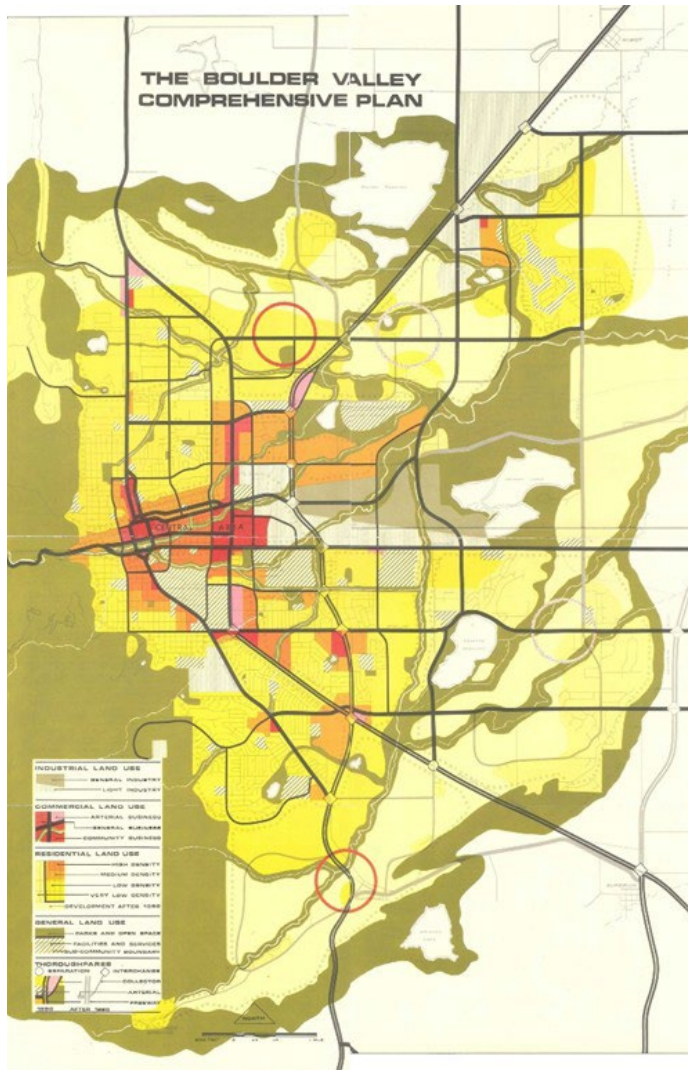


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Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan Land Use Designation Map

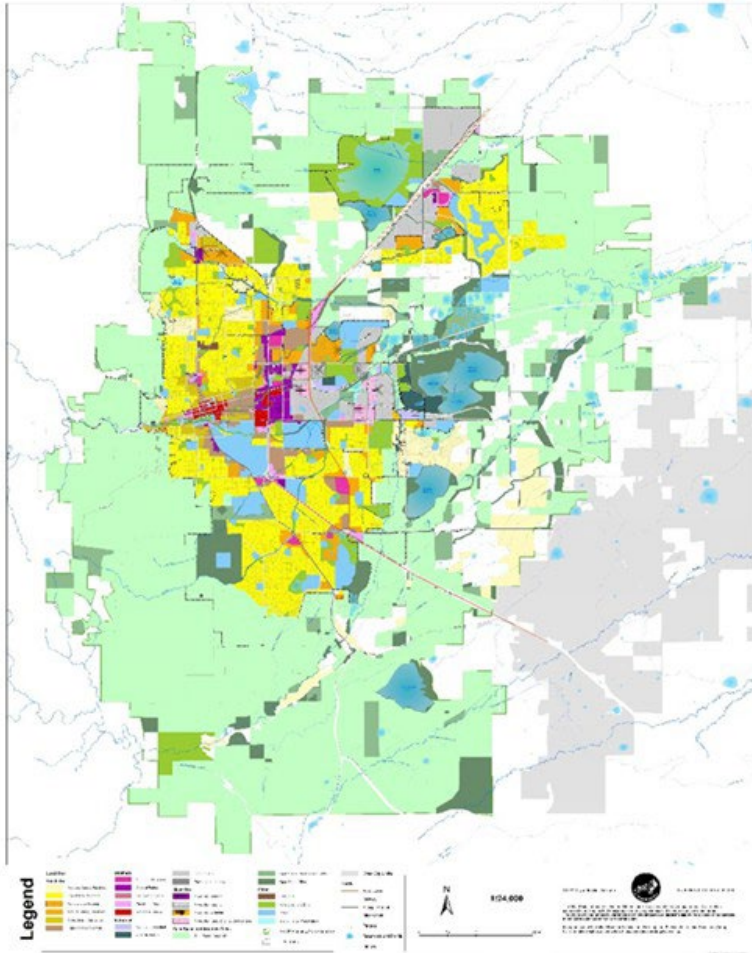


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Challenges

The Map and associated designations present several challenges related to interpretation and administration:

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Comprehensive Plan amendment. Best practices in citywide and/or regional planning designate land use at a larger scale than individual parcels.

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4. The structure of the definitions is inconsistent among the 26 designations. For instance, some designations, but not all, describe a density/intensity range. Including specific density descriptions within designations can also limit potentially desirable outcomes without a Comprehensive Plan amendment.
5. Definitions for some of the 26 designations are outdated, and in some cases, do not align with recent state legislation or advancements in planning practice. For example, the community has not updated the density descriptions for the different residential land use designations since 1977.

Case Studies

To help rethink the approach to planning for future land uses, the project team reviewed strategies from many other cities as case studies. Staff have selected the most relevant examples from cities that either share common characteristics with Boulder, such as nearby cities or university towns, and/or those that have recently updated their own Comprehensive Plans and represent current planning approaches. Future land use maps and definitions from the following communities offered helpful insight into options for how the Comprehensive Plan could evolve:

Each example features broader, more flexible land use designations than the Boulder Valley's current map. These designations can accommodate multiple specific land uses, encouraging varying degrees of mixed use throughout the city and allowing for greater adaptability. Such categories can also be referred to as "placetypes" or "districts."

- **Ann Arbor, Michigan (2025)** has a draft update to their Comprehensive Plan available for public feedback. This peer city is mapping six distinct "district" designations.
- **Springfield, Missouri (2022)** uses ten "placetypes" to set a vision for the city, describing primary and supporting land uses along with anticipated characteristics, such as transportation and urban design.
- **Wheat Ridge, Colorado (2025)** is also currently engaged in a Comprehensive Plan update and is also employing a "placetype" approach to describe variety of design and scales of neighborhoods. Definitions for the eight designations intentionally shift away from density-based neighborhood classifications and strive to more closely tie land use outcomes to the transportation system.

- **Plano, Texas (2021)** plans for ten designations organized into five classes that describe typical mixes of land uses and design characteristics that will create distinct areas of the city.
- **Charlotte, North Carolina (2021)**, winner of the 2023 American Planning Association Daniel Burnham Award, uses ten designations to define expected future growth, development and mobility. The plan uses broad terms such as Neighborhood 1 and Neighborhood 2 to reset expectations and move away from traditional density-based designations.

The project team incorporated a range of ideas from these case studies into the initial concept future land use strategy for the Comprehensive Plan. A key influence came from Plano, Texas, whose structure of classes with different designations within each class was adapted to Boulder's unique needs. By grouping future land uses into broad classes, the draft system offers a map that is more legible and easier to interpret.

Charlotte and Wheat Ridge influenced the option to remove density descriptions from land use designation definitions and use more broad terms in the designation titles. This avoids implied expectations often associated with the word "density" or related terms, allowing for a more neutral and flexible description.

Finally, Springfield, Missouri's matrix of primary and supporting land uses will help the draft Map align with previously planned areas of the community and offers a closer tie between the Map and the city's [Use Table](#) within the Boulder Revised Code. This type of tool could help community members, staff and policymakers better understand how zoning or rezoning applications may or may not implement the Comprehensive Plan.

New Option for Defining the Community's Land Use Strategy

Community feedback, including the interests and concerns of the city's Planning Board and City Council, drove the project team to re-evaluate the city's land use strategy as captured in the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan's Land Use Designations and Future Land Use Map. The project team has created a revised draft strategy to achieve the following:

- Plan for change that reflects community values and identity
- Enable market-driven approaches tailored for different locations and situations
- Integrate climate and environmental strategies into plan designations
- Tailor mobility systems that support how people want to move around
- Foster a more sustainable, equitable and resilient Boulder Valley

Additionally, the future land use strategy offers a path towards implementation for the following priority actions of the [Citywide Strategic Plan](#):

- **Priority Action #5c.** Collaboratively implement and fund local and regional strategies to increase affordable housing stock and other potential innovative strategies that could provide increased housing options for our unsheltered community.

The draft Land Use designations identified below increase options for different housing types in more areas throughout the Boulder Valley.

- **Priority Action #6c.** Identify and prioritize key connections and relationships of commercial areas, cultural amenities, parks, trails, and open space areas as part of the 15-minute neighborhood model.

The draft strategy offers designations that are intended to create a scalable range of destinations and create opportunities for a mix of uses that support a high-quality environment and walkable neighborhoods. It also identifies networks that can help connect people to the places they want to go.

- **Priority Action #10a.** Expand efforts that eliminate carbon from (“decarbonize”) the built environment, vehicles, and operations and replace fossil fuel-based energy systems.

The draft land use designations are designed to create conditions that reduce reliance on travel by single-occupant-vehicles, reduce distances for many trips, and better connect people to a wider variety of daily needs and mobility choices.

Land Use Classes and Designations

The draft future land use strategy includes four classes and 13 designations intended to create a more effective, flexible and consistent future land use vision. Below are brief descriptions of each class and designation. For the complete draft strategy and more detailed definitions, please see **Attachment A**.

Neighborhoods

Neighborhoods are primarily residential areas and are one of the building blocks of the Boulder Valley’s character and housing choice. They can vary in density, from single-family areas with accessory dwelling units to those with mixed-use residential buildings. In all cases, their focus is on **livability**.

Neighborhood 1 is mostly made up of single unit detached homes and backyard cottages or basement apartments (also called Accessory Dwelling Units or ADUs). Within the city, these areas may also include a variety of other housing types that include multiple units such as duplexes or cottage courts. All housing

types are designed to fit in with the general scale of the neighborhood. Small, neighborhood-serving commercial activities, such as dining, personal services, or daycares, are encouraged, along with community uses like schools, libraries and places of worship.

Neighborhood 2 is mostly made up of multi-unit homes, like apartments, condominiums, and townhome clusters, but may also contain other housing types including single-unit homes. Homes here are closer together and often share walls or outdoor spaces. Buildings are usually taller, and the neighborhood is designed to support walking, biking, and transit. Small neighborhood serving commercial spaces, such as dining, personal services, or daycares, are encouraged, along with community uses like schools, libraries and places of worship.

Neighborhood 3 is a rural residential neighborhood in unincorporated Boulder County, established before policies were put in place to preserve rural areas and limit development outside the city boundary. They include single unit detached homes, typically on larger lots. These neighborhoods will maintain their current housing type and continue to offer rural living options in unincorporated Boulder County.

Hubs

Hubs are mixed-use centers where higher activity is concentrated. They range in scale from small neighborhood spots to regional centers. They act as anchors for surrounding areas and bring together **housing, economic activity, gathering spaces and mobility choices**.

Local Hubs are small, active centers that bring together homes, shops, local businesses, and community spaces. They serve the surrounding neighborhood and may include a coffee shop, a corner store, apartments above a medical office, or a small plaza where people gather. Local hubs include a mix of residential, commercial, and community uses, but not necessarily all in one building or project. The height of these areas may be slightly taller than the surrounding neighborhood context to accommodate an appropriate amount of activity.

Community Hubs are larger, active centers that bring together a wide mix of homes, shops, restaurants, services, offices, and community spaces. They serve not just the immediate neighborhood, but the broader community as well. This is where people come to run errands, meet friends, attend events, or work.

Regional Hubs are major destinations for the Boulder Valley and beyond. They are busy, high-energy places where people come to work, visit, shop, dine, and

live. They include a mix of offices, stores, restaurants, entertainment venues, and housing, often in taller mixed-use buildings. It is the kind of place where you can live upstairs, work down the street, and meet friends for dinner without needing a car.

Innovation & Production Hubs are at the heart of the Boulder Valley's economic activity. These areas have research and development, light industrial manufacturing, flexible workspaces, office environments, maker spaces, and local food production. They may also have multi-unit residential and live/work uses that offer housing options close to employment centers and services.

Networks

Networks refer to systems that define the Boulder Valley's distinct **sense of place**. While these networks may not all be connected on a map they make up the net which the community relies on for healthy, meaningful and sustainable living. These are the backbones of how the city and natural environment interconnect.

Parks & Greenways Network is managed by several city departments to provide recreational spaces such as playgrounds, sports fields, recreation centers and pavilions, and features that offer important ecological, stormwater and mobility purposes such as greenways and the Boulder Creek corridor. These areas are designed for public access and enjoyment in addition to climate resilience and multimodal transportation functions.

Open Space Network is permanently protected by the city or county either through direct ownership, by conservation easements or other development restrictions held on private land. Open Space is managed for specific purposes including preservation and restoration of natural habitat, water resources, scenic views, agriculture, and passive recreational uses. These areas serve, in part, as the foundation of the Boulder Valley's local agriculture community. Trail networks within these areas serve as important recreation areas for the community and support activities such as hiking, biking, and climbing in designated areas.

Rural Lands Network is the area of the Boulder Valley that contributes to the open lands character, scenic vistas, and definition between the city and rural surroundings. It is primarily designated for rural uses including farming and ranching along with uses related to and in support of these activities.

Institutions

Institutions represent areas which will provide significant anchors for Boulder's community, governance and economy. These are places for gathering, learning, and working together. Boulder's institutions will continue to contribute to the region as important places for **connection and commerce**.

Civic Institutions represent a wide array of public and private institutions that serve governmental, cultural and healthcare functions. This includes hospitals, community centers and government facilities or campuses.

University Institutions apply to land that is planned for University of Colorado uses into the future. This includes educational facilities, research facilities, event space, athletic fields, student and faculty housing, and other University uses.

Industrial Institutions is an area for more intensive manufacturing, processing, service commercial, and other compatible uses such as public utilities.

