

**CITY OF BOULDER
TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY BOARD AGENDA ITEM**

MEETING DATE: April 14, 2014

AGENDA TITLE: Staff briefing and TAB input regarding Envision East Arapahoe: East Arapahoe Plan and Sustainable Streets & Centers—Scope and Approach.

PRESENTERS::

Tracy Winfree, Director, Public Works Transportation
Mike Sweeney, Transportation Planning & Operations Manager, Public Works Transportation
David Driskell, Executive Director, Community Planning & Sustainability (CP&S)
Susan Richstone, Deputy Director, CP&S
Kathleen Bracke, Go Boulder Manager, Public Works Transportation
Micki Kaplan, Senior Transportation Planner, Public Works Transportation
Lesli Ellis, Comprehensive Planning Manager, CP&S
Sam Assefa, Senior Urban Designer, CP&S

OBJECTIVE:

Provide an update on the Envision East Arapahoe project and receive feedback from TAB on the following topics:

1. The scope of work and timeline for 2014
2. Project issues/opportunities and constraints, and
3. Approach and ideas for developing the project vision

BACKGROUND

Project Purpose

During the work plan discussion in January 2013, City Council indicated a desire to conduct a planning effort in the East Arapahoe area, primarily precipitated by the expansion of Boulder Community Hospital and desire to improve the urban form and land use mix, and strategies noted in the Economic Sustainability Strategy (ESS). Additionally, in 2013 the city completed an existing conditions inventory for this corridor, including analysis of the street network and site design characteristics through the Sustainable Streets and Centers (SS&C) project. SS&C focuses on the urban design aspect of the streets and centers/districts to implement the community design/sustainable urban form policy section to the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan. The next stage of SS&C has been integrated with the East Arapahoe planning effort and proposed to be called “Envision East Arapahoe.” This effort will define a vision for the corridor’s future, support Arapahoe Avenue’s role as a major transit corridor, lead to appropriate tools to help shape urban form, improve the quality of the street and its centers, and lead to specific near and long term implementation tools such as guidelines or a “pattern book” to be used during project review and/or other possible changes to the land use code.

Each board is being asked to comment and provide feedback about the draft scope of work,

project timeline and project approach. Staff will consult with each of the boards as the plan progresses, and other boards as relevant (e.g., Parks and Recreation, District boards).

1. **Planning Board** will provide input as the vision and goals are drafted, as plan options are explored and analyzed, as strategies are developed, and on the draft plan. Planning Board is the approval body for all area plans.
2. **TAB** will provide input on plan goals, analysis and strategies specifically related to transportation policy and planning topics.
3. **BDAB** will provide input on plan option analysis and the draft plan on issues specifically related to urban design issues.

Study Area

The initial project study area consists of length of East Arapahoe Avenue from Folsom Street to 75th Street and quarter mile wide on the south side and half a mile wide on the north side, incorporating the adjacent industrial areas and enclaves. While it is important to have a larger study area to start, particularly for transportation improvements, the area is over 4.5 miles in length, covers 3,000 acres, and includes approximately 1,900 parcels. Therefore, early in the project it will be important to narrow the focus on particular centers and locations to address design, land use, and mobility “hub” issues.

