



# Land Use

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**BOULDER COUNTY  
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

**April 30, 2015 – 2:00 PM  
Hearing Room, Third Floor, County Courthouse**

Staff Planner: Pete Fogg, Senior Planner with City of Boulder staff Leslie Ellis, Comprehensive Planning Manager; Jean Gatza, Sustainability Planner; and Courtland Hyser, Senior Planner

**Docket BVCP-15-0001: Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan 2015 Major Five Year Update – Community Engagement Plan, Work Plan, and Update on Foundations Work**

The purpose of the study session is to provide an update to the Board of County Commissioners on the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan (BVCP) work to date and receive feedback on the overall work plan with emphasis on foundations work; the Community Engagement Plan ideas; and preliminary ideas and issues to address in the BVCP update.

*Discussion Item – No Action Requested. Public testimony will not be taken.*

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## **Summary**

The 2015 major update to the BVCP is underway, and is currently in the first phase of a four-phase process that is anticipated to last until mid-2016. The current phase one work includes the foundations work (technical analysis) and development of the Community Engagement Plan. Phase two will begin this summer with a public kickoff and community discussions focused on issue identification. Later phases will result in updates to plan policies and content, and ultimately a final draft for adoption. With this discussion item, staff is seeking feedback on the overall work plan, schedule, community engagement ideas, and foundations work underway.

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
STUDY SESSION**

**MEETING DATE: April 30, 2015 – 2:00 p.m.**

**AGENDA TITLE:**

**Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan 2015 Update – Community Engagement Plan, Work Plan, and Update on Foundations Work**

**PRESENTERS:**

Lesli Ellis, Comprehensive Planning Manager, City of Boulder  
Courtland Hyser, Senior Planner, City of Boulder  
Jean Gatza, Sustainability Planner, City of Boulder  
Pete Fogg, Senior Planner, Boulder County  
Abby Shannon, Lang Range Planning Manager, Boulder County

**OBJECTIVE:**

Provide the updated Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan (BVCP) 2015 work plan, the Community Engagement Plan, and an update on work in progress for Phase 1, and hear feedback from the Board of County Commissioners to further refine.

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of the study session on April 30, 2015 is to provide an update to the Board of County Commissioners on the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan (BVCP) work to date and receive feedback on the overall work plan with emphasis on foundations work; the Community Engagement Plan ideas; and preliminary ideas and issues to address in the BVCP update.

**QUESTIONS**

Does the Board of County Commissioners have questions or feedback on the following topics related to the BVCP 2015 Update:

1. Overall work plan and schedule? (See pages 2-3 and **Attachment A**.)
2. Ideas for the Community Engagement Plan? (See pages 3-4 and **Attachment B**.)
3. Foundations tasks underway? (See pages 4-5.)

**Brief Update on the BVCP**

The 2010 plan and maps are available online at [www.bouldervalleycompplan.net](http://www.bouldervalleycompplan.net), which is also the webpage for the 2015 update and portal for interested participants to sign up for project updates.

Summaries of the [Nov. 3, 2015 – Joint Study Session with the Board of County Commissioners and Planning Commission](#) and the [Oct. 14, 2014 Study Session with the City Council and Planning Board](#) are also available on the project website. The final version of the consultant's BVCP Assessment is located online [here](#). At the City Council annual retreat, council gave direction to move forward with the Foundations work for the BVCP and begin official public involvement in mid-2015, with the plan adoption occurring in 2016. At subsequent meetings, council has provided additional feedback, such as scoping a survey, and coordinating with other

work efforts. Additionally, a joint study session with Planning Commission and Planning Board was held on April 16, 2015.

## Community Feedback

### Webinars, Public Meeting, and Online Poll - Week of April 6, 2015

Two short webinars, a public meeting, and an online poll in early April enabled the community to learn a bit more about the planning process and share additional ideas to inform the Community Engagement Plan. **Attachment C** contains a summary of input. The online survey was open through April 17.

### Planning Board and Planning Commission Joint Meeting on April 16, 2015

Staff presented the BVCP work program, community engagement ideas, and an update on the current Phase 1 foundations work. Planning Board and Planning Commission members offered comments on the topics of community engagement, regionalism, foundations work, growth and urban form, presentation/document formatting, and high-priority issues. For a detailed summary, please refer to **Attachment D**.

### City Council on Mar. 31, 2015

Council members generally supported the work plan and schedule and consultant report ideas. They provided the following feedback at a study session on Mar. 31:

- **3D Tool:** Generally liked the concept of a 3D urban form tool that will enable people to envision what growth and different types of building forms may look like.
- **Regional Data and Context:** Some council members stressed the importance of considering the regional context of growth and planning when assessing data for the BVCP update.
- **Data Requests:** This BVCP will bring forward a lot of useful data and analysis. Consider segmenting student data. Provide existing and trends data on net commercial and industrial space and jobs and housing units. Show realistic growth numbers (trends from past 5-10 year and forecasts for the next 10 years+). Segmented information by neighborhoods, subcommunities is helpful.
- **Survey:** Several council members stated that a statistically valid survey to assess community opinions regarding focused planning issues could help inform this process and worth the cost. A hybrid approach (i.e., mail, Internet, phone) may be the best solution.
- **Multi-Pronged Outreach:** Outreach should involve multiple methods and engage hard-to-reach people to get a 360 degree picture of the community.
- **Planning 101:** We used to do a “Planning 101” session at the beginning of comprehensive plan updates. It would be valuable to do so again.

## Overall Timeline for BVCP

Four phases are proposed for the BVCP update – each with extensive community dialogue and engagement – with the plan update completed in 2016.

1. **Foundations and Community Engagement Plan** (through June 2015)
2. **Issues Scoping with Community** (through summer 2015)
3. **Analyze and Update Plan Policies and Maps** (Begins summer 2015 - to early 2016)
4. **Prepare Draft Plan for Adoption, Extend IGA** (mid 2016)

Implementation steps, such as changes to code and zoning map updates, would be completed following plan adoption.

More detailed tasks by phase are identified in **Attachment A**, which also includes the draft timeline.

## Community Engagement Plan

In early May, city and county staff will complete the Community Engagement Plan for the BVCP update, with the aim of including diverse perspectives and developing an open and transparent process. The process should provide helpful information and multiple opportunities for community dialogue while remaining focused on critical issues as defined by leadership and incorporating community input. The city and county will also aim to coordinate the BVCP engagement with other initiatives such as housing, climate, and resilience.