Benefits and Challenges of Draft Approach

The draft strategy has the potential to offer the following benefits:

- Could allow for greater flexibility in rezoning and redevelopment choices within the same land use category
- Provides a more adaptable framework to develop land in line with the land use map
- Decreases complexity in interpretation of the Map
- Offers clearer direction on types of uses that would be allowed under each designation
- Acknowledges that a rich mixture of complementary uses can result in a more livable city
- Reflects development patterns in the city that are on a more walkable scale and avoids overly segregated land use types

The strategy poses the following challenges:

- Significant change to the Map from what the community is used to
- Creates less predictability on a parcel-by-parcel basis

Map Updates

Multiple inputs will help the project team work with the community to update the Map using the draft future land use approach:

1. Planning Board, City Council, County Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioners will review and provide feedback on the draft future land use approach in August and September of this year. The project team will collect their feedback to continue to redefine land use classes and designations.
2. The project team is evaluating how the most recent Future Land Use Map and designations can be converted to the structure outlined in this memo while maintaining the intent of previously planned areas.

3. In September, at a community-wide event, the project team will host a workshop to co-create a revised map that applies the draft designations to the Boulder Valley.
4. The Community Change Request Process offers anyone in the community the opportunity to propose changes to the comprehensive plan text, Future Land Use Map or the Planning Areas I, II, III Map. This process is ongoing, and the project team will be collecting applications through October 3. Staff are considering Proposed Future Land Use Map changes under the existing land use designations. Changes will be converted to the new framework as staff further refine the strategy. Staff will share all requests with Planning Board at a public hearing on January 20, 2026, and City Council on January 15, 2026. Requests that are deemed sufficient for additional review will be further evaluated for consistency with the Comprehensive Plan and potentially incorporated into the draft plan in spring of 2026.

Conceptually, the new designations will allow for applications that will remain consistent with the current and future Comprehensive Plan. For instance, the downtown area is already identified in the current plan as a regional center and could be designated as a Regional Hub. Another example is city and county Open Space lands could be identified as part of the new Open Space network designation. For more nuanced decisions, staff will use community and policy maker feedback to help identify the best application for other designations such as Neighborhood 1, Neighborhood 2, Local Hubs and Community Hubs.

Anticipated Fiscal and Workplan Impacts

This project is part of the Comprehensive Planning team's standard workplan and is a City Council priority. The Comprehensive Planning team has accordingly prioritized the Plan update over other long-range planning activities. Fiscal impacts of the policies and land use recommendations in the Plan update will be determined as various departments develop their annual budgets and workplans for projects and programs related to direction provided in the update. Therefore, a more refined analysis of update impacts will occur following Planning Board and City Council direction on updates. For the P&DS fund specifically, staff do not anticipate impacts from these updates currently. Furthermore, there are no FTE additions associated with these updates for P&DS.

Please see table below for P&DS fund information.

	<u>FY 2025</u>	<u>FY 2025</u>	<u>FY 2025</u>
	BUDGET	EST. IMPACT	NET CHANGE
Beginning Fund Balance(s)	18.01M	0	18.01M
Total Forecasted Revenue	16.12M	0	16.12M

Total Estimated Expenses	<u>15.72M</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>15.72M</u>
Ending Fund Balance(s) After Reserves	<u>18.08M</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>18.08M</u>
FTE	<u>113.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>113.00</u>

Equity Analysis

Overview

The existing Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan has not been evaluated for impacts to racial equity in the community. The creation of the plan pre-dates city tools like the Racial Equity Instrument, the Racial Equity Index, and city departments like the Office of Equity and Belonging. This major update to the Plan offers an opportunity to examine how policies and land use choices influence equity throughout the Boulder Valley.

During Phase 1 (Existing Conditions Analysis) of the project, the team used the Racial Equity Index to evaluate relationships between indicators of living conditions in Boulder with the Index and revealed opportunities for improvement under the SER goals of Safe, Healthy and Socially Thriving, and Environmentally Sustainable. Staff included a summary of this analysis in the May 22, 2025, special meeting packet. This analysis has informed the draft future land use strategy.

Additionally, the project is integrating equity by systematically assessing the potential impacts of policies and goals on Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) and other historically excluded and underrepresented communities. The project team is committed to ensuring that the Plan's outcomes actively promote equity across all policies, initiatives, and programs moving forward.

Approach to Comprehensive Plan Policy Drafting and Revision

The approach has two main steps. First, staff are using the city's Rapid Response Equity Assessment Tool to evaluate how draft policies impact systemic inequities. Second, staff will use these findings to revise policies to improve equity outcomes. The working draft of comprehensive plan policies includes 84 separate policies. To prioritize policies for Equity Assessment analysis, the cross-departmental team considers several factors:

- Policies that are new to the Plan;
- Policies that staff have significantly revised in the draft;
- Policies identified by the city's Office of Equity and Belonging;
- Policies falling under the "Areas of Focus" (Topics of highest interest to the community).

The analysis will include input from underrepresented and minority voices in the community. The team is seeking advice from consultants and internal city staff members with diverse backgrounds and experiences.

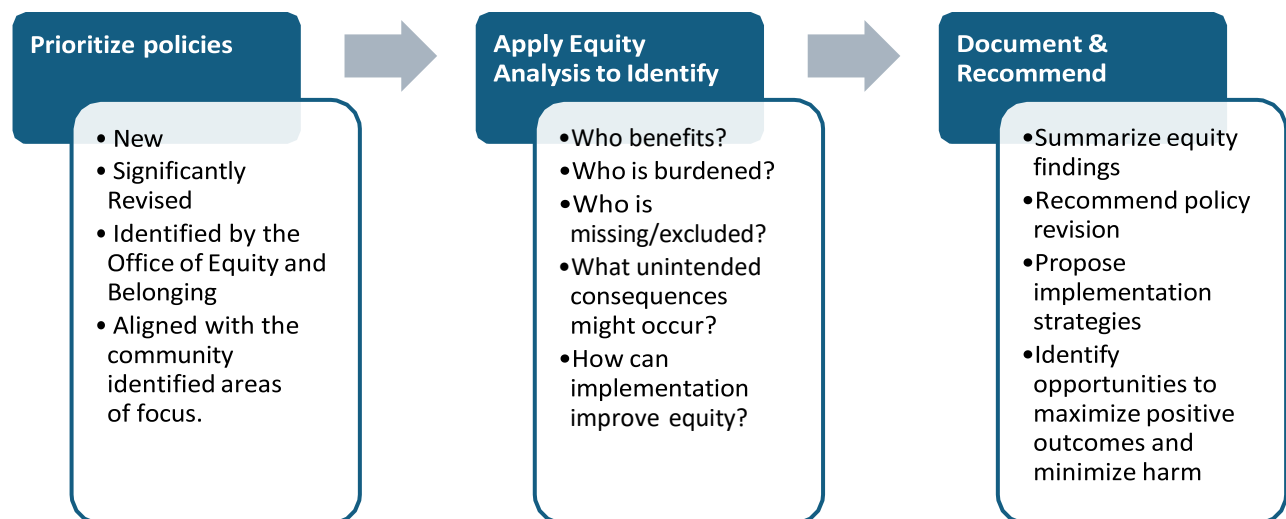
The analysis will evaluate:

- Who benefits?
- Who is burdened?
- Who is missing or excluded?
- What unintended consequences might occur?
- How can equity be improved through implementation?
- Identify areas for revision in proposed policies
- Identify the opportunity to advance equity

The analysis will document findings and recommend targeted strategies to address disparities and advance equitable outcomes through plan implementation.

Goal

The aim of this analysis is to identify potential burdens, reduce future harms and maximize equity opportunities throughout the plan. The team is working to ensure that the Comprehensive Plan shapes a community that is more just, inclusive, and reflective of the full diversity of the Boulder Valley population.



Climate, Resilience, and Sustainability Considerations

Staff will evaluate the projected climate and sustainability impacts of policy and land use changes they are considering for this update as part of the planning process. Staff will measure outcomes over time after adoption of the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan updates and implementation of the policy and land use changes.

Community Engagement

The city and county Comprehensive Planning teams are in a pivotal stage of the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan update. This stage of the update, A Boulder Direction, builds on the input the team has heard from thousands of community members so far. It introduces a set of choices to move the plan toward shared goals such as housing affordability, economic opportunity for all, climate resilience, transportation options, food systems, and social connection.

Now the team is asking the community: Are these the right ideas? Are they bold enough, or too bold? What alternatives should be considered? And what tradeoffs is the community willing to make to reach a collective vision?

Previous Engagement

The most recent engagement concluded for Phase 3 (summer and fall) includes:

Event	Date
Pop-up events at Bike to Work Day (2) *	June 25 – a.m. and p.m.
Pop-up event at the Civic Area Open House at the Bandshell*	July 14
Engagement Skill-building Workshop facilitated by YOUNify*	July 15
Office hours	July 30

*Staff gathered input related to 15-minute neighborhoods at these events and shared with the Community Assembly

Planned Engagement – Phase 3 (summer and fall)

Event	Notes	2025 Date(s)
Community Assembly Meetings No.3 to 7	Summaries of past meetings are available here . Assembly members will formally present their recommendations at the Dec. 11 study session	Aug. 23, Sept. 6, Sept. 20, Oct. 4, Oct. 18
Community hosted Conversations	Facilitated by YOUNify. Volunteer hosts convene a group, join a live virtual kickoff, receive a simple guide and support, then lead a discussion with their own networks before reporting back.	Aug. 19
Online feedback form	Community members can learn about and provide feedback on potential policies	Aug. 11-Sept. 2
What's Up Boulder	Comprehensive Planning team will be available to meet community members and promote ways to shape policies and land use options	Sept. 7

Community Workshop	In-person at Casey Middle School to learn about and provide feedback on land use options and designations	Sept. 9
Office Hours	Open to anyone in the community	Sept. 17
Statistically valid survey (SVS)	Focuses on policy and land use options	Sept. 15 – Oct. 17
Survey – online complement	Same questions as the SVS but available online to all community members; results not expected to be statistically valid and will be presented separately from the SVS	Sept. 22- Oct. 17

In 2026, staff plan the following touchpoints with our community (may be adjusted):

Jan 15 & 20	City Council and Planning Board public hearings on Community Change Requests and Area III-Planning Reserve Community Needs Evaluation
Jan/Feb	Share highlights of final recommended policy and land use changes for feedback
March	Public Draft Review
May	Final Draft Review
Jun-Jul	Public Hearings and Adoption Process

Attachment B summarizes engagement completed to date since October 2024. The Community Comments Log, which includes all emails received by the project team, is available [here](#).

Next Steps for Planning Board

- 1) Mid-November, 2025: CC IP Memo – Planning Board will be copied**
 - a. Summary of results from statistically valid survey, online companion questionnaire, and community engagement
- 2) Dec 11, 2025: Joint Study Session with City Council**
 - a. Staff recommendations on policy and land use changes and Community Assembly recommendations related to 15-minute neighborhoods.
- 3) Jan 20, 2026: Planning Board Public Hearings (City Council on Jan 15)**
 - a. Item 1 – Review of Community Change Requests
 - b. Item 2 – Area III-Planning Reserve - Step #2: Community Needs Assessment
- 4) Mar 24, 2026: Planning Board Matters Item (anticipated, City Council on Mar 26)**
 - a. Review of Preliminary Draft Plan and Land Use Map
- 5) June 4, 2026: Joint Public Hearing with Planning Board (anticipated)**

- a. Review of Final Plan and Land Use Map
- 6) Jun 16, 2026: Planning Board Public Hearing (anticipated, City Council Jun 18)**
 - a. Deliberate and vote on Final Plan and Land Use Map

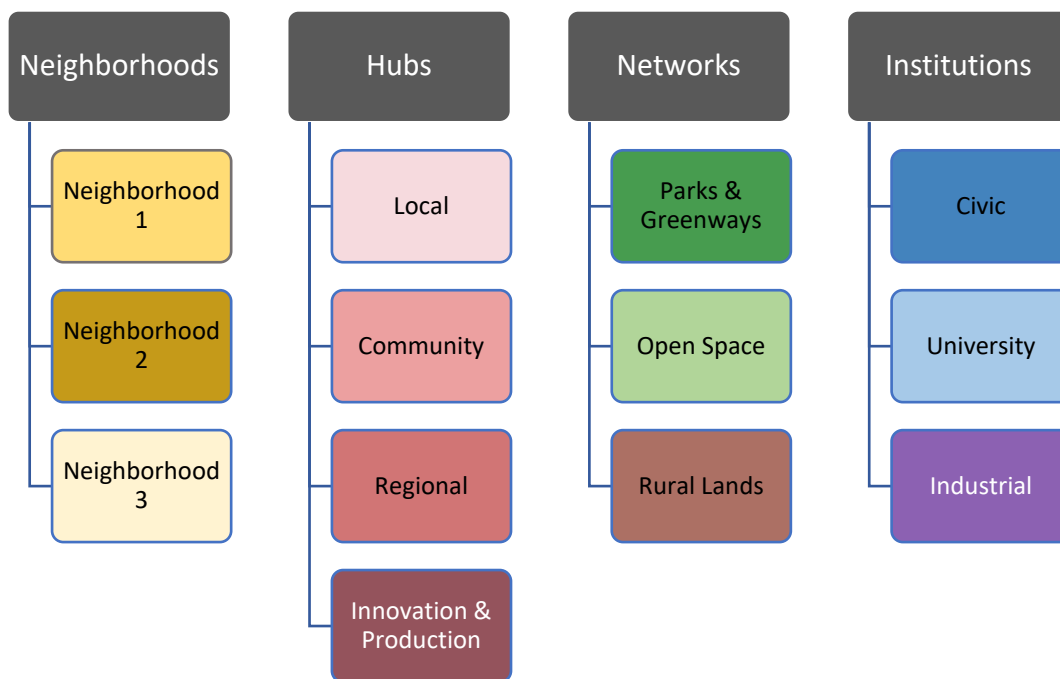
Attachments

- A) Draft Land Use Approach & Designations
- B) Community Engagement Summary
- C) Racial Equity Policy Analysis Example

BVCP Major Update: Draft Land Use Approach

For Boulder Planning Board and City Council Review
August 2025

This attachment includes the working draft definitions for a revised Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan (BVCP) Future Land Use Map. The draft future land use approach includes four classes and 13 designations intended to create a more effective, flexible and consistent future land use vision.



Why Distinct Classes and Designations Matter

A clear and distinct set of future land use classes and designations allows the community to:

- Coordinate land use and infrastructure planning in a way that more directly reflects desired outcomes for how people live, work, move, and connect.
- Prioritize resources where they are most needed and effective, whether it's investments in public transit, stormwater infrastructure or economic development tools.
- Support a balanced city, where no one area is overloaded with all functions, and each type of place can thrive based on its role.

By classifying land uses in this way, we can make more informed decisions about the use, scale, intensity, and type of development that fits best in each area.

What Each Class Represents

Neighborhoods

Neighborhoods are primarily residential areas and are one of the building blocks of the Boulder Valley's character and housing choice. They can vary in density, from single-unit dwellings with accessory dwelling units to those with mixed-use residential buildings. In all cases, their focus is on **livability**.