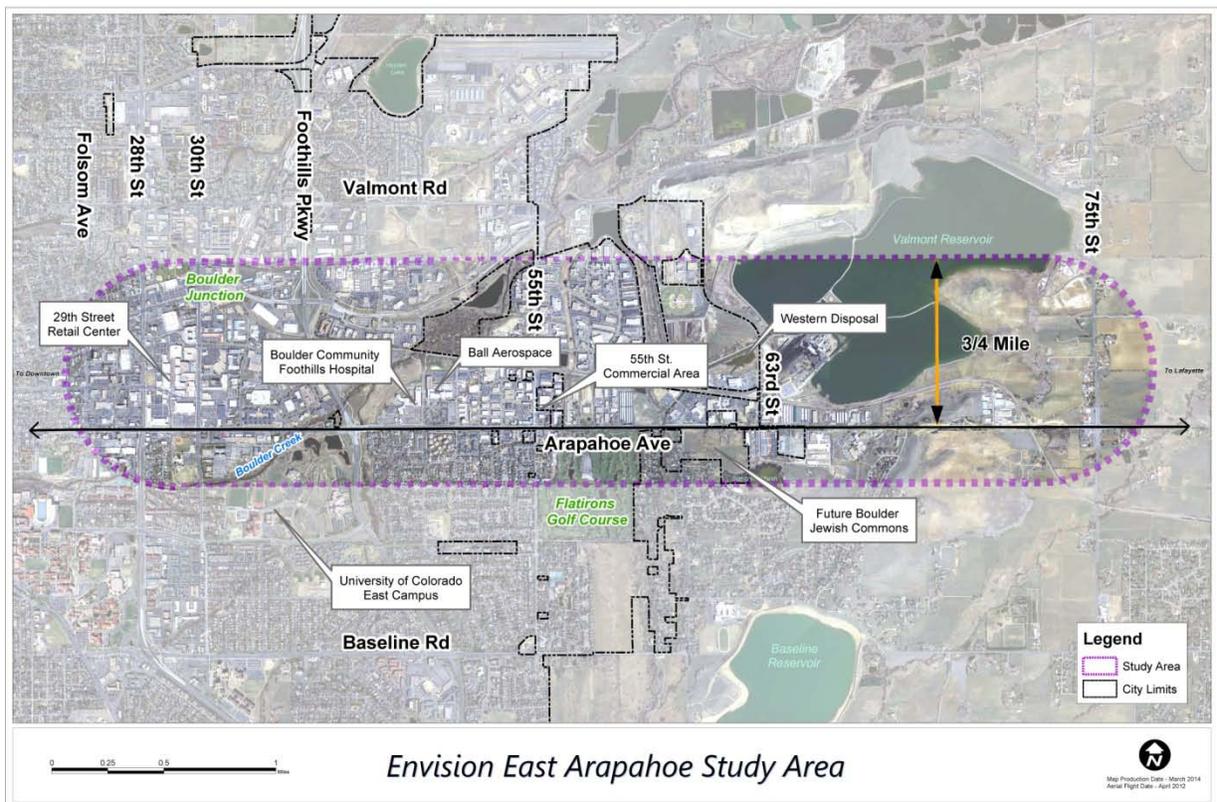


Figure 1: Study Area Draft

Approach

Envision East Arapahoe will model the expedited, focused, and action-oriented planning

approach described by City Council and Planning Board with the term “Area Plan Lite.” Staff will work with the community to swiftly produce a **visionary, data-driven plan and set of actions within a year. The plan will demonstrate cross-cutting goals, near-term solutions and longer term actions.**

The plan will contain a vision and a clear set of guiding principles, as well as next steps underpinned by visualization and scenario development. It will not contain the full level of detail that a typical area plan would include. However, the process should demonstrate how the city can effectively and quickly identify potential redevelopment areas and weigh choices about policy options, services, infrastructure investments, and feasibility.

Scenario development uses indicators or evaluation criteria as the basis for creating and evaluating choices and will allow the community to collaboratively discuss and adjust future scenarios. Indicators might address factors such as:

- redevelopment potential
- carbon emissions
- building energy use
- transportation, multi-modal connectivity, bicycle, pedestrian, and transit access
- housing mix and affordability
- urban design
- water consumption
- parks (or other services or amenities) per capita
- impervious surface
- infrastructure costs and return on investment
- jobs-to-housing ratio

The city has issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) to hire a firm (or firms) that will support the scenario building, analysis, and visualization aspects of the project. A project website has been established www.envisioneatarapahoe.com

Background – Inventory, Issues and Opportunities

A description of issues and opportunities and maps are included as **Attachment A**. Additionally, draft maps illustrating zoning and land use, transportation, natural resources, facilities, and other existing conditions are available [here](#). (The SS&C Phase 1 Inventory work is located [here](#). Staff also is completing resource inventory work, such as a more thorough understanding of redevelopment potential of parcels, ownership patterns, current development proposals, existing zoning and standards (i.e., parking, use standards), service patterns and areas lacking services, and other factors. This information will be available later in April 2014.

Some of the opportunities identified are listed below. The final plan will include recommendations for some or many of these topics, whereas some items may be addressed in the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan later. The early stages of the process and engagement and outreach will help further refine the scope of work.

1. Establish a vision for the street (i.e., what type of “complete street”?) and the use and form of the built environment along it (i.e., uses, location of “centers” and their

- connection? How do people interact and get access?)
2. Retrofit parts of the corridor into more healthy, vertical and horizontal mixed-use, compact and connected place(s) and brand these places.
 3. Improve multi-modal transportation including local/regional transit, Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), mobility hub, auto, pedestrian and bicycle connections (especially across Arapahoe Avenue), and align transportation and land use goals.
 4. Connect this part of the city more strongly with downtown and other areas (i.e., CU and Boulder Junction) and expand sustainable transportation options for employees and residents, through changes to the street and with tools such as EcoPass.
 5. Identify places for workforce housing and healthy, walkable, and complete neighborhoods, helping to alleviate Boulder's in-commuter pressure.
 6. Identify locations for hospital growth and adjust to accommodate changes in land use.
 7. Address annexation of unincorporated industrial and residential properties.
 8. Incorporate CU's new vision for East Campus and connections to Arapahoe.
 9. Integrate this project with follow up to the Primary Employer Study and Economic Sustainability Strategy.
 10. Coordinate with flood mitigation planning south of Arapahoe Avenue and on the Flatirons Golf Course.
 11. Identify potential for pocket parks, urban agriculture, increased tree canopy, reduced heat island effect, cultural amenities, food carts, art, etc., and build on cultural and community assets already present.
 12. Reduce carbon emissions, increase energy efficiency and reduce operating costs.
 13. Incorporate low impact development stormwater techniques, improve water conservation and address green infrastructure.

Timeline

Staff has been developing a scope of work and timeline for the project. (See **Attachment B**.) The project is envisioned as having three major phases: (1) Inventory (*currently underway*), (2) Vision and Scenarios (*April through August*), and (3) Action Planning and Implementation (*September through December*).