## Engagement Approach

**Attachment B** provides an overview of the principles for engagement. The approach includes:

1. Regular check-ins with the City Council and Planning Board as well as County Commissioners and Planning Commission (periodic joint meetings), as well as input related to the community process from a process subcommittee.
2. Working with countywide boards and commissions where appropriate. While Planning Board and the Planning Commission have an approval role, staff will check in with other city and county boards that have potential technical or specialized input.
3. Partnering with established organizations that may host or co-host events.
4. Building relationships and working within subcommunities and neighborhoods (e.g., providing information and hosting events at the subcommunity level in different parts of the Boulder Valley; providing opportunities for HOAs, neighborhood representatives and others to identify their unique issues, needs, and potential solutions; etc.).
5. Using creative and effective ways to engage people throughout the process, potentially including:
  - **Hands-on Meetings** – Set up forums co-hosted by others that are well-designed and facilitated, and/or charrettes that foster dialogue and build understanding.
  - **Videos and Channel 8** - Use video, especially for an intriguing kick off that captures the community's imagination and encourages participation and that provides "Planning 101" information.
  - **Speaker's Panel** - Invite speakers representing different planning viewpoints.
  - **Web-based** - Use online, social engagement and surveys (e.g., Inspire Boulder, Facebook, etc.).
  - **Subcommunity Meetings** – Host meetings that are customized for different parts of the city and the Boulder Valley.
  - **Mobile planning** - Get out into the community (e.g., a plan van asking for direct ideas and input). The city did not receive the Knight Foundation grant, but will seek other ways to do mobile work planning.
  - **Community Survey** - Gauge perspectives on urban form issues and other critical topics of interest at the right time during the process.
  - **Go Where People Are** - Go to events and meetings already taking place – e.g., farmers' market, festivals or events, new tech meet ups, and places of worship.

- **Portable Meeting Kits** - Design “Meeting in a Box”/ “Meeting to Go,” kits so neighborhoods and small groups can address planning questions self sufficiently and conveniently.

## BVCP Foundations Technical Work

**Attachment A** includes an outline of the four-phased work plan with focus on technical foundations work (in addition to developing the Community Engagement Plan). Staff will present more detailed information about these tasks on April 30. Technical work that is underway and largely to be completed within the first two quarters of 2015 includes:

1. **Update 2015 “Profiles”** – update both community and housing profiles, last updated in 2014.
2. **Prepare 2040 Forecasts (25 years)** – update citywide forecasts for housing, population, and employment.
3. **Prepare Trends Snapshot** – prepare report to examine social, economic, and environmental trends, organized by sustainability categories and systems.
4. **Prepare Map Inventory Updates** - develop subcommunity / neighborhood maps and infographics to document existing conditions and help identify factors related to areas of stability and change. Do **Land Use Map and Area I, II, III map clean up** to clarify parcels, identify inconsistencies with zoning, and identify suggestions for improving the descriptions and definitions.
5. **Align Master Plans and Measurable Objectives/Metrics**, including survey of measurable objectives and metrics, and identifying policy directions or data from master plans and subcommunity or area plans that may be relevant.
6. **Prepare 3D Urban Form Tools** – identify purpose, intent and options for conveying urban form information in a manner that is easily understood and which supports meaningful community dialogue about and plans for the future.
7. **Identify Initial Accomplishments and Challenges** – begin to identify actions and remaining needs and opportunities for discussion and refinement with the community at initial outreach events.

### **2010 Residential and Nonresidential Forecasts – BVCP**

*As of January 2010, the City of Boulder (Area I) had approximately 43,400 housing units, 97,500 residents, and 97,000 jobs. The remainder of the Service Area (Area II) had approximately 6,000 housing units, 12,000 residents, and 3,000 jobs. About 30,000 students attended the University of Colorado.*

*In 2010, Area I was projected to add about 6,000 housing units, 15,000 residents, and 19,000 jobs by 2035. At the same time, CU enrollment was anticipated to increase by additional 5,000-15,000 students by 2030. It was expected that most growth would occur through redevelopment, since the city has little vacant land left within the Service Area.*

**The diagnostic for the Resilience Strategy** is happening concurrently.

## A Bit More about Work Underway

### **2040 Forecasts**

In preparation for completing 2040 forecasts by June of this year, the city assessed its forecast methodology, which was initially developed in 2002 as part of the Jobs to Population project. The methodology has evolved over time, with each BVCP update incorporating additional refinements from previous years. The base forecasting methodology is to establish current

estimates of existing dwelling units, population, and employment as a first step, then project those forward 25 years using historic growth rates and zoning capacity. Since the methodology is zoning-based, projected residential and non-residential growth can be presented at the zoning district, subcommunity, and service area geographies.

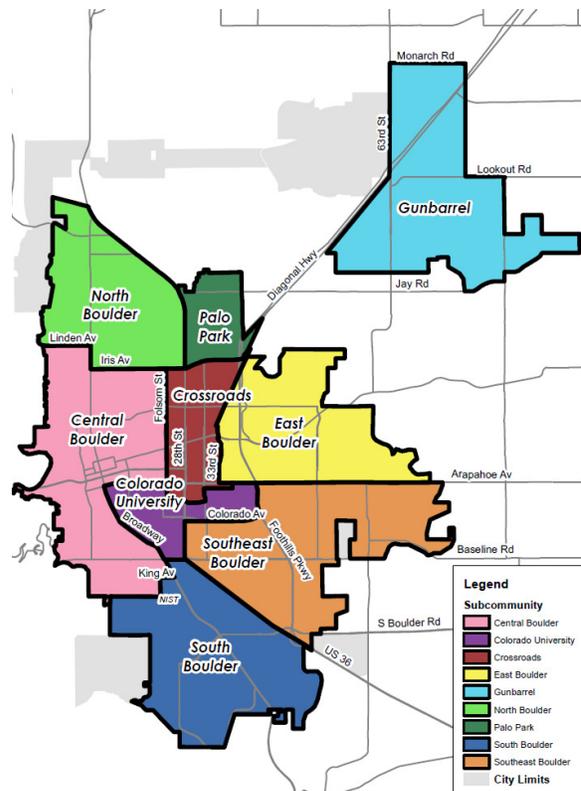
As a result of the recent assessment of the forecasting methodology, the city is incorporating some additional refinements for the 2015 BVCP update. The most significant refinement is that the 2015 BVCP projections will make use of CommunityViz, a GIS-based tool that automates some of the calculations and allows housing to be projected in the same manner as employment, whereas in previous years the specific methodology differed for those two components. CommunityViz also allows added sophistication to the model by incorporating development constraints that were not factored in under the previous methodology. The constraints being added for this update include flood zones (high hazard and conveyance) and wetland regulatory areas.