- **Land Use Goals:** Creating more housing opportunities, enabling a diversity of housing options to fit different lifestyle needs, providing community amenities and gathering spaces and allowing small-scale neighborhood-serving commercial opportunities.
- **Environmental Goals:** Preserving and enhancing existing pervious areas, expanding urban tree canopy and nature-based climate solutions and creating opportunities for more efficient housing types.
- **Mobility Goals:** Improving walkability to neighborhood amenities and services, building support for local transit and enhancing the network of low-speed safe streets for multimodal travel.
- **Equity Goals:** Providing a range of housing types and options to accommodate a more diverse mix of lifestyle needs and households, enabling home-based entrepreneurial activity and locating housing near community amenities and mobility options.

Hubs

Hubs are mixed-use centers, ranging in scale from neighborhood to regional centers, where higher activity is concentrated. Hubs can be organized around nodes or along corridors. They

act as anchors for surrounding areas and bring together **housing, commerce, public spaces and mobility choices**.

- **Land Use Goals** Encouraging economic activity, expanding housing choices, enhancing cultural and civic life.
- **Environmental Goals:** Focusing higher intensity development to preserve open land elsewhere, supporting energy-efficient building types and introducing tree canopy and nature-based infrastructure into urban locations
- **Mobility Goals:** Supporting transit-rich environments, creating walkable pedestrian-oriented streets, reducing automobile dependence and minimizing impacts from parking.
- **Equity Goals:** Creating mixed use hubs to support diversity of living and working choices for community members, prioritizing programs that support local businesses and locating more people near community amenities, job opportunities, and mobility options.

Networks

Networks refer to systems that define the Boulder Valley's distinct **sense of place**. While these networks may not all be connected on a map they make up the net which a community relies on for healthy, meaningful and sustainable living. These are the backbones of how the city and natural environment interconnect.

- **Land Use Goals:** Maintaining the urban and rural characteristics that define the valley, enhancing opportunities for connection with nature and supporting spaces for social interaction.
- **Environmental Goals:** Improving climate adaptation and resilience by thinking of systems as a whole rather than individual parcels, understanding the critical link between urban and natural systems, and enhancing wildlife and landscape habitat.
- **Mobility Goals:** Improving non-motorized connections through connected networks and supporting local agriculture to reduce the travel distance for food availability.
- **Equity Goals:** Ensuring community support and service provided by networks is dispersed throughout the community and focusing resources on underserved communities.

Institutions

Institutions represent significant community assets that offer unique opportunities for Boulder's governance and economy. These are places for gathering, learning, and working together. Boulder's institutions will continue to contribute to the community as important places for **connection**.

- **Land Use Goals:** Ensuring institutional sites are planned and managed to support community needs, adaptability, and long-term viability.
- **Environmental Goals:** Promoting sustainable building practices, minimizing resource consumption, and expanding environmental goals on institutional campuses.
- **Mobility Goals:** Providing safe, convenient, and connected multimodal transportation options, including walking, biking, and transit, to and within institutional areas.
- **Equity Goals:** Guaranteeing that institutions are accessible, inclusive, and welcoming for all community members, with special attention to underserved populations.

Land Use Designations and Definitions

Neighborhoods

Neighborhood 1

What it is:

Neighborhood 1 is mostly made up of single-unit homes and backyard cottages or attached apartments (also called Accessory Dwelling Units or ADUs). Within the city, these areas may also allow for a variety of other housing types that include multiple units such as duplexes or cottage courts. All housing types are designed to fit in with the general scale of the neighborhood. Small, neighborhood-scale commercial activities such as dining, personal services, or daycares are encouraged, along with community uses like schools, libraries and places of worship.

Why it matters:

Neighborhood 1 maintains the charm and character of our neighborhoods while making room for a wider variety of housing types. Allowing more home type options that still fit in with the existing single-unit houses can offer more opportunities for individuals at all phases of life and a spectrum of income levels that need more options than those currently available. Neighborhood 1 encourages a variety of housing choices without disrupting the primarily small-scale residential character of existing areas.

What you can expect:

- A limited mix of housing types that are primarily single-unit houses. ADUs are encouraged and small multi-unit homes and cottage courts may be included.
- Limited commercial activity at key locations and home-based businesses
- Buildings are generally 2-3 stories, but may be taller in some circumstances.
- Individual, private green spaces around detached homes with some shared gathering spaces.
- Nearby access to public transit, with direct connections to bicycle networks and walkable amenities



Neighborhood 2

What it is:

Neighborhood 2 is mostly made up of multi-unit homes, like apartments, condominiums, and townhome clusters, but may also contain other housing types including single-unit houses. Homes here are closer together and often share walls or outdoor spaces. Buildings are usually taller, and the neighborhood is designed to support walking, biking, and transit. A small neighborhood-serving commercial activities such as dining, personal services, or daycares are encouraged, along with community uses like schools, libraries, and places of worship.

Why it matters:

Neighborhood 2 provides opportunities for more people to live close to jobs, schools, parks, shops and mobility options. They help make housing more affordable and give people more options for how and where they live. Whether someone is living alone, with roommates, or raising a family, this area offers choices for a wide range of community members.

What you can expect:

- A wide mix of multi-unit housing types with some single-unit homes.
- Limited commercial activity at key locations and home-based businesses
- Buildings that are generally 3-5 stories.
- Primarily shared green spaces, plazas and courtyards.
- Direct and high level of access to public transit, bike networks, and walkable amenities



Neighborhood 3

What it is: Neighborhood 3 is a rural residential neighborhood established before policies were put in place to preserve rural areas and limit development outside the city boundary. They include single-unit detached housing, typically on larger lots in the unincorporated county. These neighborhoods will maintain their current housing type and continue to offer rural living options in unincorporated Boulder County.

Why it matters:

Preserving the rural character of unincorporated Boulder County maintains important functions of the valley's unique landscapes and the underlying framework of the plan which directs urban development to occur within the city. These neighborhoods were established before policies and regulations limited additional development in these areas. They offer living options for community members who seek a rural lifestyle.

What you can expect:

- Single unit homes and accessory dwelling units where county planning efforts may determine them to be appropriate.
- Limited access to public transit, bike networks and walkable amenities
- Individual, private green spaces around detached homes and rural open lands
- City of Boulder will not provide services in these areas; existing urban services are limited.



Hubs

Local Hub

What it is:

Local Hubs are small, active centers that bring together homes, shops, local businesses, and community spaces. They are designed to serve the surrounding neighborhood such as a coffee shop, a corner store, apartments above a medical office, or a small plaza where people gather. These areas includes a mix of residential, commercial, and community uses, but not necessarily all in one building or project. The height of these areas may be slightly taller than the surrounding neighborhood context to accommodate an appropriate amount of activity.

Why it matters:

Local Hubs make it easy for people to walk or bike to simple needs within their own neighborhood—whether that’s picking up a few groceries, grabbing lunch, visiting the library, or working in a shared studio. They bring activity to the neighborhood, support small businesses and makers, and offer more housing options close to daily destinations.

What you can expect:

- A mix of mixed use and multi-unit housing types
- Commercial activity generally serving the local neighborhood
- Community uses and spaces like libraries, playgrounds or pocket parks, and childcare
- Buildings that are often taller than nearby areas
- Direct and high level of access to public transit, bike networks, and walkable amenities



Community Hub

What it is:

Community Hubs are larger, more active hubs that bring together a wide mix of homes, shops, restaurants, services, offices, and community spaces. They are designed to serve not just the immediate neighborhood, but the broader community as well. This is where people come to run errands, meet friends, attend events, or work.

Why it matters:

Community Hubs help bring people together and support a strong local economy. They offer places to live, work, and gather—all within a walkable, vibrant environment. They provide space for small and medium-sized businesses, local services, and a range of housing types.

What you can expect:

- A wide mix of mixed use and multi-unit housing types
- Commercial activity generally serving a large area of the community such as ground-floor shops, groceries and food stores, restaurants, offices, and services
- Community uses and spaces like libraries, cultural centers, or parks and plazas
- Buildings that are generally 3-5 stories.
- Direct and high level of access to public transit, bike networks, and walkable amenities
- Highly walkable urban streets with tree canopy, seating, wayfinding and other features
- A destination that draws people from surrounding neighborhoods and beyond



Regional Hub

What it is:

Regional Hubs are major destinations for the Boulder Valley and beyond. They are busy, high-energy places where people come to work, visit, shop, dine, and live. They include a mix of offices, stores, restaurants, entertainment venues, and housing, often in taller mixed-use buildings. It's the kind of place where you can live upstairs, work down the street, and meet friends for dinner without needing a car.

Why it matters:

Regional Hubs are a key part of the city's and the region's economy. They bring together jobs, retail, services, tourism, and housing in one walkable, transit-connected area. They support large, medium, and small businesses, help reduce commuting and offer a vibrant mix of uses that serve the whole region.

What you can expect:

- A wide mix of mixed use and multi-unit housing types
- Highly active commercial activity serving the region such as restaurants, retail, groceries and food stores, entertainment venues, and services that support both community members and visitors
- Shared community plazas, green spaces, and gathering places
- Buildings that range in height up to 5 stories.
- Direct and high level of access to public transit, bike networks, and walkable amenities
- Highly walkable urban streets with tree canopy, seating, wayfinding and other features
- A dynamic, urban feel that supports both daytime and evening activity



Innovation & Production Hub

What it is:

Innovation & Production Hubs are at the heart of the Boulder Valley's economic activity. These areas support research and development, light industrial manufacturing, flexible workspaces, office environments, maker spaces, and local food production. They also support multi-unit and residential live/work uses that offer housing options close to employment centers and services.

Why it matters:

Innovation and production spaces are essential for Boulder's economy. They support job growth in emerging industries, encourage startups and small businesses, and create harmony between working, living and creating. These areas offer an anchor for talent and investment in the region. These neighborhoods offer choices for a range of community members who appreciate the character of working neighborhoods and want to live close to active places of work and innovation

What you can expect:

- A mix of commercial and light industrial uses with a variety of multi-unit and live/work residential buildings.
- A wide range of commercial activity including light industrial, office, research, retail, and service uses that support workers, residents, and the broader economy
- Buildings that vary widely in height and scale
- Good connections to major transit facilities to support employment centers
- Good access for freight and delivery vehicles



Networks

Parks & Greenways

What it is:

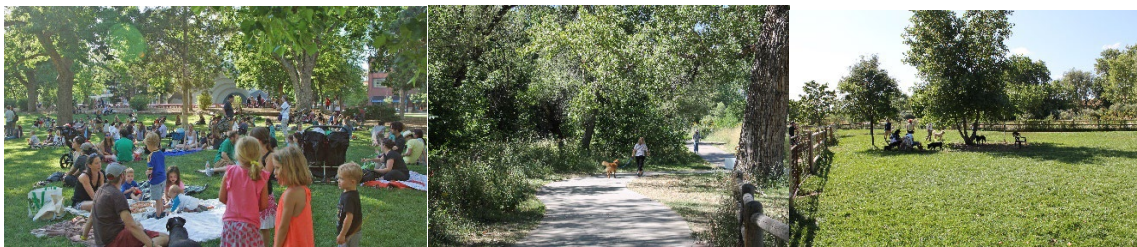
The Parks & Natural Infrastructure network is managed by several city departments to provide recreational spaces such as playgrounds, sports fields, recreation centers and pavilions, and also features that offer important ecological, stormwater and transportation purposes such as greenways and the Boulder Creek corridor. These areas are designed for public access and enjoyment in addition to climate resilience and multimodal functions.

Why it matters:

The Parks & Natural Infrastructure network enhances community health, provides green space in the city, and supports mental and physical well-being. It also helps manage stormwater, reduces urban heat island effects, hosts off-street pedestrian and bicycle networks and fosters social interaction.

What you can expect:

- Areas designed for high activity recreational and transportation amenities like sports fields, playgrounds and multi-use paths.
- Areas designed for more passive activities such as open lawns, walking paths and community gardens.
- Natural areas with creek access, riparian trees and plants, and seating.
- Events, community gatherings and programs



Open Space

What it is:

The Open Space network is permanently protected by the city or county either through direct ownership or by conservation easements held on private land. Open Space is managed for specific purposes including preservation and restoration of natural habitat, water resources, scenic views, agriculture, and passive recreational uses. These areas serve, in part, as the foundation of the Boulder Valley's local agriculture community. Trail networks within these areas serve as important recreation areas for the community and support activities such as hiking, biking, and climbing in designated areas.

Why it matters:

The Open Space network forms the foundation of the Boulder Valley's philosophy of compact urban development surrounded by intact rural and natural lands. It provides an accessible connection to nature and rural character, and contributes to the mental and physical well-being of the residents, workers, and visitors of the Boulder Valley.

What you can expect:

- Human access is limited to designated areas, with a focus on conservation and education.
- Trails, signage, and viewing areas where appropriate.
- Agricultural and ranching activities.



Image Credit: Kira Vos, The Colorado Sun

Rural Lands

What it is:

Rural Lands are areas of the Boulder Valley that contribute to the open lands character, scenic vistas, and definition between the city and rural surroundings. They are primarily designated for rural uses including farming and ranching along with uses related to and in support of these activities.

Why it matters:

Rural Lands support local food systems, land based economic activities and cultural heritage. They also help preserve open space, reduce sprawl, and maintain our regional identity through policies that limit over-intensive rural development. Rural lands may also host regional infrastructure systems such as power generation or transmission and water and wastewater systems. These lands sometimes include community uses such as churches or schools as well as business and light industrial uses and settlements which reflect the development of the area before the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan. Rural Lands are not suitable for uses that may be limited by space within municipal boundaries, but primarily serve the urban population, due to the lack of adequate existing infrastructure and services in the unincorporated county.

What you can expect:

- Fields, orchards, livestock, barns, rural homes, and agricultural infrastructure.
- Uses and buildings focused on supporting agricultural operations, such as farm stands or seasonal farm events.
- Some existing community, light industrial, and infrastructure uses that pre-date policies to preserve rural areas and limit over-intensive rural development



Institutions

Civic

What it is:

Civic Institutions represent a wide array of public and private institutions that serve governmental, cultural and healthcare functions. This includes uses such as hospitals, community centers, libraries, schools, and government facilities or campuses.

Why it matters:

Civic institutions provide essential services, foster learning, promote civic engagement and support public health. Their presence ensures access to opportunities, care, and community-building resources.

What you can expect:

- A mix of large and small facilities, often clustered near residential or commercial areas to promote easy accessibility for community members.
- Buildings such as schools, community centers, medical campuses, federal labs and libraries often with significant public space, transit access and community-serving infrastructure.
- Primarily shared green spaces, plazas and courtyards.
- Direct and high level of access to public transit, bike networks, and walkable amenities



University

What it is:

University Institutions apply to land that will be used for university purposes into the future. This includes educational facilities, research facilities, event space, student and faculty housing, and other uses that support a high-quality university environment.