Engagement Process and Stakeholders Interviews

The project encompasses a large and varied area of the City of Boulder with many segmented and complex stakeholders, communication and engagement are important to success. Engagement for Envision East Arapahoe will be broad-based, inclusive, transparent, and accessible for all, using some of the successful techniques employed during the Civic Area project. It also will be targeted to the specific businesses and employees, property owners and residents along the street. Parts of the outreach may revolve around day-time events and online/social media techniques.

The stakeholders proposed for interviews are located in **Attachment D**.

The first major workshop for the public will be in June. It will include design visualization and character preferences. The scenario building workshop will occur later in the summer or early fall. (**Attachment B** contains additional information about community engagement.)

JOINT BOARD FEEDBACK FROM DECEMEBER 2013

In late December, the Planning Board, Transportation Advisory Board, and the Boulder Design Advisory Board met together to review the first phase of the SS+C Inventory and the approach to the East Arapahoe Project. Following is a summary from that session. The proposed scope of work, timeline, and visioning approach reflects input received.

SS+C Phase I Inventory

- Define a broader vision for project first.
- Phase I report is good, but it is light in some inventory areas and some recommendations are premature.
- Identify “centers” and what needs to be connected. Centers might take many forms and scales (i.e., coffee carts or food trucks).
- Reference transportation opportunity -- Arapahoe as a BRT link.
- Note opportunity to coordinate land use patterns with CU.
- Development along the edges of the corridor – along the street.
- Map less tangible items (i.e., cultural assets)
- Link walkability goals of SS+C with other initiatives (i.e., ADU test area)

Approach to East Arapahoe

- Analyze existing zoning, including barriers to desired development patterns, such as excessive surface parking and explore whether rezoning some areas would be appropriate (i.e., rezone perimeters for multi-use and leave the neighborhoods intact OR allow for more residential development, high density between Boulder Junction and CU., OR consider whether residential mixed use may not be feasible in some areas along East Arapahoe
- Identify opportunities for 20 minute walkable commercial areas.
- Identify/map employment centers, cultural amenities, areas lacking service and multi-modal transportation connections.

Combined Projects' Next Steps

- Issues for East Arapahoe Planning and SS&C are similar – combine.
- Establish the vision first.
- Avoid using labels such as “activity centers.” Branding should be engaging and exciting (i.e., “spines” instead of “corridors,” “Boulevards” instead of “streets”)
- Public engagement important; involve variety of stakeholders (i.e. commuters, employees, etc.)
- Develop tools to help visualize and engage the public, such as 3D representations, pattern books, form-based zoning, visual preference, design guidelines, etc.
- Conduct zoning analysis, especially on East Arapahoe
- Identify low hanging fruit for the short-term as well as longer term visionary items.
- Look at other successful “best practice” examples of street retrofit regionally and nationwide (i.e., Colfax)
- Integrate with 20 min neighborhoods and housing and use Walk Score to identify potential centers.

ADDITIONAL FEEDBACK FROM PLANNING BOARD, MARCH 20, 2014

The Planning Board reviewed this material on March 20, 2014. This memo has been modified to reflect input given. Planning Board also suggested the following ideas in response to the questions in the memo.

The scope of work and timeline for 2014

- The approach generally makes sense.
- It makes sense to make the study area asymmetrical with focus to the north. Also

consider the two major riparian corridors and their influence on the study area. It might be more of a triangle than strictly a linear corridor.

- Include some sort of site review tools as part of the outcomes. May need two (or more) sets of guidelines – one more street-facing (along Arapahoe) and one for the interior properties and around riparian areas.
- Early code changes might be part of “early wins”.
- Board members will send additional stakeholder contacts.

Project issues/opportunities and constraints

- Identify what cultural heritage is there and opportunities to identify the authenticity of the area and tie to the history of Boulder.
- Very little of the development is reflective of the riparian corridors; that’s a missed opportunity.
- Improving the connections and bicycle network is a priority outcome. Make the area more permeable for bicycles.
- Tired buildings are also an opportunity.
- Avoid sterile street improvements; make sure north and south are not further divided with any RTD improvements. Urban design and landscape are really important to the quality of the street.
- Work with property owners to identify good opportunity projects and stimulate positive change.

Approach and ideas for developing the project vision

- The 3D visualization and visual preference approach will be helpful in crafting the vision.
- The stronger the vision, the more likely it will happen.
- Be clear about the role of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) along the corridor. A corridor with it (or without) will be very different in nature. Encourage BRT as a catalyst.

Establishing the Vision

Staff will discuss with TAB what type of inspired vision and type of street and centers East Arapahoe should become. **Attachment C** contains some questions and draft vision ideas for the discussion. Staff is preparing base maps for discussion about character areas.

