

55th & Arapahoe Station Area Master Plan

Summary of Engagement Window Events Alternative Land Use & Transportation Concepts

March – April 2021

The purpose of this 55th & Arapahoe Station Area Master Plan (STAMP) engagement window was to get feedback on alternative land use and transportation concepts to answer the question “Who Do We Want to Be?” in this area of the East Boulder Subcommunity. The project’s staff collected input from community members across the city and targeted specific audiences for participation, including property owners, businesses and residents within the STAMP study area, East Boulder workforce and commuters, and East Boulder residents living in neighborhoods surrounding the study area.

Engagement for this phase of the project included two major products:

1. A video presentation to describe the STAMP context, the purpose of planning for transit oriented development and three distinct future land use and transportation concepts.
2. A community questionnaire that asked participants to provide input and feedback on the three land use and transportation concepts.

Online Focus Groups – 43 people attended one of four virtual focus groups held the week of March 28th. Focus group invitations were mailed to all property owners, businesses, and renters within the STAMP boundary and emailed to approximately 400 East Boulder stakeholder list via email.

Community-wide Questionnaire – 45 people responded to this community questionnaire that was hosted on BeHeardBoulder.org for four weeks. Responses provide quantitative and qualitative data about the preferred mix of land uses and the potential benefits and concerns associated with transit oriented development and expanded transportation options. Many participants also offered critical feedback and comments through open-ended questions included in the questionnaire. See the [Summary Report](#) for detailed results.

What We Heard

Between the quantitative data included in the questionnaire and the comments staff received during focus groups and through BeHeardBoulder.org, participants in the STAMP Spring Engagement session provided thoughtful and productive feedback that will move the East Boulder Working Group, city staff and decision makers toward a preferred land use and transportation concept.

Generally, most people support a vibrant mix of uses in the area and would not like to see any one single land use, such as office or multifamily residential, become the predominant uses. Rather,

there is general community support for transit oriented development that is characterized by mostly flex space, which could include industrial and retail with multi-family residential and/or office.

More specifically, the summary below includes key themes that have received consistent support or discussion from this phase of engagement. These are aligned with the six focus areas of the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan (BVCP) and the East Boulder Subcommunity Plan (EBSP).



Housing Affordability & Diversity

- There is a desire to incorporate residential development into the area that is attainable by a range of different earners. This need was raised by both general community members as well as business owners in the area who see a benefit to providing affordable or attainable housing options for employees to live closer to their place of employment.
- There is general concern that this area will not provide a sufficient amount of affordable housing.
- People expressed support for housing that would attract additional retail stores, restaurants and services to the area and would create a welcoming, safe, and attractive area. It was generally acknowledged that more people living in the area would accomplish these goals and create a strong sense of community and place.



Small Local Business

- It is important to preserve and protect existing businesses in the area.
- There is a desire to maintain affordability for existing businesses to operate and provide space for start-up businesses. There is general concern over potential business impacts, particularly to the large number of owner-operated businesses in the area.
- There is overwhelming support for developing new retail uses, particularly restaurants and grocery stores.
- Comments and concerns focus on:
 - The potential for rents to increase
 - The creation of more traffic and spillover parking into surrounding neighborhoods
 - Additional noise



Resilience & Climate Commitment

- It is important to create a more walkable, bicycle-friendly and transit-accessible environment that should intrinsically include parks, plazas and green space. These elements were noted as necessary to support a sustainable and low carbon environment.

- There was general recognition that creating more housing in close proximity to transit and employment could reduce traffic and its ensuing environment impacts.
- It was noted that much of the area is within the 100-year floodplain, which should be addressed and/or mitigated with future plans.



Design Quality & Placemaking

- There is a strong desire to create a more vibrant and walkable area than what is there today.
- There is support for and interest to:
 - Set buildings back from the street and step back building heights
 - Incorporate generous green space, public gathering spaces, and landscaping
 - Maintain mountain views
- Many of the comments and concerns focus on creating a unique place that is more than a “block of buildings,” which is how new development in the Boulder Junction area is perceived by many community members.



Access & Mobility

- There is community support for a more walkable, bikeable, transit-accessible and well-connected transportation network through the area.
- Community members prioritized ease of access for bicycles and pedestrians to connect to places within and outside the area, particularly between the BRT station and surrounding uses and to the city’s extensive trail network.
- There is general concern that land use changes could add to the current traffic volumes in the area.
- Community members indicated both a need for more parking as well as an acknowledgement that parking demand could dwindle over time.



Arts & Culture

- While comments specific to arts and culture were limited, there is interest in supporting local artists and art/studio spaces.