Why it matters:

The University of Colorado is a cornerstone of Boulder's identity, economy, and cultural life. It attracts students, faculty, and researchers from around the world, fostering innovation, creativity, and a vibrant exchange of ideas. The university is one of the city's largest employers and a key driver of local business activity, from housing to retail. Its research partnerships and community programs strengthen Boulder's capacity to address local and global challenges. Beyond academics, CU enriches the community through arts, athletics, and public events that bring people together.

What to expect:

- A range of student and faculty housing in various formats including dormitories and individual dwelling units
- A variety of academic, educational and research facilities
- Commercial activity geared towards university functions, lodging, conferences and dining options
- Theaters, museums and other cultural spaces
- Indoor recreation centers, athletic fields and stadium facilities
- Primarily shared green spaces, plazas and courtyards.
- Buildings that vary widely in height and scale, including those that exceed the city's height limit
- Direct and high level of access to public transit, bike networks, and walkable amenities including university operated mobility options



Image Credit: Casey A. Cass/University of Colorado

Industrial

What it is:

Industrial institutions are lands that have and will continue to serve the community's needs for more intensive manufacturing, processing, service, commercial and other uses such as public utilities or wireless communications.

Why it matters:

Industrial areas provide essential goods, services, and employment opportunities that help sustain Boulder's economy and self-sufficiency. They support local businesses, supply chains, and trades, and often house uses that cannot be located in other land use categories due to space, noise, or operational needs. Preserving industrial land helps ensure that Boulder can continue to produce, repair, and distribute locally, reducing dependence on outside markets and transportation.

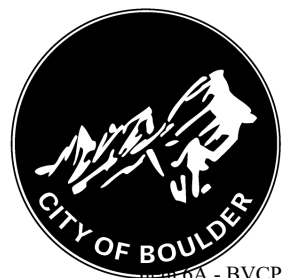
What you can expect:

- Buildings that vary widely in height and scale.
- Manufacturing, repair, service operations, and warehousing facilities that support local economic needs.
- Loading docks, truck access, and circulation areas designed for both employees and large vehicles.
- Limited retail or customer-facing spaces tied to industrial uses (e.g., parts counters, showrooms).
- Limited access to public transit, bike networks and walkable amenities



Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan Community Engagement Summary

Last Updated: Aug 2025



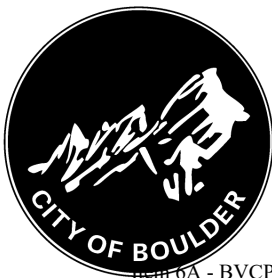
Item 6A - BVCP Conceptual Future Land
Use Framework and Preliminary Policy Choices

A BOULDER FUTURE

BOULDER VALLEY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

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BOULDER VALLEY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

Snapshot of all engagement opportunities

Oct. 2024-July 2025 (Phases 1 – 3)

5000+
responses

2 Community Assembly meetings

2 open houses **12** pop-ups

1 roundtable **3** online feedback forms

6 community led conversations

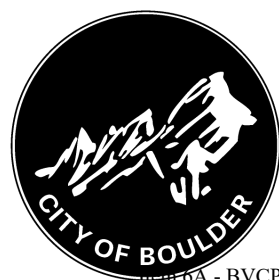
1 feedback station (5 locations)

3 consultations with Growing Up Boulder

8 small group consultations

3 office hours

41 engagement opportunities:

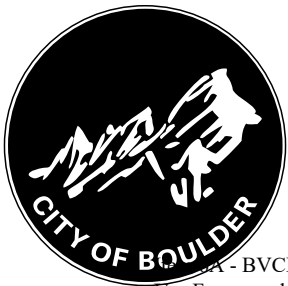
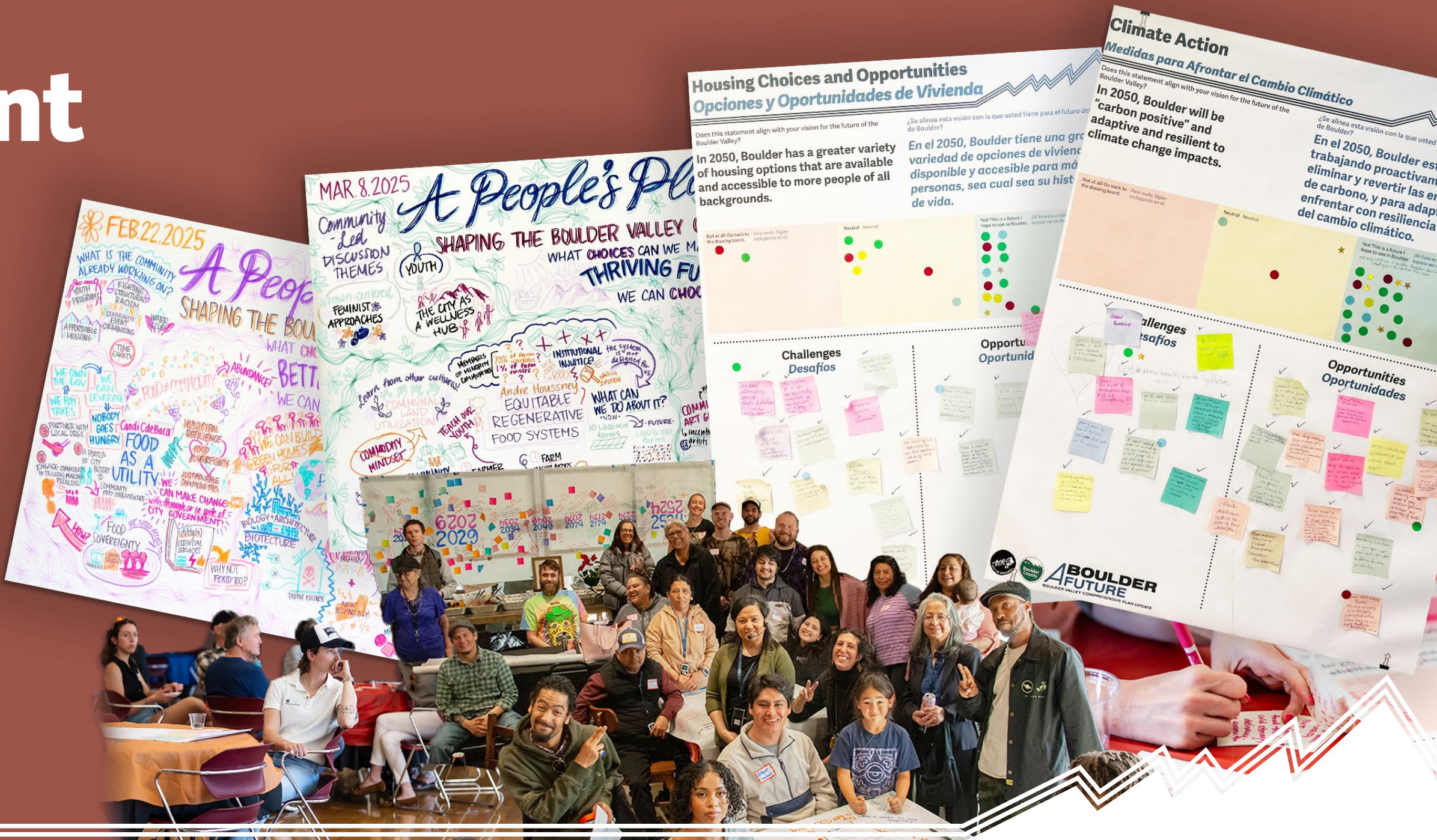


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Phase 3 Engagement Summary

February – July 2025
(will continue until Oct)



Phase 3B – summer and fall



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Community Assembly



Exhibit A

May 3 & May 31



Should Boulder pursue more 15-minute neighborhoods? If so, where and how?

So far, the Assembly has:

- learned from city and county staff, other cities and each other
- discussed benefits and disadvantages
- established collective values for their work together.

They selected these 2 comp plan areas to focus on:

- Housing Choice & Opportunity: interested in questions of affordability, gentrification, belonging (and others)
- Inclusive Local Economy: interested in support for and viability of small, local businesses (and more)

Assembly's next steps

- Continue learning about 15-minute neighborhoods and Boulder's existing conditions
- Advise whether Boulder should proactively pursue 15-minute neighborhoods
- Confirm or update Boulder's definition of 15-minute neighborhoods
- Develop other consensus-based recommendations about 15-minute neighborhood policies

event summary

A randomly selected and demographically representative group of 48 community members were selected to serve on Boulder's first Community Assembly.

Two out of 7 meetings have been held. The last meeting is on Oct. 18.

Assembly members will formally present recommendations to City Council and Planning Board on Dec. 11.



Community Connectors-in-Residence learning visit



Exhibit A

May 16



Jacob Springs Farm



event summary

The comprehensive planning team and Community Connectors-in-Residence visited Jacob Springs Farm together to learn more about local agriculture and identify relevant issues for the comp plan update.

Jacob Springs Farm is owned by Boulder's first person of color to lease working lands from the city's Open Space (site visit was on privately owned land).

Participants:
6 Connectors; 11 staff

Land Use & Leasing Policies

Ideas to support farmers with less experience/means:

- Make smaller lease plots available
- Allow cooperative/subleasing models
- Introduce leasing criteria that rewards regenerative practices or mentoring others
- Simplify application process for leasing; or help with navigation
- Increase transparency in farmer application review process

Climate Resilience & Safety

- Encourage farmers to bring their livestock to graze fire-prone open space
- Develop policies that integrate ag into climate adaptation strategies, like soil regeneration and diversified crops for resilience

Housing for Ag Workers

- Address cost-prohibitive regulations
- Explore affordable seasonal solutions that meet health and safety standards





Pop-up - Bike to Work Day



Exhibit A
June 25



1500 Pearl (am)
3101 Pearl Parkway (pm)

event summary

228 community members shared their views on what would make their neighborhoods better.

What goods and neighborhood services would you still like to access in person by walking or biking from home?



Top Priorities

Cafes and Restaurants



Fresh Produce



Supermarkets

Transit Stops



Secondary Priorities

Bars

Indoor sports facilities



Libraries

Outdoor recreation



Parks



Community members discussing on Bike to Work Day

What would make your neighborhood feel more complete?

"Less giant parking lots"

"More trees and plants"

"More affordable homes, especially for young people and renters"

"Grocery options close to home (corner stores, bodegas)"

"More welcoming public places to gather, play and relax"

"Stores we can walk or bike to"

"Better safety and lighting at night"

"Better ways to get around without a car –protected bike lanes, safer crossings, more frequent bus service"



Community members writing on boards

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Pop-up - Civic Area Park



Exhibit A

July 14



Bandshell – Civic Area

What goods and neighborhood services would you still like to access in person by walking or biking from home?



Top Priorities

Cafes and Restaurants



Parks

Outdoor recreation



Transit Stops



Secondary Priorities

Fresh produce

Libraries

Shopping centers



Supermarkets

What would make your neighborhood feel more complete?



Planners and Community members discussing at the Civic Area

“Corner store
(Dakota
Ridge/Holiday)

“Better
lighting”

“Less empty
storefronts”

“E-bike
enforcement on
walking paths”

“Safer
crossings”

event summary

31 community members shared their views on what would make their neighborhoods better.

Participants were mainly families with young children.



Engagement Booth at the Civic Area



Skill-Building Workshop: BRAVE Conversations



Exhibit A

July 15



Fairview Highschool

Should neighborhood serving businesses be allowed in residential areas?

YES group

Local businesses play a role in building community, cultural hubs, third places – helps reduce social isolation

Reducing car trips – less pollution, better air quality, reduced traffic, saves time, healthier lifestyle

NO group

We already have great 15 min neighborhoods – Table Mesa, Holiday, North Boulder, East Boulder

Such businesses should only be allowed once there is sufficient population density to make them viable

Top-down neighborhood level planning rarely works

UNSURE group

Need more information: on how this aligns with neighborhood needs; experiences elsewhere; implementation details

Concerns about noise, parking, incompatibility with residential life

Concerns about whether small businesses would be affordable – and people would still travel to more affordable shops

event summary

The engagement organization YOUNify facilitated a workshop to build community member skills to have BRAVE and effective conversations around difficult topics.

40 community members participated and applied the skills while answering a question about mixed uses in neighborhoods.

Other considerations shared:

- How can Boulder support business owners of color?
- Relax regulations and let the market decide
- Importance of thoughtful design, community-informed planning



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Community members discussing in pairs

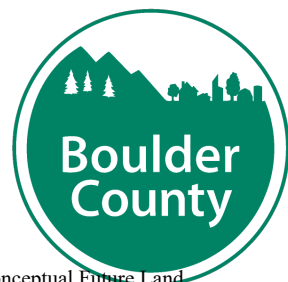
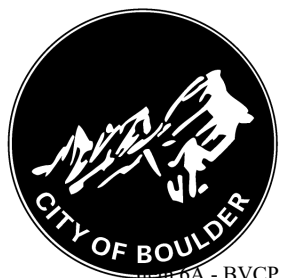


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Community members discussing at Fairview High School



Phase 3A - winter and spring 2025



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BOULDER VALLEY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

How was Phase 3A feedback used?

Feedback received during Phase 3A was used to refine the vision and list of Focus Areas; better understand our community's excitement and concerns about potential policy ideas; and identify equity considerations.

Purpose of Phase 3A

In Phase 3A, community members:

- Reviewed the vision
- Reviewed the Focus Areas
- Assessed different policy ideas
- Identified opportunities and barriers for each Focus Area.

Each phase is also an opportunity to bring new people into the process.

Communication & Engagement Tactics

Engagement tactics in Phase 3A emphasized the following:

- Collaboration with community partners to contact harder-to-reach populations
- Roundtable discussions on Focus Areas
- Focused consultations to narrow demographic gaps

Communication tactics used in Phase 3A included:

- Social media
- Newsletters
- Inside Boulder News
- Outreach through Community Connectors
- Outreach through county
- Press Release
- Bus ads
- Paid advertisements

What we collected in Phase 3A:

1750+ responses

12 engagement opportunities:

- | | |
|---|------------------------|
| 1 open house | 1 pop-up |
| 4 small group consultations | 1 roundtable |
| | 1 online feedback form |
| 2 community led conversations | |
| 2 consultations with Growing Up Boulder | |



The City and County are in the process of making all websites and applications more accessible. While much progress has been made, some features in this document may be inaccessible for certain people. If you would like assistance accessing this document, please contact the project email address:

future@boulder.gov or call (303) 441-4124



Community Roundtable & Open House & Online Feedback Form



Exhibit A

April 12 (in person)

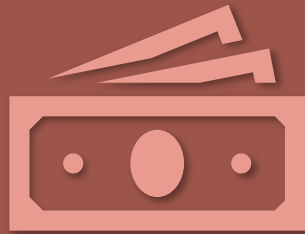
East Boulder

Community Center

~85 participants

April 11-23 (online)

232 respondents



Affordable Living – What we heard

Opportunities: Broad support for innovative housing, expanded local food systems and partnerships with non-profits and the private sector for service delivery, with a call to include healthcare and childcare in affordability efforts.

