



Community Planning & Permitting

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Memo

To: Parks and Open Space Advisory Committee

From: Hannah Hippely, Long Range Planning Division Manager

Date: November 21, 2024

RE: Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan 2025 Update INFORMATIONAL ITEM

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PURPOSE

Staff will provide an overview of the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan, the major update process, as well as to introduce the project plan and timeline as developed to date.

BOULDER VALLEY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN (BVCP)

The [BVCP](#) is the jointly adopted City of Boulder and Boulder County Comprehensive Plan for the Boulder Valley. This plan and its associated intergovernmental agreement (IGA) have shaped the development of the Boulder Valley. The Plan's core Service Area framework has not changed since its adoption in 1977 (see Exhibit A Planning Area Map). This framework directs urban development to those areas where urban services can be provided creating a compact urban form. Within the maps areas designated as Area I are those areas already within City limits, where additional growth and development is expected. Areas designated as Area II are areas which could be annexed into the City and where urban services could be provided (in many cases the City of Boulder already provides some urban services within these areas). Area III lands are areas which are to remain rural and under county jurisdiction and these are appropriated delineated as Rural Preservation. A subset of these areas are City of Boulder Open Space and Mountain Parks lands that have been annexed and are shown as Area III - Annex. The effect of this simple and clear framework is reflected in the current municipal boundaries of the City of Boulder which have grown intentionally, incrementally outward, and in a manner where the growth can be fully supported while preserving the rural character of the lands outside of the City Service Area. Rural preservation efforts have been supported by the investments in open space preservation within the planning area, primarily by the City of Boulder (see County Open Space within the BVCP Planning Area Exhibit B). This framework has been a bulwark against uncoordinated development and sprawl and has relieved the county of filling the role as a competing development option for property owners. With the recent annexation of the CU

South property, there exist one remaining large undeveloped area within the BVCP planning area that the Plan has designated as an option for future service expansion and development. This is designated as Area III, Planning Reserve and is located east of North Foothills Highway roughly between Jay Road and the North Broadway/ North Foothills Highway intersection. The Plan requires a Baseline Urban Services Study to be completed prior to considering a service area expansion into the Area III, Planning Reserve.

The urban service framework establishes the Plan's big picture vision however the BVCP also guides development within the City and includes a number of addition layers and lenses. The Plan includes a set of Core Values and 7 Focus Areas which were identified during the last major update including Housing Affordability & Diversity, Growth – Balance of Future Job & Housing, Design Quality & Placemaking, Resilience & Climate Commitment, Subcommunities & Area Planning, Arts & Culture, and Small Local Business described in Chapter 2. In Chapter 3, there are 10 policy sections that cover intergovernmental cooperation and growth management, the quality of the built environment and neighborhood character, the natural environment, energy climate action and waste minimization, economic vitality, transportation, housing, community well-being and safety including culture and the arts, agriculture and food, governance, and community engagement. Chapter 4, includes a description of 25 land use designations which are shown in detail on the [Future Land Use Map](#). Chapter 5 provides guidance on subcommunity area planning and identifies the subcommunities. Chapter 6 includes a summary of adopted master plans and trails map. Chapter 7 details the urban services standards and “adequacy standards are included for those urban services that are required for urban expansion in Area II. These include public water, public sewer, stormwater and flood management, urban fire protection and emergency medical care, urban police protection, multimodal transportation and developed urban parks”. Appendix B is the text of the Intergovernmental Agreement and includes the amendment procedures for the Plan.

Major Update Process

The BVCP, requires that a major update occurs at least every 10 years to ensure the document continues to reflect the communities needs and vision for the future. The Plan provides a few specific guidelines regarding the details of how a major update is to be completed. According to the Plan, the process is initiated by City and County staff who establish a tentative update process and schedule, which is revised as necessary throughout the process. The Plan requires that policy changes be considered before map changes and that the process include an opportunity for change requests to the plan from landowners, the public, staff, and City and County approval bodies to be considered. The Plan is then required to be considered at public hearings and is adopted by all 4 decision making bodies; City Planning Board, City Council, County Planning Commission, and the Board of County Commissioners.

The 2025 Major Update

City and County staff have been developing the 2025 Major Update process. The official public launch of the BVCP major update project will occurred at a kick-off event held October 19th, 2024. Next, staff will be working on an existing conditions analysis which will provide a clear picture of where the Boulder Valley is today. Community engagement will largely be conducted throughout 2025. During this time, the community will help guide the creation of the BVCP vision, values, and priorities as well as review how different future land use options could support the vision (scenario testing). Beginning in late 2025, staff will begin drafting policies based on the feedback from the

community, city and county departments, and decision-makers. The first half of 2026 will be focused on preparing the draft plan and public request process, followed by plan adoption in late summer. August 2026 is the adoption goal for the BVCP. After the content is adopted and the project is complete, staff will then work towards creating a published, likely web-based, version of the BVCP.

