



**CITY OF BOULDER
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM**

MEETING DATE: March 1, 2022

AGENDA TITLE

Consideration of a motion to amend the Transit Village Area Plan Streetscape Guideline for 30th Street to remove on-street parking and to replace trees in grates with an eight-foot-wide streetscape planting strip and 10-foot-wide detached sidewalk and protected bike lanes per the Transportation Master Plan, including text amendments as provided in the staff memo.

Applicant: City of Boulder

Property Owner: City of Boulder

PRESENTER/S

Nuria Rivera-Vandermyde, City Manager

David Gehr, Interim Director of Planning & Development Services

Charles Ferro, Senior Manager Development Review/Interim Comprehensive Planning Manager

Edward Stafford, Senior Manager Civil Engineering

Elaine McLaughlin, Principal Planner

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this request is to consider an amendment to the Transit Village Area Plan Streetscape Guideline for 30th Street to remove on-street parking and to replace trees in grates with an eight-foot-wide streetscape planting strip and 10-foot-wide detached sidewalk and protected bike lanes per the Transportation Master Plan, including text amendments as provided in the staff memo. The Planning Board unanimously approved the amendment (5-0, S. Silver, absent). This issue arose during the review process for the Site Review application of Fire Station 3 proposed at 2751 30th Street which is subject to call-up consideration by City Council under Item 4B. The Site Review was also unanimously approved by the Planning Board in the same discussion on Feb. 17, 2022.

This amendment would allow for the future implementation of the recommendations of the [Low-Stress Walk and Bike Network Plan](#) recently adopted as part of the City's Transportation Master Plan (TMP). The Low-Stress Walk and Bike Network Plan has identified the need for protected bike lanes on 30th Street and on-street parking would impact the operations and comfort of the protected bike lane along with the general

operations of the street. Additionally, the available existing right-of-way on 30th Street may preclude the ability to include both street design elements in sections of 30th Street.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Suggested Motion Language:

Staff requests council consideration of this matter and action in the form of the following motion:

Motion to approve the proposed amendment to the Transit Village Area Plan Streetscape Guideline for the 30th Street Cross-Section, and associated text amendments.

COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENTS AND IMPACTS

- Economic: None identified.
- Environmental: None identified.
- Social: None anticipated.

OTHER IMPACTS

- Fiscal: None identified
- Staff time: None identified

BOARD AND COMMISSION FEEDBACK

On Feb. 17, 2022 the Planning Board unanimously approved the amendment to TVAP Streetscape Guideline for the 30th Street cross-section (5-0, S. Silver absent). The staff memorandum to Planning Board, meeting audio, and other related background materials are available at the following link, along with a link to the video from Channel 8: Record Archive for the Feb. 17, 2022 Planning Board and the video of the public hearing is found at the following link: [Channel 8 Archive for the Feb. 17, 2022 Planning Board](#).

BACKGROUND / PROCESS

The streetscape under consideration is along 30th Street from Pearl Street to Goose Creek on the east side only, and from Goose Creek to Valmont Road on both the east and west sides. The streetscape is within the [Transit Village Area Plan](#) (TVAP) adopted in 2007 to guide redevelopment of the area surrounding the regional RTD facility and anticipated rail facility. Guided by the TVAP, redevelopment in Boulder Junction, is intended to

“...transform this mostly industrial, low density, auto-oriented area into a more urban, higher density, pedestrian-oriented environment, with a mixture of uses.”

Planned in two phases, as shown in Figure 1, the first phase of TVAP is essentially built out between 30th Street on the



Figure 1: TVAP Phasing Plan

west to the railroad tracks on the east and between Pearl Parkway on the south to Valmont Avenue on the north.

The TVAP established future land uses for the area, shown in Figure 2, which became the basis for both the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan (BVCP) land use designations as well as zoning.

Over the past 15 years, guided by the vision and goals of TVAP, many of the formerly underutilized industrial parcels of the Phase 1 area have redeveloped or are under construction, including the neighborhood of S'PARK and Boulder Commons I and II on the north, 30 Pearl and Depot Square with the regional RTD bus facility at the center, and the Reve on the south. To date, 1,092 residential units have been approved or built including 295 permanently affordable residential units; close to meeting the goals outlined in TVAP.