- **Housing ideas:** community land trusts, workforce housing, rent-to-own, limited-equity co-ops, tiny homes, protecting smaller, older homes from demolition, more city-led efforts and collaboration with CU
- **Food ideas:** emphasis on affordable, fresh and local through community gardens, food rescue and nutrition education;
- **Healthcare ideas:** pop-up clinics, mental health services
- **Childcare ideas:** essential for a livable city and increasingly scarce and expensive; need a community solution

Barriers: Limited city funding capacity; rising commercial lease costs; insufficient shelter capacity for our unhoused; gaps in early childcare services; healthcare is not provided by the city; declining state/federal funding; macroeconomic pressures; and a local culture that undervalues diversity

Divergent views: Community divided on if it's a realistic goal; and whether and how to sustainably fund ideas.

event summary

Each participant at the in-person event could choose three Focus Areas for roundtable discussions; and provide input on the remaining Focus Areas through activities in the Open House area or online.

The questions on the online form mirrored the activity at the in-person event on April 12.

This summary focuses on **Affordable Living**.

Equity considerations: The responses reveal a deep and widespread concern about the rising cost of living and growing economic inequality.

- Community members shared that less affordable living is linked to racial and economic inclusion and the ability to retain or attract a diverse population.
- Local economic interventions that prioritize inclusion and fair wages.

Community Roundtable & Open House & Online Feedback Form (Cont. 2/6)

Climate Action – What we heard

Opportunities:

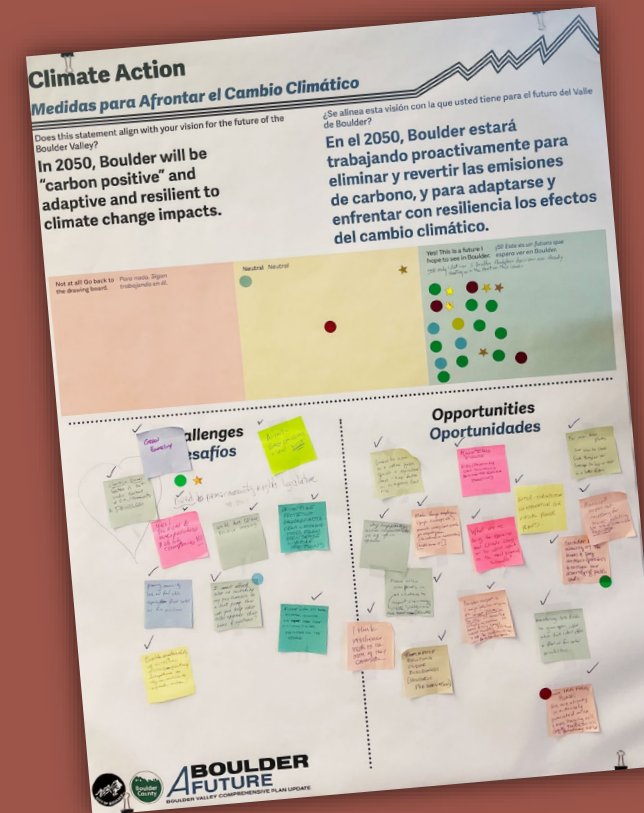
- Local control over and innovation in renewable energy
- Strengthening our wildfire and flood resilience
- Enhancing our local food system
- Building retrofits
- Better transit and integration with land use
- Biodiversity/species protection
- Preserving green space

Barriers:

- Growing population; high upfront cost of some solutions; cross-jurisdictional coordination

Main divergent view:

- Whether to strictly limit population growth or focus on more compact development for accelerated climate action



Example notes taken during discussions on April 12



A planner leading discussion on April 12

Equity considerations:

- Demand for greater involvement of vulnerable communities in climate action planning
- Focusing adaptation and support resources for our most vulnerable community members.
- Concerns about the affordability of 'green' solutions.



Community Roundtable & Open House & Online Feedback Form (Cont. 3/6)

Housing Choice & Opportunity – What we heard

Opportunities:

- Less restrictions on “missing middle” housing types
- Preserve smaller, older houses
- Community land trusts
- Workforce housing
- Adaptive reuse
- Vacancy taxes
- Strategic transit-oriented growth
- Partnership with CU



Barriers: Cost of land; weak transit system

Divergent views on:

- How to define ‘affordable’
- How much and where to grow
- Height increases
- Using some open space for housing
- Whether a more compact urban form is a sustainable development approach for boulder



Community members discussing on April 12

Equity considerations:

- Housing is out of reach for middle-income families, young professionals, essential workers and older adults on fixed incomes.
- We need measures to stabilize and increase our demographic diversity.



Community Roundtable & Open House & Online Feedback Form (Cont. 4/6)

Safety – What we heard

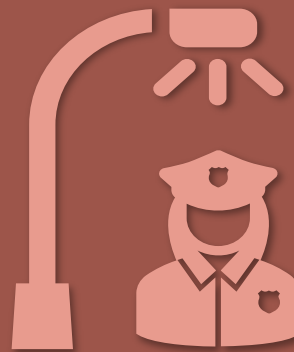
Opportunities:

- Expand The Vision To Include Psychosocial & Emotional Safety
- Better Lighting
- Safer Bike And Pedestrian Infrastructure, Especially Near Schools (& More Walkable Neighborhoods)
- Expanded Emergency Preparedness
- Neighborhood Level Resilience Hubs

Barriers: Increasing wildfire risk; large unhoused population in shared spaces; reckless drivers; lack of effective enforcement

Divergent views on:

- Strategies for the unhoused population
- Policing approaches
- How safety should be defined and measured



Community members wrote their ideas down during discussions on April 12

Equity considerations:

- Ensuring compassionate, non police approaches to support unhoused population
- Mental health support
- Child-friendly spaces

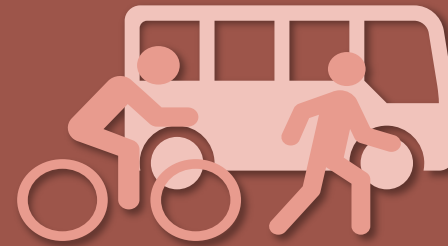


Community Roundtable & Open House & Online Feedback Form (Cont. 5/6)

Travel Options – What we heard

Opportunities:

- Improve regional connectivity
- Expand multimodal choices (bike, rail, bus), especially along existing corridors
- Small, frequent electric buses
- More EV charging stations
- Reduce car dependency for live, work, recreation
- Address accessibility for all



Barriers: Our low density impacts the viability of transit; car-free or car-light is unrealistic for many; dependence on regional institutions

Divergent views:

- Feasibility of a car-free lifestyle
- The future of parking
- Funding priorities



"Subject matter experts" from the City of Boulder and Boulder County helped lead some of the discussion tables to be available as an information resource for the topic at hand.

Equity considerations:

- Affordability
- Solutions must be inclusive of older adults, people with disabilities and workers who rely on vehicles.



Community Roundtable & Open House & Online Feedback Form (Cont. 6/6)



Wellness & Social Connection – What we heard

Opportunities:

- Create neighborhood gathering spaces and “third places” to encourage connection
- Offer activities and spaces that bring together people of all ages, cultures and incomes
- Expanding nature-based wellness efforts focused on health, food access, open space, and social resilience
- Make it easier to walk about bike instead of using car
- Preserve beloved places like Iris Fields

Barriers:

- Technology and housing costs driving social isolation, especially among seniors, people with disabilities, youth, neurodiverse population
- Loss of gathering spaces
- Civic engagement is often inequitable – based on availability of time, transportation and cultural relevance



There was a table dedicated to Spanish-speakers to allow everyone to be able to engage in meaningful discussion in-person on April 12

Divergent views:

- On the city/county's role in delivering solutions vs. community-led solutions
- Mixed views on density's impact on wellness

Equity considerations:

- Low-income people often have the least time for wellness and civic engagement– how to ensure this group benefits from policies?



Focused Consultation: Spanish speakers



Exhibit A
April 16

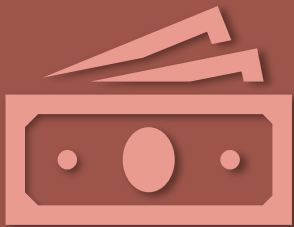


Virtual meeting
5 participants

On income & costs

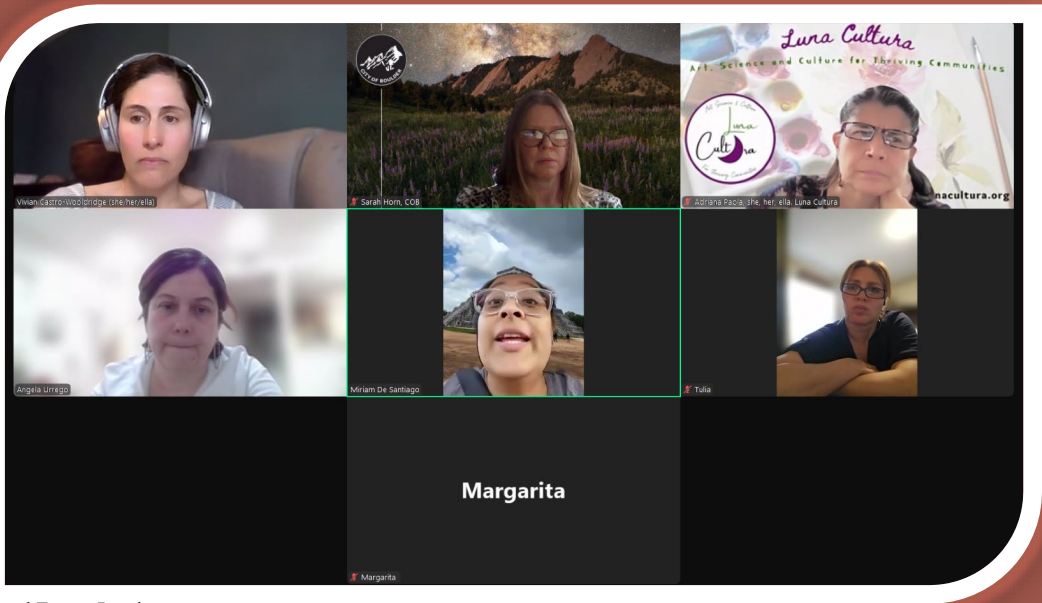
Participants highlighted that **the ECONOMY** should be added to the list of Focus Areas. Economic opportunities are central to the wellbeing of our historically excluded communities.

...and we cannot lose sight of affordability as a community – even if it’s challenging we must keep working together to ensure basic needs can be met and all people can thrive.



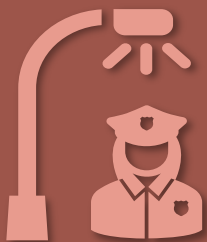
On climate

Participants highlighted that **climate impacts are felt disproportionately on the most vulnerable** – *what can we do to reduce harm?*



On safety

Safety is not only physical – it is also socio-psychological. We want everyone to feel safe and welcome in Boulder.



On wellness

Our dysfunctional healthcare system causes high levels of stress. While the city is not a healthcare provider – ***what can we do more of and better as preventive wellness measures*** to prevent illness?



event summary

Five community members participated in the online consultation in Spanish.

The activity and questions mirrored the in-person event on April 12.

Participants chose to discuss: Affordable Living, Climate Action, Housing Choice & Opportunity and Safety (4 out of the 6 Focus Areas).

Community Led Conversations

Once & Future Green

Exhibit A

Feb. 22 & March 8

Junkyard Social Club
85 participants

Themes from both events:

Horizon: We should be planning much farther than 20 years into the future

Community: Cultural diversity is an asset – *how to ensure this is part of our fabric and supported?*

Economic: Poverty is a policy choice. Need more equitable economic opportunities for Frontline communities.

Housing & quality of life: Beyond *adequate, affordable or attainable* - instead aim for *thriving, wellness, spectacular, aligned with local ecosystem*

Community mindset: Embrace and systematically support communal vs. individualistic approaches

Engagement & collaboration: Trust in the community more for knowledge and to partner in developing solutions

event summary

Once & Future Green designed two events to provide community members with inspiration and community-based learning before asking them to brainstorm in small groups.

85 frontline community members participated in total with interpretation into Spanish (and Nepali for one event).

88% of participants on March 8 self-reported never having participated in a government process previously.

*frontline communities suffer the most from intended and unintended impacts of government policy and have benefited the least.