**Trends Snapshot**

The city is preparing a trends snapshot that builds on work completed in 2010 but makes the analysis more systems-focused and data rich. Staff has been coordinating with other data (TMP, housing) to organize the information according to the Sustainability Framework and address topics such as: population, housing, education, income, age, employment, industries, employment share and commuting, transportation, energy and climate, natural resources, urban form, and local food.

**Existing Conditions and Data Mapping**

The city is preparing maps and data information for each of the areas shown at the right, including information about neighborhood demographics, land use mix, features and assets, history/historic features, and travel patterns within each area. The first drafts will be ready for the subcommunity meetings in May to use for discussions. Additional, maps will be produced at the regional and Boulder Valley scale.



**Align Master Plans and Measurable Objectives/ Metrics**

Staff is currently identifying policy directions or data from master plans that might be relevant and surveying metrics are in use at the city as well as beginning research to identify new metrics. Staff is asking for professional review and guidance on the approach from Clarion and will be prepared to discuss it with the boards on April 16.

**Prepare 3D Urban Form Tool**

Similarly, staff is scoping what type of tool or tools could be most useful in a community dialogue about land use, planning, areas of change, and the like, and how different approaches to modeling urban form can advance community values identified in the BVCP. Clarion also will be providing professional review and ideas, and staff will be prepared to discuss some options with the boards on April 16.

## BVCP Next Steps

<b>Early May</b>	Complete Community Engagement Plan
<b>May 11-19</b>	Subcommunity meeting events coordinated with Housing Boulder and preliminary “Planning 101” information
<b>June 4, 2015</b>	Planning Board check in – review Foundations work
<b>June 9, 2015</b>	City Council Study Session – review Foundations work
<b>July 16, 2015</b>	Planning Board check in – remaining Foundations work and plan issues
<b>July 21, 2015</b>	City Council Agenda Item to accept BVCP schedule, work plan, and process for public requests for changes to the plan, including assessing interest in considering requests for changes to the service area
<b>July 2015 (TBD)</b>	Board of County Commissioners and Planning Commission check-ins
<b>July or August</b>	Community kick off, final “Planning 101” videos

## ATTACHMENT(S)

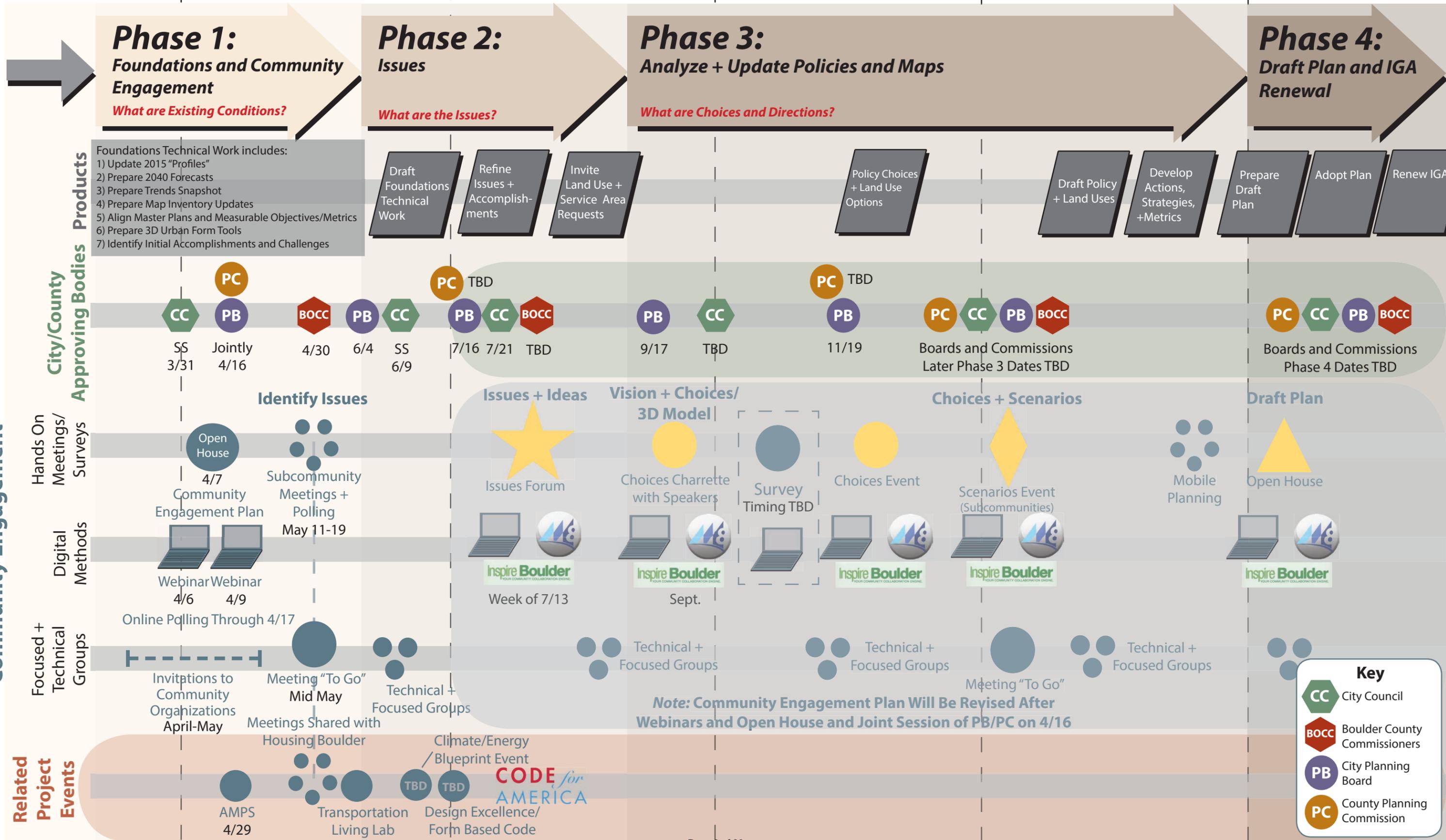
- A. Draft Work Plan including: (a) Timeline, (b) Work Plan - Focused on Phase 1 Foundations Work**
- B. Draft Community Engagement Plan Ideas**
- C. Summary of Community Feedback on Engagement for the BVCP Update**
- D. Discussion Summary from April 16, 2015 Planning Board/Planning Commission Joint Study Session**

Link to final [Clarion BVCP Assessment, Mar. 2015](#).

# Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan 2015 Update: **Work Plan**

**Draft 4/8/2015**

Mar 2015    Apr    May    Jun    Jul    Aug    Sept    Oct    Nov    Dec    Jan 2016    Feb    March    Apr    May    Jun



**Key**

- City Council
- Boulder County Commissioners
- City Planning Board
- County Planning Commission

## A—BVCP Work Plan Outline (Focused on Phase 1 Foundations Work)

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 2010 plan and maps is located at [www.bouldervalleycompplan.net](http://www.bouldervalleycompplan.net). The BVCP is updated periodically to respond to changed circumstances or evolving community needs and priorities. In 2015, the plan is due for a major five year update.

### What Preparatory Work was Completed in late 2014/early 2015?

- City provided background information for joint study sessions of the City Council and Planning Board (Oct. 14, 2014) and Board of County Commissioners and Planning Commission (Nov. 3, 2014).
- Additionally, a consultant team (Clarion Associates/Godschalk) prepared an assessment of the 2010 Plan and ideas about how communities make their plans strategic and effective.
- The project web page provides up to date information.
- City Council solidified their priorities for the 2015 city planning work plan during their Annual retreat in January and provided feedback in February and March.
- The Planning Board has provided input on the scope of work in February.
- The community gave input on the Community Engagement Plan at several events and online.

### Preliminary Timeline and What to Expect in 2015

Four phases are proposed – each with extensive community dialogue and engagement. The plan update will be complete in 2016.

- 1. Foundations and Community Engagement Plan (through June 2015)**
- 2. Issues Scoping with Community (through summer 2015)**
- 3. Analyze and Update Plan Policies and Maps (Begins summer 2015 - to early 2016)**
- 4. Prepare Draft Plan for Adoption, Extend IGA (mid 2016)**

**With follow up code reform and implementation.**

City and county staff are working together to prepare a more detailed work plan and schedule, but more detailed tasks by phase are identified in the outline that follows.

## Phase 1 – Foundations / Snapshot of Community and Community Engagement Plan

Phase 1 consists of the following tasks:

### Task 1.1 - Refine Scope of Work and Schedule.

**Task 1.2 - Develop a Community Engagement Plan.** Finalizing the engagement strategy for the BVCP will include input from the community and will be coordinated with neighborhood liaison and other city initiatives. (See “Initial Ideas for Community Engagement”.)

**Task 1.3 - Foundations Technical Work.** Work to be developed and used during community engagement will focus on:

- a. **2015 “Profile” Update.** The housing and community profiles were last updated in 2014 and will be updated in March 2015.
- b. **Prepare 2040 Forecasts (next 25 years).**
  - Update forecasts (residential, non-residential) mapped citywide and by geographic areas of city (e.g., subcommunity level).
  - Build from 2010 forecast methodology, possibly using CommunityVIZ, and identify necessary categories that may assist with other work such as commercial linkage fees.
  - Prepare brief summary analysis of Residential Growth Management System.
- c. **Prepare Trends Snapshot.** Building on the 2010 format, identify and examine social, economic, and environmental trends (e.g., Boulder Past, Present, Future). Present data and information in clear, compelling maps and graphics, with information on cross-cutting topics, potentially by sustainability categories (e.g., safe community, healthy/socially thriving, livable community, etc.), and at various scales: regional, Boulder Valley, citywide, and by subcommunity. An outline of topics is under separate cover.
- d. **Prepare Map Inventory Updates (for use in trends reporting).**
  - **Update maps,** tools and info-graphic approach to presenting system-based data, including but not limited to:
    - Update to subcommunities and neighborhoods maps as appropriate
    - Update 15-minute neighborhood assessment tool
    - Floodplains and current wetlands inventory
    - Parks, schools, and other public facilities map
    - Boulder Valley Natural Ecosystems map update
    - Hazards map update
    - Incorporate information from transportation connections and transit corridors plan
    - Utilities map updates
    - Trails, greenways, and open space updates
    - Major institutions, ownership

- Current land uses and density, including people density
- **Begin Land Use Map/Area map clean up and analysis.**
  - Begin clean up of existing Land Use Map and Area I, II, III maps to better align data with parcel boundaries. Identify where land use is unclear or uncertain that may need to be considered later in map update (Phase 2).
  - Prepare analysis of Land Use Map descriptions identifying inconsistencies or ambiguity with intent or zoning districts.
- **Identify factors for stability/change areas.** Using updated map(s) and other data, prepare preliminary assessment factors relating to stability/maturity vs. areas of change for use in later community dialogue.
- e. **Align Master Plans and Measurable Objectives/Metrics.**
  - **Review Master Plans/Summaries.** Identify policy directions or data from master plans and subcommunity and area plans that might be relevant for previous tasks or discussions in Phase 2. Update summaries as necessary to reflect current plans.
  - **Measurable Objectives/Metrics.** Survey existing measurable objectives in use at the city from master plans, budget process, etc. Identify gaps. Identify measurable objectives and metrics in use in other communities that may be useful considerations for Boulder.
- f. **Prepare 3d urban form tool for use in community dialogue about urban form.** Using the updated land use map, prepare land capacity mapping that conveys information about urban form based on current land use and zoning, three-dimensionally.
- g. **Identify Initial Accomplishments and Challenges (to be finalized in Phase 2 after further community input).**
  - Identify what the community has accomplished (e.g., land use mix and urban patterns, growth management, neighborhoods, resource conservation, design and public spaces, services and infrastructure, historic preservation, infill and redevelopment).
  - Identify remaining challenges and opportunities (e.g., how will the city accommodate future lifestyle shifts? How will the city address infrastructure needs?)