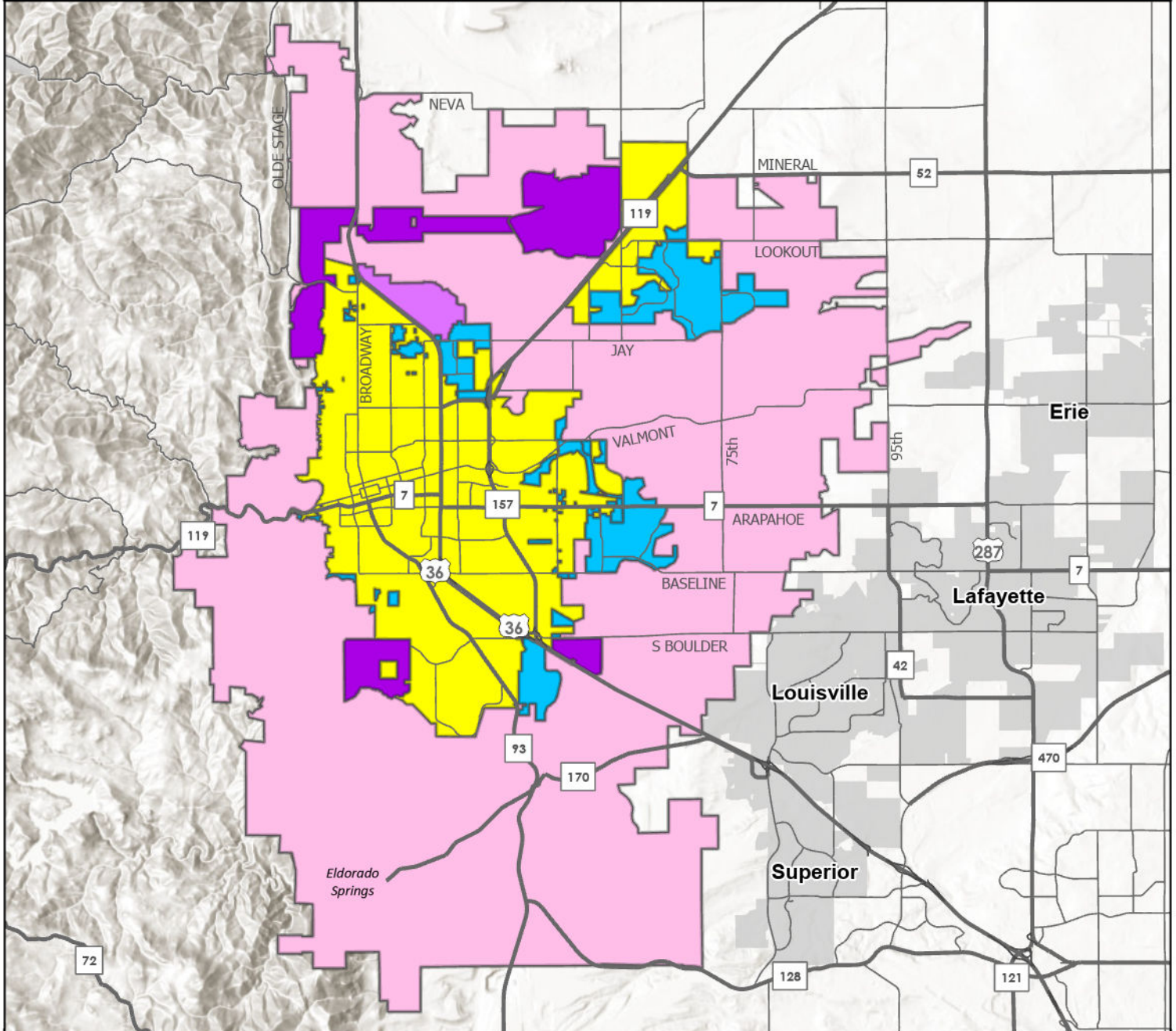
As shown in the project schedule, a large component of the BVCP update is focused on community engagement. The engagement plan includes many commonly used engagement techniques such as open houses, workshops, focus groups, etc. Additionally, in an effort to try new approaches to community engagement, hear from a diversity of voices, have an opportunity for meaningful and in-depth engagement an additional innovative strategy called a Community Advisory Committee (CAC), or Community Assembly is proposed.



