

BVCP Mid-term Update Recommended Policy and Text Changes

City and County staff are recommending these policy and text amendments to reflect recently adopted master plans, area plans and other confirmed new policy direction.

There are no new policy questions proposed as a part of this update, but only changes that reflect already adopted or accepted policy guidance since the last BVCP update. Where there are new policies included to reflect adopted policy direction, the policy numbering will be adjusted in the final plan. Additions are shown in teal and deletions in red.

- A. Chapter III Section 1 –Intergovernmental Cooperation – New policy: Consultation with federally recognized American Indian Tribes to reflect existing Memorandum of Understanding and direction in the 2019 Open Space and Mountain Parks Master Plan recognizing consultation with indigenous people about cultural resources on OSMP/city land
 - B. Chapter III Section 1 – Framework for Annexation & Urban Service Provision – Amend Policy 1.16 Annexation, to reflect intent of 2016 Blue Line changes regarding annexation of parcels now eligible for annexation.
 - C. Chapter III Section 6 Transportation – Amend and add new policy language to reflect 2019 Transportation Master Plan direction, add new policies for Transportation Equity and the Low-Stress Network, and updating other policies
 - D. Chapter III Section 7 Housing – Amend and add policy language to reflect the new affordable housing goal to secure 15 percent of all residential properties within Boulder as permanently affordable to low-, moderate-, and middle-income households by 2035; reflect direction from the adopted 2017 Homelessness Strategy
 - E. Chapter V Subcommunity and Area Planning, to reflect revisions approved in early 2019 by City Council and to add a summary of the adopted Alpine-Balsam Area Plan.
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COMMUNITY INPUT

Proposed policy and text changes were available on the BeHeardBoulder online platform for review and comment. Feedback received includes:

- I'm fine with the changes though [I] don't think they go far enough. [W]e need to be having larger housing policy shifts a la Portland or Minneapolis to reflect our current housing crisis. [A]lso eliminating parking minimums city wide. [E]nforcing parking MAXIMUMS city wide. [A] switch to mixed use throughout the city to allow for better more walkable neighborhoods.

- Why does City Council knowingly move forward to build low to middle income housing where multi-million dollar homes exist nearby? Does this not even suggest the obvious rise in neighborhood crime? In these uncertain times of security especially when 2nd amendment rights are being challenged (City of Boulder specifically) It's just plain wrong.

A. Policy/Text Topic: Intergovernmental Cooperation, Consultation with federally recognized American Indian Tribes (Chapter III, Section 1)

Section 1 Intergovernmental Cooperation & Growth Management focuses on intergovernmental cooperation and how vital it is to successful planning and implementation within the Boulder Valley. The addition of a new policy around engagement with American Indian Tribes and Indigenous Peoples is intended to highlight that federally recognized American Indian Tribes are another group we engage with on a government-to-government basis, reflecting the City of Boulder's existing commitments in the [2002 Memorandum of Understanding](#) and the [2002 MOU amendment](#) as well as the Indigenous Peoples' Day Resolution: https://www-static.bouldercolorado.gov/docs/Indigenous_Peoples_Day_Resolution_1190_-_no_seal-1-201608230837.pdf

Proposed New or Changed Policy / Text:

New Policy: Consultation with federally recognized American Indian Tribes

In the pursuit of shared responsibility and of promoting knowledge about American Indian Tribes, unifying communities, combating prejudice and discrimination against Indigenous Peoples, the city supports actions that encourage understanding and appreciation of Indigenous Peoples, their traditions, culture and our shared history in these ancestral lands known as Boulder Valley.

The city has long-standing government-to-government relationships and agreements with a number of federally recognized American Indian Tribes. The city respects Tribal sovereignty and self-determination and follows federal and state consultation guidelines.

The city follows a formal government-to-government consultation process to receive input on important topics from Tribal Nations including:

- Supporting American Indian Tribes' connections to their ancestral homelands;
- Encouraging understanding and appreciation of Indigenous People, their traditions, culture and our shared history in the Boulder Valley;
- Protecting areas of religious and cultural significance and establishing procedures to notify Tribal Nations of cultural resources discovered;
- Providing opportunities for ceremonial practices;

- Helping fulfill the city's Indigenous People's Day Resolution, which requires the city to correct omissions of the Native American presence in public places, resources and cultural programming; and
- Advising on land acquisition and land management efforts.

The city recognizes that meaningful engagement with Tribal Nations needs to also happen at a regional level, and that the city is committed to partnering and participating with other local governments on this regional approach.

B. Policy/Text Topic: Framework for Annexation and Urban Service Provision

Proposed New or Changed Policy / Text:

Chapter III Section 1 – Framework for Annexation & Urban Service Provision – Amend Policy 1.16 Annexation, to reflect intent of 2016 Blue Line changes regarding annexation of parcels now eligible for annexation.

Policy 1.16 Annexation

The policies in regard to annexation to be pursued by the city are:

- Annexation will be required before adequate facilities and services are furnished.
- The city will actively pursue annexation of county enclaves, substantially developed properties along the western boundary below the Blue Line and other substantially developed Area II properties. County enclave means an unincorporated area of land entirely contained within the outer boundary of the city. Terms of annexation will be based on the amount of development potential as described in (c.), (d.) and (e.) of this policy. Applications made to the county for development of enclaves and Area II lands in lieu of annexation will be referred to the city for review and comment. The county will attach great weight to the city's response and may require that the landowner conform to one or more of the city's development standards so that any future annexation into the city will be consistent and compatible with the city's requirements.
- In 2016, the city adopted Ordinance 8311 which changed the location of the Blue Line. This change to the Blue Line was intended to clarify the location of the Blue Line and permit water service to existing development in the area, while reinforcing the protection of the foothill's open space and mountain backdrop. Both entire properties which and properties where the developed portions (1) are located in Area II and (2) were moved east of the Blue Line in 2016 shall be considered substantially developed and no additional dwelling units may be added. No water services shall be provided to development west of the Blue Line.

