



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

Location: Boulder County Courthouse
1325 Pearl Street, Third Floor, Boulder

TO:	Parks & Open Space Advisory Committee
FROM/PRESENTER:	Therese Glowacki, Director
AGENDA ITEM:	POS 2026 Budget Requests
ACTION REQUESTED:	Recommendation to the BOCC

Summary

The normal budget cycle for Boulder County begins in early summer when departments start assessing their needs for funding for the following year. POS looks at 5 different funding needs: 1) Ongoing operating budgets; 2) One-time project funding (mine clean-up, etc.); 3) New staff requests; 4) Seasonal budgets; and 5) Capital/equipment. In POS, we discuss these among divisions and get a priority list for the whole department.

For our 2026 budget process, due to overall concern for the county's budget, the County Commissioners directed departments not to ask for any new staff or additional on-going funding increases (operating or seasonals). This leaves one-time project requests, and capital/equipment requests.

This presentation will summarize our one-time requests and look at our long-term funding projections.

Background

Our funding for POS comes from three main sources.

- The first is the general fund, generated from property taxes. This is the largest source of income for the county and funds most county functions like administrative, IT, and human resources.
- The second is our open space sales and use taxes. These are dedicated revenues that can only be used on open space and are for acquisitions, management, and maintenance.
- The third source is grants. We typically are successful in securing grant funding for restoration projects, trail construction, and historic preservation.

2025 Budget

Our general fund operating budget is \$2.5 million dollars. Our sales tax operating budget is \$13.5 million (\$7.3M on-going, \$6.2 M one-time), with an additional \$25 million for potential acquisitions. Among the one-time projects, there is \$2 million for Prairie Run open

space riparian restoration and park development, and the Cardinal Mill water contamination cleanup. Our grant funding for 2025 is \$4.8 million dollars for forestry, stream restoration, and flood mitigation (i.e. Prince Lake dam reconstruction). These numbers do not include staff salaries.

2026 Budget Requests

Attached you will see the individual project requests for 2026 for your review. The presentation will also cover open space sales tax revenues and long-term projections for POS budgets. We would like POSAC input on these requests.

POSAC Action Requested: Recommendation to the BOCC of presented or modified POS 2026 one-time budget requests.

Attachment: POS 2026 one-time requests

Boulder County Parks & Open Space 2026 Budget Requests for Sales and Use Tax Funds

19-Aug-2025

Proposal details	New budget Expense	Description/Justification (tied to BoCo Strategic Priorities)
Cardinal Mill Water Quality Treatment	\$ 4,000,000	Environmental Stewardship: Water quality treatment facility required by state
Prairie Run	\$534,000	Economic Security and Social Stability. This capital project will span 7 years from 2024 -2030. Total project cost is \$7,300,000. Engineering and permitting has started and will continue through 2026. Construction will occur in two phases starting in 2025 and concluding in 2030. In 2025 we anticipate improving the following wetland and riparian areas: Alex 8, Keno-49, and Lower Boulder Creek (from west of Highway 287 to N. 109th St.) Wildlife monitoring & wildlife surveys to collect baseline data, provide data analysis and reports, surveys prior to, during, and after projects, installations, park/trail opening etc. We will implement soil health practices, off-stream cattle water, and build storage off-site. Design, construction materials, operational & personnel expenses total \$2.4 million for FY 2025.
Prince Lake Dam Rehabilitation	\$251,250	Environmental Stewardship: Dam safety construction required by state
Howell Ditch Diversion Design	\$300,000	Environmental Stewardship: Fish passage, restoration, and irrigation infrastructure
	\$5,085,250	
Heron Lake Outlet Construction	\$ 350,000	Environmental Stewardship: Repair of a culvert for floodwater safety This proposal supports Good Governance by addressing our maintenance backlog. Our program provides single family caretaker homes & agricultural land based housing to promote the well being of our open space. This program supports our commitment to Good Governance by through improving our public assets to current standards. Our rental property program has developed a 3-5 year plan to address the 30 years of maintenance backlog. In 2025 (year 3) we will focus on
Admin. Rental Property Maintenance Backlog	\$ 500,000	completing the final 8 homes out of our originally assessed 26 building. Renovations will include new roofs, gutters, exterior & interior painting, asbestos remediation, window & door replacements and conversions from fossil fuel sources to electric. As our renovations are completed rent is increased towards market value (discounted per policy).
Community Engagement Program	\$ 5,000	Good Governnace: Parks has continued to address Racial Equity through Inclusive Community Engagement. We recently hired a second community engagement specialist and these funds will help with program establishment.
Innovation Center Project	\$ 5,000	Climate Action and Environmental Stewardship: working on issues around species conservation. The project also has an outreach and education component working with students from the St Vrain Valley School District.
Species of Special Concern	\$ 5,000	Climate Action and Environmental Stewardship: focusing on Species of Special Concern including more efficient prairie dog vaccinations for future Black Footed Ferret re-introduction
Breeding Bird Surveys	\$ 20,000	Climate Action and Environmental Stewardship: focusing on improvement of our data collection and analysis process surrounding our breeding bird program.

Buffalo Fencing	\$	1,000,000	This proposal supports Good Governance through assuring all voices are heard, valued and considered. As part of our Departments' continued efforts to support diversity and inclusivity we are working with Native Tribal leaders in our communities to assist in bringing a buffalo herd back to Boulder County. The location for the buffalo heard will be determined in 2025/2026.
Ag General Land Management	\$	35,000	Stewardship: One-time funds will be used to enhance operations by enabling the purchase of operating supplies in support of Prairie Dog management on agricultural lands
AG Maintenance Backlog	\$	90,000	Stewardship: Funds will be used to continue restoration work of degraded ag lands, improve safety by contracting for the removal hazard trees and contracting for the maintenance of stockwater tanks
	\$	2,010,000	
Water Assessments & Cropshare Expense	\$	63,000	Stewardship: Requesting one-time funds to cover the cost of water assessments and cropshare expenses that are billed to POS by the Ditch Companies and Agricultural Leaseholders. These expenses have increased approximatley 12% over the last several years and this increase is needed to keep up with inflation.
	\$	63,000	
Sum of 126 Sales and Use One-Time Requests	\$	7,158,250	