Board Action Requested

The TAB is asked to review and provide input on:

1. The scope of work and timeline for 2014
2. Project issues/opportunities and constraints, and
3. Approach and ideas for developing the project vision

Project Next Steps

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| May 27, 2014 | City Council study session regarding issues, draft scope, feedback from workshop, vision (Note: Date may shift to May 22) |
| Early June 2014 | Launch public workshop with speakers and focus on vision/visualization |
| Summer 2014: | Return to Boards and Commissions to work on scenarios |

ATTACHMENTS

A – Issues and Opportunities and Inventory Maps

B – Draft Scope of Work and 2014 Timeline

C – Draft vision ideas

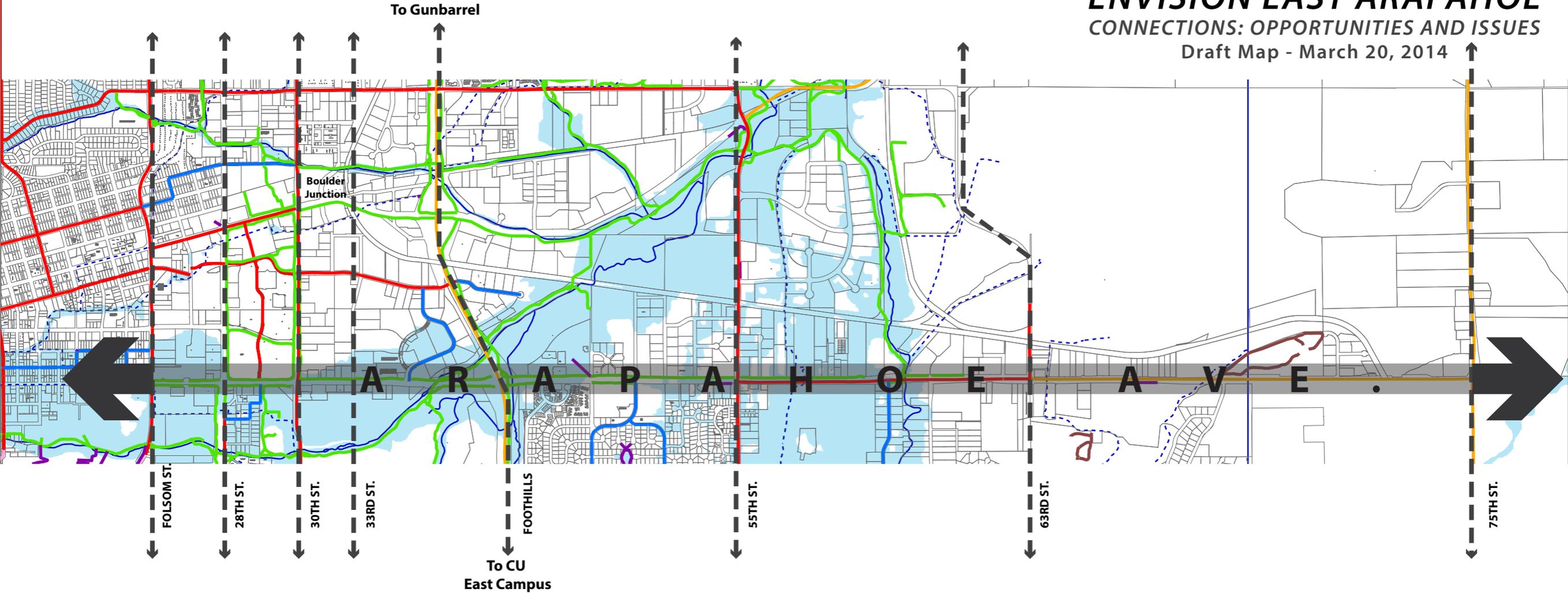
D – Stakeholder list

E – Integrated Time Line for Housing, Planning, Transportation, Access Management and Parking Strategy, and Climate

ENVISION EAST ARAPAHOE

CONNECTIONS: OPPORTUNITIES AND ISSUES

Draft Map - March 20, 2014



- 1) Establish a vision for the street (i.e., what type of "complete street"?) and the use and form of the built environment along it (i.e., uses, location of "centers" and their connection? How do people interact and get access?)
- 2) Improve multi-modal transportation including local/regional transit, Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), auto, pedestrian and bicycle connections (especially across Arapahoe Avenue), and align transportation and land use goals.
- 3) Connect this part of the city more strongly with downtown and other areas (i.e., CU and Boulder Junction) and expand sustainable transportation options for employees and residents, through changes to the street and with tools such as EcoPass.

OPPORTUNITIES

1. Area is in the 100-year flood plain
2. Area has limited parks, open space and trails
3. Area lacks connectivity and has mobility barriers
4. Area uncomfortable for walking and biking

ISSUES

EXISTING TRANSPORTATION CONNECTIONS

- MULTI USE PATH
- ON STREET BIKE LANE
- DESIGNATED BIKE ROUTE
- SIDEWALK CONNECTION
- SOFT SURFACE PEDESTRIAN PATH
- PAVED SHOULDER
- CREEK
- - - DITCH