~~b.d.~~ Annexation of existing substantially developed areas will be offered in a manner and on terms and conditions that respect existing lifestyles and densities. The city will expect

these areas to be brought to city standards only where necessary to protect the health and safety of the residents of the subject area or of the city. The city, in developing annexation plans of reasonable cost, may phase new facilities and services. The county, which now has jurisdiction over these areas, will be a supportive partner with the city in annexation efforts to the extent the county supports the terms and conditions being proposed.

- e.e. In order to reduce the negative impacts of new development in the Boulder Valley, the city will annex Area II land with significant development or redevelopment potential only if the annexation provides a special opportunity or benefit to the city. For annexation consideration, emphasis will be given to the benefits achieved from the creation of permanently affordable housing. Provision of the following may also be considered a special opportunity or benefit: receiving sites for transferable development rights (TDRs), reduction of future employment projections, land and/or facilities for public purposes over and above that required by the city's land use regulations, environmental preservation or other amenities determined by the city to be a special opportunity or benefit. Parcels that are proposed for annexation that are already developed and which are seeking no greater density or building size would not be required to assume and provide that same level of community benefit as vacant parcels unless and until such time as an application for greater development is submitted.
- d.f. Annexation of substantially developed properties that allow for some additional residential units or commercial square footage will be required to demonstrate community benefit commensurate with their impacts. Further, annexations that resolve an issue of public health without creating additional development impacts should be encouraged.
- e.g. There will be no annexation of areas outside the boundaries of the Boulder Valley Planning Area, with the possible exception of annexation of acquired open space.
- f.h. Publicly owned property located in Area III, and intended to remain in Area III, may be annexed to the city if the property requires less than a full range of urban services or requires inclusion under city jurisdiction for health, welfare and safety reasons.
- g.i. The Gunbarrel Subcommunity is unique because the majority of residents live in the unincorporated area and because of the shared jurisdiction for planning and service provision among the county, city, Gunbarrel Public Improvement District and other special districts. Although interest in voluntary annexation has been limited, the city and county continue to support the eventual annexation of Gunbarrel. If resident interest in annexation does occur in the future, the city and county will negotiate new terms of annexation with the residents.

C. Policy/Text Topic: Transportation (Chapter III, Section 6)

As a result of direction in the 2019 Transportation Master Plan, staff propose new policies to reflect Equitable Transportation and the Low-Stress Walk and Bike Network. Staff also proposes minor changes to several policies and text in this chapter to align with city and county adopted Transportation Master Plans. *The information below contains only policies and text within Section 6 where there are proposed changes, not the entire section.*

Proposed New or Changed Policy / Text:

Section 6. Transportation

The vision is to create a safe, accessible and sustainable multimodal transportation system connecting people with each other and where they want to go. The system should be safe, equitable, reliable, provide travel choices and support clean air and the city, county, and state's ~~'s and county's~~ climate commitment.

~~to create and maintain a safe and efficient transportation system that meets city and county sustainability goals.~~ The transportation system should accommodate increased person trips by providing travel choices and by reducing single-occupant automobile trips and vehicle miles traveled (VMT). Plans should also prepare the community for future technology changes, such as electric/low emission vehicles, autonomous vehicles, and demographic and social shifts, such as an aging community, and increasing bicycle, micromobility and car sharing.

A mature community like Boulder has little opportunity or ability to add road capacity, as widening streets and building new roads would have significant negative environmental, community character and financial impacts. Consequently, the strategies of the city's Transportation Master Plan (TMP) center on maintaining a safe and efficient system.

The policies in this section generally reflect the focus areas of the city's TMP Action- Plan and the adopted Boulder County ~~T~~ Transportation Master Plan (TMP), including:

- Complete Transportation System;
- Regional Travel;
- Funding & Investments;
- Integration of Land Use & Transportation with Sustainability Initiatives; and
- Other Transportation Policies.

Complete Transportation System

6.01 All-Mode Transportation System & Safe and Complete Streets

The Boulder Valley will be served by an integrated all-mode transportation system, developed cooperatively by the city and county. The city's and county's transportation system focuses on moving people, and is ~~will be~~ based on complete streets reflecting the unique contexts of urban, suburban, and rural areas. ~~in the urban area,~~ These streets include ~~including~~ completed networks for each mode, making safe and convenient connections between modes, providing seamless connections between the city and county systems and promoting access and placemaking for the adjacent land uses and activities. Improvements to urban travel corridors will recognize pedestrian travel as the primary mode of transportation and preserve or improve the safety ~~and efficiency~~ of all modes of transportation. For more suburban and rural parts of the Boulder Valley, the transportation system is focused on sustainable mobility through development of a safe, multimodal system, creating the complete trip and investing in key regional transportation corridors.

New Policy: Equitable Transportation

The city and county will equitably distribute transportation investments and benefits in service of all community members, particularly vulnerable populations, ensuring that all people benefit from expanded mobility options. Providing more transportation options—like walking, biking, transit and shared options — in areas where people are more reliant on various modes will have a greater benefit to overall mobility. New transportation technologies and advanced mobility options provide Boulder with an opportunity to expand affordable transportation choices to those who need them the most, including those who cannot use existing fixed route transit such as service and shift workers.

