

Boulder City Council STUDY SESSION

**Tuesday
October 14, 2014**

6-9 PM Joint Session with Planning Board

**6-7:15 PM Follow Up on Discussion of Planning Issues
(materials available 10/10)**

**7:15-9 PM Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan
Assessment and Update**

**Council Chambers
Municipal Building
1777 Broadway**

Submit Comments to City Council
Email: [council @bouldercolorado.gov](mailto:council@bouldercolorado.gov)

or

Attention: Alisa Lewis, City Clerk
PO Box 791, Boulder, CO 80306
Fax: 303-441-4478

City Council/Planning Board Study Session

October 14, 2014

AGENDA

6:00 - 7:15 PM Follow up on Discussion of Planning Issues

(from City Council Sept. 16 meeting)

Objectives:

- Hear Planning Board input on priority issues of concern
- Understand relationship of issues raised to current work efforts
- Outline of approach to work program and community engagement
- Hear feedback on priorities/ focus for 2015 work plan and community engagement

- 1 **Introduction** (5 min) – *David Driskell*
- 2 **Summary of Planning Board Discussion** (5 min) - *Aaron Brockett*
- 3 **Presentation of Preliminary Approach to Work Plan and Engagement Options** (10 min) - *David Driskell*
- 4 **City Council Feedback on Priorities** (20 min.)
- 5 **Joint Discussion** (30 min)
- 6 **Summary of Next Steps** (5 min)

7:15 - 8:50 PM Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan Assessment and Update

Objectives:

- Provide update on BVCP assessment process
- Review input received to date and consultant preliminary observations
- Receive feedback on desired approach to BVCP update process

- 1 **Staff/Consultant Presentation** (15-20 minutes) - *Lesli Ellis, Ben Herman*
- 2 **Summary of Planning Board ideas (3 min)** - *Aaron Brockett*
- 3 **City Council/Planning Board Discussion and Feedback**
 - BVCP update issues
 - Guidance on desired update approach and process
 - Guidance on relationship of resilience strategy with BVCP

8:50 - 9:00 PM Wrap up and Next Steps

**Summary of Feedback on Work Program Options for
September 16 Motion re: Planning Issues**

Items in Main Motion	Potentially part of existing work program effort?	Level of Effort
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do by right projects result in better design than projects that go through discretionary review? Comparisons/ examples would be helpful. Process changes that would lead to improvement of the public realm and the design of better buildings. Are there changes to Site Review Criteria that would make discretionary review more effective + lead to better buildings, taking into account roles of both BDAB and PB? 	<p>YES. Issues identified can be addressed through the Design Excellence initiative already underway. This initiative will evaluate built projects to determine if desired outcomes are being achieved, and identify specific tools, incentives, code and/ or process changes that would result in better design outcomes.</p>	<p>The approved motion will make the Design Excellence initiative a more significant work effort than originally anticipated. Planning Board, Design Advisory Board and Council will need to provide input on prioritization and sequencing of desired process and code changes through the evaluation process already underway.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comment on the feasibility of creating a 3-D model that would demonstrate the current zoning capacity of the city 	<p>YES. The feasibility of a 3-D modeling tool can be assessed during early phase of the Comprehensive Plan Update.</p>	<p>Commenting on the feasibility is not a significant work effort. However, depending on scale and scope, implementation could be a significant work effort.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Process changes that would lead to increased predictability in the review process 	<p>YES. Staff has a list of code changes. It is understood that “predictability” in the sense of this motion language is focused on the certainty of outcomes that are approved (or assumed) within the site review approval process. “Predictability” can also refer to certainty for applicants that if certain measures are met, there application will be received favorably.</p>	<p>Predictability needs to be more clearly defined, with common understanding of how it would be achieved through specified code changes. Such changes would need to be prioritized and sequenced within the overall work effort related to code updates.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What has been the role of “community benefit” in obtaining entitlements and does the term need to be defined in the Code? 	<p>YES. The definition of “community benefit” can be added to the list of potential code changes and prioritized accordingly.</p>	<p>The proposed work would need to be prioritized and sequenced within the overall work effort related to code updates.</p>

STAFF EVALUATION AND FEEDBACK ON FULL LIST OF “PLANNING ISSUES”

In advance of the September 16, 2014 special study session on “planning issues,” councilmembers were invited to email a list of specific topics or concerns they would like to discuss. Those lists were compiled and sorted by the meeting facilitator, Heather Bergman, in advance of the meeting, with specific areas of input sorted into three overall topic headings: “Vision,” “Process/Perspectives,” and “Policies/Tools.”

Later in the evening, Council adopted a motion directing staff to evaluate several potential areas of concern. One line of the motion referenced the “Policies/Tools” listed in the study session’s summary table of council input, asking for staff’s review and recommendations regarding how the identified issues might be incorporated into existing or proposed work efforts.

The table on the following pages summarizes the staff response to each of the specific action items (excluding broad areas and information items) in the “Policies/Tools” section of the September 16 summary table.

- Items highlighted in **green** indicate policies or tools that had already been incorporated into the main motion and had clear council support, and which could be addressed as part of an existing work effort. Also included are items not included in the main motion but which are already being considered as part of an existing work effort. Code changes or other actions to implement these items will require prioritization.
- Items highlighted in **blue** were not incorporated in the main motion, are not already incorporated in an existing work effort, but could nonetheless be considered (subject to prioritization) within the context of an existing work effort.
- Items highlighted in **yellow** were not reflected in other items of the main motion, and would require an additional work effort not currently part of the work plan. Brief comment related to the potential work plan impact of these items is provided for each.

Staff would like direction from Council on both the blue and yellow highlighted items as to whether to devote additional time and consideration to these items, which would (particularly in relation to the yellow highlighted items) require some level of trade-off with other priority work plan items.

Specific policies or tools proposed for review, or specific action or solution proposed	Included in main motion?	Will or could be considered in existing project?	Comments
Height modification policy and relationship to community benefits	Yes	Yes	This issue could be considered and prioritized within the staff work program focused on code changes .
Density bonus policy and connection to community benefits	Yes	Yes	This issue could be considered and prioritized within the staff work program focused on code changes .
Downtown commercial density bonus and amount of linkage fees	Yes	Yes	This issue could be considered and prioritized within the staff work program focused on code changes .
Exemptions in growth management policy		Yes	This issue could be considered as part of the BVCP Update or as a potential code change but is not currently specified as an issue to address within either effort.
Codes governing by-right development and relationship to quality of developed product	Yes	Yes	This issue could be considered and prioritized as part of the Design Excellence initiative and potential code changes.
Require onsite affordable housing, no exceptions; or include option at site review to require onsite		Yes	This issue will be considered as part of the Comprehensive Housing Strategy
Revise site review criteria, strengthen requirements for community benefit	Yes	Yes	This issue could be considered and prioritized within the staff work program focused on code changes
Make community benefits binding, measurable, and enforceable; changes trigger a Planning Board review	Yes	Yes	This issue could be considered and prioritized within the staff work program focused on code changes
Consider requiring projects with intensity or height bonuses to be net zero emissions above by-right	Yes	Yes	This issue could be considered and prioritized within the staff work program focused on code changes

Specific policies or tools proposed for review, or specific action or solution proposed	Included in main motion?	Will or could be considered in existing project?	Comments
Reconsider adequate public facilities fee methods to ensure they cover public impacts and externalities		No	Not currently in the scope of existing work efforts and would be a significant project
Review/revise current land use intensity code to incentivize smaller residential units over larger ones		Yes	This issue will be considered as part of the Comprehensive Housing Strategy
Implement ordinance change for ADUs and OAU's and to allow owner-occupied boarding houses		Yes	This issue will be considered as part of the Comprehensive Housing Strategy
Implement program to preserve existing and manufactured housing, micro-zoning of mobile home parks		Yes	This issue will be considered as part of the Comprehensive Housing Strategy
Forecast water availability based on climate change models and apply to build-out scenarios		Yes	Currently in process – Water Conservation Future Study being prepared by Utilities
Implement form-based zoning and overlay districts		No	Not currently in the scope of existing work efforts and would be a significant project
Look at tools/ incentives for assuring better design	Yes	Yes	This issue will be considered as part of Design Excellence
Require earlier input by DAB, neighbors, residents, businesses		No	Will be looking at development process, but not necessarily this specific issue
Develop area plans or a pattern book		Yes and No	Major new area planning efforts not currently on work plan (except for Envision East Arapahoe). "Pattern book" could be an outcome of Design Excellence

Specific policies or tools proposed for review, or specific action or solution proposed	Included in main motion?	Will or could be considered in existing project?	Comments
Require that new neighborhood plans include schools, libraries, transit stops, fire stations, reasonable distances to grocery stores, etc.		No	These types of considerations are part of area planning efforts, however, no additional plans beyond Envision East Arapahoe are currently on the work plan.
Develop a plan for targeting diverse demographics when reviewing projects		No	Will be looking at development process, but not this specific issue
Develop a plan for land banking mobile home parks		Yes	This issue will be considered as part of the Comprehensive Housing Strategy
Develop joint strategy with Boulder Housing Partners to incentivize preservation of existing affordable and workforce housing		Yes	This issue will be considered as part of the Comprehensive Housing Strategy
Explore requiring transportation demand management plans for new commercial projects		Yes	Currently in process. Planning Board to discuss TDM toolkit on Oct. 18
Consider creating a Housing Advisory Board to help develop, coordinate, and monitor City actions on housing		Yes	This issue will be considered as part of the Comprehensive Housing Strategy
Temporarily pause all major site and use plan review projects at the Planning Board level by no longer accepting applications		No	Not supported by council at Sept. 16 meeting
Implement appeals process that could enable project past concept plan phase to proceed to full site plan review during the pause, given adequate community benefit		No	Not supported by council at Sept. 16 meeting

Boulder Planning Board points for discussion with City Council on October 14th

1. Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan
 - Where do we want to be?
 - Add more visualization
 - Link to Implementation Tools
 - Disagreement on the role of quantification
2. Importance of robust community engagement
3. Community benefit in relation to modifications. Tie requests for modifications to community benefit or not? (4 think yes, 3 think no)
 - An important conversation
 - All agree defining community benefit is key
4. Agree on desire/need to create affordable housing for middle income: need the right tools
 - Tools to get affordable housing on site
 - Need to provide both affordable housing and a variety of household types
 - Creative, grassroots approach
 - Organic, infill, include existing neighborhoods too
5. Update Site Review criteria and other regulations (e.g. Zoning, Use tables, etc.)
 - Reflect Comp Plan goals
 - Tools to get affordable housing on site

