



Boulder Town <townclerk@boulder.utah.gov>

Public Comment for April 3rd, 2025 Meeting

Matthew Cochran <matc787@gmail.com>

Wed, Apr 2, 2025 at 11:26 AM

To: town council@boulder.utah.gov

Official Public Comment for Town Council, April 3rd, 2025 Meeting

Town Council,

Introduction: The following is an account documenting the damages to Lower Boulder Road. I've included photos at the end. The intent here is to prevent this from happening again. At the end are some ideas on moving forward.

While understanding the intent and scope of the work, it is the real lack of communication to residents, lack of oversight or quality control while the work was happening and doing something beyond what was agreed upon that is the failure here. If it was not for the actions of residents in Lower Boulder the damage would have been much worse, which, given the current evidence, is both unacceptable and scary.

Issues concerning "drainage" and "edge" work:

1. Flying sand and debris created dust storms and the pavement is broken even more at the edges and the road itself is presently covered in sand in many places.
2. It was scraped much wider than necessary and edged so close to the fence lines (sometimes within 6 inches) that they are eroding and leaning over in places. Given water and erosion the fences are now at risk of falling over. The 90 degree cuts should have been done at a 45 degree angle to minimize undercutting from drainage water. It is careless work.
3. Many of the trees/bushes lower roots are exposed and/or cut off, endangering their health.
4. Deer herds move across many of these areas and now have a 3 foot higher jump in some cases to clear these fences. Inevitably this will create more cases of deer getting hung up in the fences. Also due to the wider road people are moving faster which will increase roadkill incidents.

Tree damage:

1. Trees were trimmed last year by Catmull and Tree City, under guidance of an actual arborist. No further action on the trees was needed or communicated.
2. Trees alongside Barsch's were butchered with limbs dropped and roots exposed. Three Silver Poplars (100 + year old trees) were cut down by Conrad's. The historic apple tree by Conrad's which neither encroached on the road nor endangered any powerline was butchered; same issue with the Lower Boulder Cottonwood on the west side. Constance Lynn explicitly asked the TC (via email) to protect these trees a week before and never received any communication back.
3. The tree cutters contracted by Garkane (via the county) are actually not trained arborists. Their practices endanger the health of the trees.

4. Many of these trees are crucial habitat for songbirds, raptors, owls and others and their damage endangers the ecology of the area as many of these birds do such things as pollinate and/or help reduce rodent population. The Trees also provide shade and have intrinsic value and are of great importance to the residents of Lower Boulder.

TC Lack of Accountability:

1. No communication, lack of response and reasonability.
2. Breaking agreements, breaking your word, saying one thing and doing another.
3. No oversight or quality control while the work was occurring.

What we'd like to see in the Future:

1. Apologies, Reparations (such as hiring an arborist to attend to the health of the damaged trees), taking Ownership?
2. Establishing clear communication, notification. Keeping your word.
3. Raising Standards and taking Responsibility
4. Oversight and quality control onsite for development projects which include a town official and a private resident.

Conclusion: The intended development of "improving" Lower Boulder Road has resulted in destroying much of the character of the the country lane. The General Plan prioritizes preserving and protecting the character and place. The secondary objective is economic opportunities. Road improving is generally a first step towards greater development so in this case you are not following the General Plan. I imagine if projects like this were done with much more care and attention and guided by actual residential concerns it could of been done in a way that also preserves and protects. Please consider this for the future.

Respectfully,

Matthew Cochran









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Matt

ravendreamtracking.org



Boulder Town <townclerk@boulder.utah.gov>

Fwd: public comment

constance lynn <constancelynn@gmail.com>
To: Boulder Town <townclerk@boulder.utah.gov>

Wed, Apr 2, 2025 at 9:20 PM

Hi Jessica,
Here is my public comment for April 3 Town Council Meeting. I will be commenting in person as well. Thank you.

Public comment Town Council April 3 2025
Regarding road work on Lower Boulder Road

Greetings Town Council:

Thank you for receiving my public comment regarding the road work on Lower Boulder Road.

On March 18 I emailed Josh to see if and when there was a town council vote to widen Lower Boulder Rd as it came as a bit of a surprise to leave home that day and find the work in process.

Josh replied and referred to the last meeting and how there wasn't much of a discussion. That "it definitely wasn't called "widening", I think "grading the shoulders". There was no vote, this is routine maintenance that didn't even take any funding."

I replied that in 17 years I'd never seen this kind of maintenance.

On March 20 I sent this email to Josh and John:

good morning all...

I completely agree with what Mary expressed in her email. Seeing trees plowed down and roots emerged as a result of the work seems beyond fixing potholes. The dust storm we experienced the other day was beyond anything I've experienced here in my 17 years on Lower Boulder.

As president of Tree City our group has advocated for the street trees time and time again with the water work, A-OK tree trimming and the fiber optics and to not be informed on the extent of this project didn't give us a chance to work with the crew.

**As crews move farther down the road I align with Mary by asking:
"please consider discussing the remainder of the work with the county road crew and ask that they focus only on the area directly adjacent to the road and keep**

destruction to a minimum."

There are three cottonwood trees lower down the road that are crucial habitat for raptors, eagles and owls...as well as a historic apple tree. To damage these trees will be a great loss to the community, human and more than human.

No response from John. Josh's response made it evident that now there are competing interests complicating the issue, which was beyond the scope of keeping things as "a quiet country lane" as residents desired in the November listening session.

