



Boulder County Land Use Department

BOULDER VALLEY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN: 5 YEAR UPDATE
POLICY INTEGRATION OVERVIEW

August 25, 2016

Topics

- Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan (BVCP) Update: background and purpose
- BVCP Update schedule
- Overview of BVCP policy sections of relevance to POSAC:
 - Section 2: Built Environment
 - Section 3: Natural Environment
 - Section 8: Community Well Being
 - Section 9: Food and Agriculture
- Update to Trails Map

Background and Purpose

- Update process began in the summer of 2015, expected to finish in early 2017
- Overall objectives: reflect new priorities, changing conditions, emerging challenges
- Currently in Phase 3:
 - Research for focus areas
 - **Integrating policies with other city and county plans**
 - Researching land use change requests



<https://bouldercolorado.gov/bvcp>

- Role of county :
 - Staff from range of departments provided input for policy updates reflecting concepts in post-2010 plans and programs, and emerging topics
 - Planning Commission and BOCC, decide on policy updates affecting county
 - Initial draft revisions ready for refinement in response to additional feedback

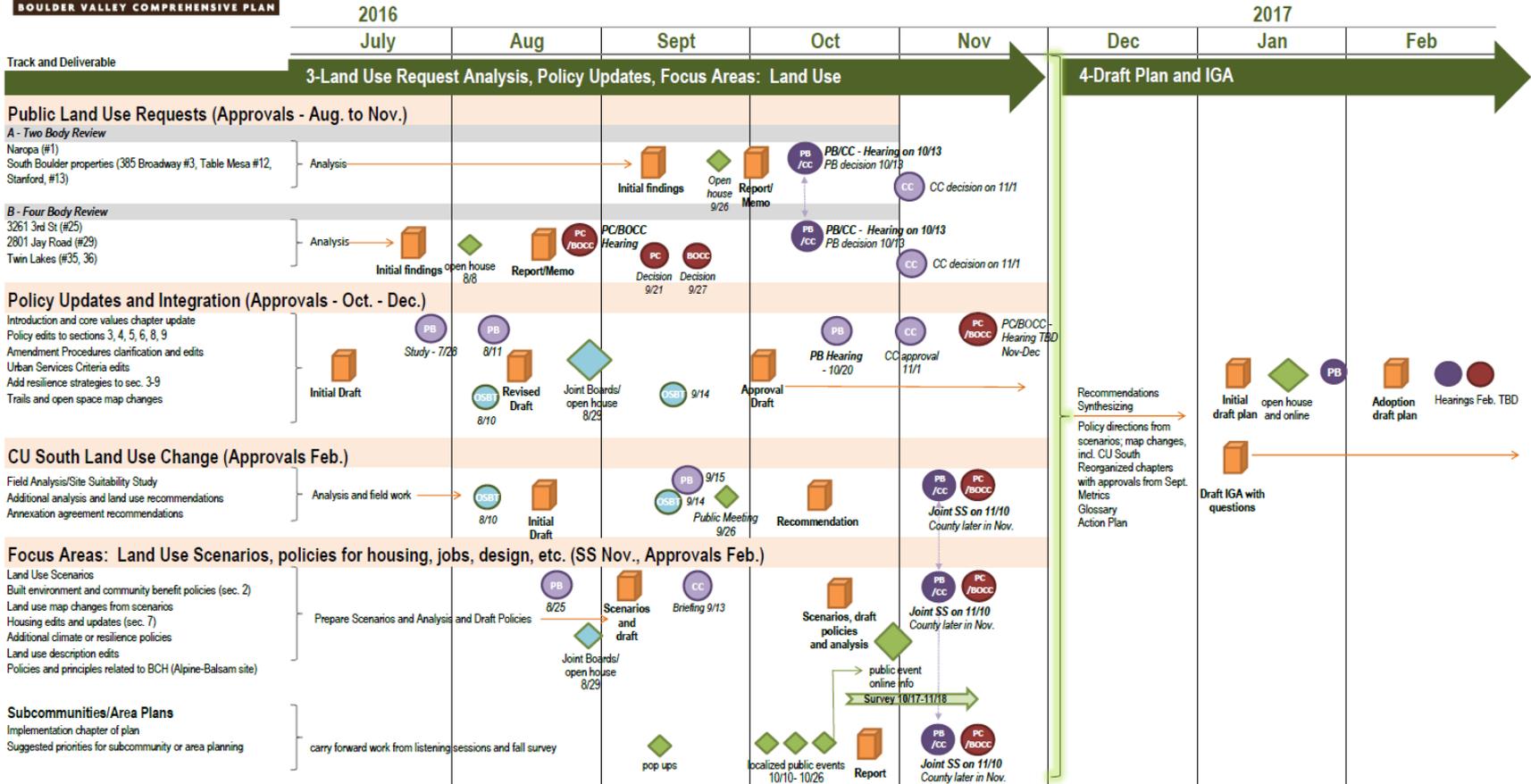
BVCP 5 Year Update Schedule

**OUR LEGACY.
OUR FUTURE.**

BOULDER VALLEY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

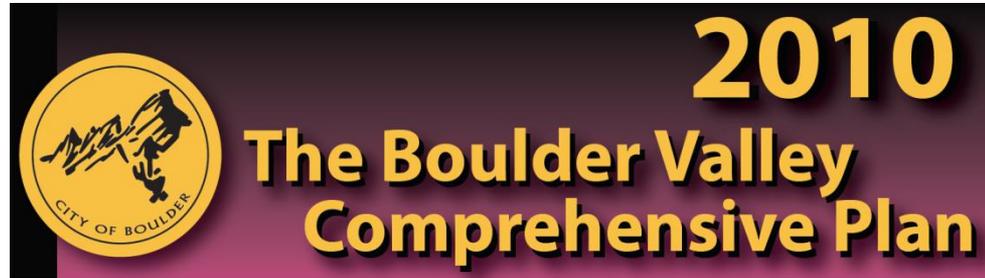
Detailed Schedule for Phases 3 and 4 and Approval Process

Updated - Aug. 8, 2016



Sections of 2010 BVCP Chapter 1: BVCP Policies

- 1. Core Values, Sustainability Framework and General Policies
- 2. Built Environment
- 3. Natural Environment
- 4. Energy and Climate
