



Parks & Open Space

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PARKS & OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Time/Date of Meeting: 6:30 p.m., Thursday, August 28, 2025

TO: Parks & Open Space Advisory Committee
FROM: Melissa Arnold, Land Officer
AGENDA ITEM: Creekside Property Acquisition
ACTION REQUESTED: Recommendation to the BOCC

Real Estate Land Commitment: For much longer than Parks & Open Space's history of stewarding open space, the land in this community has been important to American Indian, urban native, Indigenous, and other cultural communities that continue to live here. We are making meaningful changes to how we do our work that include them, incorporate their perspectives, and honor their land stewardship legacy. Parks & Open Space operates within modern legal constructs of land ownership to steward Boulder County open space and accomplish these efforts on behalf of our community.

Summary

Boulder County proposes to acquire fee title to approximately 127 acres owned by Ron Readmond and Andi Blackwell for \$3,600,000. The property has addresses of 1390 Old Saint Vrain Road, 1015 Old Saint Vrain Road and 0 Jade Way, located southwest of the Town of Lyons near the intersection of State Highway 7/South Saint Vrain Drive and Old Saint Vrain Road. This request includes permission to create and sell two conservation easement encumbered house lots should the department determine it is necessary at any point in the future. Staff recommends approval.

Background Information

The Creekside property includes approximately 420 feet of the South Saint Vrain Creek, sandstone cliffs, and a topography that rises from 5,440 to 6,150 feet in elevation. It borders Hall Ranch open space to the west and north and the Lyons Park Estates neighborhood to the east and south. The Hall Ranch Trailhead sits just 500 feet away on the other side of State Highway 7, and the property is visible from many vista points along the Nighthawk and Bitterbrush Trails on Hall Ranch. Old Saint Vrain Road is a popular walking route for many birders and recreationists looking to enjoy the solitude of the surrounding open space.

The property has been in the landowner's family for over 50 years and has primarily been used for residential and agricultural purposes. The property consists of four parcels with two residences and several outbuildings. The westernmost parcel at 1390 Old St. Vrain Road includes the stretch of the South Saint Vrain Creek, a residence, detached garage and three outbuildings. The two middle parcels share the address of 1015 Old St. Vrain Road, one which contains a residence built in 1890, a detached garage and several outbuildings, including a log barn that has been found to be eligible for local landmarking and listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The other parcel at 1015 Old Saint Vrain Road

contains a large storage building and a shed. The easternmost parcel at 0 Jade Way is a vacant strip of unbuildable land from the Lyons Park Estates.

Deal Description

The landowner would like to sell the fee simple interest in the property, including all structures and minerals rights, to the county. There are no irrigation water rights to be transferred with the property; however, the property contains wells supporting the residential uses. The county would lease the residences, outbuildings and the immediately surrounding land back to the landowners after closing until June 30, 2026, at no cost.

The department would like the ability in the future to decide whether to sell the houses and is requesting approval to create two lots of approximately 1 to 2 acres around each house and to sell them at a later date subject to conservation easements. The decision whether to keep them to support the open space program or sell them will be made after closing, after the department has a chance to fully evaluate the need for keeping them versus the potential costs of doing so. These lots will not be divided from the property at closing, but if the department later determines it is appropriate to sell either or both the house lots, the lots would be divided at that time. Staff would present the proposed sale deals for future approval by the Commissioners at the appropriate time.

Acquisition Summary

\$3,600,000 Land Price (includes mineral rights) (Fund Source: Open Space Sales and Use Taxes)

Boulder County will acquire these interests:

- 127 Acres (Fee) [\$20,472/acre, or said differently, \$866,667/right for 3 Bldg Rights]
- 2 Residences and multiple outbuildings [\$1,000,000 total value]
- All Mineral Rights [valued with land price]

The property is not subject to an oil and gas lease.

The property is within the Town of Lyons' planning area and according to the Lyons Comprehensive Development Plan and Intergovernmental Agreement with Boulder County, is designated as a Rural Preservation Area. At a May 19, 2025, public meeting, the Town of Lyons Board of Trustees voted to allow Boulder County to acquire the Creekside property as open space. The town board asked that Parks & Open Space include them in discussions about future property uses, and the department will aim to do so.

Boulder County Comprehensive Plan Designations

The Boulder County Comprehensive Plan (Comp Plan) provides information about the area's agricultural, cultural, environmental, and other open space resources (including passive recreation, community buffers, and scenic viewsheds). Maps in the Comp Plan indicate the following designations of these resources near the property: Rare Plant Area; Riparian Area and Riparian Habitat Connector; Critical Wildlife Habitat, St. Vrain Corridor; Preble's Meadow

Jumping Mouse Conservation Area, zone 1 mouse management area; and View Protection Corridor.

