

2019 Planning Highlights Bike Tour

The Highlights...

October is National Community Planning Month!

Thanks for taking part in the 4th Annual Boulder County Planning Highlights Bike Tour. In honor of the American Planning Association's (APA) National Community Planning Month, each October the county partners with communities representing a geographic area of the county to highlight the collaborative planning efforts that help shape the infrastructure and built environment that make our community unique and special.

Your participation in the planning process is what makes it successful! We hope you will continue to be an active participant in community planning activities in the future! You can always ask a question of our planning staff by filling out this online form: <https://www.bouldercounty.org/property-and-land/land-use/planning/ask-a-planner/> or calling 303-441-3930. Sign up to stay informed of upcoming planning processes and other news from Boulder County at **boco.org/e-news**

What is Community Planning?

Planning Provides a Vision for the Community Today — and in the Future

The goal of planning is to maximize the health, safety, and economic well-being of all people living in our communities. This involves thinking about how we can move around our community, how we can attract and retain thriving businesses, where we want to live, and opportunities for recreation. Planning helps create communities of lasting value.

While architects often focus on a single building, a planner's job is to work with residents and elected officials to guide the layout of an entire community or region. Planners take a broad view and look at how the pieces of a community — buildings, roads, and parks — fit together like pieces of a puzzle. Planners then make recommendations on how the community should proceed. One of the greatest challenges for planners is to imagine what can and should happen to a community: how it should grow and change, and what it should offer residents 10, 15, or even 20 years into the future.

Thanks to **University Bicycles, Boulder Bicycle Works, Full Cycle, Pedego** for donated prizes and staff to help support today's event!



Starting Location: Civic Park

Completion of the Civic Area Phase One – the park at the core

- Major milestone for our community in 2018.
- The transformation of this 13-acre area was made possible by the 2014 voter-passed [2A Community, Culture and Safety Tax](#) , which invested \$8.7 million in the park.
- The Civic Area’s new nature play area just outside of Boulder’s Main Library adds a sense of adventure. A local family gifted the Tree House park.
- A local family donated a gift that helped fund the cost of the treehouse structure.
- The design for this playground was also the result of much feedback and input from Growing Up Boulder.

Multi-use Path

- The first, most noticeable safety improvement for visitors will be the reconfigured east-west multi-use Boulder Creek Path through the park on the north side of the river.
 - The path is 17-feet wide, providing allocated lanes for both foot and bicycle travel.
 - It has designated travel lanes for pedestrians and curves around the park so that conflicts can be reduced.
 - Visitors will be able to relax within the main park area away from traffic in a safer, more inviting green space.

11th Street Spine Bridge

- Designed with help from school kids who submitted designs and what we heard from the kids who submitted drawings was that they wanted to be able to see the creek below the bridge and we incorporated that.
- To avoid intersection conflicts, the smaller span stretches over a nature path on the north side of Boulder Creek.

Park and pathway lighting throughout the Civic Area

- An important safety element incorporated into the new design.

Two new Creek Terraces

- In addition to the existing Peace Garden, two new **Creek Terraces** along the north bank will provide access to Boulder Creek.
- The Creek Terraces function in a way to get people down and close to the creek.
- Access and sight lines to Boulder Creek is something the city heard about a lot in the outreach for the design.

Re-use of Existing Materials

- Some of the trees that were removed as part of the project were reused. You can see this in the monument signs and in some of the custom seating elements we have throughout the project site.



Stop #1: Alpine-Balsam Plan Area

Chris Ranglos, planner with the City of Boulder, will be on site to speak with groups.

- The Alpine-Balsam site is home to the former Boulder Community Health (BCH) campus.
- The City of Boulder purchased the 8.8-acres of property from BCH in 2015 for \$40 million. The intent of the purchase was to both consolidate select city services here, while also providing a diverse range of housing types and incomes.
- In the spring of 2016, the city engaged in a Vision Plan with the community. The Vision Plan was the first step in our planning process and was intended to guide future planning at the site and surrounding areas, or to essentially provide the framework for the area planning that was to come.
- Out of this process, the community identified the vision for Alpine-Balsam as being “a vibrant multi-generational hub for community life and local government services.”
- In 2018, after the acceptance of the Vision Plan, the city initiated the area planning process. The area plan provides a greater level of detail on the desired character and scale, land uses, and the location of streets, paths, parking, public spaces and public buildings.
- The area plan considered a broad range of issues and strategies to address them.
 - These include Transportation Demand Management, Access and Mobility, Land Use, Urban Design and Placemaking, and the renovation of the Medical Pavilion to house future city services, etc.
- City Council adopted the Area Plan on October 1st, 2019!