With Phase 1 completed, initiation of Phase 2A began with the recent mid-term update to the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan land use changes to properties within Phase 2A in 2020. At that time, the recommended land use changes were done with the intent of allowing rezoning to occur as needed with re-development of properties in the Phase 2A area. Also adopted as part of TVAP in 2007 were both Design Guidelines to establish urban design character and a Transportation Connections Plan to establish connectivity along with Streetscape Guidelines.

TVAP Connections Plan. As noted on page 41 of TVAP, the intent of the Transportation Connections Plan was to establish a more fine-grained street grid and transform the areas large “superblocks” by adding street connections. As noted in TVAP, the intent of the plan is as follow:

“Create walkable streets in a fine grain grid pattern, providing for walking, biking and possible car free zones. Provide multimodal connections within the area to adjacent neighborhoods and to key nearby destinations and activity areas.”

To that end, a number of connections have been constructed as a part of Phase 1 implementation and build out, consistent with the Streetscape Guidelines. Those built out as part of Phase I are summarized in an excerpt from the connections plan shown in Figure 3

Land Use Plan

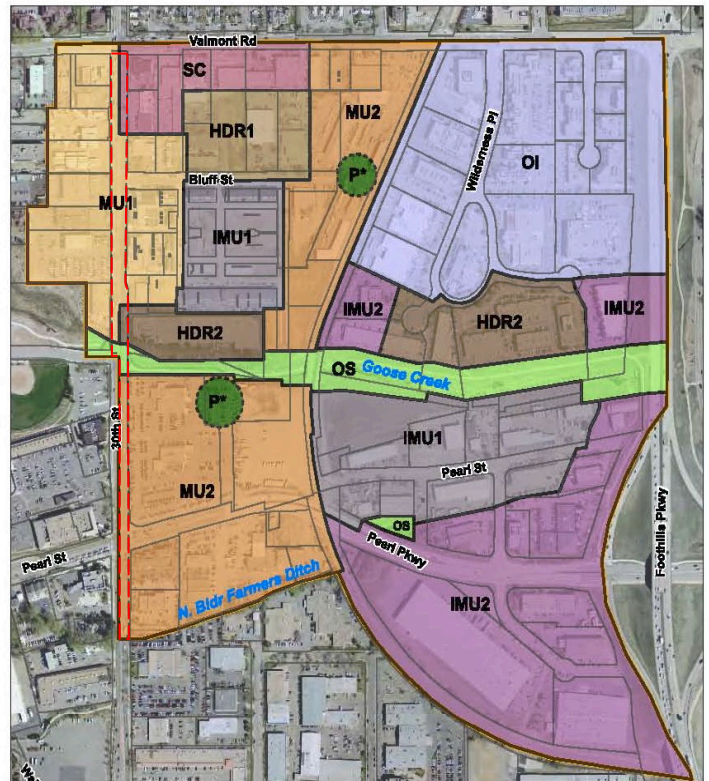


Figure 2: TVAP Land Use Plan

and include Junction Place from 32nd to Valmont and including two bridges: one at the Boulder Slough on the south and one at Goose Creek. New street extensions within S'PARK and 30th Pearl including Bluff Street on the north; 31st and Spruce Street on the south; along with alley way connections. With the exception of the construction of Junction Place, the new streets have been local streets, consistent with TVAP.

ANALYSIS

Recommended Change to the 30th Street Cross-Section Streetscape Guideline.

Staff recommends that the TVAP – Streetscape Guidelines for the cross section for 30th Street be amended to remove the on-street parking element of the section. In addition, staff recommends that the street trees shown in tree grates in a 15-foot sidewalk instead be planned within an eight-foot planting strip area with a detached 10 foot walk. Figure 4 on the following page, illustrates the existing streetscape guideline and Figure 5 illustrates the proposed 30th Street cross-section.