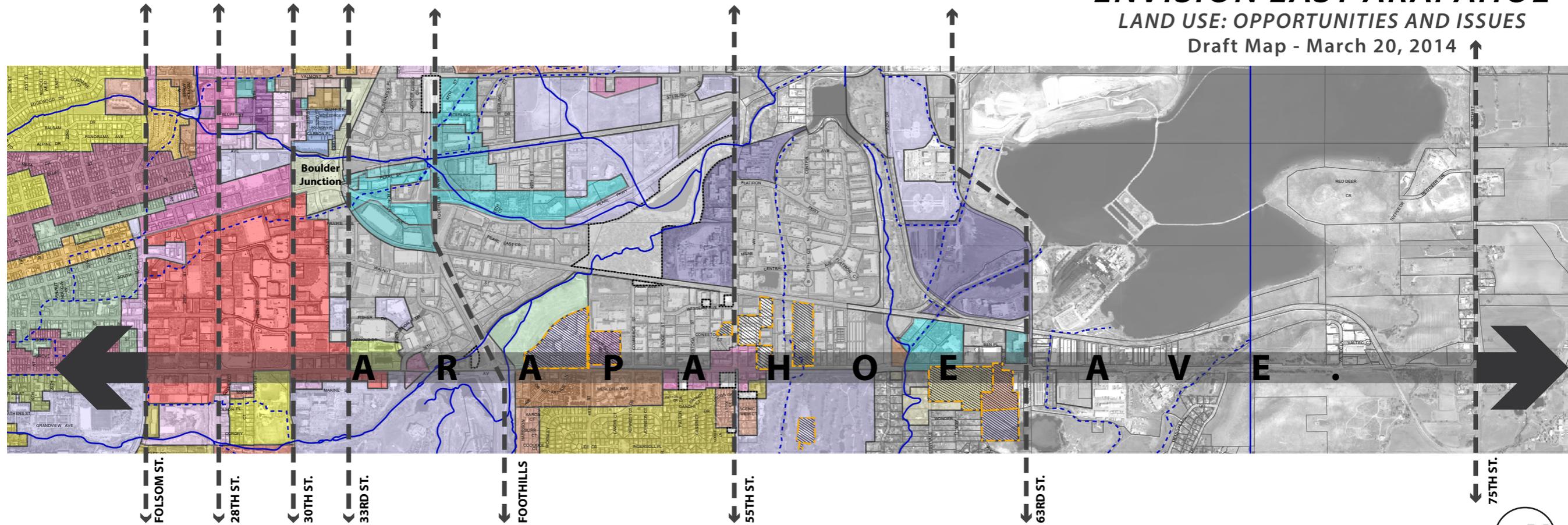


1/4 mile 1/2 mile

ENVISION EAST ARAPAHOE

LAND USE: OPPORTUNITIES AND ISSUES

Draft Map - March 20, 2014



- 1) Retrofit parts of the corridor into more healthy, vertical and horizontal mixed-use, compact and connected place(s) and brand these places.
- 2) Identify places for workforce housing and healthy, walkable, and complete neighborhoods, helping to alleviate Boulder's in-commuter pressure.
- 3) Identify locations for hospital growth and adjust to accommodate changes in land use.

- 4) Address annexation of unincorporated industrial and residential properties.
- 5) Incorporate CU's new vision for East Campus and connections to Arapahoe.
- 6) Integrate this project with follow up to the Primary Employer Study and Economic Sustainability Strategy.
- 7) Coordinate with flood mitigation planning south of Arapahoe Avenue and on the Flatirons Golf Course.
- 8) Identify potential for pocket parks, urban

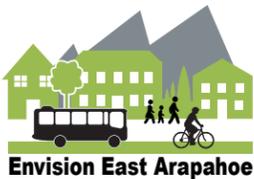
- 9) Reduce carbon emissions, increase energy efficiency and reduce operating costs.
- 10) Incorporate low impact development stormwater techniques, improve water conservation and address green infrastructure.

OPPORTUNITIES

- 1) Area is in the 100-year flood plain
- 2) Area has a patchwork of unincorporated properties
- 3) Area has "fired" buildings and limited amenities