For more info, visit <https://bouldercolorado.gov/planning/AlpineBalsam>

Stop #2: Foothills Park

Blue Line

- If you look west, you’ll notice that there are very few houses in the foothills to the west. That’s the result of the “Blue Line” - a great example of decades-old city/county coordinated planning that’s responsible for what makes Boulder the unique community it is today.
- It’s the boundary that was set through a 1959 citizen-led referendum to prevent development on Boulder’s mountain backdrop. [There was an amendment to the city charter.]
- It’s called the Blue Line because no water or sewer service can be built west of that line.
- Original designation was somewhat crude. The mapping underwent updates in 2016 to specify more precise delineations.

Pre/Post Site Plan Review Ridgeline houses in county jurisdiction to the west

- The unincorporated county contains many unique building sites. In the foothills and mountains to the west of the City of Boulder, steep slopes, varying topography, erosion, wildfire risk, and lack of easy physical access can make development challenging.
- Furthermore, the county’s comprehensive plan highlights the importance of environmental protection and maintaining a rural character. One of the Guiding Principles of the



comprehensive plan is to “Maintain the rural character and function of the unincorporated area of Boulder County by protecting environmental resources, agricultural uses, open spaces, vistas, and the distinction between urban and rural areas of the county.”

- To address these goals, the county’s Land Use Department employs a site-specific administrative review process called Site Plan Review (aka SPR) to review projects such as new houses, sizeable additions on to existing structures, and projects in the floodplain.
- Site Plan Review was first adopted in 1993 in response to increased development in the mountains. Soon after, SPR was applied to the plains as well. In both areas, the impact of development on natural resources and existing character of the surrounding neighborhood have been issues raised by Boulder County citizens experiencing the impact of new development. The good news is that through careful site design, most impacts of new development can be mitigated or minimized.
- The Site Plan Review standards, or criteria, are listed in the Land Use Code. Here is one of the SPR standards (#10): “The development shall not have a significant negative visual impact on the natural features or neighborhood character of surrounding area. Development shall avoid prominent, steeply sloped, or visually exposed portions of the property. Particular consideration shall be given to protecting views from public lands and rights-of-way, although impacts on views of or from private properties shall also be considered.”

Homes that were built before Site Plan Review may be breaking the ridgeline, have prominent walls of windows that can act as a beacon at night, and may have colors that do not blend into the landscape. Homes that went through the Site Plan review process are not as prominent and nestle into the natural curve of the land.

For more information on Site Plan Review in Boulder County, visit

<https://www.bouldercounty.org/property-and-land/land-use/planning/review/site-plan-review-spr/>

Ponderosa Mobile Home Park

- A diverse, tight-knit community of 68 households located at 4475 Broadway in North Boulder.
- The land is a county enclave, surrounded by city and located adjacent to West Fourmile Canyon Creek.
- The City of Boulder purchased Ponderosa in 2017 with plans to preserve long-term affordability, annex the property into the city, replace outdated infrastructure, and reduce flood risk to the community. Those plans are being carried out through the Ponderosa Community Stakeholder Stabilization project – in partnership with the residents of the Ponderosa community.
- The central goal of the Ponderosa Community Stabilization project is to create long-term stability for community residents. Residents can choose to stay in their current home or move into a new home – no one will be forced to move out, and all homes are affordable and highly energy-efficient. It’s expected to take about 10 years to fully implement the project.

Project Funding Includes:

- \$75,625 in CDBG-DR (Disaster Recovery) Resilience Planning Grant from Colorado Department of Local Affairs for West Fourmile Canyon Creek Study Area
- \$3.6 million in CDBG-DR funding for infrastructure replacement



- \$600,000 from the City of Boulder’s Affordable Housing Fund toward purchase of property

In-kind support was provided by Rebuild by Design, a New York City-based organization

For more info, visit <https://bouldercolorado.gov/housing/ponderosa-community-stabilization>

North Boulder Library

- The city is in the design phase for the North Boulder Library. This library branch will focus on:
 - A “quiet” environment with open views and connections to nature and the mountains beyond for the main reading rooms;
 - Expanded community spaces with access from Broadway;
 - A generous kids space with connection to an outdoor playground; and
 - A large maker space with access to outdoor working space and a community garden.

The building will be net zero energy- meaning it will be highly energy efficient and equipped with renewable energy, so it will produce at least as much energy as it draws from the electric grid.