Planning Board Members' Areas of Interest:

Aaron Brockett

I'm mainly addressing the concept of revising the site review criteria that was mentioned in Tim and Macon's motion, but I have some additional thoughts as well:

- Should we fine-tune the zoning in certain areas to ensure that we are getting the developments that we are looking for? For example, the MU and Main Street zones (BMS), to my knowledge, allow mixed use developments, but don't require them. BC zones allow for neighborhood serving retail, but don't require it, etc.
- Similarly, I think the Use tables could use some changes. For some areas of the city, we may want to allow a more limited set of uses to accomplish the city's goals; in others, we may want to allow some additional uses.
- What changes could we make to the code to incentivize smaller residential units? I would like to see an analysis of which requirements in the code have an effect on unit size. We should move towards eliminating requirements that encourage larger units and adding incentives for smaller units. Maybe this means removing open space per unit rules, or dwelling unit per acre rules, and switching to an FAR based system. I'm not sure of the best approach, but would like to explore alternatives.
- One of Tim and Macon's items addressed public benefit and whether it should be defined in the code. Currently, I don't think public benefit is in the Site Review criteria, but it does come into play in annexations and some other situations. It would be very helpful to have a definition of public benefit for those situations where it is a criterion.
- The rest of my comments are about the Site Review criteria:
 - I would like to see the word minimize removed from the criteria. It's too extreme -- in many cases minimize would mean removing something entirely, which isn't necessarily practical. Examples are F(iii) (minimizing shadows) and F(xi) (minimizing energy use).
 - Speaking of F(xi), I would like to get clarity on what minimizing and mitigating energy use consists of. This criterion deals with important city (and world!) goals and it's important to take the right approach while avoiding arbitrariness.
 - D(iv) says we should minimize the amount of land devoted to the street system, but this contradicts our desire to break up super blocks and have a fine-grained street network. I would like to see this changed to encourage the creation of narrower streets that allow for the coexistence of different travel modes.
 - F(i) and (ii) talk about compatibility with the character of the area and the height being in general proportion to the height of existing buildings. It would be helpful to have some guidelines to what constitutes compatibility and being in general proportion.
 - I(i) lists certain zones that allow for intensity modifications. Are there other zones in the city that could benefit from similar allowed modifications?
 - K(ii) lists the criteria for allowing parking reductions. Can we add references to shared, unbundled and paid parking?
 - k and l address the criteria for allowing minor modifications and amendments to approved site plans. Could we add the requirement to notify Planning Board of any allowed mods/amendments? It wouldn't have to be subject to call-up, but could be helpful for the process to see what changes are being approved.

Bryan Bowen

- I think most of this conversation ought to be couched in terms of community livability - what makes this a wonderful, sustainable, and vibrant place? I also think we ought to pursue clarifying all of this through the comp plan update rather than putting forth a separate parallel process. The city does a lot of outreach, and I think their current trend toward more visualization is a good thing.
- By-right vs discretionary review: risky topic, as always, but I think allowing more by-right projects to happen under tighter regulations might be best. Just ask for whatever it is that we want, and allow Site Review to deal with the real variation. It'll ease things for the development community and reduce staffs workload.

Affordability is a big issue - which leads me to ask that we explore whether a site review criteria can be made to keep affordable housing on-site when important. There are certainly cases when we still need cash-in-lieu, mostly small or overtly luxury buildings. We're all aware that there are legal hurdles here, but I think we'd like to elevate the conversation to consider changing our ordinance to do what we can without being in conflict with state laws.

- I also think we ought to codify ways if increasing affordability passively: smaller units, cooperative housing (a high priority for me), pocket neighborhoods, cohousing, allowing unrelated adults to live together legally, OAOs and ADUs. Beyond that, I think it's worth considering whether BHP can expand its programs to a wider band width of the market, up to 125% AMI, to help bridge the gap between the top of the affordable range and the bottom of the market.
- While I like data and analysis as much as the next guy, I'm a little leery of attempts to quantify concrete goals such as a population cap, thinking that the unforeseen consequences are likely to be pretty big as things change over time. I am not sure we have a complex enough model to be highly accurate in its predictions.
- I don't personally think that additional "community benefit" ought to be tied to increases in height or density, rather that all developments pull their own weight in terms of paying for their impacts, serving community sustainability and affordability goals, and providing for art and creative funkiness. I don't think a three story building is inherently better than a four story building, it's just a matter of design and urban form.
- As they are now, the Use Review tables in the LUC need to be refined and probably simplified. In some areas they need to be made more restrictive to ensure we get what we want - assuming that other uses can still be allowed through Use Review - and in other cases they need to become more permissive so that mixed use neighborhoods can stay more vital and adaptive.
- Regarding the 3-D model - I think it's a good idea to help the public and applicants understand what the zoning allows, though that happens at the risk of leading to projects that always go for the max. I think such a model would need to reflect what things aren't likely to change as well - it's really different to imagine the whole of Pearl Street going to 55' (which can't happen) vs what's possible, meaning that it needs to show what's protected by landmarking as well as anything that's over 50 years old, contributing, or in historic districts. This seems like a big undertaking, but it might be best as an outsourced low resolution study. I think that some of the neighborhoods would feel more at ease if they understood that there isn't a plan in place that allows greater intensity to flood over them.

John Gerstle

Among the topics I would like to include are:

- A discussion of the manner in which "community benefit" should be considered and evaluated in PB decisions - for example, in decisions concerning allowable building height.io
- A discussion of Boulder's goals and objectives with regard to employment and growth, location of commercial activities, and physical form of our town with respect to desired density and transportation goals, and how this should be taken into account by the Planning Board in its consideration of individual project proposals.

Crystal Gray

Do by right projects result in better design than projects that go through discretionary review? Comparisons and examples would be helpful.

Yes- if you have the underlying zoning designed to achieve what you want. An example is the MU-3 (Mixed Use) zone on Pearl from 18th to Folsom. Besides an occasional Use Review we rarely get a site review in this area yet there is infill and redevelopment that achieve the goals of the MU-3 zone. The MU-3 zone might be a good example for some BC zones or 'strip malls' that are changing or we want to encourage to change - create a zone that accomplishes what Community Business should be especially for the surrounding neighborhood and eliminate exceptions that do not achieve the BC goals. Tweak those things that are barriers to providing real community businesses.

Process changes that would lead to improvement of the public realm and the design of better buildings.

Adopt more area plans, neighborhood plans and 'area plans light' so projects will be within an agreed upon vision for the area.

Make sure that neighborhood meetings are led by the Neighborhood and Planning Department and not the developer. Zoning information can be presented in an unbiased manner, the public can be educated as to what is allowed by right, what is an exception and what is the process.

Concept Reviews should be required, even in amendments to existing PUD's, and applicants should be encouraged to check back in with PB, without additional fees, if they want to 'test' their new/ revised concept.

Change site review exceptions (height, density, setbacks, etc) need to have defined community benefit.

Take a look at the zoning and make sure the allowed uses achieve the urban design goals - an example is downtown where what is allowed as a use by right on the ground floor (banks, offices) might not achieve the goals of having a lively community space with retail, restaurants, and yes -movie theaters. Narrow the uses allowed by right and make the others by use review or we are going to lose the character of downtown. Of course - ask the downtown businesses, property owners and neighbors what would help keep downtown the 'heart' of Boulder.

Process changes that would lead to increased predictability in the review process;

See above - Adopt area Plans, meaningful neighborhood outreach and meetings, and zoning that achieves the vision. Review zoning districts and eliminate exceptions that do not achieve the goals of the zone. The predictable process is use by right but properties are now priced on potential for exceptions. - this is beyond our control except to make changes in the exceptions.

Are there changes to Site Review Criteria that would make discretionary review more effective and lead to better buildings, taking into account the roles of both BDAB and Planning Board?

Effective changes, from my PB standpoint, would be to have a mechanism that requires the ‘aspirations’ that a developer presents to PB be a part of the site review approval. Too often we hear goals such as will provide ‘affordable housing’, or ‘middle income’ housing, or ‘micro units’, or ‘micro offices’, or ‘artists work space’ or movie theaters, or an ‘active’ community plaza or ‘better connections’ and even ‘design visioning’ that has little resemblance to what is presented in the final site review- you get the point. Nothing in the site review right now can require these ‘aspirations’ to be achieved so there should be changes that allow PB to require these ‘aspirations’ as part of approval. See the list of Site Review Criteria changes below.

What has been the role of “community benefit” in obtaining entitlements and does the term need to be defined in the Code?

Yes the ‘community benefit’ term needs to be defined in the code. The role of “community benefit” use to be in the code but some where (I think in the 1990’s) was actually removed from the height exception criteria. We need to have it back in the Land Use code and defined for all exceptions - including the growth management exceptions.

Comment on the feasibility of creating a 3-D model that would demonstrate the current zoning capacity of the City?

The Downtown Alliance did a similar exercise showing what buildout would look like - it led to zoning changes because of the realization that the downtown did not have the infrastructure or capacity to absorb the build out that was allowed by right. It was a wake up moment and some of the downtown was actually ‘downzoned’. A model would also show the greater context of projects as well as helping define the context for city projects and plans. We could avoid projects that seem out of place for their context.

POLICIES / TOOLS

Topic

Height modifications:

Community benefit should be a requirement (criteria) for height modification. Benefit could be: more affordable housing, targeted moderate affordable housing, energy conservation/renewables beyond code requirements, public open space, non-profit benefits (office space), community meeting space, preservation of unique features, neighborhood retail, actualization of 15 min. neighborhood etc,

Density and density bonuses:

See above: Should have requirement that units be smaller (more intensity) if density bonus is requested and not just have a larger building. Tie it to specific site review criteria.

Design and aesthetics:

Design should have to respond to the context the project is in and should have urban design elements that make it interesting on all sides. Requirement for durable materials - not just have an ‘aspiration’.

