



**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
MEETING SUMMARY**

**February 23, 2017 – 3:30 PM  
Commissioners Hearing Room, Third Floor  
Boulder County Courthouse**

**Docket BVCP-15-0001: Boulder Valley Comprehensive Land Use Change Requests**

**STAFF PLANNERS:**

Dale Case - Land Use Director, Boulder County; Nicole Wobus - Long Range Planning and Policy Manager, Boulder County Land Use; Amy Oeth – Planner II, Boulder County Land Use; Steven Giang - Planner I, Boulder County Land Use; Lesli Ellis - Comprehensive Planning Manager (City of Boulder PH+S); Jay Sugnet - Senior Planner (City of Boulder PH+S); Caitlin Zacharias – Planner I (City of Boulder PH+S)

**BACKGROUND**

This document summarizes discussion and outcomes from a Feb. 23, 2017 Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) public meeting at which the following Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan Major Update (BVCP)-related topics were addressed:

- **Key policy choices related to land use and jobs-housing balance.** Staff provided background and updates on recent analysis on scenarios, results from a second survey, directions toward land use changes, and city decision-makers' input on housing and land use policy alternatives. *Action requested: None. Study session only.* No public testimony was taken.
- **CU South site suitability.** Staff provided background on recent site suitability studies and exploration of appropriate land use for the property and issues to address. *Action requested: None. Study session only.* No public testimony was taken.
- **3261 3<sup>rd</sup> Street land use map change, decision to reconsider.** BOCC was asked to decide whether to proceed with the reconsideration process for a previous land use designation change decision for this property due to a change in circumstances related to the location of the blue line (Land Use Change Request #25). *Action requested: Decision.* No public testimony was taken.

Please refer to the staff memo submitted in advance of the meeting, [available here](#).<sup>1</sup> All public comments received related to the BVCP Major Update docket are [available here](#).<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.bouldercounty.org/doc/landuse/bvcp150001staffreport20170131.pdf>

**Reconsider BOCC’s Sep. 27 land use change decision regarding 3261 3<sup>rd</sup> St. (Request #25).**

Caitlin Zacharias, City of Boulder PH+S, provided an overview of the Planning Commission discussion from the previous week regarding approval of land use designation and area map changes for 3261 3rd Street. County decision makers voted on a previous staff recommendation put forward before in Sept., before voters approved amendments to the blue line in Nov. 2016. City decision makers decided on an amended version of the staff recommendation that was put forward to them after the Nov. vote. Therefore, reconsideration of the county bodies’ Sept. decision making was necessary as all four decision bodies’ must be in alignment for the land use change to take effect. Due to the change in circumstance, staff presented county decision makers with an amended recommendation for the land use and area map change request.

The rationale behind the blue line changes was to create a logical service area boundary which preserves the intent to limit the development potential along the western edge.

Commissioner Jones stated that it made sense to clean up necessary changes along the western edge of the blue line which holds true to the intent from the original review by the BOCC when this project came to them.

BOCC unanimously approved the motion.

**Review draft updates to Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan (BVCP) policy section.**

Amy Oeth provided an update on policy integration efforts for the BVCP Major Update. The primary objectives of the policy updates have been to reflect new priorities, changing conditions, and emerging challenges, and to align polices with other city and county master plans. The staff presentation provided an overview of changes to the following policy sections of the BVCP: Section 3 Natural Environment, Section 4 Energy and Climate, Section 5 Economy, Section 6 Transportation, Section 7 Housing, Section 8 Community Well-Being, and Section 9 Agriculture and Food.

The Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) provided comments on several sections. The BOCC pointed out several policies in which they would like to add reference to the county. However, they recognized that they were not comprehensive in their review for places in which adding reference to the county would be appropriate, and they asked that staff flag additional possibilities for consideration.

***SECTION 1: CORE VALUES***

**BOCC requested that the section include reference to the county, as appropriate, where relevant sustainability frameworks are noted.**

***SECTION 3: NATURAL ENVIRONMENT***

The BOCC made several comments regarding the policies in this section. They suggested adding ‘carbon’ to “soil sequestration” for consistency with other references in the document. They suggested changing language in policy 3.20 Flood Management to clarify whether the policy is aspirational or definitive. They want to ensure that the language is reasonable and feasible since absolutely protection is not possible, as reflected by the 2013 Flood conditions. This direction also

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.bouldercounty.org/property/build/pages/lubvcp150001.aspx>

applied to policies related to wildfire protections where a lot of protection from wildfire and recovery comes down to personal responsibility through mitigation. BOCC also requested that policy language related to “critical facilities” include reference to the county, as appropriate. George Gerstle of the Transportation Department addressed this point and indicated that he would work with his staff to propose revised language. For policy 3.23 Larger Flooding Events BOCC requested adding reference to “city and county”, so it would reflect that the city and county will seek to better understand the impact of larger flood events.