- 5. Economy
- 6. Transportation
- 7. Housing
- 8. Community Well-Being
- 9. Agriculture and Food



Full draft of updated policies available at:

https://www-static.bouldercolorado.gov/docs/BVCP_Policy_Sections-DRAFT_8.24.16_-1-201608241658.pdf

Section 2: Built Environment - Current Content

- Defines city structure (natural setting, individual character areas, activity centers map, mobility grid, and the public realm)
- Provides growth projections
- Defines sustainable urban form
- Includes 37 policies addressing:
 - Community identity / land use pattern
 - 2.01 Unique Community Identity; 2.02 Physical Separation of Communities; 2.03 Compact Development Pattern; 2.04 Open Space Preservation; 2.05 Design of Community Edges and Entryways
 - Rural lands preservation
 - 2.06 Preservation of Rural Areas and Amenities; 2.07 Delineation of Rural Lands; 2.08 Rural Density Transfer
 - Neighborhoods
 - Mixed use and higher density development
 - Activity centers
 - Community conservation (and historic preservation)
 - Design quality

Section 2: Built Environment — Update

- Better convey through maps and diagrams the “elements that define Boulder’s city structure” such as “activity centers,” and now relationship of transit corridors from renewed vision for transit
- Illustrate and provide metrics and principles of sustainable urban form
- Clarify guidance on neighborhood protection strategies (such as transitions and mix of complementary land uses)
- Describe and illustrate principles of quality mixed use and higher density development
- Convey other principles of design quality (such as sensitive infill and redevelopment)
- Alignment between city and county building codes