Growth management:

Re-examine the exceptions - are we getting real mixed use projects or does an residents only ‘exercise room’ count as mixed use and thus an exception.

Fees/taxes:

This is the big question! Does development put a burden on the existing property owners or does development pay for the needed infrastructure and public facilities that are required. Put this on the work program!

Micro units:

Describe these and add a mechanism that can make them a requirement of site review and not just an 'aspiration'.

Existing housing

Involve neighborhoods in this discussion!

Examine zones where ADU's (*attached* Accessory Dwelling Units) and OAU's (*detached* Owner Accessory Units) can be expanded - within the existing FAR requirement. Examine what 'tweaks' might improve these units (don't count stairs or upstairs decks in the 450 sq. ft. for OAU's, look to expand alley coverage if historic structures are preserved), allow on smaller lots if unit is proportionally smaller and allow a slightly larger OAU for larger lots (over 14,000 sq. ft.),

Allow subdivision to preserve a small house on a non-conforming lot if small house is landmarked. For encouraging landmarking of homes allow for an OAU.

Try a pilot program, from a volunteer neighborhood, for 6 unrelated senior houses and evaluate it in one year.

Smaller residential units

Ask the various neighborhoods for their suggestions!

Allow for 'family friendly' type projects i.e. town-homes and single family type homes at a 2-1 ratio within the allowed FAR. Allow for 2 Tiny (250 sq. ft) homes to be build instead of one OAU at 450 sq. ft. Allow large lots (over 14,000 sq. ft) to have cluster of tiny homes or small units.

Zoning

Ask neighborhoods what would help reduce their car travel - is it changing the adjacent zoning to encourage more neighborhood services, making streets safer for peds and bikes, etc.

Look at zones to see if they are producing by-right developments that meet the definition of the zone - especially BC. Don't be afraid to come up with a new zone if the developments are not producing the right outcome.

By-right development

Make sure the zone is producing the desired outcome and if it needs to be tweaked do that - eliminate exceptions that are inconsistent with the zone goals.

Community benefit

Define community benefit for all exceptions and include it in site review criteria

Demographics

Include in all area plans the goal of having diversity in the uses - from housing to neighborhood retail to commercial to industrial so you have all types of

Offsite affordable housing

The city should encourage on-site affordable housing to meet at least 10% of the IH requirements - this is now allowed and was done during the first years of the program. The manager can once again require

this. If housing is allowed to be done off site it should be of similar quality as the project and nearby - unlike what happened with 29 North's requirement that ended up in North Boulder.

Mobile home parks

A plan should be developed with occupants of MHP's to transition to homes on a foundation. Ask the occupants.

Water

All annexations should be put on hold until a real water analysis is done on our supply showing consequences to existing businesses and property owners during various drought levels if the annexation was approved.

Qualitative guidance

What does this mean?

Site review,

See many comments above - bottom line is there should be enforceable criteria to define community benefit for exceptions and a mechanism so a developer's 'aspirations' can be a requirement.

Use review

Make all uses on the ground floor in the downtown a use review unless it is retail, restaurant - or some other use the downtown groups deem important to the vitality of downtown.

The most contentious neighborhood meetings are for liquor approvals up on the Hill. Have these meetings be run by the staff and not the applicant.

Discretionary review

See comments on Community benefit, Site Review -

Leonard May

Suggested issues to put on our joint CC meeting agenda:

- Council direct community dialogue of where we want to be population wise and form wise in 50 years
- Council direct 3d modeling of potential buildout including all available FAR and height bonuses. Further, access according that buildout, what it portends for population, worker spaces, traffic and congestion, and water resources use/availability etc.
- Revise land use code based on feedback from above to control pace, scale, type and quantity of residential and nonresidential development and track to gauge progress relative to goals and limits rising from above.
- Introduce metrics into city goals rather than vague aspirations such as diversity of housing types for a diversity of income groups. Establish specific housing types for specific income ranges for specific resident groups. Are we for example building the types of housing at the affordability levels to attract a diversity of workers to support our economy and foster diversity
- Establish desired ranges for non commercial space and business types.
- Dashboard tracking of development to indicate their progression toward total buildout for amount of space for each use type.

- Dashboard tracking of greenhouse gas emissions including those from proposed development and whether we stay on track for 80% FHFG reduction
- Regulation more directly reflect BVCP goals

General Topics for Discussion:

1. Site review criteria issues
2. Height and area bonuses:
 - Availability directly linked to specifically defined benefits.
 - Also, define which areas bonuses are to be allowed and to what extent they should exist in any allowed area. For example, limit 55' height increase to no more than X% (I prefer 30%) of a project's buildable site area. Limit area increases to X% of the by-right underlying zoning entitlement.
 - Explicitly state intent of bonuses - if bonuses are intended to be available to the max for entire project as defacto by right entitlements just by entering into site review or if the intent is to have bonuses "up to" the upper limit depending on the degree to which they comply with criteria.
 - Do not call height and area "modifications" as such - they are bonuses or exceptions and therefore to earn them, something exceptional must be offered.
 - Also require net zero for any construction portion beyond by right.
3. Design:
 - Specific requirement and stated intention that projects are high quality design. No more acceptance of poor projects complying with criteria - that the goal is to create nondescript background projects.:
4. BVCP:
 - Specific reference for each criteria for consistency with BVCP and applicable area plans and guidelines for project location.
5. Administrative:
 - PB callup option for all minor site review modifications
6. Get what you thought you were getting:
 - All suggestions of intent made for site review such as on site affordable housing to be commitments bound by site review approval. Don't offer if cant provide.
 - Tie use to site review.

Liz Payton

Responses to select items in the Cowles-Plass motion:

a. Do by right projects result in better design than projects that go through discretionary review? Comparisons and examples would be helpful.

I don't have enough experience yet to comment on this except to say that at least by-right projects are subject to the applicable design guidelines, if there are any.

b. Process changes that would lead to improvement of the public realm and the design of better buildings.

Design issues are very difficult to resolve at a public hearing. Staff does a fabulous job of analyzing every aspect of a proposal, but the architecture often needs more tweaking than we can do at PB. Is design excellence something we can put in the site review criteria? I don't know. Perhaps Council and the City Manager could ensure that staff is empowered to say no, regardless of the fees paid and pressure applied by the applicant, to projects and aspects of projects that don't serve the community well. Ultimately, the customer is the community, not the applicant.

The reaction of the public to recent development projects is partly about how unattractive they are. There were plenty of voices defending density but did anyone from the public defend the 29 North, Solana, or Landmark Lofts projects specifically? Staff should feel completely empowered to send designs back as many times as necessary to get an excellent design to recommend to PB.

If staff isn't empowered to say no, then it should not have to recommend projects for approval. Requiring staff to provide a recommendation has always seemed odd to me. It puts the analysts in the position of being advocates.

c. Process changes that would lead to increased predictability in the review process;
The flexibility gained with site review is a mixed bag for both the community and the developers. The changing composition of the board and council shifts the pendulum every few years. More teeth in the code, especially with respect to community benefit and design, would make the changing PB and CC composition have less impact on outcomes.

Also, every area of the city should have a set of design guidelines that staff, PB and developers could use to guide design of a project. Several Boulder neighborhoods have benefitted greatly from design guidelines, but there are still huge gaps, and some design guidelines need refreshing. For example, the North Boulder Subcommunity Plan itself has just one very broad design guideline (street forward design) and doesn't address materials, form, mass or scale.

d. Are there changes to Site Review Criteria that would make discretionary review more effective and lead to better buildings, taking into account the roles of both BDAB and Planning Board?
Of course, if we do have design guidelines, as suggested above, we need to make sure that their provisions are incorporated into the site review criteria. By not including all of the provisions of applicable design guidelines into the site review criteria we are losing the benefit of a lot of community process and buy-in. I'm thinking specifically of the way area-specific open space guidelines are excluded from the site review criteria but there are probably others.

The written comments and minutes from BDAB that I have seen so far have been very helpful.

e. What has been the role of "community benefit" in obtaining entitlements and does the term need to be defined in the Code?
It would certainly make some PB members more comfortable approving projects if the community benefit that is proposed could be legally bound to the approval. That would require definitions, I assume.

Height modifications

There doesn't seem to be much nuance to the requests for height modifications, as though the maximum is always the most compatible with the context.

It would be helpful to have more contextual imaging and modeling to assess whether a particular height modification request will enhance the street and neighborhood or, instead, make it less coherent and potentially introduce a new barrier to the evolution of a cohesive neighborhood. Introducing a maxed-out building to a neighborhood of mostly 2-story buildings will define a new edge to the neighborhood. What are the consequences of creating that new edge?

Design and aesthetics

Staff needs to be empowered to send back bad designs as often as necessary to achieve attractive buildings. Iterative tweaking is not something we can do at site review. This is especially important for large buildings, which have a bigger impact on the community.

Demographics

Are we creating neighborhoods? I applaud the move toward smaller units. It's a huge step in the right direction. But we have to pay attention to how many units and of what type. Brent Toderian says, "Children are the indicator species of healthy neighborhoods." Most of the units being built now are suitable for singles—not seniors or families. One of the operators of the Solana development said that most of their units were being leased by "tech guys," and almost no families. Will the Boulder Junction area be a neighborhood? Or will it be a tech boys' Neverland?

The incommuter survey told us that we might be able to capture some of the incommuting workforce if we could provide duplexes and triplexes with a bit of yard. It wouldn't be as many units as you might get in very dense multi-unit housing, but it would add diversity to the demographics served. It's important to focus on creating neighborhoods, with the amenities that children and families need. The rest will fall into place.

John Putnam

Provisions to support use of electric and/or other alternatively fueled vehicles with charging readiness (BRC 9-2-14(h)(2)(D) or (E))

Extent to which housing variety needs to be provided in each project or just each neighborhood (BRC 9-2-14(h)(2)(F)(vii))

Clarify status of lighting plans for site review approval, insofar as they usually don't come until tech docs (BRC 9-2-14(h)(2)(F)(ix))

Clarify requirements for renewable energy projects; update for consideration of energy districts or other tools 9-2-14(h)(2)(F)(xi)

Create standard (possibly form-based) in 9-2-14(h)(2)(F) for simplicity in design and materials choice

Standards for Minor Amendments and Minor Modifications to assure plan fidelity on materials, design, etc. (BRC 9-2-14(k)-(l))

PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE LAND USE CODE [Revised 10.2014]

Priority: In general, the highest priority changes are toward the top of the list whereas the lowest priority changes are towards the bottom of the list, but not necessarily in the specific ordering shown. Shaded changes reflect staff's current focus where work has been commenced. Unshaded cells indicate code changes not yet commenced.

