

BUSINESS MEETING ITEM COVER SHEET

DEPARTMENT Transportation

DIVISION

TITLE Authorization of Docket DC-16-0003, Proposed Land Use
Code Text Amendments (Storm Drainage Criteria Manual)

DOCUMENT TYPE Land Use docket

SUBTYPE

BUSINESS MEETING DATE 09/20/16

COMMISSIONERS' ACTION



Approved



Denied



Other

ORIGINAL(S) RETURNED TO Dave Webster

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER

6

COMMENTS



Land Use

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**BOULDER COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

**Sep 20, 2016 - 10:30 AM
Hearing Room, Third Floor
Boulder County Courthouse**

STAFF: Dave Webster, Engineering Project Manager – Transportation
Ben Doyle, Deputy County Attorney

Authorization of Docket DC-16-0003, Proposed Boulder County Land Use Code Text Amendments related to updated Storm Drainage Criteria Manual (“SDCM”)

Authorization of Land Use Code text amendments to incorporate by reference an updated Storm Drainage Criteria Manual and make various companion changes throughout the Code, including in Articles 3, 4, 7, and 18

Public Testimony will not be taken – Action Requested

SUMMARY

The Planning Commission or the Board of County Commissioners must authorize text amendments to the Land Use Code (Art. 16-100.A). Staff is requesting the Board authorize text amendments Code to incorporate by reference an updated version of the County Storm Drainage Criteria Manual and make various companion changes throughout the Code, specifically in Articles 3, 4, 7, and 18.

BACKGROUND

Boulder County first adopted the Boulder County Storm Drainage Criteria Manual in July of 1984. Its creation was spurred by the need to provide a uniform set of standards that would be used to guide development and design drainage improvements in order to prevent future drainage problems and enhance the urban and natural environments. The original Manual also sought to reduce the effort to prepare and review drainage design submittals. Counties are required to adopt drainage plan criteria as part of our subdivision regulations. We also use the current Manual in reviewing drainage plans for other developments, too, such as those projects to which Site Plan Review or Special Use Review applies.

The update is intended to modernize and entirely replace the original Manual, while carrying forward the goals of the original Manual.

Staff hopes that the updated Manual will be significantly shorter than the current document. Much of the current Manual is dedicated not to design criteria, but to design methodology. This is because requiring that external documents be used for a given design

procedure may have resulted in a significant time expenditure on the part of local engineers if they did not already have the applicable documents on hand. Today, those materials are readily available online. An updated version would still provide detailed design procedures for some of the more common storm drainage calculations used in Boulder County, but otherwise primarily focus on the specific criteria that must be met.

Updating the Manual will allow the County to implement comprehensive storm drainage design guidance recommended by other agencies such as the Federal Highway Administration, the US Army Corps of Engineers Hydrologic Engineering Center, and the Urban Drainage and Flood Control District.

One of the goals of a revised Manual is to provide clear guidance to landowners to help them achieve compliance and receive permits to construct replacement crossings in the wake of the 2013 flood. We made some brief amendments to the current Manual in late 2014, but a more comprehensive update is warranted that reflects lessons learned to date.

The impacts of these storms also serves as a reminder that storm drainage criteria can have a critical impact on the level of resilience a community has in the face of a flood disaster. Another goal of the update is to evaluate the priorities of Boulder County in terms of balancing public safety, infrastructure designs that provide greatest resiliency after a large storm event, capital costs, and impacts to the natural environment, among other priorities. The criteria in the Manual should reflect our current priorities.

Many federal and state regulations have changed since the Manual was first adopted more than 30 years ago. Many of these regulations involve floodplain development and water quality practices, both permanent and during construction. Because Boulder County participates in FEMA's Community Rating System, we've developed floodplain regulations and practices that allow residents to purchase flood insurance at a discounted rate through the National Flood Insurance Program.

Boulder County also holds an MS4 permit community from the Colorado Department of Health and Environment ("CDPHE"). This permit allows the County to discharge runoff to waters of the state, but it requires that certain practices must be implemented. These include requiring erosion and sediment control on construction projects and requiring permanent water quality treatment for some developments. The requirements of the MS4 permit from the CDPHE will be considered in the update to the Manual.

In sum, the update to the Manual is meant to address the great majority of design elements, site characteristics, and regulatory conditions that may be involved in drainage design projects in Boulder County. It is intended to provide clear guidance and criteria that will expedite the review and approval process within Boulder County, and will be drafted to address the unique priorities and obligations of Boulder County.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that BOCC authorize staff to update the Storm Drainage Criteria Manual and analyze necessary text amendments to the Boulder County Land Use Code through Docket DC-16-0003. Staff currently anticipates presenting the updated Manual and associated proposed regulations to the Planning Commission at a legally noticed public hearing. After Planning Commission provides a recommendation on Docket DC-16-0003, a public hearing on final adoption before BOCC will follow.