Stop #3: Holiday Park

Holiday Neighborhood

- What was once the vacant 27-acre site of the Holiday Drive-In Theater is now the Holiday Neighborhood, a new 333-unit community that combines ingenuity with affordability.
- The Holiday Drive-In parcel in North Boulder was originally slated for development as big box retail. The City of Boulder purchased the property to allow more community-appropriate development. The City of Boulder sold the parcel to Boulder Housing Partners at-cost, gave the neighborhood a density bonus for its high amount of affordable housing and waived most of the site development fees.
- The cohesive site plan and coordination by Boulder Housing Partners has created an interconnected neighborhood where unique architecture is preserved without stratifying residents by income. A resident paying \$300 per month for rent might be living next door to someone who has paid \$475,000 for their townhouse.
- Of the 333 residential units, 42% are permanently affordable. Seventy-one units are for sale at 60% of AMI (Area Median Income), 18 units are between 40-60% AMI that include sweat equity, and 49 units are for rent at 20-50% of AMI. [As of 2018 the AMI for Boulder County was \$76,000 for a single person; so for example, to qualify for a 60% AMI unit a single person must earn no more than \$45,660. The income cap for a family of 4 for a 60% AMI unit is \$65,160.] Ten units in the Holiday Neighborhood are designated for people transitioning from chronic homelessness, three units are for homeless families in emergency or crisis situations, and ten are for clients of the Boulder County Mental Health Center to both live and receive support services.
- The neighborhood includes transportation paths plus a greenway and park system integrating pocket parks, a large neighborhood greenspace "living room", and community gardens.



- Blocks are small and most homes have parking located in a rear alley, allowing for more pedestrian-friendly street interaction. There is a pedestrian mall that extends from the park to the community gardens, running through a series of live/work units. Mixed use and commercial spaces fringe the edge of the community as well as along the central axis.
- Individual yards are minimized in favor of shared green spaces and plazas that encourage interaction.

Armory site

- In 1950, the Daily Camera reported that the National Guard was constructing a \$4 million base that would house the third largest National Guard unit of its type in the United States and the largest Guard unit, including both ground and air squadrons, in Colorado.
- The armory facility was originally built to serve as the headquarters for the 139th Aircraft Control and Warning Squadron of the Colorado Air National Guard. The unit was formed in Boulder in 1947 and maintained 4750 Broadway as their headquarters until 1956, when the unit relocated to Buckley Air Force Field near Denver. In 1956, the property served as the headquarters for Battery A of the 137th Artillery of the Colorado Army National Guard.
- The National Guard vacated the property in 2014.
- The site is now being redeveloped with sixteen buildings totaling 200 dwelling units and ground floor office/retail uses.
- The original National Guard building was designated an historic landmark in 2017 and will be used as a common gathering space for on-site residents.

Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan (BVCP) & Planning Reserve

- Just north and east of the city you notice there's a distinct urban edge where the character changes from urban to rural. This urban shaping and the preservation of open space surrounding the city is the result of decades of careful planning. A critical planning tool that has helped shape the built environment and preserve land surrounding the City of Boulder is the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan (BVCP).
- BVCP establishes a vision for future development of the community, including potential for growth.
- The BVCP was jointly adopted by the City of Boulder and Boulder County in 1977. Boulder County established its own county-wide comprehensive plan in 1978 (BCCP).
- A core guiding principle of both the BVCP and BCCP is a commitment to a compact development pattern. The county encourages development to remain within municipal boundaries to protect wildlife habitat, riparian corridors, and preserve rural character and agricultural opportunities in the surrounding unincorporated area. The county also seeks to maintain buffers between communities to avoid sprawl, make efficient use of resources, and help preserve the character of each community.
- The BVCP includes a map indicating which areas are eligible for development and which areas are intended for preservation - Areas I, II, III
 - **Area I** is the City of Boulder. This land has adequate urban facilities and services and is expected to accommodate any future development.



- **Area II** is under Boulder County's jurisdiction but could be annexed by the city. New urban development may only occur if adequate facilities and services (i.e., city water and sewer service) are or will be available.
- **Area III** is the remainder of the Boulder Valley planning area and for the most part is in Boulder County. The Area III-Rural Preservation Area is preserved for rural land uses and character.
- The **Area III-Planning Reserve Area** is a subset of Area III where the city and county maintain the option for future development. The area is approximate 500 acres and is located along the northeast edge of the city. You can see part of it east and south of Gateway Park as we continue on our route.
- The Planning Reserve could be considered for future development if a number of conditions were met (e.g., a critical need for additional developable land), and additional planning steps taken. Potential development of the Planning Reserve is a contentious topic. There's no current or anticipated near-term discussion of establishing a development plan for that area.