Tiers: Tier 1 changes constitute administrative fixes of identified errors in the code; Tier 2 are changes that are meant to clarify the intent of the code, but are large enough that Planning Board and City Council review would be required, and Tier 3 changes are substantive changes to the code that will require a greater amount of time and Planning Board and City Council review.

Timing: The expected duration of each code change is categorized and estimated as either Simple (no more than 3 mos.), Moderate (3-6 mos.) or Complex (greater than 6 mos.)

TOP PRIORITIES CURRENTLY IN PROGRESS/COMPLETED/TABLED

<u>Number, Project Title & Status</u>	<u>Tier</u>	<u>Code section</u>	<u>Code section title</u>	<u>Proposed/suggested change</u>	<u>Expected project duration</u>
1) Subdivision Final Plat utility signatures <i>Approved by City Council on July 17, 2012</i>	3	9-2-17 and 9-2-18	Preliminary Plat and Final Plat	Remove requirement for utility signatures on final plats and replace with requirement for evidence that utility companies have reviewed the proposal prior to submittal of applications. This is intended to avoid delays at the end of the review that non-city signatures on plats have caused.	COMPLETED
2) Land use regulations on alcohol establishments <i>Approved by City Council on October 22, 2013</i>	3	9-2-15 and 9-6	Review processes and Use Standards	Revise regulations in regard to alcohol establishments as part of the city's efforts to reduce over consumption of alcohol in the community and the impacts from late night establishments on adjacent residential neighborhoods.	COMPLETED
3) Community Gardens <i>Approved by City Council on Aug. 7, 2012</i>	3	9-6-1 and 9-16	Use Standards (table 6-1) and Definitions	Add "Community Gardens" as a permitted use in ALL zoning districts; add definition and performance standards to minimize impacts on residential neighborhoods.	COMPLETED
4) Density/Right-of-way Calculation <i>Tabled after Planning Board denial recommendation on Aug. 15, 2014.</i>	3	9-8	Intensity Standards	Allow rights-of-way to count into the total land area for projects within Area Plan areas where transportation network plans apply as to permit density and floor area calculations to be based on land area before required dedications. Identified as recommended action of the Economic Sustainability Strategy.	TABLED
5) Landscape & Lighting Upgrade Property Valuation <i>Tabled until work plan items are discussed for 2015.</i>	3	9-9-5(a), 9-9-12(b) 9-9-16, 9-10-2(d)	Site Access Control Landscaping Outdoor Lighting Nonconf. Standards	Creation of an additional method of property valuation relative to lighting, landscaping and site access thresholds in the land use code.	TABLED
6) Senior Occupancy change <i>Tabled after First Reading not passed by council</i>	3	9-8-5	Occupancy standards within the Intensity Standards	Allow up to 6 seniors over the age of 62 years to live in one dwelling unit within the RL (Residential Low) zoning districts and up to 10 within the RR (Rural Residential) and RE (Residential Estate) zoning.	TABLED
7) Short-term (Phase I) Parking Code changes <i>In progress; approval recommendation from Planning Board; first reading at City Council on Oct. 21st and</i>	3	9-9-6	Parking standards	Update parking code standards to fix areas of the parking standards that either require too much parking for certain land uses or to correct portions of the code that	Complex

<i>second reading on Nov. 6th</i>				do not make sense. Also, includes an update to all of the bike parking standards to require more bike parking and per land use instead of a percentage of vehicular parking. Processed as part of the Access Management and Parking Strategy (AMPS)	
8) City Council review of Concept Plans <i>In progress: Scheduled for City Council consideration on Nov. 6th</i>	3	9-2-13	Concept Plan Review and Comment	Add a process to the land use code that enables City Council to vote to review Concept Plans that have been reviewed by Planning Board.	Simple
9) Potential BMS (Business Main Street) zoning district changes as part of the University Hill Moratorium <i>In progress</i>	3	9-6, 9-7 and 9-8	Use Standards, Form and Bulk Standards and Intensity Standards	Consideration of changes to the BMS zone relative to permitted uses, form and bulk standards etc. to increase the vitality of the Hill and diversity of uses to serve the neighborhood and university.	Complex
10) Long-term (Phase II) Parking Code changes <i>In progress; public outreach and best practices research</i>	3	9-9-6	Parking standards	Consideration of a comprehensive update to the parking regulations including but not limited to parking maximums, parking by land use, automatic parking reductions, more unbundled parking requirements, special parking requirements along transit corridors, shared parking requirements etc. Processed as part of the Access Management and Parking Strategy (AMPS).	Complex
11) Useable Open Space updates <i>In progress</i>	3	9-9-11	Useable Open Space	<p>→ Revise open space standards to be more firm related to counting wetlands and drainage detention areas as these are areas that not typical useable by residents. Align open space standards with engineering requirements water quality standards.</p> <p>→ Provide more specificity and prescriptive standards for open space on by-right projects in regard to decks, hardscape areas to make clear what counts as open space and to ensure that areas are functional.</p> <p>→ Provide more flexibility to meet open space in DT and BMS zones where it may be difficult to provide 15 to 20% of a lot as open space based on lotting patterns and neighborhood typologies. Some examples may be allowance of roof top decks to count in full (current regs. limit the percentage of above grade open space to count) or reduce the percentage required under certain conditions.</p>	Complex
12) Renewable Energy Sources <i>In progress</i>	3	9-6, 9-9 and 9-16	Use Standards (table 6-1) and Definitions	Add "Solar Energy Systems" and "Wind Energy Systems" as a permitted uses in ALL zoning districts; add definition and new regulations to reduce visual impacts and encourage sensitive locations for renewable energy sources. Determine how Community Solar Gardens will be addressed.	Complex
13) Comprehensive Housing Strategy short term action item	3	9-6 and 9-8	Use Standards and Intensity Standards	Update to the land use code to enable 1-to-1 replacement for 100% permanently affordable dwelling units	Complex
14) Site Review / Energy Conservation	3	9-2-14(h)	Site Review Criteria	Clarify the intent of the Site Review criteria with respect to energy conservation and in light of upcoming building code changes to enhance energy standards. Also, Identify other areas of the Land Use Code that may need to be updated to reinforce the city's commitment to energy conservation.	Complex

15) Economic Sustainability Strategy Implementation	3	TBD	TBD	Complete code changes identified in the recent Economic Sustainability Strategy.	Complex
16) North Boulder Subcommunity Plan zoning changes	3	TBD	TBD	Consideration to update the land use code to implement changes to the North Boulder Subcommunity Plan. May include changes to live/work standards, signage requirements etc.	Complex
17) Comprehensive Housing Strategies	3	TBD	TBD	Consideration of code changes to implement the Comprehensive Housing Strategy pending direction from City Council. Possible changes include but are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update to cooperative housing standards • Targeted areas for senior occupancy • Targeted fix accessory dwelling units 	Complex
CHANGES RELATED TO OPEN SPACE STANDARDS					
RL-2 (Residential Low -2) and variance criteria <i>In progress; included in Phase I parking changes</i>	3	9-2-3(j) and 9-9-6(d)	Variances and Parking Standards	The zoning code treats RL-1 and RL-2 (two similar low density residential districts) differently with respect to the variance criteria for parking in a landscape setback. This change would revise to allow additional parking within the landscape setback in RL-2 if parking requirements are met outside setback. This would match current RL-1 provisions. Similarly, standards to limit the width of driveways and the maximum amount of non-landscaped areas in landscape setback could be considered.	Moderate
CHANGES RELATED TO BUILDING DESIGN					
New Comprehensive Design Standards	3	9-9	Development Standards	➔ Addition of new regulations related to building design either as identified by staff and/or the Design Advisory Board. ➔ Analysis of whether form based coding or other prescriptive design standards should apply to the downtown zoning districts (DT) or the Business Main Street (BMS) zoning district to better implement the intended character of those areas. May be outcome of Sustainable Streets and Center project.	Complex
Subterranean garages and landscape setbacks <i>In progress; included as part of open space update</i>	3	9-7-1.	Form and Bulk Standards	Presently, subterranean garages are not required to be setback from a property line like above-grade structures. This is problematic because subterranean garage under or near tree lawns greatly impact the size and health of street trees. This item would add a setback for subterranean garages and make it clear in the definition of "landscape setbacks" that subterranean garage may not encroach without Site Review.	Simple
BMS building size	2	9-8	Intensity Standards	The BMS (Business Main Street) zone limits building size to 15,000 square feet. This change would address what is counted in the building and would correlate to net floor area for the purposes of whether a project has to go through Site Review or not.	Simple
Floor Area Ratio (FAR) analysis	3	9-8	Intensity Standards	Currently there are a variety of ways to measure floor area in the city dependent on the zoning district. This option would be to analyze floor area ratio (FAR) limits city wide and investigate whether to make them more uniform; e.g., one way to measure FAR in all zoning districts.	Complex

