



# Parks & Open Space

5201 St. Vrain Road • Longmont, CO 80503  
303-678-6200 • POSinfo@bouldercounty.org  
www.BoulderCountyOpenSpace.org

## PARKS & OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Time/Date of Meeting: 6:30 p.m., Thursday, October 23, 2025

**TO:** Parks & Open Space Advisory Committee  
**FROM:** Tina Burghardt, Land Officer Supervisor  
**AGENDA ITEM:** Pocket 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 1.21 acres owned by Tom Thomas, with any associated water rights, for \$10,500. The property has an address of 5600 Ute Highway and is located near the intersection of Ute Highway (Hwy 66) and N. 53<sup>rd</sup> Street, approximately 3 miles east of Lyons. Staff supports this acquisition.

### Background Information

The property is bisected by the BNSF Railroad and the southwestern portion of the property is bordered on 2 sides by county owned open space (Montgomery to the west and Western Mobile on the south). The northeastern portion of the property is adjacent to a privately owned parcel encumbered by a county conservation easement. Following acquisition of the Pocket property, staff will explore conveying the northeastern portion of the property to the adjacent landowner and securing a new conservation easement across the new, larger parcel which will eliminate the county's obligation to manage the portion of the Pocket property that is difficult to access.

The property has historically been used for passive recreation and is encumbered by a county conservation easement that prohibits any development. The conservation easement was conveyed to the county in 2013 as part of a land use process in exchange for increased density on the parcel to the north, across Ute Hwy (Hwy 66). The property is vacant and unbuildable.

### Deal Description

Boulder County would acquire the property for \$10,500. Boulder County would later pursue disposing of that portion of the property lying north of the railroad tracks to the landowner adjacent to the east. If a deal can be developed, Parks & Open Space would present the deal for consideration by the Board of County Commissioners at a future business meeting.

**Acquisition Summary**

\$10,500	Land Price (includes mineral rights)
\$0	Water Price
\$10,500	Total Price (Fund Source: Open Space Sales and Use Taxes)
\$0	Donation Value
\$10,500	Total Value

Boulder County will acquire these interests:

- 1.21 Acres (Fee) [\$8,678/acre (valued subject to CE)]
- All Mineral Rights [valued with land price]

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

**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: Critical Wildlife Habitat-St. Vrain Corridor, Preble’s Meadow Jumping Mouse Conservation Area-Zone 1 (Mouse Management Area), Riparian Area, Significant Agricultural Land of Statewide Importance, 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 passive recreation. The property will be 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. The property is adjacent to the Montgomery and Western Mobile open space properties and the southwestern corner of the property abuts St. Vrain Creek. Staff also recommends exploring the future disposition of the northeastern portion of the property to the adjacent property owner in exchange for a conservation easement.

**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.

(see next pages for maps)

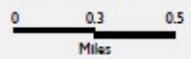
Vicinity Map

# Pocket Vicinity Map



October 2025

- Subject Property-Pocket
- County Open Space
- County Conservation Easement
- County Miscellaneous Easement
- Open Space Option



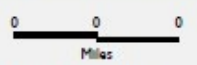
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# Pocket Focus Map



October 2025

- Subject Property-Pocket
- County Open Space
- County Conservation Easement
- Open Space Option



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