New policy: Low Stress Walk and Bike Network

The city and county will create a connected walking and cycling network for people of all ages and abilities to travel along and across streets safely and comfortably. The county has a goal to develop a low stress bike network between communities within the county. Low stress walk and bike networks will attract a broader population of people as confident and comfortable pedestrians and cyclists. These walk and bike networks also support the city and county Vision Zero safety goals.

6.02 Renewed Vision for Transit

The city and county will integrate transit investments and improvements to address service, capital infrastructure, policies, programs and implementation. These will expand the Community Transit Network (CTN) and improve regional transit service and connections outside the city, such as bus rapid transit (BRT) along state highways and regional key corridors, bus services as identified in the Northwest Area Mobility Study.

6.03 Reduction of Single Occupancy Auto Trips

The city and county will support and promote the greater use of ~~alternative~~ multimodal travel options to reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and single-occupancy automobile travel. The city will continue progress toward its specific objective to reduce vehicle miles of travel (VMT) 20 percent from 1994 levels through the year ~~2035~~ 2030 within the Boulder Valley to achieve transportation and GHG reduction goals. The county's goal is to reduce VMT to 2005 levels, and to achieve regional air quality goals and state greenhouse gas reduction targets. The city and county will include other communities and entities (especially origin communities such as Longmont, Lafayette, Louisville and Erie) in developing and implementing integrated travel demand management (TDM) programs, new mobility services and improved local and regional transit service. The city will require TDM plans for applicable residential and commercial developments within the city to reduce the vehicle miles traveled and single-occupant vehicle trips generated by the development.

6.04 Transportation System Optimization

The transportation system serves people using ~~is used by~~ all modes, and maintaining its efficient and safe operation benefits all users. The city and county will monitor the performance of all modes as a basis for informed and systematic trade-offs supporting mobility, safety, GHG reduction and other related goals.

6.05 Integrated Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Programs

The city and county will cooperate in developing comprehensive Transportation Demand Management (TDM) programs for residents and employees, which include incentives, such as developing a [fare-free local and regional transit system](#); ~~universal community transit pass program~~; promoting shared-use mobility, ridesharing, bikesharing, carsharing, vanpools and teleworking; and supporting programs for walking and biking, such as secured long-term bike parking. The city will employ strategies such as shared, unbundled, managed and paid parking (i.e., “Shared Unbundled, Managed, and Paid” – “SUMP” principles) to reflect the real cost of Single Occupancy Vehicle (SOV) travel. The city will require TDM plans for applicable residential and commercial developments.

6.07 Transportation Safety

The city and county recognize safety for people of all ages using any mode within the transportation system (i.e., walking, bicycling, transit riding and driving) as a fundamental goal. The city's and county's [Vision Zero policies](#) ~~“Toward Vision Zero”~~ aims to [eliminate traffic deaths and severe injuries](#) ~~reduce serious injury and fatal collisions~~ involving people using all modes of travel, focusing on crash trends and mitigation strategies identified in the Safe Streets Boulder Report and on-going local, regional and statewide safety assessments. [Improving travel safety is based on a holistic combination of the four E's: Engineering, Education, Enforcement, Evaluation and relies upon our whole community to keep people safe. To achieve Vision Zero, the four E's approach helps ensure we are addressing travel safety from all angles. This means dangerous travel behaviors, such as distracted and impaired travel, can be countered through enforcement efforts and safety education outreach, while engineering treatments and innovative street design can help prevent intersection conflicts for example. Applying all four E's is the most comprehensive way to help prevent crashes.](#)

Regional Travel

6.08 Regional Travel Coordination

Local transportation and land use decisions have regional transportation impacts. The city and county will work to develop regional consensus for multimodal improvements to regional corridors through working with the Colorado Department of Transportation, the Regional Transportation District (RTD), [Denver Regional Council of Governments](#), ~~US-36~~ [Northwest](#) Mayors and Commissioners Coalition and other providers to develop high-quality, high-frequency regional transportation options, including improvements identified in the Northwest Area Mobility Study (NAMS), FasTracks arterial bus rapid transit (BRT) service, [managed lanes](#) and commuter bikeways between communities. The city and county will continue development of first- and last-mile connections to local systems and longer-term transit planning.

6.09 Regional Transit Facilities

The city will develop and enhance the regional transit anchors that serve the primary attractors of Downtown Boulder, the University of Colorado and Boulder Junction adjacent to the Boulder Valley Regional Center. Developing “Mobility

Hubs” and first and last mile connections to these facilities is a priority to support employees commuting into and throughout [Boulder and Boulder County](#) and to reduce single-occupancy auto travel and congestion on regional roads.

Funding & Investment

6.10 Investment Priorities

To protect previous investments and ensure [safe and](#) efficient use of existing travel corridors, the city ~~and county~~ will prioritize investments for [travel safety for people using all modes, such as Vision Zero improvements; system maintenance, such as street and bridge repair; and system operations, such as signal enhancements.](#) ~~improvements to safety and maintenance for all modes of the existing transportation system.~~ The city ~~and county~~ will give [medium priority to system efficiency and optimization, such as enhancement of pedestrian, bicycle and transit systems; electrical vehicle charging infrastructure and electrification of fleets; neighborhood speed management, and person carrying capacity improvements \(rather than adding capacity for vehicles\).](#) ~~second priority to capacity additions for non-automotive modes and efficiency improvements for existing road facilities that increase person carrying capacity without adding general purpose lanes.~~ Lower priority will be given to investments in quality of life improvements, such as sound walls. The county will prioritize transportation investments based on several criteria, including, [multimodal operational efficiency, safety, partnership opportunities, maintenance, and resilience.](#) The city and county will manage and price any additional significant regional single-occupancy vehicle road capacity to provide reliable and rapid travel times for transit, high-occupancy vehicle lanes and other carsharing options.