FAR limitation table	2	9-8	Intensity Standards	The current FAR table can be somewhat confusing. This change would entail updates that would make the table more understandable.	Moderate
Accessory Building Coverage (added 3.2013)	2	9-7	Form and Bulk Standards	The limitations for building coverage within Table 7-1 do not match those within 9-7-8 and the definition for building coverage. The table should be updated to reference these sections or otherwise align. Also, 'maximum total building coverage' should be added to the Building Size and Coverage limitation section rather than being under Principal and Accessory Building Heights section.	Simple
CHANGES RELATED TO TECHNOLOGY UPDATES					
ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) standards update <i>In progress; included with Phase I parking code changes.</i>	2	9-9-6.	Parking Standards	Add new accessible space requirements that better match current ADA requirements. Current parking standards in the code greatly exceed contemporary ADA requirements for large residential projects.	Simple
Wireless Antennae standards update	3	9-6-9(a)	Commercial, Retail and Industrial Uses	Update antenna standards to be more in line with latest technology. Create standards that are address visual impacts while also enabling options for applicants to locate the antennae.	Complex
Sign regulation update	3	9-9-21	Signs	Include regulations on the size, location and brightness of LED signs; limit and the size and location of sandwich signs and clarify the different types of signs. Look into regulations for temporary signs/banners.	Moderate
CHANGES RELATED TO BUILDING HEIGHT					
Height measurement for building connections	3	9-7-5.	Building Height	Consider modifications to relax the height measurement (e.g., measurement is from the lowest elevation point 25 feet away from a building to the top of the building) in regard to buildings that may be connected by breezeways or elevated walkways keeping overall bulk and mass in mind.	Moderate
Natural Grade definition	2	9-7-5	Building Height	Define Natural Grade (unmodified grade as of the date of the code adoption); make sure consistent with City Charter.	Moderate
Appurtenance clarification	2	9-7-7	Building Height, Appurtenances	Clarification about silos; clarify whether they are appurtenances or separate accessory structures? Include that an appurtenance has a functional need for the function of the building and/or a permitted use on the lot. Consider lower maximum height than 16 feet.	Moderate
OTHER TIER 3 CHANGES					
Solar Access exceptions	3	9-9-17(f)(6)(A)(iii)	Solar Access	In scenarios where a project may not meet the Solar Access standards, an exception process exists. In some limited scenarios, shadows would fall on areas that would likely never be constructed upon; however, the exception process does not consider this. This item would add a new criterion that would afford some flexibility in instances where shadows would fall in an area where no impact would occur, where no solar facilities would be practical and where the encroachment is negligible.	Complex

RH-1 (Residential High -1) zoning district parking regulations <i>In progress; Included as part of Phase I parking code changes.</i>	3	9-9	Development Standards	Update parking regulations in the RH-1 zoning district to align with RH-2 changes.	Simple
Reconsideration of Growth Management allocation program	3	9-14	Growth Management Allocations	The city currently limits the number of building permits for residential units in the city. Building permits for residential generally do not come close to exceeding this limit on a general basis. This item would include an evaluation of the growth management regulations	Complex
Front porch standards	3	9-7-4	Setback Encroachments for Front Porches	The city has regulations that encourage the encroachment of front porches to create pedestrian friendly streetscapes and new urbanist type home designs. While the intent is appropriate from a design perspective, it has little flexibility for alternation under certain circumstances. This item would add language to allow for flexibility to front porch standards that could be approved at the staff level.	Moderate
Duplexes in High Density Residential zoning districts	3	9-8-1	Intensity Standards	Certain high density zoning districts (e.g., RH-5) are not conducive to duplexes. This item would entail modification to the minimum lot area per dwelling unit from 6,000 sf to 3,000 sf to permit duplexes on standard sized lots (i.e., 6,000 sf). This change would be consistent with the most recent changes to the RH-2 zoning district.	Moderate
Temporary Sales on a vacant lot	3	9-6-5(c)	Temp Sales	Temporary sales are permitted as a conditional use with staff level review on commercial lots with a principal use or building. The standards do not address situations where sales may occur on a vacant lot. This change would make it possible to have temporary sales on a vacant lot within a commercial zone.	Simple
Site Reviews and Compatible Development regulations	3	9-7 and 9-8	Compatible development	The city adopted the Compatible Development regulations to limit the size of single-family residential buildings. It included an exemption for sites that were approved through Site Review or are undergoing Site Review. This change would consider apply the same regulations on single-family homes within a Site Review project as those that may be approved by-right.	Complex
Revocable Permits and Leases	3	Title 4 and Title 8	Revocable Permits/Leases	Considering the number of patios within the right-of-way and other features the city regulates, updates to standards related to permits and leases have been identified. Clarify renewal cycles.	Moderate
Compatible Development evaluation	3	9-7 and 9-8	Form and Bulk Standards	Comprehensive overview of effectiveness of the "Compatible Development" regulations adopted in 2010.	Complex
Technical Documents and the Land Use Code	3	9-2	Types of Reviews	Technical Document Review is a review process that occurs between Site Review and Building Permit. Presently, the land use code does not specifically refer to Technical Documents. This item would consider adding references within the code.	Moderate
Substantial Completeness in projects	3	9-2-12	Development Progress Required	Projects approved through Site Review are typically valid for a three year period. At the end of the three year validity projects must be considered "substantially complete." This item would address specifically what "substantially complete" would mean under different scenarios.	Moderate
Crematoriums	3	9-6-1 and 9-16	Use Standards. (table 6-1) and Definitions	Currently the code is unclear about whether crematorium uses are permitted as accessory uses within a mortuary or not. This item would include an analysis of whether a new definition should be created and whether new standards for	Complex

				crematoriums may be necessary.	
OTHER TIER 2 CHANGES					
Concept Plan guidelines	2	9-2-13(g)	Concept Plan	The current Concept Plan guidelines are generally broad. This item would involve changing the guidelines to be more specific and conducive to standard staff reviews by identifying key issues. Consideration of adding guidelines that discuss basic consistency with Site Review criteria could help identify issues that could arise at the Site Review stage.	Moderate
Minor Modification update	2	9-2-14(k) and 9-2-14(k)(3)	Minor Modifications	Minor Modifications (staff level) are permitted for projects approved through Site Review if specific criteria are satisfied. One criterion limits expansion to no more than 10% of the existing floor area. This change would clarify that the 10% floor area limitation for expansion would only apply to those Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) or Site Reviews that specifically restricted floor area; also would include adding the word: <u>horizontal</u> direction for areas of expansion to make it clear that expansion does not include areas over the height limit which would require Site Review.	Simple
Boulder Junction references	2	9-9-5(d)	Site Access	The code refers to the "Transit Village" where the name has recently change to "Boulder Junction." This change would update the name or consider a more generic name in the code. Includes modifications to Appendix G where the references are also made.	Simple
Site Review threshold language	2	9-2-14	Site Review threshold	In some zones, Site Review is required if 5 or more units are proposed or are possible based on the underlying zoning. This change would add the word "if" to clarify that Site Review is required if the density of 5 or greater is possible.	Simple



Study Session MEMORANDUM

To: Members of City Council
Boulder Planning Board

From: Jane S. Brautigam, City Manager
David Driskell, Executive Director of Community Planning & Sustainability (CP&S)
Susan Richstone, Deputy Director of CP&S
Lesli Ellis, Comprehensive Planning Manager, CP&S
Greg Guibert, Chief Resilience Officer, CP&S

Date: October 14, 2014

**Subject: Study Session for Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan 2015 Update
Assessment and Scoping**

Study Session Purpose

The purpose of this study session is to: review the 2015 Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan (BVCP) update assessment and scoping process; provide information for feedback from interviews and boards regarding ways to make the plan more effective, strategic, and aligned with other outcomes; note the parallel resilience strategy; and seek feedback regarding issues and options for the 2015 Major Update of the BVCP.

Questions

The planning team is seeking feedback from Planning Board and City Council on the following questions.

1. **New Topics and Issues:** What are the new issues and opportunities facing the Boulder community that the 2015 plan update should address?
2. **Level of Effort:** Given the issues and other priorities, what is the appropriate level of attention and community engagement for the plan update?
3. **Resilience Strategy:** Should the resilience strategy process and/or outcomes be bundled with the BVCP update?

Introduction to the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan 2015 Update

The Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan (BVCP) is adopted jointly by the City of Boulder (“city”) (Planning Board and City Council) and Boulder County “county” (County Commissioners and Planning Commission) in their legislative capacities. A link to the complete plan and all its sections and maps is located at www.bouldervalleycompplan.net.

The BVCP is updated periodically to respond to changed circumstances or community needs. In 2015, the plan is due for its major five year update, so the city and county are beginning discussions to scope the update. Depending on community priorities, the update could be relatively narrow or much broader to encompass new issues, policies, procedures, or map changes.

The 2015 BVCP update would carry forward long-standing core values, as noted to the right. Additionally, an updated plan could accomplish some of the following ideas:

- more clearly articulate and convey the community's vision and policy direction,
- address current and emerging issues,
- better align the city organization and its services,
- provide clear guidance and tools for implementation,
- become more strategic and partnership oriented, and
- include metrics tied to outcomes.

BVCP Core Values

The BVCP Core Values (p. 9) include:

1. Sustainability as the unifying framework
2. Welcoming inclusive community
3. Culture of creativity and innovation
4. Strong city county cooperation
5. Unique community identity and sense of place
6. Compact, contiguous development and infill that supports evolution to a more sustainable urban form
7. Open space preservation
8. Great neighborhoods and public spaces
9. Environmental stewardship and climate action
10. A vibrant economy based on Boulder's quality of life and economic strengths
11. A diversity of housing types and price ranges
12. An all-mode transportation system to make getting around without a car easy and accessible to everyone
13. Physical health and well-being

Some or all of these ideas may be appropriate for inclusion in the 2015 Major Update depending on the breadth of topics to be addressed and other planning project scope and timeline.

On Sept. 18, the consultant presented initial analysis, best practices, and results from interviews for discussion to Planning Board in preparation for the Study Session with City Council on Oct. 14, 2014. A summary of key directions from that discussion is attached (See **Attachment A: Summary of Planning Board Discussion** and **Attachment B: Summary of Interviews**). The Environmental Advisory Board discussed the update on Oct. 1 (see **Attachment D: Summary of Environmental Advisory Board Discussion**), and the Transportation Advisory Board will discuss it on Oct. 13. Staff will provide an update from the TAB discussion on Oct. 14.

Plan Assessment and Scoping Process

In June 2014, the city issued a Request for Proposals, received five proposals, and hired a consultant team (Clarion Associates/Godschalk) to conduct research and analysis in support of the assessment, evaluate the current plan, understand community goals for the update, and provide information about best practices and fresh ideas about how communities make plans more strategic, aligned, and effective.

The consultants began their work in mid August and are currently evaluating the plan. They also are working with city and county leadership, staff, and boards and commissions to identify potential focus topics, public process, and phasing of the update to best sequence with other ongoing or recently completed projects. Following the October 14 Study Session, they will conduct additional research on best practices to help guide development of the update process.