When TVAP was adopted in 2007, the plan recognized the need for additional engineering to study the feasibility of on-street parking along the 30th Street corridor. The purpose of the engineering study was to examine the overall feasibility, including impacts and safe operations of the multi-model street, of on-street parking, along with the exact alignment of the street related to existing building constraints, the location of parking near traffic signals and intersections and the feasibility of adding parking in front of smaller properties. The engineering study has not been completed and development in the area has continued without this study. With the recent TMP update staff does not recommend further study efforts for on-street parking occur and instead is recommending that the on-street parking element be removed.

The revised cross-section for 30th Street also proposes to remove the trees in grates which are an appropriate streetscape design element to support on-street parking in a downtown or parking district area, but not in the proposed cross section. The trees in grates are proposed to be replaced with an eight-foot-wide streetscape planting strip. This would result in a streetscape section along

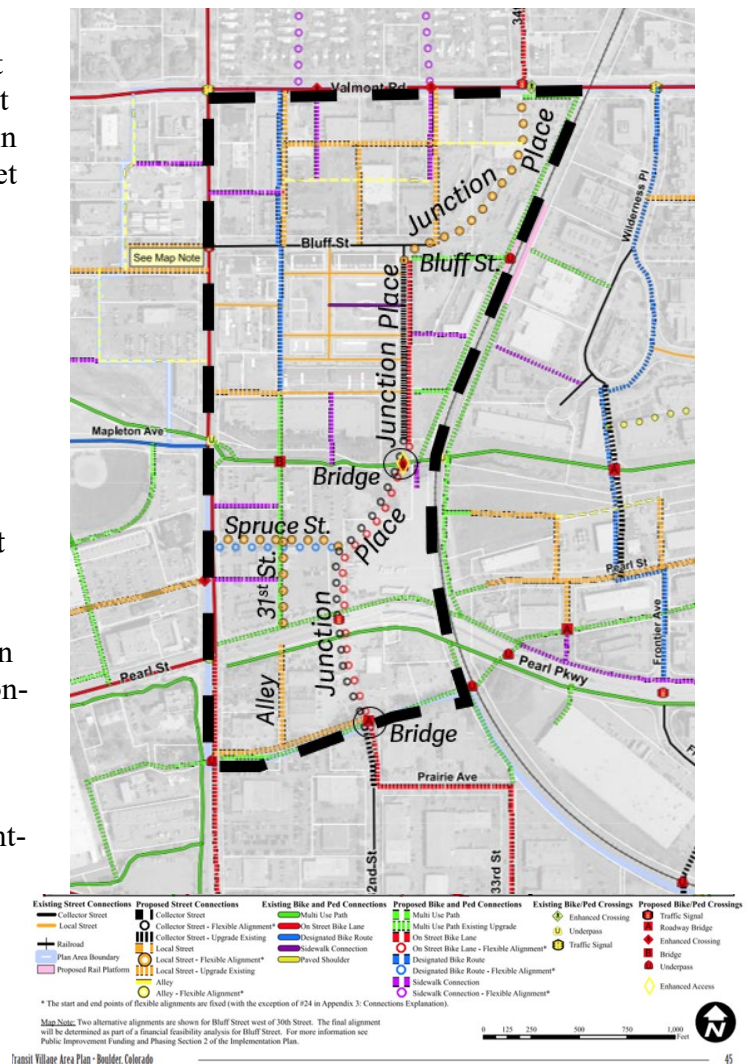


Figure 3:
Excerpt from TVAP Connections Plan identifying some of the streets implemented as part of Phase I of TVAP

30th Street consisting of a ten-foot-wide detached sidewalk separated from 30th Street with an eight-foot wide planting strip and a protected bike lane as part of the roadway.

The revised cross section applies to 30th Street from the Boulder Slough crossing to Valmont. It is not intended to apply along services commercial where existing conditions are intended to remain. In addition, staff recommends that the text that accompanies the existing cross-section at the bottom of page 35 of TVAP be deleted as it references on-street parking.

