

BVCP Update Phases 3 and 4

Community Engagement

August 2016 – August 2017



The following provides a summary of community engagement in Phases 3 and 4 of the BVCP update including:

- I. Overview and Metrics
- II. Phase 3 Events and Targeted Outreach
- III. BVCP Survey #2
- IV. Phase 4 Events and Final Decision-Making Process

I. Overview and Metrics

The purposes of public participation in **Phase 3** built on what was heard in earlier phases of the update, and focused on **sharing options, analysis and recommendations** around key topics and areas of focus for the update. Preferences were gauged for choices around key issues in the update including:

1. Housing and Affordability and Diversity
2. Climate Change, Energy and Resilience
3. Balance of Future Jobs and Housing
4. Urban Design and Community Benefits
5. Addressing Local Needs

The purpose of public participation in **Phase 4** was to **reflect on community feedback** from throughout the entire update process, and to distribute and **garner feedback on the draft plan** to inform the **final approval of the plan**.

BVCP Process Subcommittee

In order to learn from the experiences and feedback gained in all engagement activities, as well as ensure that the goals of the engagement plan are being met, the process committee advised that the planning and communications teams measure aspects of engagement and document qualitative feedback. The BVCP Process Subcommittee met 19 times over the course of the update process to date and updates to the committee have included metrics as well as qualitative feedback.

Metrics for Phases 3 and 4

Goals	Way to Track / Measure
During Plan Update	
<p>Inform and invite all Boulder Valley people about the project and provide opportunities to interact and get more information.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Emails sent every week August 2015 to present with BVCP info to 5,000+ recipients of the mailing list <input type="checkbox"/> 6 “pop-up” meetings <input type="checkbox"/> Frequent use of social media - multiple times per month (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Next Door, other)
<p>Engage - provide community members opportunities to influence the project.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Approximately 6 city- and county-hosted events, meetings, opportunities to provide feedback (<u><i>not including additional meetings for public request land use changes or CU south</i></u>) <input type="checkbox"/> 11 non-city/county hosted community meetings and events attended by staff <input type="checkbox"/> Over 600 responses to the random sample survey; 95 to open online survey <input type="checkbox"/> Joint Advisory Board meeting / meetings of 4 advisory boards (with more planned through March 2017)
<p>Inspire - make the project inspiring and informative by using graphics, logos, photos, and positive messaging about the legacy of the plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Colorful graphics, photos, logos, and videos used as part of all presentations, survey, and informational displays. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Provided videos and speakers explaining the project and history of the plan.
<p>Transparency - track all feedback provided throughout the process and make that information transparent and available.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Feedback from each event and online opportunity is compiled and available online (See Get Involved Tab on project website).
<p>Provide Multiple Ways to be Involved</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Event materials and survey have been available in both in-person and online venues.
Targeted Outreach	
<p>Engage with organizations in Boulder Valley with interest in planning (notify, invite, attend meetings) and unique population segments and targeted outreach groups</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 11 organizations accepted invitation for staff to attend their meetings at this point in the update. <input type="checkbox"/> Qualitative input was recorded in meeting summaries <input type="checkbox"/> Youth engagement with YOAB and CU Leadership students
<p>Genuinely communicate with non-English-speaking and immigrant population</p>	<p>Meetings were considered for early 2017 with Immigrant Advisory Committee and focus groups in Latino community to focus on specific questions on policy and land use direction, but were not held in respect to significant concern in the immigrant community at the time around national election results and safety issues.</p>

Survey the community

- Conduct a statistically valid survey with validity of at least 5%;
- Conduct an open web-based survey open to all (with separate results from statistically valid survey).

- Mail to **6,000** households
- 623** completed statistically-valid surveys
- 11.8%** response rate; +/-3.8% margin of error
- ~**95** responses to open online survey
- Survey report of results** available [online](#)

II. Phase 3 Events and Targeted Outreach

In all of the engagement opportunities in Phase 3, community members provided a wide range of feedback on these topics, documented in each event summary on the [project website](#). A key purpose of the questions posed to groups and individuals was to **examine trade-offs with policy choices and consider community-wide goals and future outcomes**. A high-level summary of key themes is provided below. The event summaries provide a deeper level of detail.