On November 3, the consultants and staff also will review preliminary findings with the joint County Planning Commission/Board of Commissioners study session, as noted below.

Following additional input, consultants will prepare a report that summarizes recommendations for topics to address, an annotated proposed outline of a revised structure for the plan, and a recommended approach to the process and engagement.

Engagement and Integration

The consultants and staff have conducted initial interviews and scoping sessions with city board members and with staff from city and county organizations. (See **Attachment B**) As part of the assessment, consultants and staff have also been monitoring discussions in the community that have taken place in August and September regarding planning policies, growth, and urban form. Following the study sessions, additional community engagement (online and in meetings) will occur regarding the plan update and scope of work. Future engagement will also need to coordinate with related projects and plans including the resilience strategy, the housing strategy, Envision East Arapahoe, climate and energy work, Transportation Master Plan implementation, and access and parking strategies, and reform of development regulations.

2010 BVCP Background

Since 1970, the city and county have jointly adopted a comprehensive plan that guides land use decisions in the Boulder Valley. Since then, six major updates have been completed (in 1982, 1990, 1995, 2000, 2005, 2010). The BVCP provides a general statement of the community's desires for future development and preservation of the Boulder Valley. The principle of sustainability drives its overall framework.

Each five years, the city and county undertake a review to determine how to re-craft the plan to respond to conditions and needs. Consequently, there is no "typical" update process. In the past, some updates have been more resource intensive and involved higher levels of community engagement, whereas some have been more focused on one or several issues.

The last update in 2010 addressed demographic challenges, recommended ramping up climate action, and addressed economic challenges. Two broad areas were strengthened during the update: (1) Sustainability policies encompassing social equity, environmental health and economic vitality, and (2) urban form and community design policies. The city and county also discussed clarifying the process for considering service area expansion into the Area III-Planning Reserve but did not ultimately change the plan requirement for four-body review of service area expansions (i.e., City Council, County Commissioners, Planning Board and County Planning Commission).

Regardless of the level of effort, staff now anticipates certain steps that are part of a five year update. The steps listed below are considered foundational for the 2015 update and will occur early in the update process:

1. Conduct the review/assessment with the city and county to determine needs (currently ongoing).
2. Update community profile and demographic information.
3. Prepare map-based (using Geographic Information System) analysis of growth capacity considering current land use plan and zoning and other regional forecast information.
4. Engage the Boulder community in discussing and proposing changes to the plan.
5. Invite requests for land use map changes and evaluate requests.

Plan Implementation

The plan is framed as the overarching policy guide for the community that is implemented by departmental strategic/master plans, subcommunity and area plans, Priority Based Budgeting, the Capital Improvements Program, and Development Standards and Zoning, as shown in the graphic to the right. The city has over 20 master plans that implement the plan, and the Boulder Land Use Code and zoning is largely instrumental in guiding development to achieve plan goals consistent with the plan and its land use map.



Resilience Strategy

An additional consideration while scoping the BVCP update is the relationship with the upcoming resilience strategy. As Council is aware, the City of Boulder is one of 32 cities worldwide to receive a grant from 100 Resilient Cities (100RC), an initiative of the Rockefeller Foundation, to develop a resilience strategy. A resilient city is able to manage disruptions from shocks and stresses, such as fires, floods, and economic downturns, while maintaining essential functions, recovering quickly after disruptions, and thriving as a community. A resilience strategy for Boulder is more likely to be effective if it builds on past and ongoing efforts and integrates with other city initiatives and the BVCP. Therefore, the city seeks to “piggy back” resilience with the BVCP process and engagement and use the resilience strategy as a way of assessing the plan through the lens of resilience. In addition to outreach, technical steps toward resilience will include:

1. Conduct a resilience diagnostic
2. Assess risks, needs, and opportunities
3. Identify resilience priorities and initiatives
4. Develop implementation and action plans, identify funding, and
5. Create final strategy

BVCP Update Observations

Initial Observations

As noted above, the 2015 plan update may be narrow in scope or wide, depending on direction from city and county leadership regarding community priorities and resources to dedicate to the plan update. Some context of best practices will also be included in the presentation. The consultant has prepared preliminary observations to assist with the discussion. They are summarized in **Attachment C** and include:

1. Focus the Update on 21st Century Challenges and Opportunities
2. Recast the Document Format and Presentation to be More Compelling
3. Use the Plan to Integrate Ongoing and New Ideas
4. Articulate a Clear Vision for the City’s Desired Urban Form
5. Strengthen Linkages between the Plan and Implementation Tools
6. Clarify Policies in Key Areas

Possible Approaches to Update the Plan

Different approaches and levels of attention to address the update range from lower to much higher levels of effort and allow discussion of the plan update in relation to other planning objectives to be discussed during Part One of the Oct. 14 study session. Some examples are noted below. Each one is not mutually exclusive.

- ✓ **Retain Current Plan/Focus on Implementation Tools:** Limit the plan update. Put a greater level of attention on development standards and procedures (i.e., code changes) more than updating the plan vision or policies.
- ✓ **Minor Plan Update with Focus on Vision and Policy Refinement:** Use the plan update to sharpen policy focus, particularly to fold in the 21st Century Ideas and to articulate a clear vision for urban form, and link it better with implementation.
- ✓ **Plan Repackaging/Sustainability Integration and Outcomes:** Repackage the plan and integrate it with other city initiatives and outcomes to better align with the Sustainability Framework. Include metrics in the plan.
- ✓ **Community/Partnership Process:** Include multiple community partners in the update and make the plan more partnership, systems, and oriented and strategic to address needs of the community beyond city services.

Next Steps

- Nov. 3:** Joint Study Session - County Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioners for BVCP scoping
- November:** Additional community engagement regarding the BVCP 2015 Major Update, issues, schedule, and approach
- December:** Final consultant report on scope of work and approach to the 2015 Plan update
- Early 2015:** Check in with city and county leadership regarding scope and commence plan update inventory and foundation work

Attachments

- A. Summary of Planning Board Discussion of BVCP on Sept.18
- B. Summary of Interviews
- C. Consultant Preliminary Observations
- D. Summary of Environmental Advisory Board Discussion on Oct. 1

Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan – 2015 Update Boulder Planning Board – Summary of Key Points (September 18, 2014)

The Boulder Planning Board discussed and indicated support for the following ideas regarding the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan (BVCP) Update in 2015.

Format of the Plan

Recognition of its Strengths:

- It includes great aspirational statements and provides an overview of the community (e.g., built environment, energy, community well-being). Many use it to learn about the community.
- Our partnership with the county and 4-body review provides a strong link to regionalism.

Areas for Improvement:

1. **Improve the format:** Ideas include using graphics and illustrations to convey ideas. Make it more concise, less wordy, add more visualizations.
2. **Tell the Boulder planning story better:** For instance, include a retrospective (e.g., what the plan has done to shape this community, and what if it had not had the plan)
3. **Broaden its topics to reflect inclusive community ideas:** It is important to be inclusive in the plan regarding all topics beyond land use. *(some new topics noted below)*
4. **Sharpen its policy focus:** Provide community guidance on priorities; make the intent of policies in key areas more clear and less subject to interpretation
5. **Include metrics:** Roll in existing and new metrics related to land use, climate/energy, etc.
6. **Partnerships:** Continue to build partnerships with CU, federal labs, and other important institutional and regional partners.
7. **Bridge to Implementation:** Provide a bridge and stronger, clearer linkage between the plan's vision statements, policy, and implementation tools (e.g., between land use and zoning). Make land use map definitions more specific and clear, and link site review criteria with the plan.
8. **Clarify density and design:** Better define sustainable urban form (e.g., how urban, compact, etc.), and what level of quality is desired as defined through a community conversation. Address form-based design.

Current Issues to be addressed

1. Workforce housing
2. Public art, art, and culture
3. Sustainability goals (integration)
4. Impacts on government services - community facilities and services (e.g., library, etc). More specificity about offsetting/mitigating impacts of development on basic services.
5. Regional system and partnerships
6. Local food
7. Energy and municipalization
8. Carrying capacity
9. Settling planning area questions such as Hogan Pancost
10. Regenerative design vs. greenfield design

11. Resilience

How Resilience Strategy Might Relate to the BVCP Update

1. Coordinate resilience strategy and BVCP, at least at high level and for public process, but do not sideline resilience.
2. Let resilience implementation actions move forward without being tied to the plan.
3. Determine where vulnerable populations can best be accommodated (e.g. reserve land for community identified needs).
4. Address communication strategies (e.g., between city and population, or within neighborhoods), as an important part of resilience that could also be addressed through the plan. This is especially relevant during floods, fires, etc.

Community Engagement Process Ideas

1. Educate the community about the plan. Start out with some common information (e.g., “Comp Plan 101” sessions). Public forums to set the foundation, via speakers.
2. Consider producing a series of short, snappy videos – educate the community in different ways.
3. Reach out to people not ordinarily engaged (e.g., Mobile home parks, Neighborhood associations)
4. Talk about how the plan actually affects people’s lives – those not interested in zoning, etc. - by illustrating what it means to people.
5. Visualization is really important as part of the outreach process.

Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan (BVCP) Assessment and Update Process Summary of Comments from Board Members and Staff Interviews

09/29/14

Following is a summary of comments received from a series of staff interviews conducted by the consultants and staff on Sept. 3 to 8, 2014. During the course of these interviews, the consultant/staff team members met with city and county staff from a broad range of service areas, including: Public Works (including Transportation and Utilities), Finance, Fire, Police, City Manager’s Office, Community Planning and Sustainability (including Historic Preservation, Climate and Ecology, and Economic Vitality), Energy Future, Human Resources, Communications, Housing, Open Space, and Parks and Recreation. We also met with the City’s Master Plan Coordination Committee; Ecological Planning Team; members of the Arts Commission; Downtown Management Commission; and Open Space Board and with Growing Up Boulder, and Boulder County planning staff.