Other Transportation Policies

6.20 Improving Air Quality & Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Both the city and county are committed to reductions in GHG emissions, with the city committing to an 80 percent reduction from 2005 levels by 2050 [and the county committing to a 45% reduction by 2030 and a 90% reduction by 2050.](#) The city and county will design the transportation system to minimize air pollution and reduce GHG emissions by promoting the use of active transportation (e.g., walking and bicycling) and low-emission transportation modes and infrastructure to support them, reducing auto traffic, encouraging the use of fuel-efficient and clean-fueled vehicles that demonstrate air pollution reductions and maintaining acceptable traffic flow.

Relevant Plans & Policies

- Boulder County Transportation Master Plan
- Boulder County Multimodal Transportation Standards
- Transportation Master Plan (City of Boulder)
- City Climate Commitment Strategy (City of Boulder)
- Airport Master Plan (City of Boulder)
- [Access Management and Parking Strategy \(City of Boulder\)](#)
- Northwest Area Mobility Study (NAMS)

D. Policy/Text Topic: Housing (Chapter III, Section 7)

Policy revisions reflect the [new affordable housing goal](#) to secure 15 percent of all residential properties within Boulder as permanently affordable to low-, moderate-, and middle-income households by 2035.

Proposed New or Changed Policy / Text:

7.02 Affordable Housing Goals

The city will [secure 15 percent of all residential properties within Boulder as permanently affordable to low-, moderate-, and middle-income households by 2035](#) ~~study and consider substantially increasing the proportion of housing units permanently affordable to low-, moderate- and middle-income households beyond our current goal of at least ten percent of the housing stock for low and moderate incomes~~. The city will also increase the proportion of market-rate middle-income housing, as described in the Middle Income Housing Strategy. These goals are achievable through regulations, financial subsidies and other means. City resources will also be directed toward maintaining existing permanently affordable housing units and increasing the stock of permanent affordable housing through preservation of existing housing.

As a result of the City adopting the *Homelessness Strategy* in 2017, Housing & Human Services staff propose a new policy to reflect the strategy's vision and guiding principles. Staff also proposes minor changes to policy 7.05 to reflect the emergence of the Homeless Solutions for Boulder County (HSBC) and the demise of the 10 Year Plan to Address Homelessness.

Proposed New or Changed Policy / Text:

New Policy in Section 7 Housing: [Addressing Homelessness](#)

[The city and county will work to ensure that residents, including families and individuals, have opportunities to achieve or maintain a safe, stable home in the community. The city and county will effectively use resources within a coordinated and integrated system. Solutions will consider the diversity of people experiencing homelessness and their unique needs in community planning and support the advancement of resilience, self-sufficiency and independence.](#)

7.05 Strengthening Regional Housing Cooperation

Affordable housing is a regional issue that requires the city and county to work with neighborhoods and other public and private partners to develop and innovate regional housing solutions. The city and the county will work to enhance regional cooperation on housing issues to address regional housing needs and encourage the creation of housing in proximity to regional transit routes. Such efforts include the Regional HOME Consortium, the Boulder County Consortium of Cities, [the County Regional Housing Partnership](#), and the [Homeless Solutions for Boulder County](#) ~~Ten-Year Plan to Address Homelessness~~.

Relevant Plans & Policies:

- Comprehensive Housing Strategy (City of Boulder)
- Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice (US Department of Housing and Urban Development)
- Boulder Broomfield HOME
- [Consortium Consolidated Plan](#)
- [Boulder County Regional Housing Plan](#)
- ~~[Boulder County 10-year Plan to Address Homelessness](#)~~
- [Homelessness Strategy \(City of Boulder\)](#)
- Middle Income Housing Strategy (City of Boulder)

E. Policy/Text Topic: Subcommunity and Area Planning (Chapter V)

Based on direction from the Planning Board and City Council about the future of the Subcommunity Planning Program for Boulder in 2019, staff propose multiple revisions and additions to the subcommunity and area planning descriptions. Also proposed is a brief summary of the adopted Alpine-Balsam Area Plan.

Proposed New or Changed Policy / Text: See following pages

CHAPTER V

SUBCOMMUNITY & AREA PLANNING

Subcommunity and area planning ~~bridge~~ provide localized opportunities to implement ~~s the gap between the~~ broad policies of the comprehensive plan ~~and site-specific project review (development applications or city capital projects)~~. ~~Subcommunity plans~~ address one of ten subcommunity regions identified in Figure 5-1. Area plans typically address ~~a group of adjacent parcels or a corridor ranging in size from ten acres to 200 acres~~ ~~planning issues~~ at a more detailed level than subcommunity plans. ~~The planning horizon is the same as that for the comprehensive plan—15 years.~~ Such plans are prepared through a process that requires residents, neighbors, businesses and land owners and city (and sometimes county) departments to work together toward defining the vision, goals and actions for ~~an~~ ~~a subcommunity or~~ area, as described below.