Section 3: Natural Environment - Current Content

- Recognizes Boulder's role as a leader and role model in environmental protection and preservation
- States the goal of continuing to develop and implement state of the art policies
- Includes 30 policies addressing:
 - Biodiversity and Natural Ecosystems
 - Urban Environmental Quality
 - Geologic Resources and Natural Hazards
 - Water and Air Quality

Section 3: Natural Environment — Updates

- Reflects several new plans / programs in place since 2010:
 - The city currently is working on updates to its Integrated Pest Management policy, an Urban Forest Strategic Plan, the Resilience Strategy, and draft Climate Commitment.
 - The city adopted the Bee Safe Resolution (2015) banning the use of neonicotinoids on city property and a Bear Protection Ordinance to secure waste from bears (2014). The county adopted a resolution to reduce and eliminate pesticide use to protect both people and pollinators (2015).
 - Boulder County adopted the Environmental Resources Element of the Boulder County Comprehensive Plan (2015) and is currently working on policy related to Genetically Modified Organisms in the county.
 - The city will be developing an Open Space Master Plan (2017).
 - Boulder County is analyzing how to address local oil and gas regulations, and looking at potential policy updates to better align the Fourmile Canyon Creek Watershed Master Plan (2015), Boulder Creek Watershed Master Plan (Urban Drainage and Flood Control District, 2015), and Consortium of Cities Water Stewardship Task Force Final Report (2013).
 - HR&A's Recommendations for Resilience Integration (2016)

Section 3: Natural Environment — Updates

- **New Policy: Climate Change Preparation and Adaptation**
 - The city and county are both working on climate mitigation and recognize that adaptation plans will be necessary as well. To prepare open space lands and natural areas for climate change, the city and county will consider allowing or facilitating ecosystems' transition to new states in some sites (e.g., newly adapting plants and wildlife) and increasing the stability and resiliency of the natural environment elsewhere. The city and county will measure biological indicators to identify high risk species for monitoring and/or relocations, and may conduct restoration projects using arid-adapted ecotypes or species. The Open Space and Mountain Parks Master Plan will address other topics related to climate change, such as visitor experiences to open space.
- **Revised policy 3.07: Invasive Species Management**
 - Add: “management of both non-native and non-local native species will be based on weighing impacts vs. benefits that includes documented threats to species of concern, specific to each site, acknowledging that some non-native species may have become naturalized. Management decisions should also take into account changing species composition due to climate change and other human impacts, as well as the ecosystem role provided by each organism based on the best available science.”

Section 3: Natural Environment — Updates

- Revised 3.11: Urban Forests
 - Develop an Urban Canopy Master Plan to guide short and long term urban forest management.
- Revised 3.13: Integrated Pest Management
 - Notes that “the city and county will carefully consider when pest management actions are necessary and focus on creating healthy and thriving ecosystems to lower pest pressure by natural processes. When pest management is necessary, the city commits to the use of ecologically-based integrated pest management principles...”
- New Policy: Soil Carbon Sequestration
 - The city recognizes that soil sequestration has a range of potential benefits, including water retention, soil health, and stabilization. The city and county will consider soil sequestration strategies, including land management practices that may be used to sequester carbon out of the atmosphere, and explore opportunities to incentivize carbon sequestration.
 - (Note: This policy will continue to be refined City and county are exploring soil carbon sequestration. Also requested by public.
- Revised 3.15: Mineral Deposits
 - Add: “The use of mineral deposits and other non-renewable resources will be evaluated considering the need for these resources and other community values and priorities such as natural and cultural resource protection, community and environmental health, and carbon emission reduction. The city and county will work together to acquire mineral rights as appropriate. Attempting to clarify that intent of the policy is to balance relevant community values with the use of mineral deposit. “