During the interviews, we posed a consistent set of questions in order to obtain a wide range of input in a consistent manner. Topics discussed included the following:

1. **Plan Usage and Awareness** - How do you currently use the Comprehensive Plan? How would you like to use it in the future, once updated? How widely do you think that the plan is understood and used by the community?
2. **Content** - What are the strengths of the current plan? What are things in it that are rock solid, must remain – format, content, process? What could be improved (format, content, process)?
3. **Issues to be Addressed** - What are some of the issues facing the community that you think the plan update needs to address?
4. **Update Process** - Do you have any ideas for creative ways to engage the community in the update process itself? Any organizations or sectors of the community that you think are particularly important to reach out to?

The following is a summary of feedback received from the interviews, organized in the same manner as the interview questions above.

1. Plan Usage and Awareness

- **Usage of the Plan varies widely.** Usage of the Plan varies, depending on the role that staff members fill in the city organization. Those involved in development review use it regularly as an implementation tool – to provide direction regarding development projects, or to justify actions or support actions they are about to take as a city. Some use it as more of a “vision” document, to see if what they are proposing is consistent with the city’s overall direction. Some departments acknowledged that they have little knowledge of the plan, and do not see it as integral to their work. Many would like to see the Plan have more relevance to what they do – to see it serve as more of a “unifying” document, particularly for those service areas that rely on a Master Plan to guide their efforts.
- **Awareness of the Plan among the general community is perceived as low.** With the exception of Planning Board and City Council members, the development community, and a small number of planning-oriented citizens (many of whom date back to the initial growth management/land preservation efforts in the 1970s), most feel that the Plan is not widely

understood or perceived as relevant to most residents. However, many feel that the community has a good understanding of and support for the Plan's core values (e.g., growth boundary, land preservation, focus on transportation choices, etc.) even if they do not know that those concepts are contained in the Plan.

- **The Plan gets used by the community to support (or repel) proposed development activities.** Many noted that the Plan's policies tend to be used by the public as either a sword or shield, depending on whether they support or oppose a proposed action.

2. Plan Content

a. Plan Strengths

- **Growth Management/Service Area concept is seen as "rock-solid".** There is widespread understanding and support for the Plan's focus on containing urban growth where it can be served, and preserving rural areas and open lands.
- **Core Values (sustainability, city/county cooperation, environmental stewardship, multi-modal transportation, etc.) are widely supported.** Most believe that these values are widely supported and must remain as part of the Plan's foundation.
- **Policies are generally clear and well-founded.** However, as noted below, many believe that there are opportunities to improve on the Plan's policies.

b. Areas for Improvement

- **More focus on implementation.** Many feel that the Plan is weak on implementation and actions.
- **Clarify Policies.** The Plan's policies in key areas (e.g., urban form, density) could be sharpened to make the intent of the policies clearer. (One comment - "dial up enough detail so that 90% of people will agree on what it says".)
- **Strengthen connections to the university and other partners.** These partnerships are seen as critically important to the community, yet they are not broadly addressed in the Plan.
- **Update the format and content to make the Plan more community-friendly.** Many feel that the Plan is too much of a "planner's plan", and would like to see it repackaged in a way that would make it more accessible to the broader community. This could include a stronger vision, as well as a retrospective on how the city has gotten to where it is through planning.
- **Strengthen linkage to Master Plans.** Many departments rely on a Master Plan for their guidance and direction, and see an opportunity to strengthen ties between the Plan and their Master Plans, with the BVCP containing high-level actions and strategies to help integrate the Plan and Master Plans.
- **Add Metrics and Outcomes.** While opinions vary on this topic, many feel that the Plan should set the foundation for the city's increasing efforts to set outcomes and track progress. Some feel that the metrics should be contained in the Master Plans, and that the Plan should set high-level goals and outcomes.

- **Integrate the Sustainability Framework into the Plan.** The Sustainability Framework is seen as an increasingly important tool for the city. While it is mentioned, it is not yet fully integrated into the Plan. However, departments are beginning to use the Framework as a basis for Master Plan updates and for budgeting.

3. Issues to be Addressed

- **A wide range of issues was identified for the update to consider.** As may be expected, our interviews identified a wide range of issues that the update might address. These are listed below (in alphabetical order):
 - **15-Minute Neighborhoods** – transition of neighborhoods over time; Where? How? How much?
 - **Arts and culture** – little mention in current plan.
 - **Climate** – action, adaptation, mitigation – no mention of current long term climate goal and climate related metrics in plan
 - **Density/urban form** – identified as a top issue by many; clarify and provide examples of what we mean by sustainable urban form.
 - **Disruptive change** – shift focus of plan from growth management to new challenges (e.g. climate change). How to be more adaptive, dynamic, and fluid?
 - **Economic vitality** – does it need a reset?
 - **Energy Future** – needs to be considered in Plan.
 - **Fiscal health** – linkage with budget, capital projects, tracking fiscal health and outcomes.
 - **Inclusivity/income disparity** – equity issues around income, public health, access, diversity.
 - **Resilience** – one comment; “with two fires, a flood, and a recession, resilience is an important topic”.
 - **Workforce and affordable housing** – in conflict with high economic levels and in short supply.
 - **Youth issues** – interaction with nature, places for teens to “hang”, independent mobility

4. Community Outreach

- **Important to get authentic participation in the update process.** There is widespread support for transparent, inclusive, meaningful input from the community, and a variety of ideas were expressed about how to accomplish this. These are listed below:
 - **Tap into neighborhood groups organized as part of flood recovery efforts.** This was mentioned as a way to involve many who would not typically be involved in planning-related topics.
 - **Look to recent successful planning efforts (Transportation Master Plan, Civic Center Plan) for ideas that worked.** Both of these recent efforts were mentioned by

many as having using creative new approaches to citizen engagement – both web-based, videos, as well as activity and event-based. TMP storefront workshops were seen as particularly effective, as were youth workshops organized by school district, university, and the city.

- **Use creative ways to engage the business community.** Look to engage owners, but also employees and in-commuters. Consider focus groups, employee surveys that focus on economic policies.
- **Traditional meetings/open houses not seen as very effective.** These events tend to attract relatively small attendance (unless focused on controversial topics) and provide low return on investment.
- **Make the Plan “real” to people.** Focus on real examples with visual tools for people to understand how changes to the Plan might affect them.
- **Go to where people are, work with trusted groups.** Rather than organizing events and expecting the community to come out for them, go to where they are – senior living centers, schools, places of worship (particularly important for minority communities).

Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan (BVCP) Assessment and Update Process

Preliminary Observations

October 6, 2014

Following is a summary of preliminary observations from the consultant team based on our initial assessment of the BVCP (the “Plan”), Planning Board input, interviews with board members and city staff, and observing other community discussions regarding planning policy. While recognizing many long time strengths of the Plan, our assessment identifies a number of potential areas of improvement. Some or all of these ideas may be appropriate as part of the scope of work for the Plan update, depending on discussions with city and county leadership.

Key observations and possibilities include:

1. Focus the Update on 21st Century Challenges and Opportunities
2. Recast the Document Format and Presentation to be More Compelling
3. Use the Plan to Integrate Ongoing and New Ideas
4. Articulate a Clear Vision for the City’s Desired Urban Form
5. Strengthen Linkages between the Plan and Implementation Tools
6. Clarify Policies in Key Areas

1. Focus on 21st Century Challenges and Opportunities

The Plan has its origins in the challenges facing the community in the 20th century; growth management, containment of sprawl, preservation of open lands. In its current form, the Plan is largely a land use and preservation plan. Its role and structure need to broaden if it is to serve the community’s needs and vision for the future. Opportunities include:

- **Address new century challenges.** While the Plan’s core values and vision are still solid, a new and evolving set of challenges is now before the community, such as:
 - resilience
 - climate adaptation and mitigation and energy future
 - equity, income disparity, and aging population
 - workforce housing
 - need for partnerships
 - arts and culture
 - neighborhood action and self-sufficiency and 15-minute neighborhoods (neighborhoods as building blocks for the community)
- **Expand systems and regional scope.** Many of the systems that serve the community and demographic and growth influences that affect it (e.g., water, transportation, air quality and climate, natural systems, energy infrastructure and supply, population growth) have a geographic scope that reaches beyond the boundaries of the Plan. With an increased emphasis on resilience, it may be appropriate during the Plan update to consider these systems in their larger context, beyond the boundaries of the Plan area.

2. Make Format and Presentation More Compelling

The Plan in its current form does not present a clear picture of the community’s vision for its future, and while its core values are strong, it is not presented in a manner that is a compelling read for much of the community because it is heavy on text, contains few graphics, maps, and photos and is organized in standalone chapters or elements that do not relate to a broader vision for the city. Opportunities include:

- **Do a better job of telling the Boulder story.** Boulder has an incredible story to tell – its past, present, and future – and the Plan can present so much more in a way that is more inspirational and accessible to the broader community. This can help build a greater understanding of the purpose of the Plan, and garner support for ongoing and new initiatives.
- **Convey a compelling vision.** The Plan and other documents (Sustainability Framework, for example) contain much that speak to the community’s values and vision, but at present this is not presented in a clear, cohesive, form that gives meaning to most people in the community. The Plan document itself could be shorter, and convey the vision in a more visual manner. This could entail more graphics and illustrations to convey desired concepts and restructuring of the Plan to be organized around “big ideas” and themes, such as the Sustainability Framework (see 3. below).



From Imagine Austin:

“The distinctive benefit of a comprehensive plan is that it confronts big issues in a big-picture way. Other City of Austin plans are more focused and deal with topics such as parks, solid waste, transportation, water, or smaller geographic areas. But only a comprehensive plan fully considers how the whole community’s values, needs, people, and places are interrelated and interdependent.”

3. Use the Plan to Integrate Ongoing and New Ideas

Over the past several years, the City has increasingly focused its efforts on new and ongoing initiatives that support the core values contained in the Plan, such as sustainability, climate, and others. While many of these are addressed to some extent, they are not yet fully integrated into the Plan in a cohesive, coordinated manner. For example, Fort Collins recently updated its plan (*Plan Fort Collins*) to integrate energy, green infrastructure, local food production, public safety, and other topics within a unified document that is structured around the same topics as the City's Budgeting for Outcomes categories. Opportunities to strengthen these connections include:



Above: *Plan Fort Collins* is structured around the city's Budgeting for Outcomes areas.