**Parallel Efforts:**

- **Resilience Diagnostic.** Resilience analysis and diagnostic also happening.
- **Housing Strategy.** Several milestones may overlap between Housing Boulder and BVCP, including the subcommunity community engagement proposed for May 2015.
- **Other integrated planning efforts** are shown on the 2015 Integrated Planning Timeline (Q1 and Q2).

## Phase 2 – Issues Focus

*(Note: Additional detail about this phase and tasks will be added after Phase 1 is complete)*

Phase 2 builds on Phase 1, and will entail extensive community engagement to accomplish the following:

**Task 2.1 - Identify Issues.** With community, identify areas of focus for the plan update, building on the work completed in the consultant assessment, joint study sessions of the city and county, and foundations technical work.

**Task 2.2 - Initiate Community Engagement/City and County Leadership Input.** Engage the community regarding the completed technical analysis (e.g., trends, challenges and opportunities), and identify priority issues to explore and update community engagement schedule for this phase of the plan. Check in with city and county (council and Planning Board, Board of Commissioners and Planning Commission).

**Task. 2.3 - Confirm Issues:** Based on community input, refine and confirm issues.

**Task 2.4 - Refine Accomplishments and Challenges.** Based on community input, refine and confirm accomplishments and challenges.

**Task 2.5 - Refine Scope.** Refine overall scope of work and schedule of meetings.

## Phase 3 – Analyze / Update Policies and Maps

*(Note: Additional detail about this phase and tasks will be added after Phases 1 and 2 are complete)*

Phase 3 builds on previous phases, and will entail extensive community engagement to accomplish:

**Task 3.1 – Update Community Engagement Schedule.** Schedule will include specific activities for this phase, including sessions with City and County leadership.

**Task 3.2 - Verify Vision.** With community, verify parts of the vision that are still valid. Determine what new ideas should be added, using consultant report and input from the city and county joint study sessions as a way to help frame an initial set of issues. Revamp format to make the vision more accessible and user friendly. Consider adding illustrative map (e.g., from 2000 plan).

**Task 3.3 - Invite Public Land Use Requests and Possibly Service Area Expansion or Contractions.** Take in requests and begin review using criteria set forth in BVCP. As part of the process, clarifications to that section of the plan may be made.

**Task 3.4 - Formulate Policy Options.** Based on community input, determine and analyze options presenting information about conditions and tradeoffs.

**Task 3.5 - Land Use/Urban Form.** Invite and initiate land use map changes and prepare analysis. Prepare 3D form based plans as relevant for certain areas of city. Improve land use descriptions to

make consistent with zoning and considering other factors such as land use/transportation relationships and services and infrastructure.

- **Analyze choices.** Prepare analysis of key choices -- policy and map based
- **Add Metrics.** Depending on analysis in Phase 1 and input, add plan metrics.
- **Resilience Strategy.** Ongoing.

## **Phase 4 – Prepare Draft Plan for Adoption. Update IGA.**

*(Note: Detail about this phase will be added after previous phases are complete)*

Phase 4 builds on previous phases, also with extensive community engagement to address:

**Task 4.1 – Update Community Engagement Schedule.** Schedule will include specific activities for this phase, including sessions with City and County leadership.

**Task 4.2 - Develop Actions and Strategies.** Identify strategies to achieve plan (e.g., priority actions, addressing priorities, necessary actions, how city will pay for what community wants, monitoring tools and indicators to continually renew the plan?). Engage community in discussion and prioritization.

**Task 4.3 - Prepare Draft Plan.** Develop draft plan update.

**Task 4.4 - Adopt Plan.** Prepare and bring plan for adoption.

**Task 4.5 - Extend the Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA)** between the City of Boulder and Boulder County for the purpose of coordinated planning and land regulation. Current IGA expires on Dec. 31, 2017.

## **Resilience Strategy**

In parallel, the city is undertaking the Resilience Strategy to increase the community’s resilience, which gives the community a unique opportunity to assess its resilience strengths and weaknesses, considering local and regional multi-faceted resilience topics. Early steps in the Resilience Strategy that overlap with Phases 1 and 2 of the BVCP work plan include:

1. Identify Resilience Perceptions
2. Map stakeholder network (i.e., Stakeholder Engagement Plan)
3. Develop City Context Document
4. Prepare Resilience Diagnostic of Shocks and Stresses
5. Prepare Actions Inventory (to identify actions underway)

## B—Ideas for Community Engagement Plan

*Work in Progress - 04/22/15*

***Goal: A smart, open engaging process focused on critical issues.***

All phases for the plan update will entail extensive community dialogue and engagement. The plan update will be complete in 2016.

### **Engagement Objectives and Principles**

- 1. Listen***
- 2. Include diverse perspectives***
- 3. Provide relevant information***
- 4. Remain focused on critical issues as identified by the community and its leadership***
- 5. Have a civil/civic conversation to seek common ground where possible***
- 6. Be transparent***
- 7. Provide multiple and meaningful ways for people to feel included, including small groups organized by geographic areas (subcommunities, neighborhoods)***
- 8. Use input to inform approaches and the plan update (i.e., effective feedback loops)***
- 9. Strengthen community partnerships***

### **Engagement Approach**

#### **Design a High Quality and Responsive Process Design**

Design engagement processes and techniques to appropriately fit the scope project and evaluate and adapt it to changing needs and issues as the project progresses.

#### **Be Transparent**

Design the public decision-making processes to be accessible, open, honest, and understandable. Provide multiple ways for people to receive the information they need, and with enough lead time, to participate effectively. Show and explain how community input will be incorporated into the options for consideration and decision-making.

#### **Facilitate Partnerships**

Facilitate respectful and engaged participation from community members, groups and organizations as community partners. Provide specific opportunities for engaging targeted communities (such as Gen Y or hard-to-reach people). Build partnerships during the engagement process, thus empowering people to use the plan moving forward and partner with the city and county to achieve the goals in the plan.

**1—BVCP will be guided and approved by: City Council and Planning Board. County Commissioners and Planning Commission** (with periodic joint meetings).