For more info, visit <https://bouldercolorado.gov/bvcp>

Stop #4 Elks Park

Wonderland Creek Greenways Improvement Project

- The Wonderland Creek Greenways Improvement Project extends from Winding Trail in the north to the Diagonal Highway in the south.
- Completed in April 2019, this \$30M project provides channel improvements to accommodate the 1% annual chance storm for this mile-long segment of the creek. By creating these improvements, the city will be reducing the flood risk to numerous structures including over 450 dwelling units that are currently located within the 1% annual chance special flood hazard area floodplain.
- Three new underpasses were constructed as part of this project (1. at the BNSF Railroad 2. Kalmia Ave. 3. 28th St.) to provide safe passage for pedestrians and cyclists as well as connecting vital missing link in the city's multi-use path system.

For more info, visit <https://bouldercolorado.gov/flood/wonderland-creek-greenways-improvements>

Stop #5 Pleasantview Fields

Diagonal Crossing Development

This 20-acre mixed use project will include:

- 21 multifamily residential buildings totaling 357 units. There are 250 workforce, market rate housing units, 85 permanently affordable deed-restricted units, 20 faculty units for Naropa University and two studio units in the Studio Arts building for visiting artist.
- Meals on Wheels facility (10,800 square feet)



- Restaurant (3,100 square feet)
- Naropa University housing
- Studio Arts facility

A multi-use path runs north south along the east side of the site, a pedestrian spine through the center, sidewalks along the roads and drives, a centrally located B-Cycle station, and designated car share parking (i.e., special emphasis on the “first and last mile” to public transportation.)

Jay Rd. Bike Lanes

- Jay Road is heavily used by cyclists. Jay Road was originally built with wider lanes than the required 11-foot travel lane. Because of the extra pavement the transportation department was able to add a buffer between the bikeable shoulder and travel lane. The buffer is outlined in white paint.
- Skip striping of green paint was added through intersections to highlight the bikeable shoulder and draw driver’s attention to the possibility of bikes traveling through intersection. This was done in response to a number of cyclist injuries and fatalities along the corridor
- The daily bike count for the western part of Jay is 200- 300 cyclists per day. The daily bike count closer to 75th is about 100 cyclists per day.

SH 119 BRT / Bikeway

- In collaboration with CDOT, City of Boulder, Boulder County and City of Longmont, RTD led a process to determine what type of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) improvements could be implemented along the Diagonal.
- All of these agencies settled on managed lanes for the trunk between Boulder and Longmont (similar to US 36, these would be for HOVs, toll paying vehicles and transit) and two BRT routes (downtown Boulder to downtown Longmont, and west Longmont to CU-Boulder)
- Improved stations, end-to-end travel time savings up to 30 minutes compared to existing BOLT service.
- Project vision also includes a bikeway between Boulder and Longmont. CDOT led the feasibility study for the bikeway and Boulder County has secured funding to finish the design
- Total project budget is around \$250M, and about 1/3 of this has already been secured through grants and local funding.

Construction planned for 2023-2024

For more information on the SH119 Bus Rapid Transit /Bikeway, visit <https://www.sh119brt.com/>

NW Rail/ FasTracks

- Northwest Rail from Denver-Boulder-Longmont still planned, but due to Great Recession and higher project costs RTD does not have funding to complete this line until 2050.
- FasTracks money is a separate fund, and cannot be spent on SH 119 BRT or other projects not identified in the FasTracks ballot measure

Peak Rail (3 trains to Denver in the AM, 3 trains back to Longmont in the PM) also being studied and could open sooner than 2050, but timing is uncertain.



Stop #6 Cottonwood Trail

LoBo Trail-Jay Rd Connections Project

- The “LoBo” Trail stands for “Longmont to Boulder”. It is an important multi-commuter route. There are currently some gaps in the trail north of Jay Rd, and some additional connections and improvements are being considered.
- Current plans are to have LoBo extension start at Cottonwood and parallel the south side of Jay.
- Depending on several factors the proposed extension will either cross Jay and parallel 55th St or continue east and cross Jay to parallel Spine Rd.
- Likely in 2021 or later
- Existing Rapid Flashing Beacon. Allows westbound peds and cyclists to hit button and turn left onto Cottonwood trail.

For more information on the LoBo trail, visit <https://www.bouldercounty.org/open-space/parks-and-trails/lobo-trail/>

For more information on the Jay Rd connection, visit <https://www.bouldercounty.org/transportation/plans-and-projects/trails/jay-road-connections-project/>

LoBo Trail- Williams Fork/Twin Lakes Connection

- Multi-use path connection in Gunbarrel from Twin Lakes Regional Trail (LoBo) to Spine Rd.
- Construction anticipated to begin in early 2020.