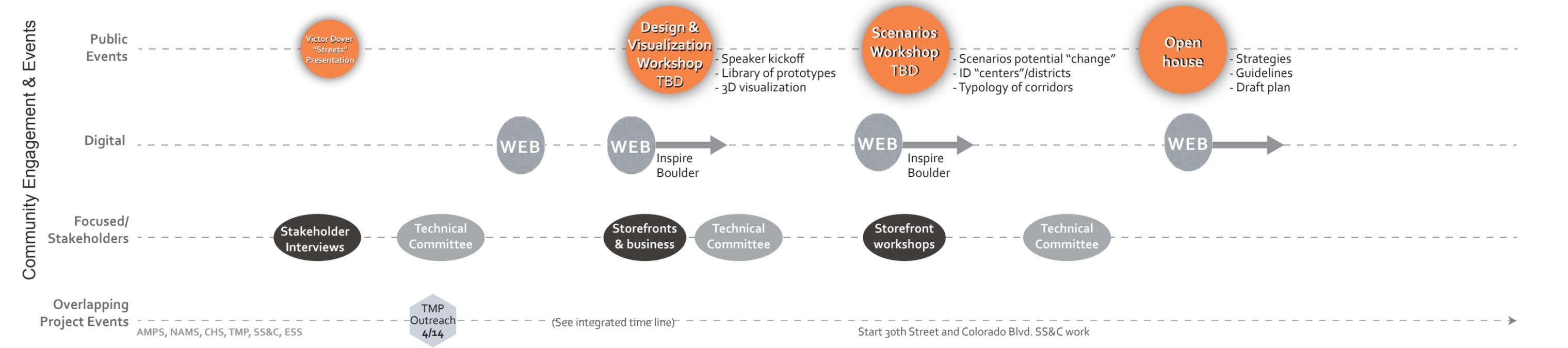
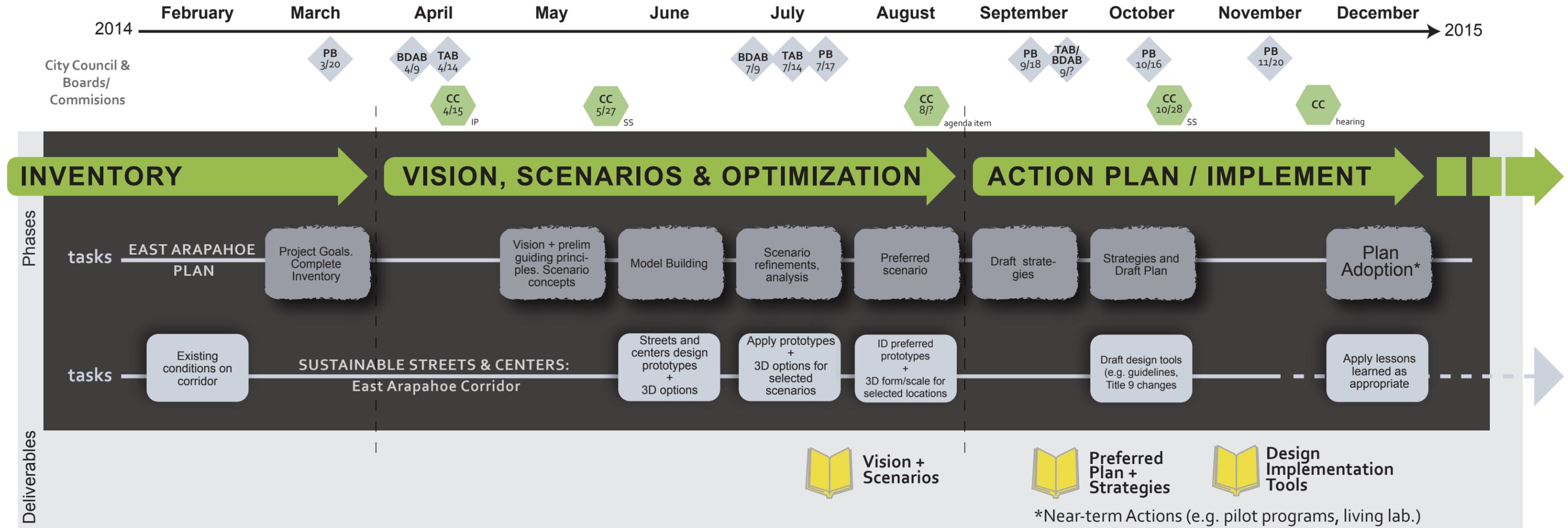
ISSUES

| | | | | | |
|---|------|---------------------------|---|-------|-----------------------------|
|  | BC-1 | Business - Community 1 |  | RL-2 | Residential - Low 2 |
|  | BC-2 | Business - Community 2 |  | RM-1 | Residential - Medium 1 |
|  | BCS | Business - Commercial |  | RM-2 | Residential - Medium 2 |
|  | BMS | Business - Main Street |  | RMX-1 | Residential - Mixed 1 |
|  | BR-1 | Business - Regional 1 |  | RR-1 | Residential - Rural 1 |
|  | BT-1 | Business - Transitional 1 |  | MU-3 | Mixed Use 3 |
|  | BT-2 | Business - Transitional 2 |  | MU-4 | Mixed Use 4 |
|  | MH | Mobile Home |  | IG | Industrial |
|  | RE | Residential Estate |  | IM | Industrial - Manufacturing |
|  | RH-1 | Residential - High 1 |  | IMS | Industrial - Mixed Services |
|  | RH-2 | Residential - High 2 |  | IS-1 | Industrial - Service 1 |
|  | RH-4 | Residential - High 4 |  | IS-2 | Industrial - Service 2 |
|  | RH-5 | Residential - High 5 |  | A | Agricultural |
|  | RH-6 | Residential - High 6 |  | P | Public |
| | RL-1 | Residential - Low 1 | | E | Enclave |



ENVISION EAST ARAPAHOE: 2014 Timeline

East Arapahoe and Sustainable Streets & Centers



Attachment C:

Envision East Arapahoe – Transformative Vision Ideas

How do you Envision East Arapahoe? What would make it a great place in 20 years? What would you like to see change in the next few years?

1 - How bold or inspired should East Arapahoe's vision be? *For instance:*

- A. **STATUS QUO+:** Arapahoe Avenue continues as a suburban corridor with an important economic vitality function. The corridor is served by a variety of RTD transit routes with the Jump as the primary route on Arapahoe with good transit ridership. TDM programs (such as ECO pass) are also available to employers in the area. People mostly drive between work and home. Change over time will be shaped by the market. Investment focuses on response to the market and maintenance, not transformation.
- B. **MODERATE:** The corridor and districts for people to work, eat, and live transform around a more complete street with transit that is improved in look and function to connect places and attract higher transit ridership. Moderate investment in infrastructure, transit and TDM programs at selected areas that are most in need of change and improvements. It will take some partnerships and focused planning for selected locations within the area.
- C. **BOLD:** Over time, Arapahoe Avenue transforms to a transit-oriented corridor with amenities for workers and neighborhoods, a mix of land uses, and vibrant people-oriented places. People walk a lot, and live, work, eat, and recreate in complete neighborhoods and districts. A high level of investment occurs in the street and block transformation, BRT boulevard/complete street, mobility hub, expanded TDM programs and infrastructure occurs to support the desired transformation. This approach will require partnerships, programming, comprehensive planning approach and multiple sources of funding.