## **2—Involving Boards and Commissions**

- City Planning Board (approval)
- County Planning Commission (approval)

*City and county boards with potential technical or specialized input role:*

- Arts Commission
- Boulder Design Advisory Board
- Downtown Management
- Environmental Advisory Board
- Health (County)
- Human Relations
- Immigrant Advisory Committee
- Landmarks Preservation
- Library Commission
- Parks and Recreation / Parks, Open Space
- Senior Community
- Transportation
- Water Resources
- Youth

**3—Partnering with Established Organizations** that may lead in convening events  
*(alphabetical):*

Better Boulder

- Boulder Chamber
- Boulder Tomorrow
- Community Foundation and other social service organizations
- Consortium of Cities
- Downtown Boulder, Inc.
- Growing Up Boulder
- Faith Based Organizations (tbd)
- Historic Boulder, Inc.
- Human Service organizations
- Impact Hub Boulder
- Livable Boulder
- New Era Colorado

- Open Boulder
- Plan Boulder County
- Retirement/Seniors: Frasier Meadows, Presbyterian Manor, Academy, etc.
- Sierra Club (other environmental)

#### 4—Working with Subcommunities and Neighborhoods

Provide information and host events at the subcommunity level and in different parts of the city and Boulder Valley to help include, inform, and engage neighborhoods. Include HOAs, neighborhood representatives in contact with the city, renters, etc. Coordinate with the city’s new neighborhood liaison (to be hired) and with the Code for America Partnership project to improve a neighborhood database and online engagement.

#### 5—Using Multiple Ways to Engage Boulder and Boulder Valley

A few types of engagement or events include:

1. **Invitations:** Distribute information and invitations to organizations and individuals early in the process to help people understand the purpose and scope of the comprehensive plan update, encourage people to sign-up for communication, and build relationships.
2. **Webinars:** Host several meetings to ask people about best ways to engage the community and their neighborhood in the plan update.
3. **Hands-on Meetings:** Host forums co-hosted by others, well-designed and facilitated, charrettes that foster dialogue and build understanding.
4. **Videos and Channel 8:** Use video, especially for intriguing kick off that captures the community’s imagination and encourages participation, plus “Planning 101” information.
5. **Speaker’s Panel:** During Phases 2 and 3 of the project, invite speakers representing different viewpoints on community planning. Some of the speakers identified during Housing Boulder may be fitting.
6. **Web-based:** Online social engagement – dialogues and surveys (e.g., Inspire Boulder, Facebook, surveys, etc.). Current webpage is: [www.bouldervalleycompplan.net](http://www.bouldervalleycompplan.net), with link from county’ BVCP web page, and vice versa. Code for America is trying new tools such as “Click that Hood” to define neighborhoods.
7. **Subcommunity Meetings:** (See above.) Meetings will be designed for different parts of the city and county.
8. **Mobile planning:** Get out into the community (e.g., a plan van/food truck, or bikes around town, scannable codes directing people to web or asking for direct ideas and input).
9. **Survey:** Potentially during Phase 3 of the process (policy development), design and administer a statistically valid survey to gauge perspectives on the most critical planning topics of interest.
10. **Go to Events:** Be present at events and places where people are (e.g., farmers’ market, festivals or events, new tech meet ups, Ignite, at work, senior centers, school events, places of worship).
11. **Design Portable meetings.** (e.g., “Meeting in a Box” or “Meeting to Go” types of approaches) so neighborhoods and small groups can address planning questions and issues on their own.

## 6—With Possible Committee Input

1. **Possible Process committee:** A process committee could provide ideas to make the process transparent, informative, and democratic. The committee may include members of City council, Planning Board, and county representatives from BOCC and the Planning Commission.
2. **Possible Technical committee(s):** May include other agencies or departments with data or info to share (e.g., BVSD, CU, City/County resource managers, Human Services, etc.) and to provide feedback on technical accuracy of information (not policy direction).

## C—Summary of Community Feedback on Engagement for the BVCP Update- April 2015

### March 31 – April 17 Engagement Preferences Survey

An informal poll was posted on the comprehensive plan website ([www.bouldervalleycompplan.net](http://www.bouldervalleycompplan.net)) beginning March 31 and closing April 17 to better understand how the community wants to participate in the update process. A total of 236 people from a wide range of Boulder neighborhoods (and outside the city) responded.

Respondents were asked to rank preferences for traditional and digital engagement methods as well as how they prefer to receive information. Respondents also provided open ended comments and suggestions. A high-level summary of results is presented in the text below. A detailed summary of survey results is available [here](#).

- Preferred traditional methods are:
  1. Public events, meetings and hands-on workshops;
  2. Mailed postcards and surveys; and
  3. Meetings hosted by organizations or associations
- Preferred digital methods are:
  1. Online surveys and polls;
  2. Emails from a group or organization;
  3. Inspire Boulder.
- Preferred ways to get information and find out about events or ways to participate are:
  1. Emails from the “Boulder Planning” email list;
  2. News media story (print, TV, or digital); and
  3. Mailed postcards.
- Respondents heard about the survey primarily from direct e-mails and social media.

Respondents offered questions and feedback as follows:

#### *Engagement types*

- Be sure to use all types of engagement (digital, in-person, mail, etc.) because people’s needs and preferences vary widely.
- Include small, neighborhood meetings; charettes and scenario modeling.
- Schedule meetings and events on weekends and evenings in easily accessible locations;
- Use electronic “polling” at meetings to gain consensus in an anonymous manner.
- Offer web-friendly ways to provide input for people who can’t come to meetings so they can engage at times they are able.
- Use the mail to reach residents; many older people do not use computers or social media.
- Conduct a survey by mail to ensure everyone has a chance to participate and has notice.

### *Ways to reach people*

- Actively engage those who are typically under-represented in processes: students, millennials, local employers, low-income, etc.
- Welcome new people and have true open dialogue at public meetings.
- Reach out to agencies and non-profits to (co) facilitate meetings with Spanish-speakers.
- Work with neighborhood organizations and consider having neighborhood representatives who are engaged at a high level, can attend most meetings and serve as a conduit between neighbors and city staff.
- Go through schools, churches and gathering places to connect with families.
- Outreach to organizations and local churches that work with homeless and low-income people.

### *Process*

- Work to establish trust that people’s input is being heard and considered in the decision-making process.
- Hire an outside party for survey results.
- Do a training session for anyone leading a “meetings to go” session.
- Address complaints constructively.
- Ask for specific input and not questions where the input will be vague. Listen to input – don’t develop a position too early.
- Develop goals for engagement that are concrete and actionable. Have follow-up surveys or some feedback mechanism to measure progress with community engagement.