Fourmile Creek RR Underpass

- The county is currently still working with BNSF on an easement agreement for the trail to pass under BNSF railroad tracks. Unfortunately, we are unsure of how long that will take.

For more information on the Fourmile Creek bikeway, visit <https://www.bouldercounty.org/transportation/plans-and-projects/four-mile-creek-bikeway/>

For information on the Boulder County Transportation Master Plan, visit <https://www.bouldercounty.org/transportation/plans-and-projects/transportation-master-plan/>

Stop #7 Boulder Junction

Boulder Junction

- Boulder Junction is a 160-acre redevelopment area that is being transformed into a mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented neighborhood with regional transit connections and public spaces that will benefit the entire community. The vision for the area is guided by the 2007 Transit Village Area Plan.
- In the mid-90s RTD wanted to expand Table Mesa Park and Ride. However, the city wanted to explore a nontraditional non-Suburban Park and ride model and find a site more in the geographical center of Boulder.



- Boulder is a tale of two cities east/west of Folsom. Boulder Junction is an attempt to stitch the two together.
- Vision: mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented place where people will live, work, shop, play and have access to regional transit.

For more info, visit <https://bouldercolorado.gov/public-works/boulder-junction>

Transit Village Area Plan (adopted 2007)

- West of the tracks = Phase I (east = Phase II, not yet started)
- “...transform the mostly industrial, low density, auto-oriented area into a more urban, higher density, pedestrian-oriented environment, with a mixture of uses.
- Connectivity: establish a fine-grained, multimodal network of transportation connections (e.g., ped-friendly environment, transit access, 400-foot grid)
- Public Realm/Placemaking emphasis
- Residential Units:
 - Plan Projection: 1,400 to 2,400 new units (300 – 475 permanently affordable)
 - Built to date: 1,212 units (295 affordable)
- New Office and Industrial Space:
 - Plan Projection: 0.9 – 1.4 M sf (2,900 to 4,300 jobs)
 - Build to date: 545,277 sf
- Two access districts created:
 - Parking: SUMP Principles (Shared, unbundled, managed and paid); partnership with developments.
 - Transportation Demand Management (TDM): Eco Passes; Bike and car share memberships

30Pearl

- The City of Boulder is partnering with Boulder Housing Partners (BHP) to co-master develop the 5.4-acre, land-banked Pollard site known as 30Pearl.
- Boulder Housing Partners (BHP) will provide 120 units of permanently affordable rental housing mixed with market rate housing, below market commercial space, and public benefits like public art and a park.
- In addition, the city will sell a portion of the site to developers to support infrastructure improvements and deeper levels of affordability.
- BHP recently completed the development review process for the entire site and will be responsible for constructing all the necessary infrastructure, including an underground parking structure.

For more info, visit <https://bouldercolorado.gov/housing/30pearl>



FINISH: BOULDER BIERGARTEN

Where E-Bikes are allowed in Boulder County and where they are restricted, as well as rationale and outlook going forward.

- Boulder County is wrapping up a pilot study conducted this year in which e-bikes have been allowed on most plains trails where conventional bikes are allowed (exceptions are Walden Ponds due to public concerns about wildlife habitat, and 3 trails at city of Boulder's request: Boulder Canyon Trail, Mayhoffer Singletree Trail, and Coalton Trail)
- Staff recommendation is to allow class 1 and class 2 e-bikes on all trails in the plains where conventional bikes are allowed
- In addition, staff is recommending outreach, education efforts, and signage/maintenance in certain areas to address safety concerns
- Ongoing discussions about whether to implement speed limits

Public meetings are being held in Oct, Nov, and Dec—details on Boulder County's e-bike web page: <https://www.bouldercounty.org/open-space/management/e-bikes/>

Where E-Bikes are allowed in the City of Boulder and where they are restricted, as well as rationale and outlook going forward.

- Only an **electric assisted bicycle** (e-bike) may operate within a designated on-street bicycle lane.
- E-bike use is also permitted on certain multi-use paths within the City of Boulder.
- No other electric-powered or any fuel-powered motorized vehicle may be operated upon multi-use paths or sidewalks in the City of Boulder, except for ADA-approved wheelchairs.

A map of multi-use paths and allow e-bike use can be found here: <https://bouldercolorado.gov/goboulder/electric-assisted-bikes-policy-review>

Thanks for riding with us!