Potential Uses

Like all properties acquired for open space, the property will be managed for an open space use. The property is currently used for residential and limited agricultural purposes, and private open space by the landowner. The property will be closed for management review and not open to public use, unless Parks & Open Space later determines other closures or other open space uses are appropriate.

Parks & Open Space will determine whether current uses of the property will continue or whether other open space uses of the property may be suitable. The process to determine specific future open space uses (including public access via trails or other passive recreation versus closures that protect a property's open space resources) is an involved planning process that can only be done after acquisition. Parks & Open Space staff need ample time after acquisition to evaluate the property, and no evaluations about other potential future uses have been made at this time.

Staff Recommendation

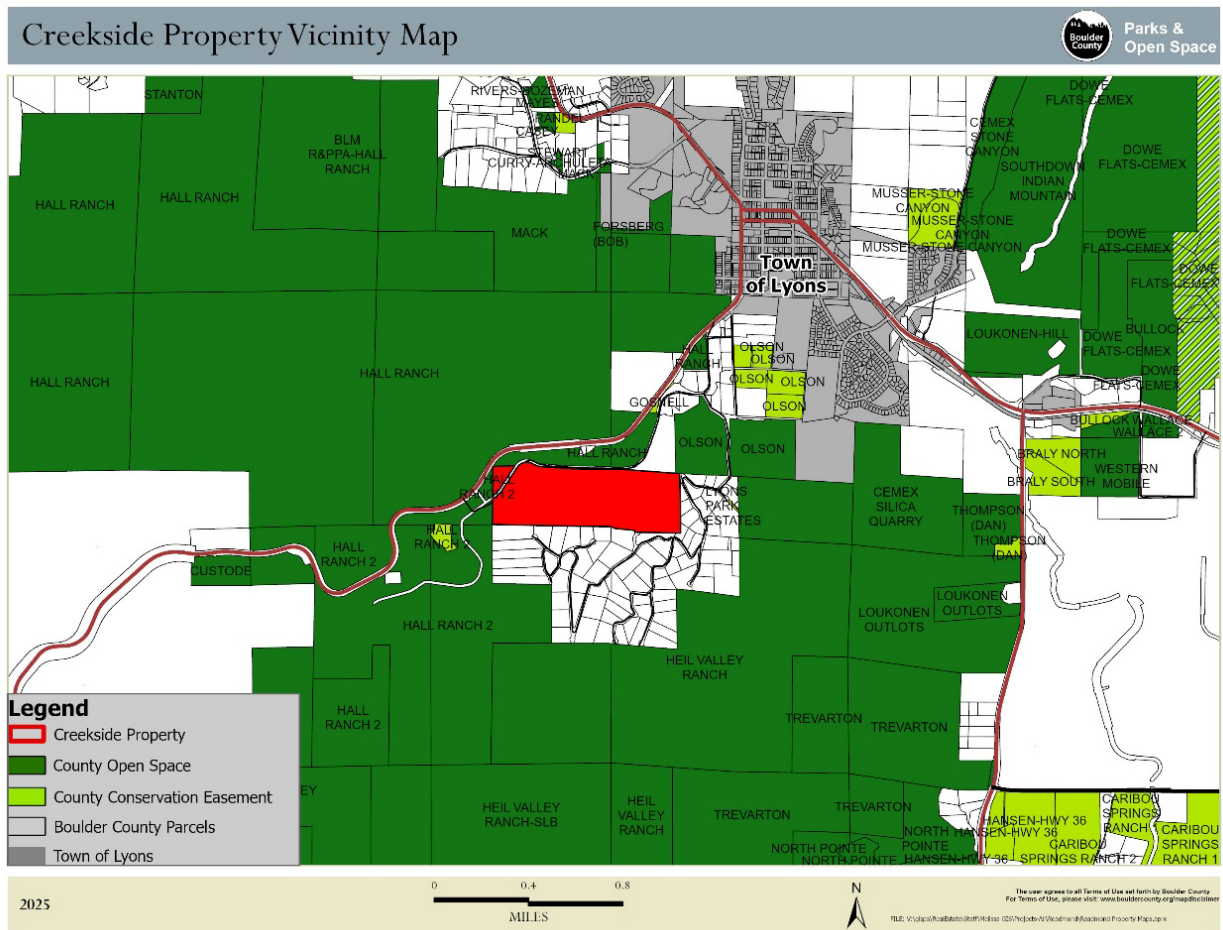
Staff recommends approval. Acquisition of the Creekside property will remove one development right from the property and greatly assist Boulder County's efforts in managing Hall Ranch open space, connecting together the natural habitats of steep slopes and cliffs, and protecting a significant stretch of the South St. Vrain Creek and riparian habitat.

POSAC Action Requested

Recommendation to the Boulder County Commissioners for approval of the project as described above and as further described by staff at the POSAC meeting.

Suggested motion language: I move approval of the project as described above and as further described by staff in their presentation.

Vicinity Map



Close-Up Map