An artist wrote down and illustrated prominent themes discussed on large posters during both sessions

Participants were encouraged to present what they discussed with everyone attending

Community Led Conversations Once & Future Green (Cont. 2/3)

Barriers and opportunities we heard by topic:

- Affordability is important – BUT we need more **entrepreneurship** and **wealth building** to sustainably thrive in this high-cost environment.
 - preserving locally owned businesses through worker owned cooperative models
 - supporting local businesses by:
 - anchor institutions (city, CU, large companies etc.) proactively contracting with BIPOC-owned businesses for catering and more
- **Food systems are linked to** wellness, the local economy and climate resilience.
 - *ensuring greater equity in farming (e.g. land access)*
 - *creating holistic local food system infrastructure*
 - *promoting more regenerative ag practices*
 - *supporting incubators at farms*

"Boulder has long been a leader in sustainability and our food system should be no exception"



Pictured are attendees at the March 8 session.

event summary

Presentation topics:

1. Food as a utility
2. Biotecture
3. Inclusive economy
4. Inspired community planning: *Spectacular dreams and visioning*
5. Regenerative food systems; barriers for farmers of color



Community Led Conversations Once & Future Green (Cont. 3/3)

"Education
sets you free"

Barriers and opportunities we heard by topic:



- **Buildings that support life** – through site-specific natural principles like harvesting heat, energy, water, and providing shelter and food



- **Multicultural community** – a desire for a more inclusive, welcoming, socio-economically and racially diverse community



- **Youth voice** – education as a major theme
 - Provide spaces to learn about local government, music, food, identity and culture, leadership skills

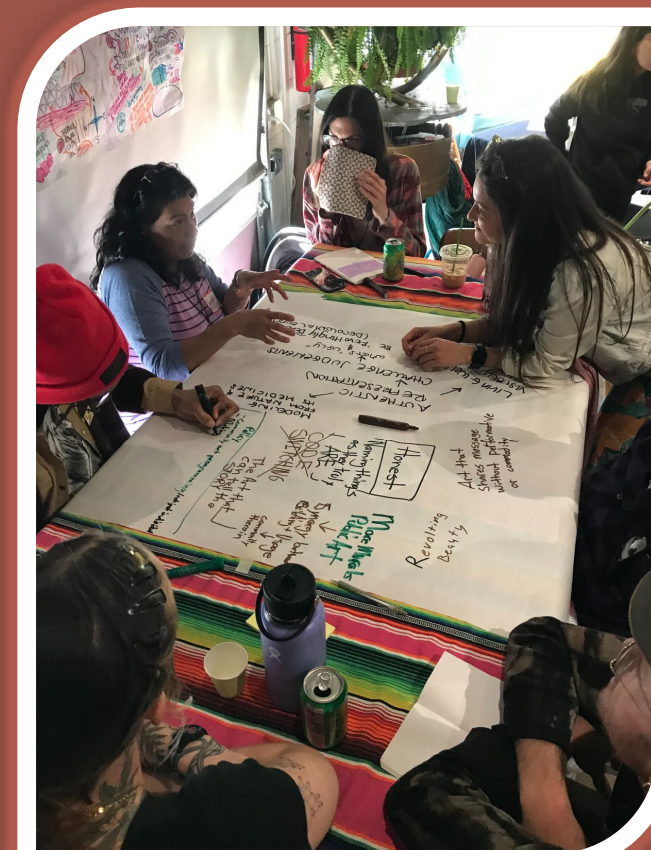


- **Public transportation** system improvements

"Public
transportation is
painfully inefficient
and takes up all
our time"



Presenters attended who discussed some of the discussion themes with the entire group before the small group discussions



"frustration about the
lack of retention of
people of color in the
community, especially
Black people"

Participants had an opportunity to discuss a theme of their choice in small groups



Community Connectors-in-Residence consultation

Key takeaways:

1. Yes...and. Support for the draft vision statement and updated list of Focus Areas– but requesting that ensuing **policies be transformational and equitable - and not the status quo.**

2. Our environment sustains us. Always center the protection of our water, air and land.

3. Belonging starts with antiracism socialization in schools. Work with BVSD to better integrate impactful, antiracist teachings into the curriculum to shift the culture, which helps meet other goals—like helping people of color feel safe and even to succeed as local business owners.

4. Need more holistic support for our youth. Other forms of cooperation with BVSD are desired for youth well-being, such as for emotional regulation, taking care of our open space, job skills and more.

5. More equitable access to farmlands. More leasing opportunities for farmers from historically excluded communities.

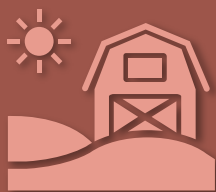


Exhibit A

April 25



Hybrid – Penfield Tate Municipal Building/online

7 participants



event summary

Community Connectors-in-Residence (CC-in-R) advise project staff at key intervals. Staff share what they’ve heard from our community and ask for additional perspectives. Connectors also help staff identify barriers and opportunities to advance equity.

On April 25 staff consulted with CC-in-R on the draft vision and list of Focus Areas; and took a deeper dive on these newly introduced Focus Areas: Food Systems; Inclusive Local Economy; and Multicultural & Multigenerational Community.

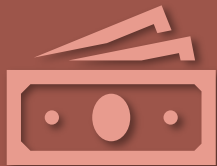
6. Still need more equitable engagement: Smaller populations facing highest impacts should be centered in decision making.



7. Scale up nature-based solutions for wildfire resilience: Lean into solutions such as rain basins, tree tending and land restoration.



8. We need an economy that works for all. Desire for interventions that prioritize inclusion in the local economy and help lower income community members build financial savvy, wealth and economic resilience.





Consultation - Center for People with Disabilities



Exhibit A

April 19



Office of Center for People with Disabilities

9 participants



Affordable Living

Affordable housing is not affordable. Many leave Boulder to purchase basics because of high costs here. Participants expressed that in general *affordability* is an unrealistic goal.



Housing Choice & Opportunities

Living solo is difficult; strong demand for more options to live in community.

Strong demand for adoption of accessibility standards for housing.

Travel Options & 15-min Neighborhoods

"Quality of life would be greatly improved if I could meet most of my needs in a 6-8 block area" [due to logistical challenges people with disabilities face].

More mixed-use neighborhoods with less parking would help with safely accessing needs.

Participants called for transit to be fixed if we increase our population.



Wellness & Social Connection

Requests:

- more adult day programs for people with disabilities
- more cultural events designed for communities with specific needs
- for city/county staff to be better equipped to interact with people with disabilities.

Concerns about Sundance being an ableist event.

event summary

The city has begun regularly meeting with the Center for People with Disabilities and its membership. The April 19 meeting focused on the comprehensive plan update.

Staff asked the nine participants with disabilities for input on the policy directions, barriers and opportunities of a few Focus Areas.





Growing Up Boulder – Consultation with 6th Graders



Exhibit A

Feb. 11-12



Boulder Country Day



For Boulder’s future, participating youth were most passionate about:

Recreation & Active Space: all season access; nighttime lighting; age-specific playgrounds/activity areas

Mental Health & Wellness: Therapeutic gardens and sensory play areas; dedicated quiet spaces

Social Services: community gardens with shared produce; facilities for the unhoused; mental health & substance use support



Environmental Integration: Protecting wildlife habitats; natural landscaping; sustainable power

Community Gathering: More flexible and family-friendly gathering spaces; cafes for kids; arts and cultural spaces

Accessibility: Strong transportation links; pedestrian-friendly, universal access design



event summary

Growing Up Boulder met with 26 sixth graders at the Boulder Country Day school in Gunbarrel to talk about the comprehensive plan update. Students were asked to build and share their ideal Boulder community through *the City as Play* activity.

Growing Up Boulder is also collaborating with the project team to align the Child Friendly Cities Initiative (over 900 youth and 500 adults engaged) with the comprehensive plan.

The youth emphasized the need for **multi-functional spaces** that serve diverse community needs simultaneously.

All recommendations reflect an integrated approach **prioritizing both physical and mental well-being** while addressing crucial **social services and environmental sustainability**.





Pop-up - One Book One Boulder



Exhibit A

April 24



Boulder Main Library

event summary

The Boulder Library hosted a community event with author of See No Stranger, Valarie Kaur.

There were over 500 participants. The project team had a table to talk to attendees about the plan update, sign people up for our newsletters and gather input on two questions.



What do you want your policymakers to know?

"I want more transparency within the city and with community."

"Boulder is a haven"

"Free buses regularly"

"Placemaking at distributed neighborhood hubs"

"Build more low-income housing please!"

"It's not that there are less children – there are less children HERE"

"I used to live here but now I don't because it's too expensive"

What questions should we be asking so that you feel heard in this process?

Where in Boulder do you feel safe and happy and like you belong?

How can we include both renters and homeowners in plans for the future direction of Boulder?

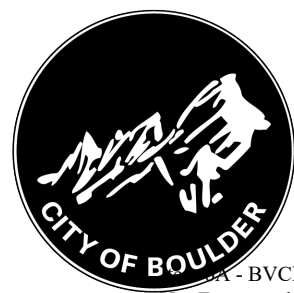
What is the right balance between natural space and parking/living space?

What are the best ways to share information?



Phase 2 Engagement Summary

January – February 2025



A BOULDER FUTURE

BOULDER VALLEY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

How was Phase 1 feedback used?

Feedback received during Phase 1 identified topics that the community wants to discuss during this Comprehensive Plan update.

Purpose of Phase 2

Phase 2 engagement collected community feedback on a vision for Boulder's future and took a deeper dive into topics that the community wants the Plan to address.

Communication & Engagement Tactics

Engagement tactics in Phase 2 emphasized the following:

- Getting out into the community and meeting people where they are;
- Multiple smaller efforts, but in more locations;
- Working with community partners (including artists) to reach our historically excluded communities through culturally relatable and meaningful ways.

Communication tactics used in Phase 2 included:

- Social media
- Newsletters
- Inside Boulder News
- KGNU Radio – Pasa La Voz
- Outreach through Community Connectors
- Outreach through county
- Press Release

What we collected in Phase 2:

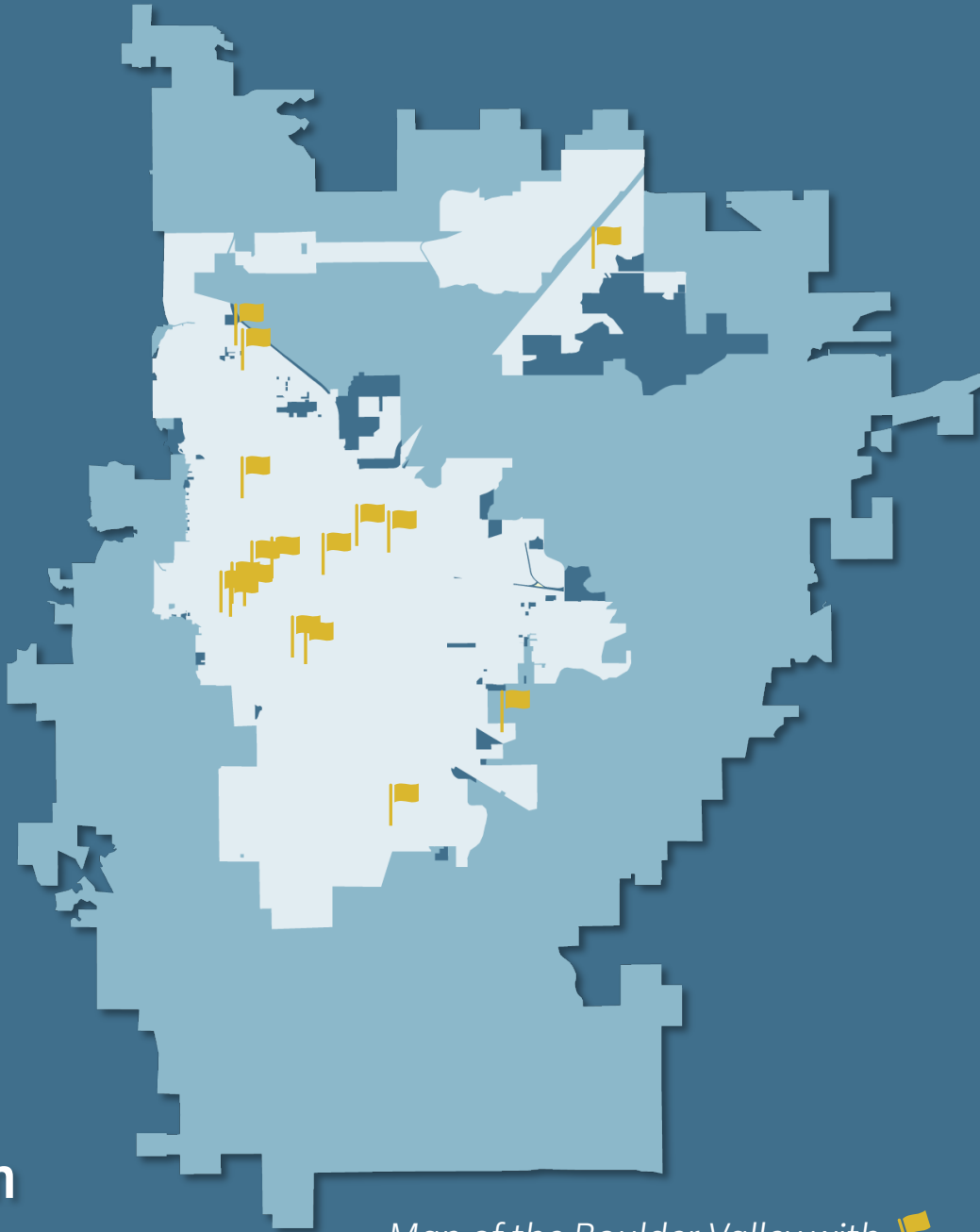
2,000+
responses

7 in-person pop-ups

6 standing pop-ups

1 online feedback form

3 community led conversations



Map of the Boulder Valley with Phase 2 engagement locations

How was Phase 2 feedback used?

The project team has updated the Community Vision Statement and identified a preliminary set of focus areas based on Phase 1 and 2 community feedback.



Community Pop-Ups (standing)



Exhibit A

Jan. 24 to Feb. 14, 2025



Various locations

Several “pop-up” boards were left at strategic locations around the Boulder Valley to provide community members the opportunity to provide their feedback. When asked to consider what the Boulder Valley needs to focus on the most over the next 20 years, respondents emphasized the following topics:



Affordable Living



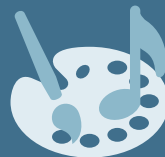
Climate Action



Pedestrian and
Bicycle Safety



Walkable 15-minute
Neighborhoods



Arts and Culture

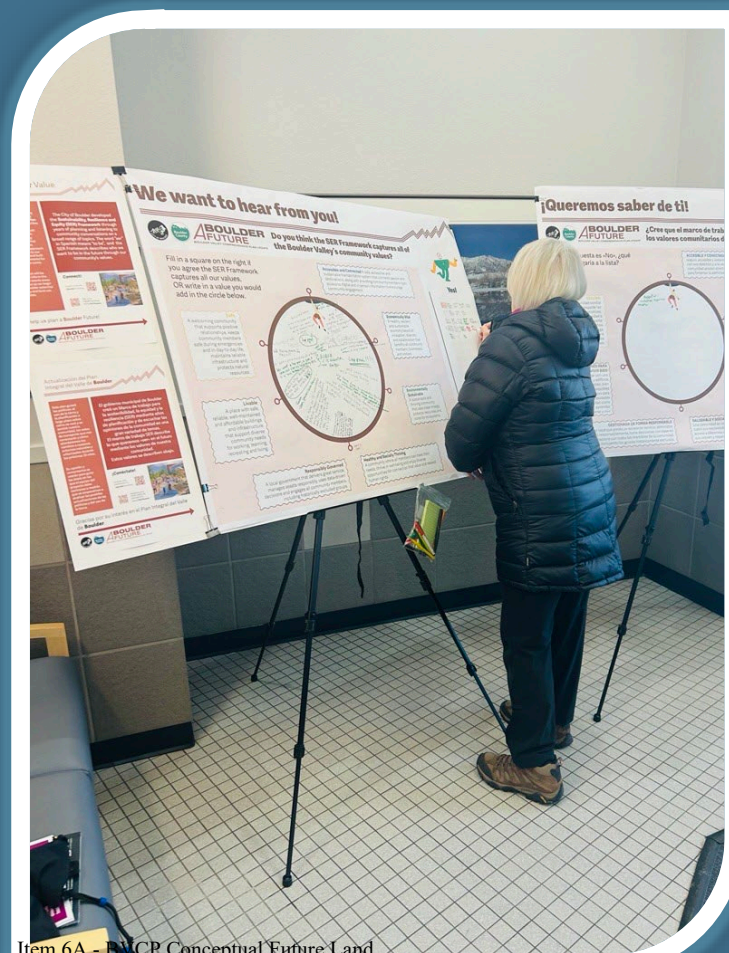


Crime and Public Safety

event summary

A series of pop-up boards were left for three weeks at the following locations:

- Age Well Center – West
- Boulder County Community Planning and Permitting
- East Boulder Community Center
- Main Library
- North Boulder Recreation Center
- South Boulder Recreation Center



Item 6A – BLMCP Conceptual Future Land Use Framework and Preliminary Policy Choices

A standing pop-up board at South Boulder Rec Center





Community Pop-Ups (events)



Exhibit A

Jan. 24 to Feb. 14, 2025



Various locations

The project team also attended several community events to provide information about the process and gather feedback. At these events, the community indicated a preference to focus on the following topics:



Affordable Living



Climate Action



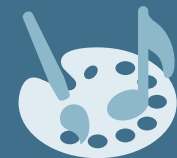
Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety



Walkable 15-minute Neighborhoods



Housing Density & Diversity



Arts and Culture

event summary

The project team attended several community led events during Phase 2 to solicit feedback.