Key events included:

- Open House and Joint Advisory Board meeting - Aug. 29, 2016
Staff providing a brief presentation describing preliminary information about land use options and policies. Members of the public joined advisory board members in facilitated discussions about the land use and policy options.
- Future Choices Forums – November 2016 – January 2017
 - South Boulder – Nov. 16
 - Central Boulder – Nov. 30
 - North Boulder – Dec. 7
 - Gunbarrel – Jan. 9



Following a similar format from the 2015 listening sessions, the city and county hosted meetings in the community to gather feedback around more local issues. While the participation was lower than fall 2015, input and ideas were useful.

- Pop-up meetings – December 2016 – January 2017
“Pop up” meetings and discussions at the library and other locations around town occurred in December and January to ask people about key topics for potential policy changes around built environment and housing.
- Youth Engagement (YOAB and CU)
 - A team of YOAB students completed five workshops with their peers in Boulder high schools to gather input about retail centers and their vision for these areas in the future. The participants represented their visions in a Lego exercise. Key themes and ideas include interest in



preserving retail; adding affordable housing; ensuring open and green spaces; as well as pedestrian safety, and transit stop improvements.

- Students in a CU Leadership class studying engagement between CU and city conducted surveys with peers about key planning issues and presented results to staff. Key themes include affordability of housing and services; importance of walkability and transit; and recommendations for quality gathering spaces.

Key Themes from Events and Targeted Outreach

Topic	Themes
Jobs: housing balance Scenarios for changes to commercial and industrial areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Concern that changes in land use may restrict creative, start-up economy. ● Concern about rate and amount of growth and view that Boulder should slow or stop additional job growth. ● Range of support for changes in land use or policies to add housing in regional, neighborhood centers and light industrial areas. ● Support for adding housing with attention to character, transportation impacts, parking, open space, design and affordability. ● Concern about loss of small and local businesses and support for ways to preserve and protect them. ● Emphasis on public realm and need for gathering spaces as areas redevelop (inclusive and creative). ● Range of comments about further analysis and attention to concerns such as: service provision, impact fees, impacts to natural environment (water, groundwater, urban forest), etc.
Transportation Impacts / Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● This is one of the biggest areas of concern with current conditions and options for the future. Support for increased walkability in all areas especially if adding housing. ● Significant desire for improved transit access especially in commercial and industrial areas.
Neighborhood planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Significant interest in planning and involvement by neighborhoods regarding what may be allowed or how areas may change. ● Significant interest in “15 min neighborhood” and more walkability and changes in neighborhood centers to add neighborhood-serving retail and services.
Affordable Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Significant concern for loss of middle-income housing and need for new housing to provide affordable options.
Residential Infill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Range of viewpoints about appropriateness and location. ● Careful consideration around lot size, owner-occupancy, parking, design.
Regional Solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Solutions to key issues of housing, transportation and employment should be considered on a regional level and in partnership with other communities and agencies.

Local Area Specific Feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wide range of feedback specific to local areas (e.g. creative community • in North Boulder, desire for improvements to neighborhood centers in SE Boulder; urgency for flood improvements in S. Boulder).
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Outreach with Civic, Business, and Community Groups

Staff reached out to civic, business, and neighborhood organizations to get input about scenarios and policy choices, and met with 11 groups and approximately 260 people. Groups included:

- Urban Land Institute
- North Boulder Creative Community
- Better Boulder
- PLAN Boulder Board
- Community Foundation
- Boulder Chamber (Community Affairs, Young Professionals)
- Boulder Neighborhood Alliance
- Livable Boulder
- Boulder Housing Partners and Affordable Housing Alliance
- East Side Industrial Businesses

Summaries of feedback from each group is available on the project website and include those written comments submitted by the groups.

Boards and Commissions

The following advisory boards held discussions and provided feedback on policy integration changes and key topics.