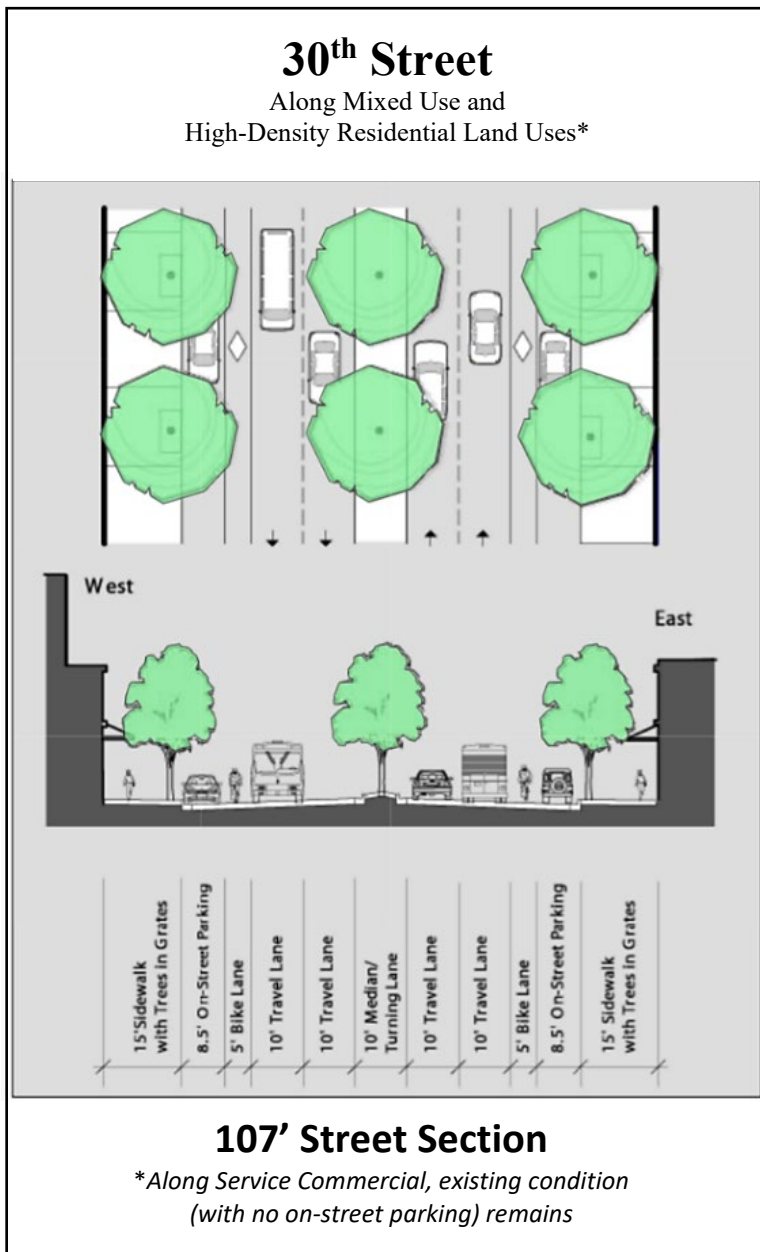


Figure 4 EXISTING
30th Street Cross-Section Guideline from TVAP

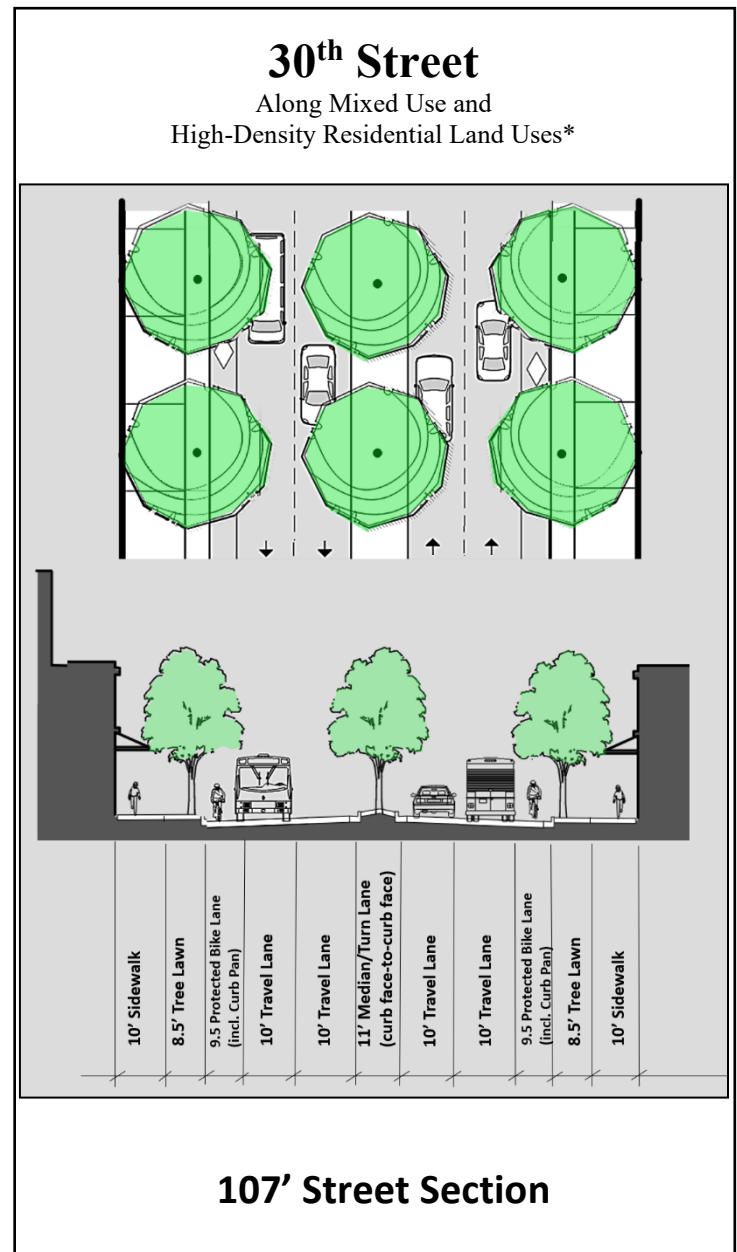


Figure 5: PROPOSED
30th Street Cross-Section Guideline for TVAP

This recommendation would implement the recommendations of the [Low-Stress Walk and Bike Network Plan](#) recently adopted as part of the City's Transportation Master Plan (TMP). The Low-Stress Walk and Bike Network Plan has identified the need for protected bike lanes on 30th Street. On street parking would impact the operations and comfort of the protected bike lane. Additionally, the existing available right-of-way on 30th Street may preclude the ability to include both street design elements in sections of 30th Street.

With redevelopment of the Reve property at 30th Street and Pearl Parkway, and the 30Pearl redevelopment to the north of Pearl Parkway along 30th Street, no on-street parking was provided on 30th Street. In those specific cases, on-street parking was challenged by the need for turning lanes, the location of intersections, the implementation of new streets and limited available right-of-way. Similarly, with the redevelopment of the Steelyards that pre-dated and influenced TVAP, no on-street parking was provided on 30th Street.

In addition, staff notes that in streetscape contexts adjacent to arterials without on-street parking, trees in grates are not necessary. Generally, trees in grates are provided to allow foot traffic from a parked vehicle to the front of a building. If on-street parking is not implemented, an eight-foot planting area is an optimal medium for growing trees to maturity. Therefore, staff is recommending that the trees be removed from grates in this arterial context and instead planted in the eight-foot-wide planting strips.

It is important to note the transit rich context of this area of 30th Street, potentially more so than most arterial streets in Boulder. Because of the build out of Phase I of TVAP, this section of 30th Street is one-block from the regional RTD facility, with a number of bus stops along the street as shown in Figure 6.

In addition, there is a significant bike and pedestrian connectivity in this area both existing and proposed as shown in the Low Street Bike and Walk Network Plan. The proposed changes to the street cross section support the implementation of this network plan.