~~Subcommunity and area plans are intended to:~~

- ~~• Establish the official future vision of an area;~~
- ~~• Create a common understanding among the parties involved regarding the expected changes in the area;~~
- ~~• Determine the appropriate density, character, scale and mix of uses in an area and identify the regulatory changes needed to ensure or encourage appropriate development compatible with its surrounding area;~~
- ~~• Define desired characteristics of an area or neighborhood that should be preserved or enhanced;~~
- ~~• Define the acceptable amount of infill and redevelopment and determine standards and performance measures for design quality to avoid or adequately mitigate the negative impacts of infill and redevelopment and enhance the benefits;~~
- ~~• Identify the need and locations for new or enhanced pedestrian, bicycle and vehicular connections;~~
- ~~• Identify the need and locations for new public or private facilities, such as shopping, child care, schools, parks and recreation, transit facilities and mobile and virtual library services and facilities so that daily needs are close to where people live and work and contribute to the livability, enjoyment and sense of physical and social identity of a subcommunity or area;~~

~~The subcommunity and area planning process includes:~~ benefits from developments that are a priority for the area; and

- ~~• Develop implementation methods for achieving the goals of the plan, which may include: neighborhood improvement, trail, park or street projects; changes to the land use regulations or zoning districts; or changes to the comprehensive plan Land Use Map.~~

- Identifying opportunities to address comprehensive plan goals;

- Developing criteria for decision-making that balance local area interests with those of the broader community;
- Involving interested groups and individuals to identify issues and opportunities to be addressed by the plan and establish a common vision for the future;
- Identifying a range of appropriate techniques for determining the priority of and means of financing and plan elements; and
- Establishing a planning framework in which to review public projects, land use changes and development proposals to implement or ensure compliance with the plan.

~~Boulder County is involved in the development of plans that affect land in Area II or III.~~

Subcommunity and area plans are adopted by the Planning Board and City Council and amended as needed with the same legislative process as originally adopted. [Boulder County is involved in the development of plans that affect land in Area II or III.](#) -Land Use Map changes proposed in subcommunity and area plans may be incorporated into the comprehensive plan concurrent with the adoption of the area plan. Subcommunity, area and neighborhood planning efforts are processes in which all are given opportunities to collaborate and innovate in achieving local, [city and regional](#) ~~as well as wider~~-community goals.

Subcommunity Planning

~~There are ten subcommunity planning areas within the Service Area: Central Boulder, Central Boulder—University Hill, Crossroads, the University of Colorado, East Boulder, Southeast Boulder, South Boulder, North Boulder, Palo Park and Gunbarrel.~~

~~When the subcommunity and area planning program was instituted in 1990, the idea was to develop plans for all of the subcommunities. The North Boulder Subcommunity Plan was the first because the area had the largest amount of vacant land in the city at the time, and a significant amount of change was anticipated. While much of the city planning focus in the years since has been on developing area plans rather than subcommunity plans, should resources permit and council and planning board decide, subcommunity plans which meet the criteria for selection called out below may be undertaken. It is anticipated that each subcommunity plan will be evaluated as needed and monitored annually through CIP and the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan Action Plan. the community interest in localized planning identified in the 2015 BVCP Major Update, adopted in 2017, led to a renewed interest to offer targeted solutions for different community geographies and bridge the gap between broad policies and site-specific project review. At the January 2018 City Council Retreat, subcommunity planning was identified as a priority program for the year to address this interest and implement goals of the BVCP update.~~

~~With an expressed interest from residents and council in re-establishing a subcommunity planning program, City Council revised subcommunity and subcommunity planning definitions, subcommunity boundaries, and prioritization criteria on Jan. 15, 2019.~~

[The Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan describes the city's core values, principles and policies to be implemented across Boulder. How these initiatives get applied to areas throughout Boulder is dependent on localized conditions of the built and natural environments as well as the motivations and desires of residents,](#)

land and business owners. Dividing the city into subcommunities creates more focused areas of study and provides a framework for managing change and implementing policy.

A **subcommunity** is an area within the service area of the city (Area I and II) that is defined by physical boundaries such as roads, waterways and topography. Each subcommunity is composed of a variety of neighborhoods and has distinct physical and natural characteristics. There are ten subcommunities in the Boulder Valley: Central Boulder, Central Boulder - University Hill, Crossroads, Colorado University, East Boulder, Southeast Boulder, South Boulder, North Boulder, Palo Park and Gunbarrel.

A **Subcommunity Plan** is a tool for residents, land owners, business owners, city officials and city staff that communicates expectations about the future of a subcommunity and guides decision-making about subcommunity resilience and evolution into the future.

The subcommunity planning process is a collaborative effort among members of the public and the city to develop recommendations for achieving local, city-wide and regional goals. The process will:

- Supplement the Comprehensive Plan by providing a further level of detailed direction for the future of Boulder subcommunities
- Integrate city-wide planning efforts at a neighborhood scale
- Establish a forum for subcommunity residents to share ideas and concerns about the future of their area
- Provide residents with opportunities to play a role in the planning, design and implementation of future preservation and change in their neighborhood
- Define desired characteristics of a subcommunity that should be preserved or enhanced
- Identify gaps and opportunities in city services and resources
- Identify gaps and opportunities in the private market for features like housing and retail
- Prioritize projects for preservation and/or change within the subcommunity
- Identify implementation tools to realize the vision of the plan
- Help shape critical capital budget decisions and public investment priorities
- Communicate expectations about the future of a subcommunity to residents, local businesses, the

Implementation of Subcommunity Plans

- Identify and describe how each subcommunity can implement city-wide goals

Once City Council adopts a subcommunity plan, the work of implementing the plan's vision begins. City staff, Boards and Council will update applicable policies, regulations, and financing strategies guiding day-to-day decision making across the City. These updates are the primary means in which the subcommunity plan is realized.