Section 3: Natural Environment — Updates

- Revised 3.17: Hillside Protection
 - Add: Due to the risk of earth movement and/or mud slides under adverse weather conditions, special attention needs to be paid to soil types and underlying geological strata before and during planning, design and construction of any development on or at the base of hillsides
- Proposed revision to Policy 3.24: Protection of Water Quality
 - County staff would like to see a policy that focuses more on general watershed health (the current policies focus on the Boulder Creek Watershed specifically), addressing different influences of watershed health such as, fires, mining, development, etc. County staff suggests adding language noting that watershed health should be known and monitored, and acknowledging that activities upstream affect downstream conditions.
- Potential New Policy: Natural Environment Investments for Resilience
 - The city and county recognize natural environment investments contribute toward resilience by reducing risk and promoting stability. Additionally, urban forestry, tree planting, natural hazard mitigation, improvement of air quality, added recreational activities, and storm water mitigation activities have co-benefits.

Section 8: Community Well-Being - Current Content

- Addresses wide range of community well-being topics, including trails
- Existing trail-related policies that remaining unchanged
 - 8.12 Trail Functions and Locations
 - 8.13: Trail Network
- Includes 20 policies addressing:
 - Human Services (serve broad spectrum of needs, regional approach)
 - Social Equity (equitable distribution of resources, diversity)
 - Community Health (safety, physical health)
 - Community Infrastructure and Facilities (schools and accessibility)
 - Community Facility Needs (support for educational, health and non-profit community agencies)
 - Parks and Trails (trail function, location, networks)
 - Culture (libraries, information resources, arts)

Section 8: Community Well-Being – Updates

- Reflects new plans / programs in place since 2010:
 - Human Services Strategy (in progress)
 - Homelessness Strategy (in progress)
 - HR&A's Recommendations for Resilience Integration (2016)
 - Community Cultural Plan (2015)
 - Parks and Recreation Master Plan (2013)
 - Fire-Rescue Master Plan (2011)
 - Police Master Plan (2013)
- Revised 8.11: Parks and Recreation
 - The city and county recognize park and recreation facilities provide one of the most effective ways to build people's sense of community and quality of life throughout the city, especially in redeveloping areas and in the revitalization of neighborhoods. Parks and Recreation programs and facilities will continue to provide for a well-balanced and healthy community by providing a range of activities that support mental and physical health through high-quality programs and services that meet the needs of the community. Such facilities and services will be designed in a manner that responds to the needs of the intended users. Recommends language changes (including adding use of “cultural vitality”), and several specific policy revisions.
- New Policy: Parks as Gathering Spaces
 - The city will strive to ensure Boulder's public green spaces among residential areas are gathering places for neighbors and community members to build relationships and social ties that encourage safety and support within neighborhoods. These spaces will be planned and managed to remain clean, open, safe and accessible to neighbors and build strong social capital which is the backbone of a resilient and engaged community.

Section 9: Agriculture and Food - Current Content

- Recognizes:
 - A strong local food system can positively affect resiliency, health, economy, environment
 - A growing demand for locally-produced food
 - Most agricultural production in Boulder Valley occurs on city and county open space
- Includes 6 policies addressing:
 - Support for Agriculture (encourage and protect significant agricultural areas and related water supplies and facilities)
 - Local Food Production (emphasis on affordable access to food for everyone)
 - Sustainable Agriculture Practices (promote methods that are healthy, have low environmental impact, etc.)
 - Regional Efforts to Enhance Food System
 - Urban Gardening and Food Production (remove restrictions for food production in shared open spaces, encourage composting and rooftop gardening)
 - Access to Locally Produced Food (support community markets throughout the region, including year-round farmers markets)