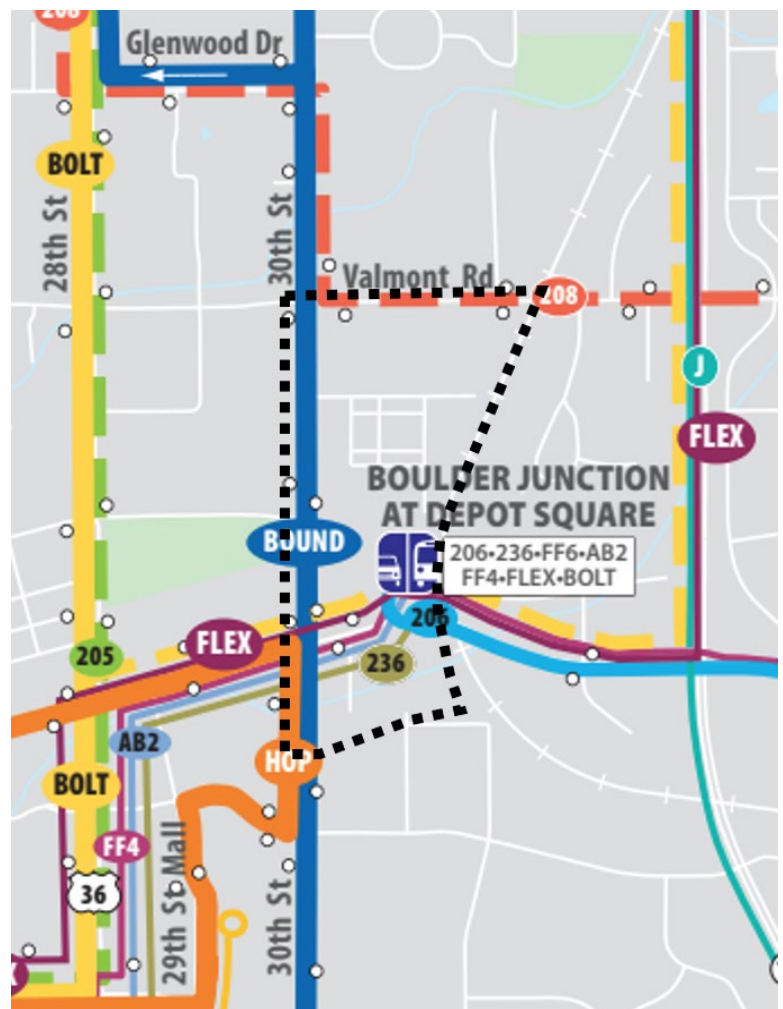


Figure 6: Bus Transit

During City Council's 2022 workplan discussion, a new "Core Arterial Network" plan was included as a workplan project. This section of 30th Street is shown for additional study in that plan. The current proposed street cross section will not preclude future changes to 30th Street that may be developed in the Core Arterial Network study. The overall right-of-way width is not changing in the proposed street cross section, and in fact this new section provides additional space for bicycle lanes.

TVAP Connections Amendment Process. As noted on page 42 of TVAP, amendments to the Connections Plan, depending on their nature, will be reviewed either administratively, by the Planning Board, or by the Planning Board and City Council. The proposed street cross section changes do not change connection plan lines, therefore the criteria in TVAP for connection amendments is not applicable. This change does impact the ROW plan created by the connection plans and therefore it is appropriate to complete a legislative amendment to TVAP, which requires approve by the Planning Board and the City Council.

The TVAP states that amendments to the Connections Plan can be processed in conjunction with a Site Review. This amendment is being processed concurrently with the site review for Fire Station 3 at 2751 30th Street. If the 30th Street cross section is not amended, then the Fire Station site review will be required to implement the current TVAP cross section.

CONCLUSION

The proposed sidewalk, bike lane, travel lanes and landscaping requirements create a cross section that achieves the goals for a business main street for this area of 30th Street while implementing new TMP goals. It would create the desired connections, would help create a pedestrian environment along the planned mixed-use neighborhood by incorporating a larger tree lawn that creates a buffer from moving vehicles, and would create additional protections for bikes from motor vehicles by incorporating a protected bike lane consistent with the newly adopted TMP goals of the city for this streetscape. Therefore, staff recommends that the cross-section for 30th Street be amended.

MATRIX OF OPTIONS

City Council may:

1. Approve the TVAP amendment for the 30th Street Cross-Section Streetscape Guideline as proposed in this staff memo.
2. Not act or vote against the TVAP amendment for the 30th Street Cross-Section Streetscape Guideline, leaving the current 30th Street Cross Section in place.
3. Propose additional or different amendments to the TVAP plan, which would then be sent to the Planning Board for approval.