They included:

- Age Well West
- Bike to Work Day (morning)
- Bike to Work Happy Hour
- CU Boulder - UMC
- E-Town Hall "Talk of the Town" Lecture Series
- Gunbarrel Ampersand Coffee Shop
- NoBo First Fridays

Feedback received also points to a revised vision statement that reflects **LOCAL COMMITMENT to CLIMATE ACTION, HEALTHY and ACTIVE LIFESTYLES, DIVERSITY of HOUSING CHOICES, a DIVERSE and ENGAGED COMMUNITY and CONVENIENT MOBILITY OPTIONS.**



A pop-up event during Winter Bike to Work Day



Community Pop-Ups



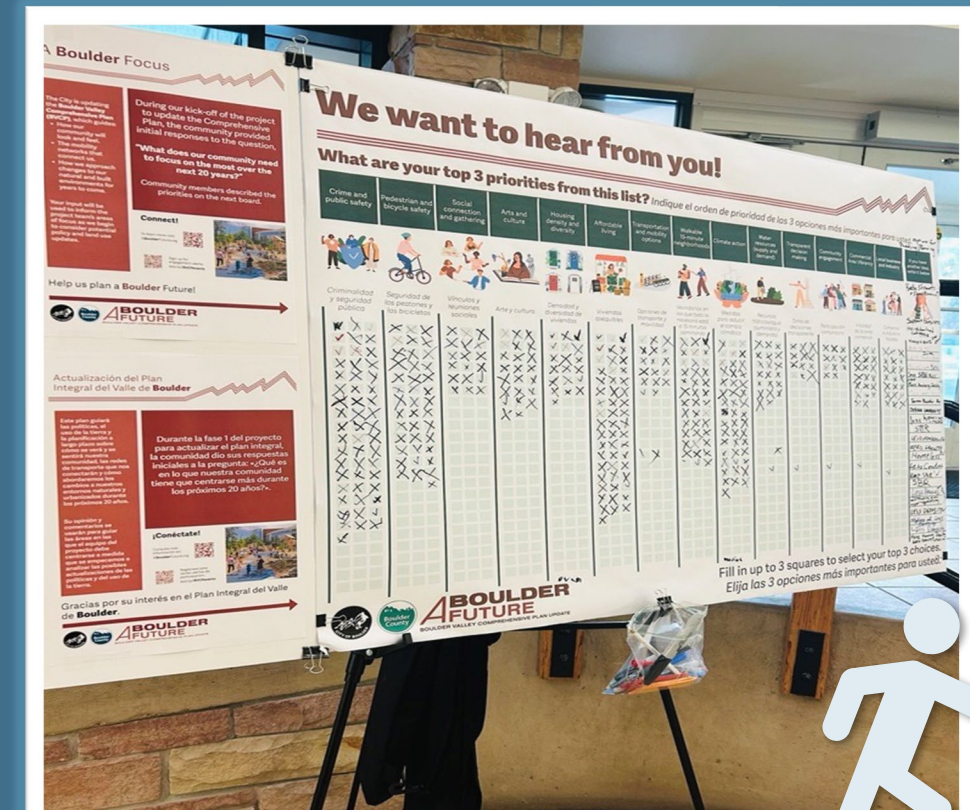
A tabling pop-up event at NoBo First Fridays art walk



Boards being filled out at a standing pop-up at the East Boulder Community Center



A pop-up event during Winter Bike to Work Day



Boards being filled out at the North Boulder Recreation Center



Online Feedback



Exhibit A

Jan. 24 to Feb. 14, 2025



Project website

ONLINE RESPONDENTS indicated a preference to prioritize the following topics:



Affordable Living



Climate Action



Transportation & Mobility Options



Walkable 15-minute Neighborhoods



Crime and Public Safety



Water Resources

Feedback received online also points to a revised vision statement and is in alignment with feedback received in-person at various pop-ups and community led events. However, online responses indicate a higher preference for elements of **ENVIRONMENTAL** and **AGRICULTURAL STEWARDSHIP** to be included in the revised vision statement.

“Prioritize clean air, ecological diversity, and public transit”



event summary

Community members could also provide their feedback online.

The online forum included the same questions that were shared on the pop-up boards.

156 responses



Motus Theater Playback Series



Exhibit A

Jan. 11 & 25, 2025

Feb. 8, 2025



Three locations

~250 participants

Community members expressed hope for meaningful change but also frustration with barriers to action. Priorities centered on **AFFORDABLE LIVING, ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP, CULTURAL REPRESENTATION & PRESERVATION** and urgent needs ranging from **FOOD ACCESS** to **CHILDCARE** and **CLIMATE ACTION**



"Aprecio los esfuerzos y recursos de la ciudad para la traducción y la interpretación.... ya no me siento invisible."

"I appreciate the city's efforts and resources for translation and interpretation,,, I no longer feel invisible" – translated from Spanish

event summary

Motus Theater led three community conversations highlighting the voices of historically marginalized communities and other community members attending the events.

Participants shared personal reflections and visions, which were enacted live by professional actors using movement, music and spoken word.

It was an opportunity to hear each others' stories and have a community conversation about a 20-year vision and priorities for the plan update.



Left: Motus performers during the first Motus playback event



Right: A community member participating in the first MOTUS playback event



Motus Theater Playback Series

continued

A community member participating in the final MOTUS Playback event

Some common themes that came out of these conversations included:

EQUITY & INCLUSION: Calls for systemic changes to address racial, economic and cultural disparities, emphasizing community-led decision-making and belonging.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING: Strong demand for policies that prevent displacement, support homeownership and foster long-term economic stability.

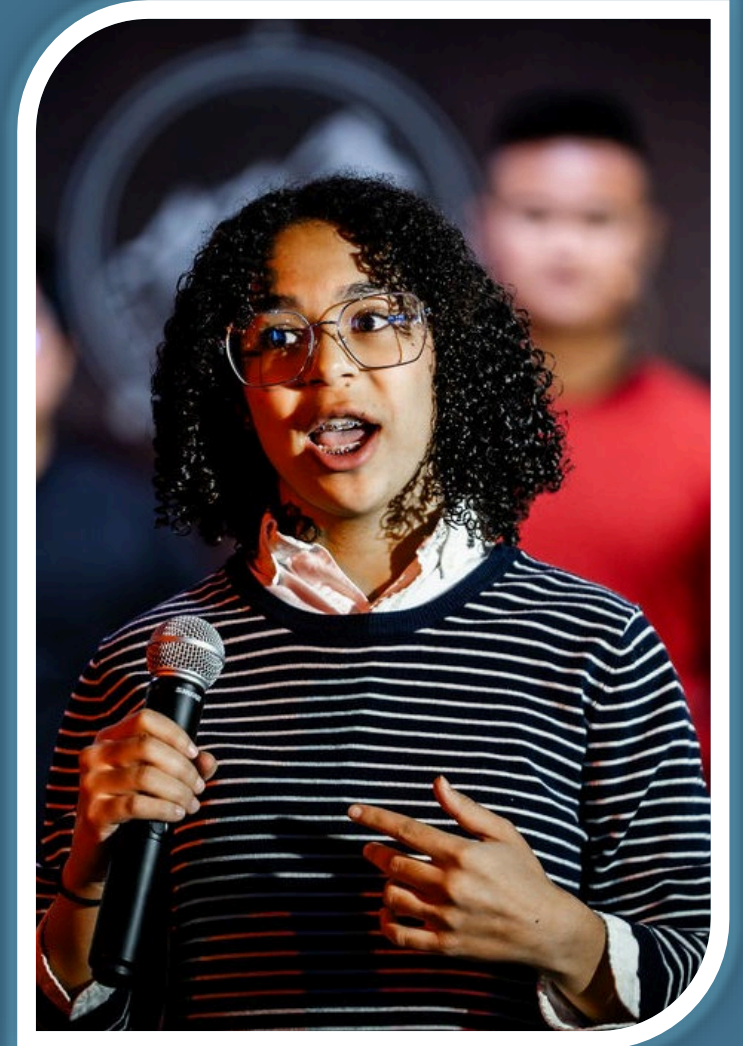
CLIMATE RESILIENCE: Concerns over climate change, with a focus on disaster preparedness, clean energy, and resource preservation.

CULTURAL & COMMUNITY ASSETS: Recognition of underutilized cultural diversity, ancestral knowledge and youth leadership in community building and policy-making.

"Boulder's success is interconnected with the thriving of other communities."

"[Our community should] emphasize ancestral knowledge, cultural diversity, and the creative arts to foster inclusivity and strengthen the community."

A community member participating in the final MOTUS Playback event





Community Connectors-in-Residence



Exhibit A
Feb. 21, 2025



Virtual
6 participants

The group discussed issues of AFFORDABLE LIVING, missing SOCIAL CONNECTION, HOUSING & SMALL BUSINESS SUPPORT and RACIAL EQUITY, emphasizing a focus on naming and dismantling systemic racism and promoting inclusivity.

Participants called for a shift towards more human centered SAFETY and WELLNESS, a more SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEM and CONCRETE POLICY CHANGES that go beyond high-level visions. There was also a push for the city to coordinate more with the Boulder Valley School District, particularly on issues around systemic racism and teaching about race.

event summary

The project team met with Community Connectors-in-Residence to provide project updates, share what we have heard from the community so far, and to seek feedback on narrowing the list of potential focus areas.

Connectors shared important feedback related to the identities and communities they area part of.



"The greatest resource we have is each other."

"When we gather together, we make richer communities, right?! "





University of Colorado Boulder – Program in Environmental Design



Exhibit A

Feb. 12, 2025



CU- Boulder
~30 participants

UNIVERSITY STUDENTS who participated in the workshop would like the community to focus on the following topics:



Housing Density & Diversity



Climate Action



Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety



Walkable 15-minute Neighborhoods

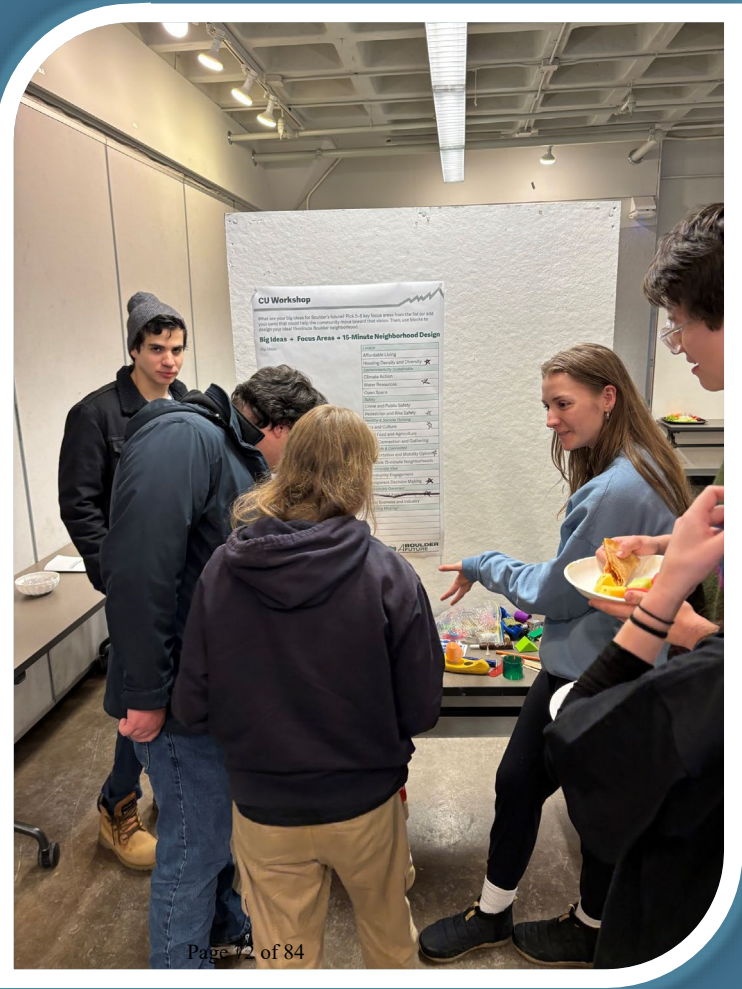


Transportation & Mobility Options



Local Food and Agriculture

“[Density is important]: student housing, multi-use buildings, commercial with local business”



event summary

The project team hosted a workshop with students at the CU – Boulder Program in Environmental Design to solicit their feedback on which topic areas they think we should focus on most as a community over the next 20 years.

“Sustainable materials and infrastructure [need to be used more often in the future]”

CU Students discussing during a workshop



University of Colorado Boulder – Program in Environmental Design *continued*

Some common themes that came out of these conversations included:



HOUSING & DENSITY: Students emphasized the need for diverse, affordable, and sustainable housing, including student housing, ADUs and missing middle housing.



MOBILITY & TRANSIT: Walkability, multi-modal mobility and improved public transit (trains, buses and transit-oriented development) were strong priorities.



SUSTAINABILITY & INFRASTRUCTURE: Suggestions included water management strategies, eco-friendly transit and energy-efficient building materials.



CU students used found objects to represent elements of a neighborhood



Item 6A - BVCP Conceptual Future Land Use Framework and Preliminary Policy Choices



PUBLIC SPACE & THE ENVIRONMENT: Green spaces near housing, fire mitigation, open space access and climate-conscious urban planning (zero emissions, sustainable infrastructure) were commonly highlighted.

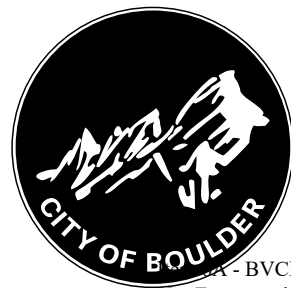


ECONOMIC & CULTURAL VIBRANCY: Students valued lively commercial areas supporting small and large businesses, street life and spaces for community gathering, arts and entertainment.