Potentially included in the scope of change related to a newly adopted plan are changes to the City's Comprehensive Plan, Land Use Regulations, Design and Construction Standards, and Capital Improvements Program. **Table X** below provides an overview of the potential scope of changes that can result from the implementation of a subcommunity plan. Precisely which changes and the scope of those changes depends entirely on the goals as laid out in the subcommunity plan itself.

Table X: Mechanisms for Implementing a Subcommunity Plan

<u>Policies (Plans)</u>	<u>Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan (BVCP):</u> May include map, policy, and other updates to the BVCP	<u>Departmental Plans (e.g. Transportation or Flood Plans):</u> Update to coordinate plan goals and objectives	<u>Guideline (e.g. Design Guidelines):</u> Create and/or update guideline documents
<u>Regulations (Land Use Code)</u>	<u>New or Modified Zone District and/or Rezoning:</u> May include (1) introduction of new zoning districts or overlays; (2) changes to existing geographic boundaries of zoning districts; (3) modifications to zoning district criteria such as height; setback; FAR; dwelling units/acre; use	<u>Codified Review Criteria:</u> May include updates and revisions to annexation, subdivision, site review, use review, and other codified review criteria.	<u>Regulatory Plans (e.g. ROW or Stormwater Plans):</u> May include updates to planned improvements and maintenance schedules
<u>Regulations (Design and Construction Standards)</u>	<u>New or Major Modifications to Standards:</u> May include introduction of new street sections, and other standards	<u>Codified Review Criteria:</u> May include updates and minor revisions to existing standards	<u>Regulatory Plans ?</u>
<u>Financing Strategies</u>	<u>Capital Improvements Program (CIP):</u> Updates to the allocation of the General Fund to City-owned property (such as street improvements)	<u>Public-Private Partnerships:</u> Create a joint financing plan for meeting plan goals when City/Private funds independently are insufficient	<u>Private Development:</u> May include updating property owners and developers of new entitlement allowances

Prioritizing Subcommunities for Planning

Each of the possible changes noted above will be recommended by Staff, reviewed and adopted by Planning Board, the City Council and/or the City Manager.

The key indicators for prioritizing subcommunities are:

1. Area with evidence of change. These areas across the city have data-based evidence of change. The city-wide data that ~~was~~ may be considered includes recent property sales, residential demolitions, new certificates of occupancy and planned capital improvement investments.
2. Areas planning for change. These areas include parts of the city undergoing current long-range planning efforts or have recently going through a long-range planning exercise.
3. Areas of described change. These are areas of the city that have been described by council as currently undergoing change

While key indicators and metrics may be used to evaluate subcommunities, City Council will not rely exclusively on measurement-based criteria for the prioritization of subcommunities for planning. The selection and prioritization of subcommunities for planning will be at the direction of City Council.

Area Planning

Area plans are developed for areas or corridors with special problems or opportunities that are not adequately addressed by comprehensive planning, subcommunity planning or existing land use regulations. Area planning is initiated as issues or opportunities arise. Area plans are generally of a scale that allow for developing a common understanding of the expected changes, defining desired characteristics that should be preserved or enhanced and identifying achievable implementation methods. While area plans generally focus on mixed-use areas of change, they may be developed for residential neighborhoods if such areas meet the criteria for selection below.

Differences between a subcommunity plan and an area plan:

	<u>Subcommunity Plan</u>	<u>Area Plan</u>
<u>Scale</u>	<u>Addresses one of 10 subcommunity regions; Subcommunity size ranges from 500acres to 10,000acres</u>	<u>Addresses a group of adjacent parcels or a corridor ranging in size from 10acres to 200acres</u>
<u>Scope</u>	<u>Defines a long-term vision for resilience and evolution in a subcommunity</u>	<u>Envisions short and long-term physical changes to the built and/or natural environment for a small area or corridor.</u>
<u>Impetus for Planning</u>	<u>Council identifies subcommunity for planning.</u>	<u>Opportunity sites or key issues arise that require a city planning process; The pursuit of an area plan for a small area or corridor may be a recommendation included in a subcommunity plan.</u>
<u>Planning Horizon</u>	<u>250 Years</u>	<u>2-15 years</u>

Criteria for Selection

The criteria for selecting the priority for the development of subcommunity and area plans are:

- Extent to which the plan implements the comprehensive plan goals;
- Imminence of change anticipated in the area;
- Magnitude of an identified problem;
- Likelihood of addressing a recurring problem;
- Cost and time effectiveness of doing the plan; and
- Extent to which the plan will improve land use regulations, the development review process and the quality of public and private improvements.

Criteria for Determining a Neighborhood Planning/Infill Pilot Project

Outcomes of a neighborhood infill or planning project may include, but are not limited to, area plans, regulations, new residential building types or other outcomes. The criteria for establishing a neighborhood planning/infill pilot include:

- A high level of interest on the part of the neighborhood residents and an organization that will work with the city and sponsor the plan or project;
- Recent trends that have created changes in the neighborhood and identified imminence of change anticipated in the future;
- Desire to address neighborhood needs and/or improvements through creative solutions;
- Agreeableness to identify solutions for community-wide goals and challenges as well as to address local needs;
- Interest in addressing risk mitigation (e.g., addressing potential hazards) and in building community capacity and the ability to be more self-sufficient and resilient; and
- Demonstrated interest on the part of the neighborhood residents and organization to test and apply innovative, contextually appropriate residential infill, including but not limited to duplex conversions, cottage courts, detached alley houses, accessory dwelling units or small mixed-use or retail projects, while considering areas of preservation.