- ***Include ongoing and new work on these topics in a strategic, coordinated manner.*** Work that is ongoing (Climate Commitment, Energy Future, Resilient Boulder) will need to be included; other topics will need to be addressed in a comprehensive way, leading to an updated Plan that addresses contemporary challenges and opportunities in a fully integrated manner.
- ***Integrate the Sustainability Framework more fully into the Plan.*** The city's Sustainability Framework articulates the outcomes necessary to achieve the desired sustainable vision for the community, and could help inform the Plan update in a number of ways, such as:
 - defining and implementing the community vision
 - aligning the Plan with the city's priority-based budgeting process
 - serve as an organizing framework
- ***Include projections, outcomes and metrics in the Plan (both existing and new).*** Many cutting-edge comprehensive plans contain projections, outcomes and metrics used to set objectives and track progress. These could be linked to maps and other visual tools to help convey and track outcomes in a more graphic style. Opportunities include:
 - include information about growth projections and land use information, to set a foundation for understanding the city's capacity for growth
 - include high-level outcomes or objectives in the Plan to provide stronger linkages with master plans
 - create linkages to the city's budgeting process
 - set the stage for tracking progress over time (possibly through the dashboard being coordinated through the City Manager's Office)

Topic Group	Priority Program
Compact and Connected	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Compact and Connected (p. 41): Invest in a compact and connected Austin. 8. Align Code (p. 47): Revise Austin’s development regulations and processes to promote a compact and connected city.
Nature and City	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Sustainable Water (p. 57): Sustainably manage our water resources. 4. Green Infrastructure (p. 63): Use green infrastructure to protect environmentally sensitive areas and integrate nature into the city.
Creativity and Economy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Workforce Development (p. 71): Continue to grow Austin’s economy by investing in our workforce, education systems, entrepreneurs, and local businesses. 5. Creative Economy (p. 77): Grow and invest in Austin’s creative economy.
Healthy and Affordable	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Household Affordability (p. 87): Develop and maintain household affordability throughout Austin. 7. Healthy Austin (p. 93): Create a Healthy Austin program.

Above: *Imagine Austin* includes an Action Plan that focuses on four key areas: Compact and Connected, Nature and the City, Creativity and Economy, and Healthy and Affordable. The Plan includes Action Steps for each of the four areas, along with Community indicators to measure and track progress.

4. Articulate a Clear Vision for City’s Desired Urban Form

The Plan does not articulate a clear vision of the desired sustainable urban form and how it will be affected by individual projects or public policies. Words alone cannot convey this vision – the Plan needs to use new tools to show what the desired outcome is (graphic images, pictures, perhaps overall 3D modeling). This will help inform ongoing efforts to update the City’s development regulations and procedures.

- **Illustrate the desired outcome so that it is clear to all.** A clear statement and image of the desired future urban form, based on growth projections and reasonable assumptions about trends, would inform public expectations and assist staff, decision-makers, and developers in judging the appropriateness of potential changes to Boulder’s regulations and ultimately built urban form. This could be done at several levels – visual models to illustrate build out of centers, prototype buildings and blocks, or perhaps visuals that conceptualize build out of sectors or the entire city, if desired.

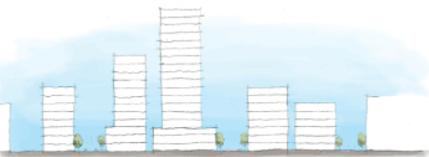
NEIGHBOURHOOD –
LOW RISE (UP TO 4
STOREYS)



TOWN & LOCAL CENTRES –
LOW/MEDIUM RISE
(UP TO 8 STOREYS)

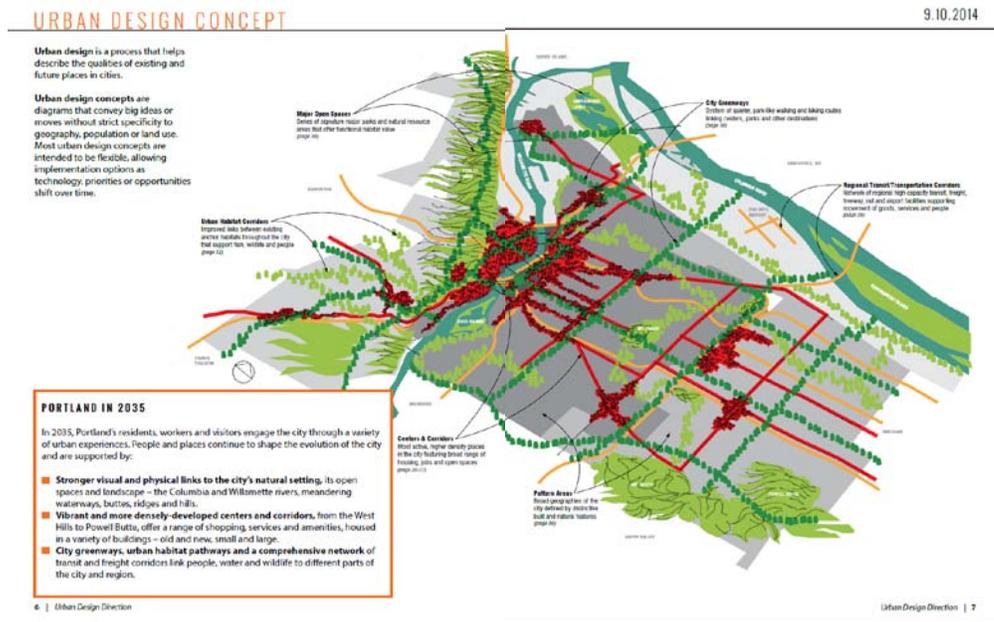


CITY & METROPOLITAN
CENTRES –
MEDIUM RISE
(5-8 STOREYS)
HIGH RISE
(9+ STOREYS)



Above: The Auckland Plan (Auckland, NZ) uses 3D graphics and drawings to illustrate the desired urban form for different sectors of the city.

- **Consider including a structure or framework plan that illustrates how all areas of the city fit together.** Many contemporary plans include an illustrative plan that conveys how various centers, corridors, open lands, and other community elements relate to future land use. In the Boulder case, this could supplement the BVCP Land Use Designation Map.



Above: Portland's newly adopted plan update includes an Urban Design Framework diagram that locates centers and corridors (areas that are expected to grow and change) within the City's physical context.

5. Strengthen Linkages between the Plan and Implementation Tools

The Plan should serve as the guiding document for a number of tools that are used to implement planning in the community. These include: departmental master plans and strategic plans; area and sub-community plans; priority-based budgeting that drives programs and services; and development regulations contained in the Land Use Code. In its present form, the Plan does not clearly illustrate or explain how it relates to the implementing tools. More could be done to strengthen and more clearly articulate this role for the Plan. Opportunities include:

- **Strengthen linkages to other plans and implementation tools.** The Plan could provide stronger linkages to the various master plans and other operational plans and tools, to illustrate more clearly how all of the component parts of the community's vision and planning framework are integrated. This could be done in a number of ways, such as a matrix that illustrates linkages and connections; an expanded section in the Plan Introduction that more fully explains the relationships between the Plan and implementation tools or perhaps "bridge" language at the beginning of each Plan chapter that describes the tools that implement the topics in the chapter. For example, climate plan is partly implemented through the adoption of the carbon tax and the building code requirements.

- ***Increase the Plan's focus on implementation by Including an Action Plan.*** While implementing actions generally are contained in master plans and other documents as well as the Boulder Revised Code, it may be appropriate to include high-level strategies and actions so that the Plan serves as a unifying element, to show how the master plans and other implementing documents are linked to it, and how they serve to carry out the overall vision contained in the Plan.

6. Clarify Policies in Key Areas

The Plan contains a large number of policies that speak to a wide range of topics. While for the most part they are clear and well-written, users of the Plan have told us that it can at times be all things to all people; that policies can be used to both advocate and repel proposed actions. Opportunities include:

- ***Make the intent of policies in key areas more clear.*** Sharpening the focus of key policies can help make them less subject to interpretation.
- ***Address inconsistencies, address trade-offs, and consider reducing the number of policies.*** While the consultants have yet to conduct a detailed analysis, preliminary observations suggest that the Plan's policies could be refined to reduce them to a smaller number, and inconsistencies could be reduced and priorities and trade-offs clarified.
- ***Address development issues at the urban edge.*** Clarify issues related to development at the urban edge (i.e., in Area II) and update policies and regulations for these areas. Develop and implement updated policies and regulations to govern annexation and the management of parts of Area II at the urban edge where development connected to urban services may be desirable, in order to clarify what form of development is appropriate, and how it is to be processed under joint city/county procedures This may also include describing how the boundaries are determined, to clarify why properties are included (or not) in these areas.

Summary from Environmental Advisory Board – Oct. 1, 2014

Staff presented an overview of the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan 5-year review process and asked the board questions regarding: (1) its strengths and weaknesses, (2) current issues to address in the plan update, (3) suggestions for community engagement, and (4) whether to bundle the resilience strategy process with the plan update. The board suggested the following ideas:

- The Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan is a high-level vision document that includes the community's sometimes-conflicting values but lacks strategic structure and fails to address where Boulder is headed as a city in terms of growth and sustainability.
- Instead of requesting community feedback on the Comprehensive Plan, hold facilitated community meetings to discuss specific topics such as the vision of Boulder, energy, resilience, housing and more. People may be more inclined to discuss specific issues instead of the entire framework of the plan.
- While gathering community feedback, use questions that will result in measurable, concrete answers rather than just ideological ones.
- Address two main questions: sustainability of resources and growth and how to balance the two, and resilience and how our community should respond to anticipated and unanticipated stressors.
- It is important to integrate resilience into our sustainability efforts and develop terminology that is more widely understood. Use the flood to illustrate the importance of resilience and as a way to build awareness of the impacts of issues such as climate change.
- Actively work with established community organizations like Better Boulder, Open Boulder, Plan Boulder, etc. to convene events through which the city could gather valuable community feedback on issues, values, and priorities.
- Boulder Valley School District (BVSD) could be a valuable resource to encourage the next generation of students to discuss these issues.
- Consider using scenario planning as a way to help make the future options more tangible and provide more concrete alternatives for the community to consider and create recommendations.