Section 9: Agriculture and Food — Updates

- Identifies new plans / programs in place since 2010:
 - Agriculture Resources Management Plan (in progress)
 - City of Boulder Water Efficiency Plan (2016)
 - HR&A's Recommendations for Resilience Integration (2016)
 - 2015 State of Colorado Water Plan (2015)
 - Boulder County Environmental Element (2014)
 - Parks and Recreation Master Plan (2012)
 - City of Boulder Source Water Master Plan (2009)
 - Ordinances and policy changes to promote local food sales
 - Boulder County Cropland Policy (2011)
 - Recommends language changes to incorporate new thinking in the OSMP Agriculture Planning and Parks and Recreation Master Plan, reflect lessons learned from 2 years of inter-departmental focus on local foods
- Policy revisions intended to address: (see draft policy for updated language)
 - Access to healthy food
 - Approach to supporting food production
 - Recognition of importance of access to water, responsible use of water
 - Urban gardening / food production and edible landscaping
 - Goals around sustainable production, and ecological conservation objectives (e.g., pollinator, beneficial insect habitat, planning for farm communities)
 - Reflect lessons learned from regional collaborations (e.g., "The Shed")
 - Reference to Harvest Bucks program and goal of creating a market hall in the civic area

Section 9: Agriculture and Food – Updates

- Revision to 9.01: Support for Agriculture
 - The city and county encourage the preservation of working agricultural lands, and sustainable production of food on them to the degree they provide cultural, environmental, economic and resilient benefits to the community. These uses are important for preserving the rural character of Area III. The success of agriculture on these lands is vitally dependent on their water supplies. The city and county will demonstrate and encourage the protection of significant agricultural areas and related water supplies and facilities, including the historic and existing ditch systems, through a variety of means, which may include public acquisition, land use planning and sale or lease of water for agricultural use. The city and county will support farmers and ranchers in this area as they negotiate the challenges of operating in a semi-arid environment that is often near residential areas.
- Revision to 9.02: Urban Gardening and Food Production
 - The city encourages community and private gardens to be integrated in the city. City incentives include allowing flexibility and/or helping to remove restrictions for food production and sales on private lands and in shared open spaces and public areas, and encouraging rooftop gardens and composting and planting edible fruit and vegetable plants where appropriate.

Section 9: Agriculture and Food – Updates

- Revision to 9.03: Sustainable Food Production Practices
 - The city and county will promote sustainable food production practices on publicly-owned lands and will encourage them on private lands. Sustainable practices include food production methods that integrate ecological conservation objectives, responsibly use water and protect its quality, provide for pollinator and beneficial insect habitat, are respectful to workers, are humane to animals, provide fair wages to farmers, integrate whole farm planning and support farming communities. These can include a range of production types that take into account land suitability, water availability, invasive species, energy use and labor and capital needs. The city and county will also promote sustainable agriculture by recognizing the critical importance of delivering irrigation ditch water to agricultural lands..
- Revision to 9.04: Access to Healthy Foods
 - The city will support cooperative efforts to establish community markets throughout the community and region. Such efforts include working to identify a location or develop facilities to allow one or more year-round farmers' markets, supporting sales of produce from small community gardens and working with local partners on food programs. The city and county support increased growth, sales, distribution and consumption of foods that are healthy, sustainably produced and locally grown for all Boulder Valley residents with an emphasis on affordable access to food and long term availability of food..

Trails Map Update

- Comprehensive guide for existing and proposed trails and trail connections for the entire Boulder Valley.
- Shows existing and proposed trails in the Boulder Valley that are or will be administered by the city of Boulder Planning Department, Parks and Recreation Department, Open Space and Mountain Parks Department, Transportation Division, the Greenways Program and Boulder County Parks and Open Space and Transportation Departments.
- A color version of the trails map will be supplied to POSAC members.
- Policy guidance for trails:
 - Policy 2.30 Boulder Creek and its Tributaries as Important Urban Design Features
 - Policy 2.32 Trail Corridors / Linkages
 - Policy 8.12 Trail Functions and Locations 8.13 Trails Network

Status and Next Steps

- Public Open House, City Joint Board Meeting: August 29
- Opportunity for additional feedback during September
- October 20, Planning Board Decision on Draft