- Open Space Board of Trustees (multiple meetings)- *feedback and recommendations on natural environment and trails policies, trails map*
- Transportation Advisory Board – *feedback on transportation policies*
- Design Advisory Board – *feedback on principles and potential changes in commercial and industrial areas*
- County Parks and Open Space Board – *feedback on natural environment and trails policy*
- Landmarks Board – *provided written feedback on historic preservation in the context of the built environment, economy, environmental sustainability and housing.*

In addition to the meeting and events listed here, other community events were held during these months for additional tracks of the BVCP update such as individual public request land use changes.

III. BVCP Survey

With guidance from the process committee, the city and county issued a second survey about the BVCP land use and policy topics to help guide and inform changes to the plan, focusing on topics of non-residential land use, options for future housing, building heights, neighborhood improvements, and other related topics.

For this second survey, 623 people responded to invitations mailed to 6,000 households within city limits and in Area II, resulting in an 11.1 percent net response rate. The 95 percent confidence interval (or margin of error) is approximately +/- 3.9 percentage points. By comparison, the 2015 survey had a 16.8 percent response rate and +/- 3.2 confidence interval.

Key Findings Regarding Policies and Land Use Choices

1. **General consistency with previous survey, other input.** Generally, the survey results were consistent with the 2015 survey and other community input such as from workshops and meetings with organizations, except for the slight shift toward support for reducing or slowing commercial/industrial growth potential.
2. **Support for housing, especially permanently affordable.** The strong support for housing seen in the 2015 Survey was upheld through support for land use changes that allow for future housing, especially if the housing is permanently affordable. Locations favored to change land uses to support housing include light industrial areas, neighborhood commercial centers, and the Boulder Valley Regional center.
3. **Some support to reduce commercial and industrial potential especially if to allow for housing.** Commercial and industrial potential (jobs) responses are somewhat more favorable toward limiting future potential and slowing the rate of growth than in the 2015 survey, especially if to allow more housing.
4. **Building height.** Respondents generally support keeping taller buildings limited to specific areas and not allowing them elsewhere.
5. **Community benefits from development.** Fifty-five percent of respondents were okay with granting development such increases (44 percent of those only if additional community benefits are provided). Permanently affordable housing is the most favored benefit followed by energy efficiency improvements, open spaces, and nonprofit space or affordable commercial space.
6. **Neighborhood improvements.** Two improvements are most desired: (a) preservation of existing housing and existing character (18 percent) and (b) more affordable housing units (17 percent). Others supported transportation improvements, maintenance, and amenities.
7. **Balanced approach.** The mixed results for some questions and open-ended comments suggest a balanced and thoughtful approach to land use changes that allow for additional intensity or growth while also focusing on character and design quality. Open-ended comments provide insight to the types of design, transportation and other livability aspects to consider.

IV. Phase 4 Draft Plan Review and Approval Process

The purpose of community engagement in Phase 4 was to share the draft plan with the community and garner specific feedback on policy recommendations. Processes were designed to accomplish the following goals outlined in the original engagement plan:

- People are able to easily understand and express support or opposition to proposed changes to the plan,
- People have the ability to provide specific feedback on changes, and
- Decision-makers and staff receive specific feedback about draft plan to support decision-making.

Events and targeted outreach included:

- **Web, e-mail, and social media announcements and invitations** to groups and organizations to review and comment on the draft plan and meet with staff to answer questions or provide comments. This included an online questionnaire linked to specific policy areas. Responses were compiled, organized and shared with decision-makers and online.
- **Open office hours** to gather in-person feedback on the draft plan.
- **Open House Drop-In Event** focusing on the draft plan and CU South Land Use Options and Recommendations. This included online information and the ability to provide e-mail feedback.

Meetings with Decision-Makers and the Approval Process

Over the course of the update, decision-making bodies were provided updates and opportunities for direction (approximately 40 meetings). Each body met to discuss the draft plan and provide direction several times before final approvals. All public feedback was summarized and shared with decision-makers. At each subsequent meeting, information was provided that reflected how feedback was incorporated and/or addressed in revisions to the draft plan. Opportunities for all 4 decision-making bodies included:

- **Study Sessions** with all 4 decision-making bodies to share the draft plan and community input with decision-makers to garner feedback to inform a final plan.
- **Multiple Public Hearings** on the draft plan with all approval bodies.