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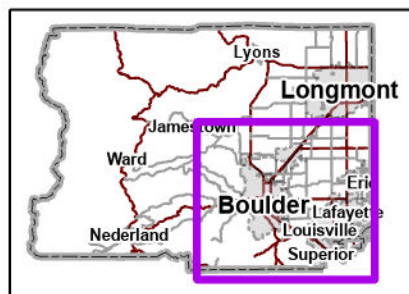
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Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan Areas



Area of Detail

Date: 9/24/2024



Legend

BVCP Area

Area I

Area II

Area III Rural Preservation

Area III Planning Reserve

Area III Annex

Municipalities

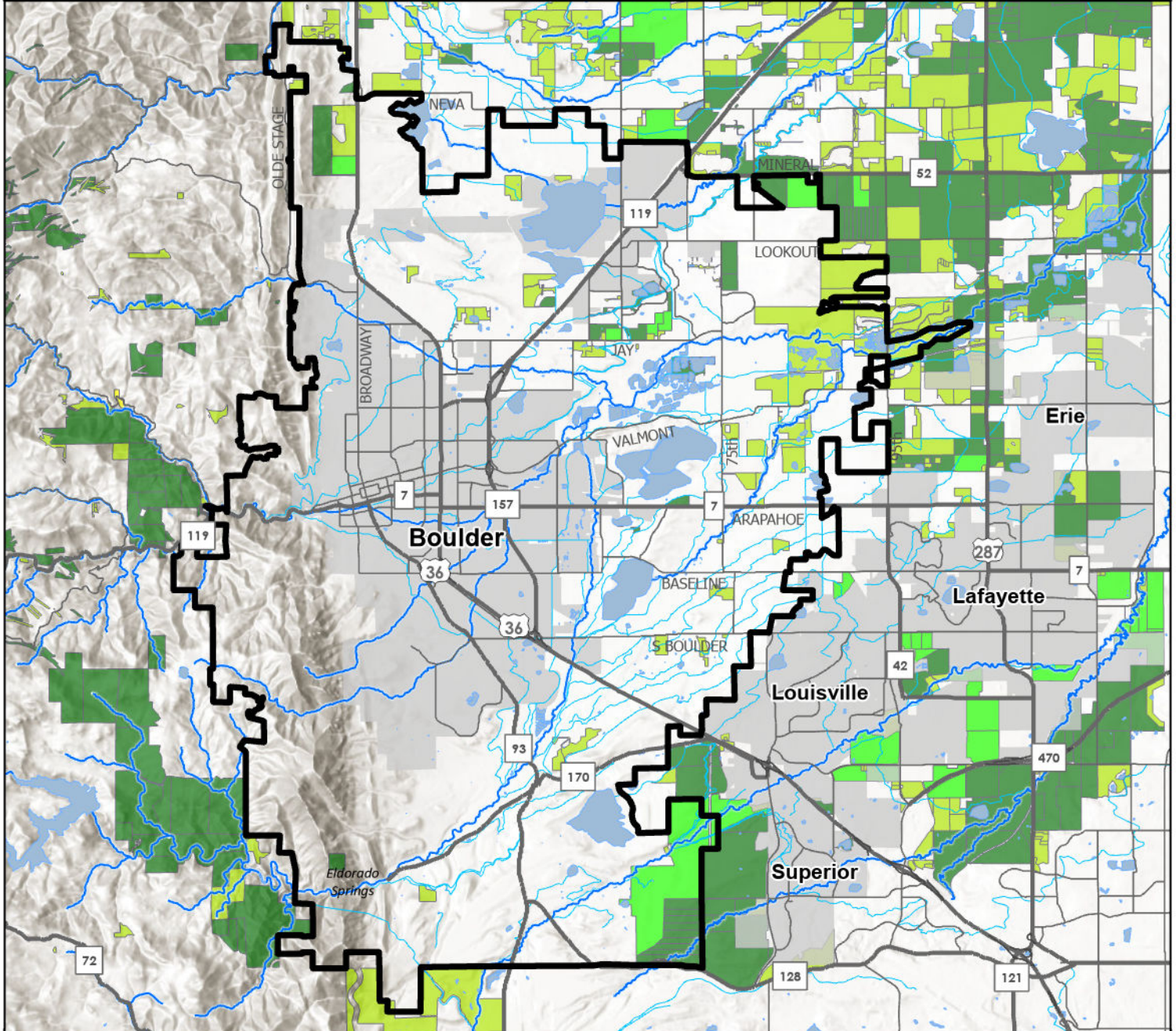
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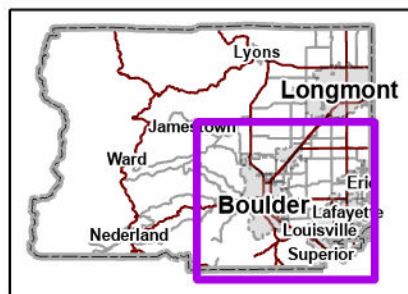
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Boulder County Open Space in BVCP Area



Area of Detail

Date: 10/4/2024



Legend

- BVCP Area
- County Open Space
- Joint County and Municipal Open Space
- County Conservation Easement
- County Miscellaneous Easement
- Open Space Option
- Conservation Easement Option
- Municipalities



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