2 – What kind of transformation is desired – where and for what aim?

- A. What type of “complete” street should East Arapahoe Avenue become?
 - a. How do people move travel along it? Why?
 - b. Is it designed with distinct characteristics according to the desired function as a “through” street or a place people are going “to”?
 - c. Does it have separated bus lanes, bicycle lanes, etc? (BRT?)
 - d. Does it have a lot of landscaping, street trees, and separated medians?
 - e. Is there a mobility hub and where?
 - f. Does it have fiberoptics and other utilities built in? Does it treat stormwater or generate energy?
 - g. Does it have bridges or connections from north to south or are there certain intersections?
- B. What kinds of people-oriented places flank Arapahoe Avenue? Where?
 - a. Where should there be “centers” or destinations along the corridor and what types?

- b. What types of work places, housing, commercial services, institutions are located along the corridor?
- c. What types of public outdoor spaces?
- d. What other activities are people doing here (e.g., recreating, dining, learning, providing child care, viewing art, accessing nature or parks, etc.)?
- C. How does it look overall?
 - a. How do buildings relate to the street?
 - b. What type of place, unified theme(s), height, mix of activities?
 - c. How suburban vs. urban?
 - d. How much public art, culture, and design?

(for instance/Some ideas we've heard....)

A people-oriented place -- to live, work, learn, play, that:

- *continues to be an economic engine supporting business investment, ingenuity, and invention...*
- *attracts people to spend time in and walk in vibrant districts...*
- *includes great neighborhoods with choices in housing and nearby parks, open space, services, and jobs that are within short walk radius...*
- *allows people to move east and west along a boulevard with multiple transportation options, including excellent transit service (BRT?)...*
- *connects easily to downtown and the west side of Boulder...*
- *boasts beautiful architecture and public spaces...*
- *provides safe and welcoming places for pedestrians and bicycles...*
- *has nearby high quality amenities and facilities for businesses and neighborhoods such as restaurants and parks...*
- *has reliable utilities and services...*
- *includes exciting cultural resources and public art...*

SUGGEST IDEAS!!

What are the key character areas (districts/corridors) along East Arapahoe, and how should they take shape? Within each -- what type of:

- Overall character
- land use patterns and types (type, mix, density/intensity)
- transportation and mobility factors (street function, bicycle pedestrian and sidewalks, transit service, street connections)
- housing and neighborhoods
- commercial and industrial development and jobs
- parks, open space, and cultural facilities or resources (location, access, amount, type)
- community identity and livability

- urban services and utilities
- design features
- etc.

Envision East Arapahoe Stakeholders

Draft - 04/01/14

Commercial/Industrial - Employers

| Company | Contact |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Ball Aerospace | Guy Fromme |
| Boulder Chamber | John Tayer |
| Small Business Bureau | Sharon King |
| Premier Members Credit Union | Branda Abbot |
| Flatirons Subaru/Acura | Scott Crouch |
| Flatirons Subaru/Acura | Ann Morris |
| Fisher Honda/Kia | Craig Fisher |
| Avery Brewing | Adam Avery |
| Boulder Valley Credit Union | Michael Shepard |
| Boulder Dinner Theater | Michael Duran |
| Daily Camera | Al Manzi |
| EcoCycle | Marti Matsch |
| ReSource | Jared D'Arcey |
| EVOL Foods | Christian Robbilard |
| Viewpoint Office Park | Brian Shrifrin |
| Elevations Credit Union | Dennis Paul |
| Boulder Community Hospital | Ron Secrist |
| Boulder Community Hospital | Kai Abelkis |
| Naropa (East Campus) | Todd Kilburn |
| Boulder Valley School District | Briggs Gamblin |
| Western Disposal | Frank Bruno |
| EcoCycle | Allyn Feinburg and Randy Moorman |

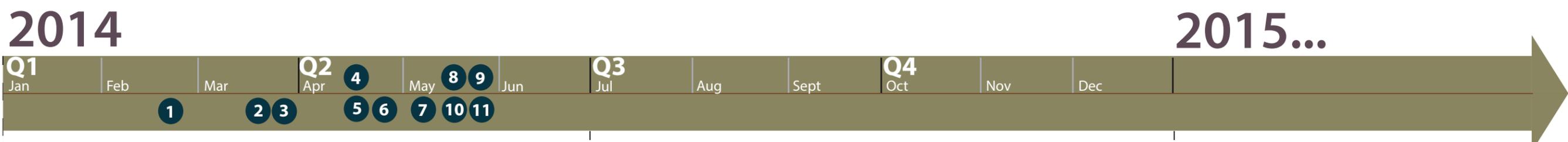
Residential / Property Managers

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| The Peloton (Housing) | Regan |
| Arapahoe East (Boulder Housing Partners) | |
| Canterwood Apartments | |
| Fairway Apts. (Thistle Comm. Housing) | |
| East Foothills Neighborhood Assn. | Shelly Schlender |
| BHP | Stuart or Betsey? |
| Peleton | Anne Bueche |