#### ***SECTION 4: ENERGY AND CLIMATE***

BOCC suggested calling out specific segments of the population such as government, private business, and individual citizens when there is a reference to the term “the community”. The purpose of doing this would be to better recognize the multiple groups of players that need to participate in order to have an impact. Commissioner Jones also commented on the “Clean Mobility” policy and how it does not specifically reference electric vehicles. Commissioner Gardner also requested to recognize both the city and the county in the Clean Mobility policy, and also to state that the city and county support innovation. BOCC emphasized that the city and county should both be referenced in any policy related to transportation.

#### ***SECTION 5: ECONOMY***

BOCC indicated a concern that policy 5.05 Support for Local Business and Business Retention was reactive when the policy should be proactive in order to avoid potential problems from occurring. Commissioner Jones stated that the natural environment is a very large economic driver for Boulder and should be identified as such. Commissioner Domenico commented on policy 5.01 Revitalizing Commercial Industrial Areas, wanting to analyze how annexed land in commercial and industrial areas could be used to address other issues such as affordable housing. The BOCC noted the following policies in this section where they felt it was important to list both the city and county: 5.02 Regional Job Center, 5.11 Sustainable Business Practices, 5.12 Home Occupations, 5.14 Employment Opportunities and 5.15 Partnerships to Support Economic Vitality Goals. BOCC also requested to note where else in the Plan the jobs-housing balance issue is addressed. Commissioner Domenico requested calling out the collaboration on planning related to State Highway 7. BOCC also liked the new reference to resilience in this section, and noted that it might be another place worth considering emphasizing the importance of taking a more proactive, forward-thinking approach that anticipates potential problems.

#### ***SECTION 6: TRANSPORTATION***

Commissioner Jones expressed support for the term “mobility for all,” and the BOCC recognized and expressed appreciation for the extensive work in this section.

#### ***SECTION 7: HOUSING***

BOCC indicated an interest in highlighting the loss of middle income households in Boulder since it has had a large impact on the community. BOCC had questions pertaining to how the county should measure economic prosperity and whether or not unlimited economic growth is truly beneficial. Strategies that were proposed included changing policy language to emphasize the “continuing challenge” for low and moderate income or the chronically homeless to address the point that the Boulder Valley is losing the middle income housing. Commissioner Domenico wanted to make a point about the emigration of people out of Boulder because of the inability to afford housing in the community. BOCC expressed an interest in having policy language highlight that the housing strategy should be a regional effort. Regarding policy 7.08 Preservation and Development of Manufactured Housing, BOCC noted that it is a priority to keep communities intact when mitigating for loss of housing. There was also interest in analyzing policies related to Manufactured Homes for equity purposes to explore whether there could be a creative opportunity to recreate mobile home parks for more durable, efficient and high quality affordable housing. Regarding policy 7.10 Balancing Housing Supply with Employment Base, BOCC recommended revising language to reflect

the importance of addressing affordable housing needs associated with the introduction of new jobs in the community. Commissioner Jones suggested the possibility of “requiring” affordable homes rather than using the term “incentivize.” Commissioner Domenico suggested additional language to add context where “market affordability” is referenced (i.e., policy language referring to the fact that smaller, attached units tend to retain value better).

BOCC requested adding references to the county in policies 7.01 Local Solutions to Affordable Housing and 7.04 Strengthening Community Housing Partnerships.

***SECTION 8: COMMUNITY WELL BEING***

BOCC appreciated the city and county policy to “partner to create and support our safety net.” They also appreciated the language about shared data and evidence based approaches. Commissioner Jones noted that the topic of quality of life align well with the discussion of trails in this section. Commissioner Domenico also requested placing an emphasis on public art in relation to Policy 8.19 Public Art.

***SECTION 9: AGRICULTURE AND FOOD***

BOCC asked to check on the accuracy of the statement that the majority of agriculture in Boulder County is happening on city and county open space. Staff agreed to confirm.