Adopted Subcommunity & Area Plans

The city has adopted the following subcommunity or area plans as shown in Figure 5-1:

- Boulder Plaza Subarea Plan, 1992;
- North Boulder Subcommunity Plan, 1995;
- University Hill Area Plan, 1996;
- Crossroads East/Sunrise Center Area Plan, 1997;
- Gunbarrel Community Center Plan, 2004;

- [Transit Village Area Plan, 2007](#); ~~and~~
- [Junior Academy Area Plan, 2009](#); ~~and~~
- [Alpine-Balsam Area Plan, 2019](#).

North Boulder Subcommunity Plan

The North Boulder Subcommunity Plan was adopted in 1995 to develop a vision for an area that had considerable development potential. The plan aims to preserve the present character and livability of the existing residential neighborhoods and ensure that future changes are beneficial to both the subcommunity and the city as a whole. A new mixed-use village center along Broadway is envisioned to become the heart of subcommunity activity. New neighborhoods in the northern portion of the subcommunity are meant to create a strong edge to the city and an attractive entrance into Boulder.

Implementation of the Plan

The North Boulder Subcommunity Plan was the basis for re-zoning of a portion of the area in 1997. Five new zoning districts were created to implement the design guidelines in the plan, including: a business main street zone, patterned after historic ‘Main Street’ business districts; three mixed-use zones that provide a transition between the higher intensity business ‘Main Street’ and surrounding residential or industrial areas; and a mixed density residential zone district. The plan also established a street and pedestrian/bicycle network plan, to which developing or re-developing properties must adhere.

Alpine-Balsam Area Plan

[The Alpine-Balsam Area Plan was adopted in 2019 to outline the vision for the Alpine-Balsam property, formerly the Boulder Community Health \(BCH\) hospital that was purchased by the city in 2015 and the approximately 70-acre area surrounding the city’s property. The vision includes building on the thriving nature of the area as a community center, redeveloping the site to include a new city service center and new housing to serve a range of housing types and price ranges. Redevelopment in the area presents opportunities to create a range of travel choices and to prepare for future transportation trends and technologies. New development at the site will incorporate sustainable solutions for infrastructure and buildings.](#)

Implementation of the Plan

[Implementation of the Alpine-Balsam Area Plan is a multi-phased process to ensure efficient and effective city investment to redevelop the city’s site and implement community infrastructure. The pace of redevelopment in the broader planning area will be determined by, if and when private property owners voluntarily choose to redevelop their properties.](#)

Gunbarrel Community Center Plan

The Gunbarrel Community Center Plan, adopted in 2004 and amended in 2006, provides a blueprint for transitioning the Gunbarrel commercial area from mostly light industrial uses to a viable and vibrant, pedestrian-oriented commercial center serving Gunbarrel subcommunity residents and workers. This will involve: expanding the amount of retail and allowing more density in the retail area; adding new residential and some offices uses in proximity to the retail core; and providing more vehicular, pedestrian and bicycle connections to and from and within the center. The new connections will improve access, break down the existing “superblocks,” provide better visibility to shops and promote more pedestrian-scale architecture and

outdoor spaces. Spine Road between Lookout and Gunpark roads will become the 'Main Street' for the retail area.

Implementation of the Plan

Implementation of the Gunbarrel Community Center Plan will occur over a long period of time through a combination of actions from both the public and private sectors. Business associations, such as the Gunbarrel Business Alliance, and neighborhood groups will play an important role in promoting collaboration to successfully implement the plan. Land use changes were made in the 2005 Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan update to reflect the plan vision.

Transit Village Area Plan/Boulder Junction

The Transit Village Area Plan guides development of an area that is within walking distance of a transit hub near 30th and Pearl Streets. The plan recommends land use changes to transform this mostly industrial, low-density, automobile-oriented area into a more urban, higher-density, pedestrian-oriented environment with a mixture of uses, including new retail and office space and new residential neighborhoods for a diversity of incomes and lifestyles. Many of the existing service, commercial and industrial uses on the north and east side of the area, respectively, will continue. The plan also focuses on developing new, high-quality public spaces and streets, creating a new home for the historic Union-Pacific train depot and protecting and enhancing Goose Creek.

Implementation of the Plan

After adoption of the plan, the area was renamed Boulder Junction. Implementation entails significant public investment in the transit facilities, the adjacent pocket park and civic plaza, the new north-south collector road, rehabilitation of the Depot, Goose Creek enhancements and the city-owned site at the northeast corner of the 30th and Pearl intersection. Property owners will contribute to construction of new streets, sidewalks and bicycle facilities when they develop their properties. In 2010 and 2011, land use and zoning changes were made on the west side of the area, and a general improvement district was formed to manage parking and provide Transportation Demand Management services. The Boulder Junction Form Based Code (FBC) pilot, now Appendix M of Title 9 – Land Use Code, was completed in 2016 and establishes building-specific form and design requirements for the west side of the area (Boulder Junction Phase I). Land use changes and public improvements on the east side of the area will occur later, after substantial redevelopment of the west side.