### **April 6 and 9 Webinars**

A lunchtime webinar was offered on April 6 and an evening webinar on April 9 with total participants about 45. Copies of the webinars are on the project webpage. The purpose was to garner input from community members to inform the engagement plan for the update. Staff presented an overview of the update process and ideas for engagement. Participants offered questions and feedback as follows:

- How to engage renters, a range of ages, students and commuters;
- How the process will address issues of growth and development;
- Presentation of survey results; and
- Engaging in subcommunity or neighborhood planning processes.

### **April 7 Public Meeting**

A public meeting was held in the Main Library from 5 to 6 p.m., including a presentation similar to the webinars (overview of the update process and engagement direction and ideas). Approximately 30 people attended. Participants offered questions and feedback verbally and on survey forms as follows:

### *Ways to reach people*

- Provide information for neighborhood groups or associations. These groups can get information to people and serve as a voice for others who don’t have time to participate.
- Consider a citizen advisory panel.
- Actively engage those who are typically under-represented in processes (e.g., low-income).

- To reach younger people, schedule time at local coffee shops on Saturday mornings with local officials attending. To reach families, go to community centers (e.g., rec centers and YMCA).
- Engage arts and cultural organizations.
- Digital and social media methods of engagement are important to use.

### *Process*

- When providing information about options – use multiple “funnels” for information on options and consequences.
- Design engagement for more interaction between groups, so groups and people can talk to each other about issues and potential solutions.
- Define dialogue, participation and partnership; what is a successful outcome of the process.
- Balance the engagement – build trust between staff and stakeholders.
- Inform, educate and motivate toward responsible action.

## D—Summary of April 16, 2015 Joint Study Session of the Planning Board and Planning Commission Regarding the 2015 Update to the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan

Following a presentation from city and county staff, the city Planning Board and county Planning Commission participated in an exercise to identify each member's top three topics for community engagement and issues. Following that exercise, the boards engaged in an open discussion of the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan 2015 Major Update. Both the results of the exercise and the subsequent discussion are summarized here.

### Exercise Results

Staff asked the Planning Board and Planning Commission to provide feedback from their city or county perspective and note what is most important (i.e., "top three" topics for each) for:

1. Successful community engagement, and
2. Critical issues/topics the 2015 plan update to address.

The notes are grouped by themes below.

### 1—Community Engagement

#### *General Engagement Ideas and Concerns*

- What's still missing is a reason for people to participate
- Ask folks but also reflect what they say/suggest so they know they have been heard
- Aligning work/housing/transportation
- Identify and weigh various community objectives
- Make everyone aware that the comp plan exists... Rationalize and measure public feedback to distill/clarify where it is coming from and to get past most vocal to the unheard
- Provide contextual info regarding local/state/national trends to mitigate myopia

#### *Groups and Demographics to Include*

- Successful engagement reaches all ages, from children through the elderly, Incorporates scientific sampling, Is interesting enough to attract people's attention
- Community outreach – organizations, groups, schools, businesses
- Work with neighborhoods including mobile home parks, low income housing
- Consider reaching out to major Boulder Valley employers to set up/facilitate opportunities for those employees to engage
- Reach out to HOAs – see if they would host a visit
- Go to the people not normally digitally engaged. Go to the neighborhood scale and use those networks.

- Involve demographics not typically active in land use issues (e.g., young adults, non-native English speakers)
- Diverse input
- Sustained public engagement beyond the usual suspects
- Broad diverse public input
- Diverse representation
- Small groups, with diverse representation – cross pollination of ideas
- Direct outreach to underrepresented portions of the community
- Engage a broad cross section – requires innovative meeting exercises/formats. Consider field trips
- But – do not exclude groups with focus and expertise on Comp Plan
- Encourage some groups to hold meetings independent of staff

### *Methods*

- Use traditional methods along with social media
- Absolutely suggest the idea of a city-wide poll on issues, as comprehensive and scientific as possible
- Identify means to evolve appropriate weight given to differing points of view
- Hands-on engagement so people can better understand impact of policies
- VISION engagements
- Continue city speakers program on planning topics
- Multiple collection methods
- Diverse tools
- Visual and engaging
- Tools that keep engagement
- Strong digital engagement and visibility
- Concern that if these are 15 different ways to give input we will get input from the same 30-40 people, just multiplied 15 times

## **2—Critical Issues and Topics**

### *Presenting Information*

- Vision – Imaging 3D urban form tool
- Showing land-use map changes and development over time – trending
- Clarify and illustrate the desired urban form for changing parts of the city – Written policy moving into visual representations – implementable actions
- Critical Topics: 3D, Urban Form, Demonstrating what growth looks like
- VISION issues
- Neighborhood mapping and area plans
- Be a document that is embraced by the community
- Enhanced visual tools (i.e., 3D, mapping, graphics)

### *Urban Form and Growth*

- Reconcile growth with levels of service
- Decide if Hogan-Pancost should move to Area III
- Sustainable urban form – idea of regenerative improvement: what parts of the city are so good they cannot be allowed to change?
- Inform design guidelines where needed to get an outcome
- Critical topics: Land use map changes
- Give clear, regulatory guidance about development potential in infill areas of the city
- Growth
- Resolve long-standing ambiguity about parcels on the edge (e.g., Hogan-Pancost)
- Deciding on a desired urban form for areas of town that are likely to change
- Giving the community a chance to have a robust discussion about growth

### *Other Specific Topics*

- Reconcile job growth with job types and housing and commercial space affordability
- Transit
- Community Diversity
- Energy: Solar, wind, water; natural gas? Transportation --how can this support resilience?
- Agriculture: Support local food production – both inside and outside urban centers. How does this affect energy? How does this support resilience? Does this support diversity?
- Diversity: Income; cultural; professional. How can this support resilience?
- Critical topics: Renew IGA soon.
- Begin work on IGA renewal ASAP.
- Identify ultimate population density (by area)
- Identify alternate transportation objectives by neighborhood
- Identify future public land uses by area
- Metrics/tracking
- Metrics on transit, affordable housing
- Resilience
- Addressing resiliency
- How to address jobs:housing imbalance
- Strengthening public understanding with strong visuals
- Housing – especially for younger and older segments of population (affordable and market rate)
- Tying policies and land use code clearly together. Should help de-politicize (to some degree) planning approval process
- Channel development to coincide with transportation infrastructure improvements.