Institutions/Agencies - Possible Technical Team

| | |
|--|----------------------------------|
| CU - East Campus / Facilities Planning | Phil Simpson |
| CU - Acting Vice Chancellor? | Steve Thweat |
| CU - Transportation and Parking Management | Dave Cook |
| CU - Transportation and Parking Management | David Lieb |
| RTD | Bill Van Meter |
| RTD | Chris Quinn |
| CDOT - Transportation Operations Manager | David Averill |
| Boulder County - Land use Planning | Dale or Denise |
| Boulder County - Transportation | Jared Hall (or Scott or George?) |
| | |
| | |

Integrated time line for housing, planning, transportation, AMPS, and climate



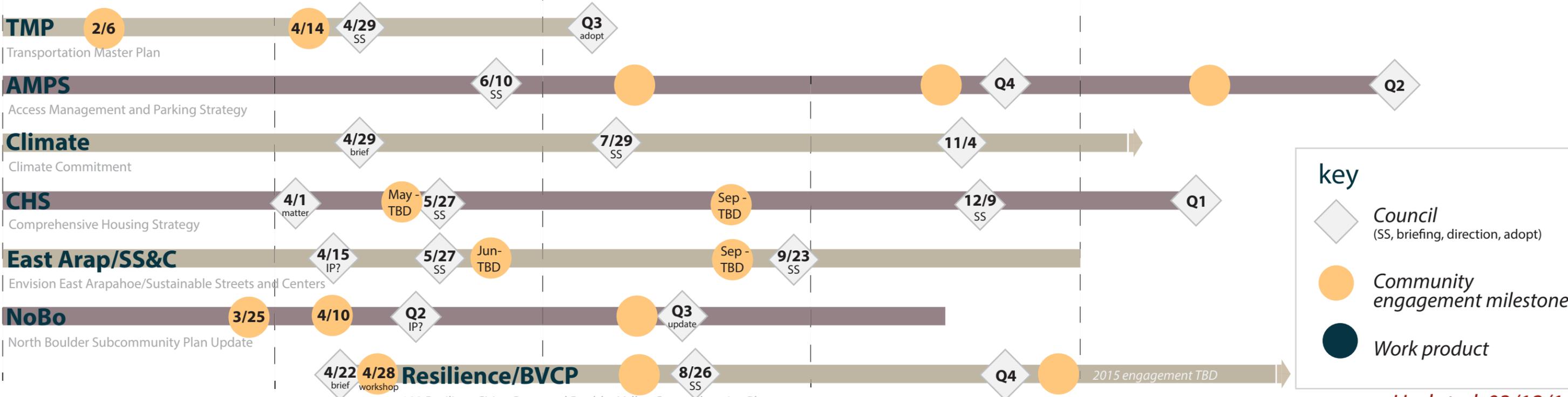
Integrated "Outcomes"

- 2014 - Q1-Q2:**
- 1 Feb- EcoPass Study (TMP) ✓
 - 2 Mar- Housing survey (CHS) ✓
 - 3 Mar- TDM toolkit (AMPS/TMP)
 - 4 Apr- North Boulder options (NoBo)
 - 5 Apr- Complete streets and optimized transit corridors (TMP)
 - 6 Apr- GHG Travelwise strategies (Climate/TMP)
 - 7 May- Visioning (E Arap/SS&C)
 - 8 May- ESS, valuation, density ROW code changes
 - 9 May- Jobs/population potential (CHS/BVCP)
 - 10 May- Resilient City Scope of Work (Resilience)
 - 11 May- Housing toolkit analysis (CHS)

- 2014 - Q3-Q4:**
- Jul- TMP draft and implementation plan (TMP)
 - Q3- CHS Early Action items (CHS)
 - Q3- Round 1 parking and other code changes (AMPS/CP&S)
 - Q3- Resilient City risk assessment (Resilience)
 - Q3- Scope of Work (e.g., local foods, engagement) (BVCP)
 - Q3- North Boulder action plan (NoBo)
 - Q3- Preferred scenario testing, opportunity areas (E Arap/SS&C)
 - Q3- Neighborhood opportunities /15-minute (CHS/BVCP)
 - Q3- AMPS other policy issues, parking mins/max (AMPS)
 - Q3- Housing toolkit (OHU/ADU, etc.) (CHS)
 - Q4- Affordable housing program strategies (CHS)
 - Q4- ESS code changes - update use standards, defs.(CP&S)

- 2015:**
- Q1- Round 2 parking code (AMPS)
 - Q2- Final Strategy (AMPS)
 - ongoing- BVCP, Regional transp. connections (TMP impl.)

Projects and Key Council and Community Engagement Milestones



key

- Council (SS, briefing, direction, adopt)
- Community engagement milestone
- Work product