CU students discussing in groups at a workshop

Phase 1 Engagement Summary

August – December 2024



Phase 1 - BVCP Conceptual Future Land
Use Framework and Preliminary Policy Choices

A BOULDER FUTURE

BOULDER VALLEY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

Phase 1 Purpose

The purpose of Phase 1 was to orient the community to the Comprehensive Plan update process, build excitement, communicate the importance of participating and set expectations for future engagement

Phase 1 was launched by sharing information about the process and asking questions about community priorities, social connection, big ideas, hopes and dreams for the Boulder Valley, and what our community wants to learn more about

Communication & Engagement Tactics

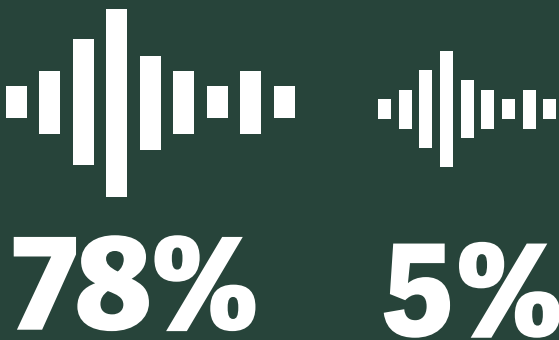
- Two tactics were used during this phase, including:
- City-wide What’s Up Boulder open house
 - Community Kickoff open house and feedback form
- These events were communicated via:
- Social media
 - Outreach through Community Connectors-in-Residence
 - Newsletters
 - Inside Boulder News
 - Utility bill inserts
 - Posters (at city rec centers and several trailheads throughout the Boulder Valley)
 - Press release
 - Media Kits

The City and County are in the process of making all websites and applications more accessible. While much progress has been made, some features in this document may be inaccessible for certain people. If you would like assistance accessing this document, please contact the project email address: future@bouldercolorado.gov or call (303) 441-4124

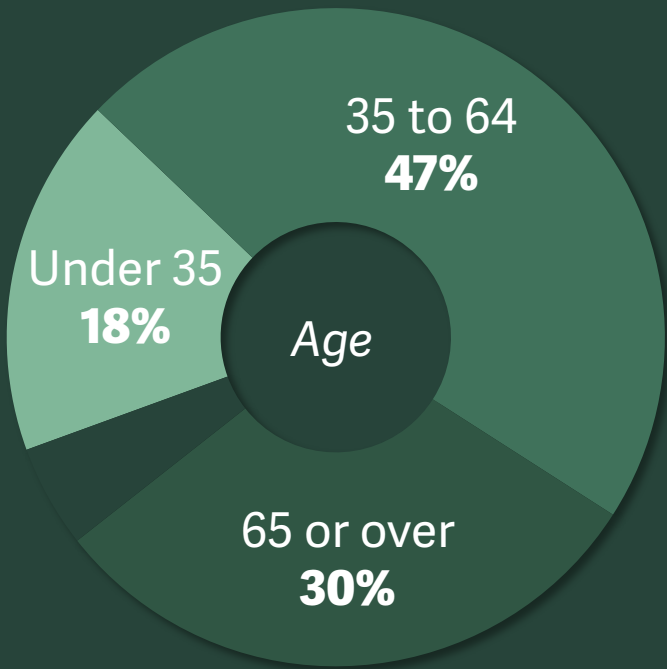
Who we heard from

550

People were engaged in-person and online



Identified as White Identified as Hispanic or Latino/a 3% Identified as Asian
2% Identified as Two or more Races
1% Identified as Black or African American



How will this feedback be used?

Feedback received during Phase 1 helped identify what community members were interested in learning more about. The comments also provided early indicators to inform a revised community vision and set of focus areas for the Comprehensive Plan update

What about past recent engagement?

The project team is also considering feedback received during previous recent engagement efforts. These include several recent department plans, Community Connectors-in-Residence, the 2024 and 2025 Annual Budget, Lifelong Boulder and Growing Up Boulder’s efforts across many different youth led projects over the last 10 years, including its most recent effort around the Child Friendly City Initiative (CFCI)



What's Up Boulder



Sept. 8, 2024

East Boulder
Community Center

~100 Participants

event summary

Community members described Boulder in three words - and learned about the BVCP and how to stay involved in the process

what we heard – 5 key takeaways

The most used words to describe Boulder Today were:

Community

Beauty

Fun

Accessible

Kind

Nature

Exciting

Fitness

Safe

Energetic





Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan Community Kick-Off & Online Feedback Form

Exhibit A
October 19, 2024
Dairy Arts Center
~210 Attendees
248 online responses

what we heard – 5 key takeaways

- 1. Community members are prioritizing the advancement of Boulder’s LIVABILITY, SUSTAINABILITY and SAFETY goals

Within these goal areas, community members feel the following topics need the most attention:

- Affordable living, including housing density and diversity
- Environmental sustainability, including climate action and water resources (supply and demand) planning
- Safety, including crime and public safety, and pedestrian and bicycle safety

event summary

The Community Kick-off Event was an open house for all community members. The event included a presentation of local demographic trends by the State Demographer and an interactive performance by Motus, a local theater group

Community members also had the opportunity to meet with project team members and provide feedback at seven stations, each focused on a different topic



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Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan Community Kick-Off & Online Questionnaire



Oct.19, 2024
Dairy Arts Center

what we heard – 5 key takeaways

2. When envisioning the future of Boulder, community members have described a place that acts as a model for ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY, and a DIVERSE COMMUNITY OF PEOPLE who have ACCESS TO HOMES, SERVICES and opportunities to make SOCIAL CONNECTION with others

The community wrote passionately about Boulder serving the greater nation (and world!) as a place that demonstrates adaptation to a changing climate and care for the natural world. Additionally, many described a future where they were part of a diverse community; could live affordably no matter their age, with access to quality homes, food and transportation; and have the opportunity make friendly connections with neighbors

event summary

The Community Kick-off Event was an open house for all community members. The event included a presentation of local demographic trends by the State Demographer and an interactive performance by MOTUS, a local theater group

Community members also had the opportunity to meet with project team members and provide feedback at seven stations, each focused on a different topic



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Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan Community Kick-Off & Online Questionnaire

Exhibit A
Oct. 19, 2024
Dairy Arts Center

what we heard – 5 key takeaways

3. When community members were asked to offer a “Big Idea” for Boulder’s future, participants dug in on some of Boulder’s greatest challenges – particularly AFFORDABLE HOUSING, DIVERSITY and INCLUSIVITY, COMMUNITY CONNECTION and CLIMATE CHANGE

Here are a few interesting ideas from community members:



Community Kickoff

“Add an “information environment” element to the BVCP alongside built and natural environments. Emphasize importance of technology for emergency management and comms. Open data for transparency.”

“Work with older adults who would like to work. Small single senior housing.”

“Connect CU, the Hill and Downtown by moving Broadway underground and creating a walkable and bikeable space on the surface.”

“Programs to help young single mothers navigate and exit poverty. I would love to help in creating this effort to create a community where we pair mentors with families in need.”



Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan Community Kick-Off & Online Questionnaire



Oct. 19, 2024

Dairy Arts Center

what we heard – 5 key takeaways

4. Community open spaces and trails remain highly valued assets as community space

When asked about ‘finding community’ within Boulder, community members indicated that **OPEN SPACE** and **TRAILS** were the top location to connect with others. Other important places for experiencing connection include **FOOD & DRINK** establishments, **PARKS** and **HEALTH** and **FITNESS CENTERS**

5. Many community members would like to understand more about Boulder’s potential for growth

When community members were asked “What else would you like to know about Boulder Today?” many of the responses described interest in understanding if and how the Boulder Valley could and/ or should grow in the future. Community members want a greater understanding of the capacity of infrastructure to support growing populations and how change in policy surrounding growth could impact the community and its valued quality of life





Community Connectors-in-Residence (CC-in-R)



Dec. 6, 2024



Virtual meeting

5 Participants

what we heard – 5 key takeaways

CC-in-R shared great ideas for promoting engagement opportunities – e.g. through BVSD communication channels, Clinica Family Health and more

CC-in-R suggested that the BVCP team collect data from our local organizations serving under resourced communities for a more complete picture of our community today

CC-in-R expressed a desire to have ongoing, in-depth consultations throughout the process with the BVCP team

event summary

BVCP team had a first consultation with Community Connectors-in-Residence (CC-in-R) with these goals:

- provide an overview of the BVCP update process,
- gather ideas on how best to promote engagement events to diverse communities
- seek CC-in-R feedback on how they want to be engaged in this process



Racial Equity Analysis of Draft Comprehensive Plan Policy

Below is an example of a new draft policy for inclusion into the major update to the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan. The project team has applied the Rapid Response Equity Assessment Tool Method to ask the following questions:

- *Who benefits?*
- *Who is burdened?*
- *Who is missing or excluded?*
- *What unintended consequences might occur?*
- *How can equity be improved through implementation?*

Using the results of this questioning, the team proposes a revision to the draft policy intended to deliver more equitable outcomes. This method of inquiry and analysis will be applied to draft policies as part of the major update to the

48. Home Based Businesses

Draft Policy Language:

The city will support home based businesses to offer affordable options for local entrepreneurs to start and operate local businesses. The city will update regulations to expand opportunities for home-based businesses and simplify requirements. The city will track benefits and impacts of home-based businesses on community neighborhoods.

Who Benefits?

- Aspiring entrepreneurs with limited capital, including parents, caregivers, immigrants, and low-income residents who may not be able to afford commercial space.
- Communities of color and immigrant communities who often operate informal businesses from home due to limited access to capital or barriers to entry in traditional markets.
- People with disabilities or mobility constraints, who may prefer or require working from home.
- Women entrepreneurs, who often balance home responsibilities and may benefit from home-based options.
- The City of Boulder itself benefits through increased economic vitality, local business diversity, and reduced vacancy rates in commercial districts.

Who is Burdened?

- Nearby neighbors may experience concerns about increased traffic, noise, or parking demand, particularly in more restrictive or exclusionary residential zones.
- Renters operating home businesses may face uncertainty or restrictions from landlords or HOA rules, and may not benefit equally from the policy.
- Small business owners in commercial zones may view this as increased competition without the same regulatory overhead.

Who is Missing or Excluded?

- Renters and people in multi-family housing may face additional hurdles, such as lease restrictions, HOA covenants, or space limitations, limiting their ability to benefit.
- Unbanked or undocumented individuals may face challenges formalizing their business to comply with city regulations.
- English language learners may struggle to access resources or navigate permit processes if materials and assistance are not multilingual.

What Unintended Consequences Might Occur?

- Inequitable access to opportunity: Without specific support, benefits may disproportionately accrue to those with access to private homes, discretionary income, and familiarity with regulatory processes—often more affluent and white residents.
- Enforcement disparities: Increased oversight could lead to disproportionate code enforcement in areas with higher populations of people of color or among immigrant entrepreneurs operating informally.
- Neighborhood tension: If implementation lacks community engagement, residents may perceive an erosion of residential character or fear commercial encroachment.
- Zoning disparities: Neighborhoods with more restrictive zoning or HOA oversight (often wealthier areas) may be less accessible for home-based businesses, reinforcing spatial inequities.

How Can Equity Be Improved Through Implementation?

- Provide multilingual outreach, technical assistance, and culturally relevant business support targeted to BIPOC, immigrant, and low-income entrepreneurs.
- Ensure renter protections by working with landlords and housing authorities to develop guidance that supports home-based entrepreneurship in rental units.
- Incentivize or prioritize equity-driven business types, such as child care, cultural foods, or services that meet community needs.
- Create an equitable enforcement strategy that avoids over-policing or penalizing informal activity in marginalized communities.
- Track and publish disaggregated data on who is starting home-based businesses by race, income, gender, housing status, and neighborhood.

Recommended Revision to Draft Policy:

The city will support and expand opportunities for home-based businesses as an affordable and accessible option for local entrepreneurship. The city will update regulations to simplify requirements and promote equitable access for residents across all housing types and neighborhoods. The city will ensure that policies do not unintentionally exclude or burden renters, low-income residents, or historically marginalized communities. Potential impacts on neighborhoods will be monitored to maintain a balance between economic opportunity and community well-being.

Accessibility Report

Filename: BVCP-25-0001 BOCC Memo 9.16.25.pdf

Report created by: [Enter personal and organization information through the Preferences > Identity dialog.]

Organization:

Summary

The checker found no problems in this document.

- Needs manual check: 2
- Passed manually: 0
- Failed manually: 0
- Skipped: 1
- Passed: 29
- Failed: 0

Detailed Report

Document

Rule Name	Status	Description
Accessibility permission flag	Passed	Accessibility permission flag must be set
Image-only PDF	Passed	Document is not image-only PDF
Tagged PDF	Passed	Document is tagged PDF
Logical Reading Order	Needs manual check	Document structure provides a logical reading order
Primary language	Passed	Text language is specified
Title	Passed	Document title is showing in title bar
Bookmarks	Passed	Bookmarks are present in large documents
Color contrast	Needs manual check	Document has appropriate color contrast

Page Content

Rule Name	Status	Description
Tagged content	Passed	All page content is tagged
Tagged annotations	Passed	All annotations are tagged
Tab order	Passed	Tab order is consistent with structure order
Character encoding	Passed	Reliable character encoding is provided
Tagged multimedia	Passed	All multimedia objects are tagged
Screen flicker	Passed	Page will not cause screen flicker
Scripts	Passed	No inaccessible scripts
Timed responses	Passed	Page does not require timed responses
Navigation links	Passed	Navigation links are not repetitive

Forms

Rule Name	Status	Description
Tagged form fields	Passed	All form fields are tagged
Field descriptions	Passed	All form fields have description

Alternate Text

Rule Name	Status	Description
Figures alternate text	Passed	Figures require alternate text
Nested alternate text	Passed	Alternate text that will never be read
Associated with content	Passed	Alternate text must be associated with some content
Hides annotation	Passed	Alternate text should not hide annotation
Other elements alternate text	Passed	Other elements that require alternate text

Tables

Rule Name	Status	Description
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Rows	Passed	TR must be a child of Table, THead, TBody, or TFoot
TH and TD	Passed	TH and TD must be children of TR
Headers	Passed	Tables should have headers
Regularity	Passed	Tables must contain the same number of columns in each row and rows in each column
Summary	Skipped	Tables must have a summary

Lists

Rule Name	Status	Description
List items	Passed	LI must be a child of L
Lbl and LBody	Passed	Lbl and LBody must be children of LI

Headings

Rule Name	Status	Description
Appropriate nesting	Passed	Appropriate nesting

[Back to Top](#)