## Discussion Summary

Following the initial exercise to identify each board member's top priorities, the boards engaged in an open discussion of the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan 2015 Major Update. For this summary, comments from that discussion are grouped according to major themes that arose:

- Community Engagement
- Regional Context and Perspective
- Feedback on Foundations Tasks Underway
- Growth and Urban Form
- Presentation of the BVCP Document
- Issues to Address this Summer

### Community Engagement

- Q: Is the public application process (both text and maps) going to be changed?  
A: Staff has historically done a screening process to whittle down the applications to proposals relevant to the specific BVCP update cycle topics/criteria, which then goes to the four bodies for their further review and decision making. The Area III Planning Reserve application process was debated in the 2010 update, but was ultimately left unchanged. All of the applications are due and analyzed at the same time. For this update, the opening date for accepting 2015 applications is anticipated to be in August.
- There still isn't a reason for certain people to participate which could mean a risk that we will hear from the same people, just in 15 different ways. The topic of the "Comprehensive Plan" is perhaps a bit dry and not engaging. Perhaps meetings should instead be framed around relevant topics, such as building form or density, that people really care about.
- Give residents of neighborhoods an overview of how staff/city identified and defined them, then have a conversation with the residents about their preferred identifying characteristics, topics/issues, and boundaries.
- Presenting the plan in a visual, quickly digestible way would help with public involvement and understanding the importance of the plan.
- Strive to engage a fuller range of the demographic spectrum that does not usually participate in BVCP updates (less affluent, ethnic minorities, elderly, the young, etc.) – they make and provide important contributions to our community.
- Reach out to organizations that already have relationships with hard-to-reach people rather than expecting staff to reach out to them directly.
- Remember that "the community" also includes county enclaves. How do we reach them?
- Try to capture input on these issues from the many ways that we are engaging the community in other projects—from other planning processes.
- Create an *affinity for interaction* (staff to public, diverse socioeconomic and ethnic groups, etc.) vs. a *fear or resistance to interaction*.
- Show how public input is actually being used and implemented vs. heard and recorded (but then vanishing). We need to provide information to people that they can relate to.
- Provide more on and off-line communication tools and connections to neighborhood/city maps – road trips, walking tours, computerized/Google Earth "fly throughs", build-out and redevelopment scenarios, etc.

- The “community” includes all those who regularly interact with Boulder, and not just those who live or own property in town.

### *Regional Context and Perspective*

- Regional context is important (i.e., the Front Range and state)? Where do we track with these trends, and where are we divergent? “Our Vision” doesn’t get set entirely by the boundaries of the Boulder Valley.
- Other communities in Boulder County are reaching their limits too (i.e., growth boundaries, services, infill/redevelopment, housing diversity, etc.). We have common issues like “what is density/what are its benefits and drawbacks?” It would be useful to share/exchange ideas about approaches to dealing with these topics.
- The regional context informs many of the problems we face, especially the things just beyond the edge of the BVCP planning area.
- It is important to look at the big picture, but also important not to let that dominate or overwhelm needs and desired vision/future of the Boulder Valley – need to balance carefully.
- Remember that the county’s role in the update is important. County constituencies both within the Boulder Valley and beyond are affected by the city’s actions.

### *Feedback on Foundations Tasks Underway*

- Q: Will there be trends devoted to the acres consumed by various uses (e.g., informal parkland that gets uses in places like redeveloped schoolyards; while formal parkland is added elsewhere)?

A: Land use analysis will be a component of the foundations work. We will be meeting with Parks and Rec staff to determine park-specific data and indicators for the trends snapshot.

- Consider how open space use has changed over the years (e.g., places with public access vs. open space saved for conservation).
- It may be interesting also to show the biodiversity of open space in terms of “non-human” use. Show progress and assess the value of open space in relation to human uses.
- Include statistics on parkland and energy use.
- Q: Is the idea of a 3D map of the city linked at all to the LIDAR mapping that is also going on?  
A: Yes. There are many paths that could be taken to create a 3D model, both big and small in scope. The LIDAR data helps with mapping existing conditions.
- Spend some time with the Open Space/Other designations when doing the land use map clean up. This becomes a problem particularly when land use is not lot-based.

### *Growth and Urban Form*

- The conversation about urban form is important even though the scope needs defining. It may be time to “bite the bullet” and really have these conversations. It will be difficult, but we should not shy away.
- We seem to have a growth management system that may be out-of-date and has been patched over time. Could there be a way to revise this system?
- Energy use/per capita energy use is an important part of the growth discussion. Need to address energy usage comprehensively. For example, the energy savings earned by smaller

buildings/home designs can be negated by one larger building. Urban form issues (densities, areas of stability/areas of change) will also affect energy use and should be considered.

- Architecture and urban design excellence is something that should be elevated in our community. This doesn't necessarily mean architecture micro-management, but it is something that should be addressed periodically.

### *Presentation of the BVCP Document*

- Taking a graphics-driven approach is helpful. A document that is too text-heavy becomes hard to engage people. Expand the use of metrics to the extent possible.
- Integration with department master plans is a great idea. Continue working on this.
- There are aspirations in the comp plan that have no link to any action item or implementation step. Making the links more clear would be helpful.
- Don't be too constrained by the existing format and layout of the BVCP. There may be an opportunity to reorganize the document itself – "less can be more" in terms of comprehension and gaining interest/readership.

### *Issues to Address this Summer and Other Comments*

- Send a BVCP update informational post card to everyone in the Boulder Valley.
- The discussion about an IGA renewal should happen sooner rather than later.
- Settle the two body vs. four body process issues raised in the 2010 update, and do it sooner rather than later (like the IGA renewal).
- The city and county need to continue working on better communication and coordination with each other about resilience issues. Where are we on developing unified/complementary plans, and what gaps or needs in resiliency planning and coordination already exist?
- Might it be possible to re-frame subcommunities with a slightly finer grain so as not to lump neighborhoods together that are, in fact, very different places? (This seems especially important in the central area.)
- Can we talk about urban gardening and food production? Should regulations or designations related to food production be changed?