Central Area

Downtown, the University and the Boulder Valley Regional Center areas constitute the three primary activity centers within the Boulder Valley's Central Area, as shown in Figure 5-2.

See also the Central Broadway Corridor Design Framework in Section 2 Built Environment (Figure 3-5).

Downtown

Downtown is the heart of Boulder—a hub of civic, social, cultural, entertainment, spiritual, professional and commercial activity. The Pearl Street Mall provides a unique pedestrian experience, with surrounding historic residential neighborhoods, newer commercial and mixed-use buildings, the city's civic center and Boulder Creek in close proximity. Several documents and districts work to maintain and enhance the Downtown environment:

- The Downtown Urban Design Guidelines, adopted in 1986 and revised in 2002, 2011 and 2016, guide the design quality of new construction, preservation and renovation projects located downtown.
- The Central Area General Improvement District (CAGID), formed in 1970, provides parking and related improvements and maintenance in a 35-block area encompassing Downtown.
- The Downtown Boulder Business Improvement District (BID), formed in 1999, provides enhancements and services (economic vitality, marketing and enhanced maintenance) in the roughly the same area as CAGID to supplement services provided by the city.
- The 2005 Downtown Strategic Plan recommends near-term strategies to keep Downtown Boulder vibrant and successful, for example, supporting small businesses and simplifying parking.

Boulder Valley Regional Center

The Boulder Valley Regional Center (BVRC) is a primarily commercial area, providing retail at a range of scales, restaurants, offices and hotels in the geographic center of Boulder. There is also some high-density housing, two parks and the Dairy Center for the Arts. The BVRC was established as an urban renewal district in 1979 to revitalize the area, with public improvements financed by bonds that were paid off in 2002. The following plans and guidelines continue to guide redevelopment and evolution of the area into a more attractive and pedestrian-, bicycle- and transit-friendly place:

- The Boulder Plaza Subarea Plan, 1992, and the Crossroads/Sunrise Center Area Plan, 1997, provide guidance on specific improvements to circulation, the public realm and building design in each area when redevelopment occurs.
- The BVRC Transportation Connections Plan, adopted in 1997 and updated in 1998 and 2002, shows where pedestrian, bicycle and vehicular transportation facilities should be constructed or improved through redevelopment or the Capital Improvements Program.
- The BVRC Design Guidelines, adopted in 1998, establish design goals and guidelines for development proposals in the BVRC, including site layout, circulation, buildings, landscaping and open space, streetscape and signs.

University of Colorado & University Hill

The University of Colorado-Boulder (CU-Boulder) is an important part of the Boulder Valley's intellectual, cultural, social and economic life. The University's plans for expansion are set forth primarily in these documents:

- The Flagship 2030 strategic plan seeks to position CU-Boulder for global leadership in education, research and creative works by the year 2030. It envisions an increase in the number of undergraduate, graduate and professional school students and a corresponding increase in faculty.
- The 2011 Campus Master Plan provides guiding principles for developing facilities over the next ten years in support of the Flagship 2030 vision. The plan proposes development of the East Campus (generally bounded by 30th Street, Colorado Avenue, Arapahoe Avenue and Foothills Parkway) as a full campus, with higher-density building and a broad mix of programs. The Williams Village property will also continue to be developed. Growth on the Main Campus will be limited, and the South Campus will continue to be reserved as a land bank for future generations.

The University Hill (“The Hill”) business district, to the west of the Main Campus across Broadway, serves both the university population and the surrounding neighborhood, with restaurants, shopping and entertainment. Efforts to revitalize and diversify uses on The Hill to include more housing, some office, a broader range of retail offerings and increased cultural activities are guided by the following:

- The University Hill General Improvement District (UHGID), created in 1970 and expanded in 1985, provides parking, maintenance and aesthetic improvements to the business district and also has played a leadership role in facilitating revitalization and redevelopment on The Hill.
- The 1996 University Hill Area Plan initiated streetscape improvements and land use regulation amendments to enhance the appeal and safety of public spaces, encourage mixed-use development and support and strengthen The Hill’s pedestrian-oriented, urban village character.
- Direction from City Council in 2010 to explore strategies for The Hill revitalization, including creation of a general improvement district for the surrounding high-density residential neighborhood and an “innovation district” in the commercial area.

Surrounding Neighborhoods

Goals for specific Central Area neighborhoods near the Downtown and the University are as follows:

- The Pearl Street Corridor between 18th Street and Folsom links Downtown with the BVRC. The corridor is half-a-block wide along both sides of Pearl Street and is separated from established residential neighborhoods by alleys. The vision for the corridor is an interesting and varied mix of uses, combining urban-density housing with small-scale retail uses and office space. The scale of new buildings will be sensitive in use and design to adjacent residential uses. The challenge is to strengthen the pedestrian environment along the street from Downtown to the BVRC and beyond to Boulder Junction.
- ~~The Alpine-Balsam/Community Plaza neighborhood just north of the downtown along Broadway includes the hospital, medical offices and two shopping centers. The design of commercial expansions and physical improvements in the area must incorporate special considerations to minimize impacts to adjacent residential neighborhoods. In 2015, the City of Boulder purchased the hospital campus at the corner of Broadway and Balsam Avenue. In 2017, City Council accepted the Alpine-Balsam Vision Plan. Additional planning efforts will continue to ensure that future redevelopment of the site fits the community’s vision and goals and enhances the character of the neighborhood.~~
- No additional changes are proposed for the rest of this section.