March 25

The historic apple tree was butchered and 5-100 year old poplars were completely cut down.

March 26

Lower Boulder Residents rallied to prevent the complete removal of a cottonwood who already had 3 major limbs removed and was only still standing because Garkane left to get a bigger chainsaw. John showed up and tried to assure people that the work was done.

March 28

John thanks everyone for our civic involvement in a pegboard.

Civic involvement for this project began with a petition last summer from Donna Owen, to attend to some potholes and visibility issues at the corner of LBR and the Burr Trail. This led to a listening session with John Veranth on November 14. Civic involvement continued with emails from Lower Boulder residents to John Veranth at the beginning of the road work on March 18.

By the time people are putting themselves between a tree and a chainsaw at the last tree on the road this is activism and a sign that the concerns of residents weren't taken seriously by John or the Town Council.

Telling us there was miscommunication with the county and not doing anything to clear up the communication while not responding to resident's pleas for help has left a wake of destruction, not only of dead and butchered trees but of public trust.

Despite listening sessions and Voices of Boulder and visioning groups over the years...what feels good and inspiring while sitting in a room together isn't translating into practice as the current road work feels like setting us up for wanton development.

Please consider meeting with Lower Boulder Road residents to discuss possible reparations.

Closing: A Eulogy

This road...this road of trees I've walked for 17 years...the trees I've known...the trees who nestled these birds, the trees where the hawk perched, the eagle hunted, the owl sat silently...these trees ...where the crickets sing in summer nights, the milkweed patch providing a resting place and food for monarchs in migration...these trees gone, gone, gone,...this road, these trees...witnessing buds turn to flowers, turn to fruits...apples and plums and elderberries...the way Spirit would whisper through these branches under a starry night sky...gone, gone, gone...well actually not just gone...trees and branches including 5-100 year old poplars discarded in a landfill....a wasteland left in the wake of all this destruction...I pray for the spirits of the trees who once carried the spirit of this land and what it has meant to live in a place where people, trees and all beings lived in harmony....

**Thank you,
Constance Lynn**

[Quoted text hidden]



Boulder Town <townclerk@boulder.utah.gov>

Public Comment for TC regarding Lower Boulder Roadwork

Mary McIntyre <marymcintyre101@gmail.com>
To: townclerk@boulder.utah.gov

Thu, Apr 3, 2025 at 10:58 AM

Hello Town Council,

I'd like to comment on the roadwork and tree cutting that occurred in Lower Boulder last week. Town residents were informed by John Veranth via email on March 17th that "the county would be doing grading of the sand drifts and drainage ditches along Lower boulder road."

My biggest issue, aside from the destruction caused, is that after the work began, the Town Council was completely unresponsive to concerns and complaints submitted by numerous Lower Boulder residents. I emailed John and Josh on Wednesday, March 19th, informing them that the work being done went far beyond what had been described. The machines ripped up vegetated areas along with mature bushes and trees. This was happening not just along the existing edge of the roadway, it was extending the road up to 5 feet on each side in many places.

I asked John and Josh to discuss the remainder of the work with the county road crew and request that they focus only on the area directly adjacent to the road and keep destruction to a minimum.

This did not happen, and the work continued. As others have stated, concerns about potential harm to the mature trees on the south end of the road were brought to the council's attention before the work reached them and nothing was done to stop the destruction. My question is: what is the appropriate communication channel in this case? What more could we have done? Calls were put in, emails sent, and nothing happened until the work crew reached the very last tree, which required a community vigil to protect. The Town Council, having requested this work, should have been responsive and available to oversee what was happening.

Establishing trees in the desert is difficult, as we all know, and the loss of these healthy, mature, well-established individuals is hard to estimate. These trees are literally irreplaceable. You cannot replace them with any amount of money. You can plant new trees and wait 100 years, but the effort it will take to water and establish them is significant. What's really sad is that it was all unnecessary: these trees were professionally trimmed last year, at significant cost to the town. Mature trees break the wind, hold the soil in place, and create habitat. The removal of grasses and existing ground cover have made the entire length of the road more prone to erosion, blowing sand (which we experienced last week), and russian thistle, tumbleweed, and other invasive plants that thrive in disturbed areas thus increasing fire risk unless mowed multiple times a season.

Secondly, I understand the need for water drainage and that roadways require maintenance, but I'll list some of the problems I've seen with the work done last week. When I was finally able to discuss the road work with John, he informed me that drainage ditches were necessary because chip-sealed roads fall apart more quickly if water sits along the edges. I have never experienced this being an issue on Lower Boulder Road in the past. However, now that the "maintenance" has been completed, water is currently running down the side of the road where the work crew cut the ditches deeper than the existing irrigation ditches. Additionally, many of the ditches they dug do not have an outlet, so water will collect and seep under the

road, creating more problems that the town will have to pay to fix. Lastly, when the county attempted to scrape off the sand they'd spread all over the road, the grader chewed up the asphalt and will now require more work to resolve. It seems like sloppy work that left the town and residents with a mess to clean up.

Many of us choose to live here because it is wild and beautiful. We loved this road, these trees, the patches of milkweed and blanketflower on our drive home. No one wants to take responsibility for the devastation caused by the road work last week. But someone needs to. Things need to be done differently in the future. This reckless work is going to cost the town more in the long run, and it could've so easily been prevented.

Thank you,
Mary McIntyre

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Photographer || Journalist



Boulder Town <townclerk@boulder.utah.gov>

Boulder Public Toilets

Keith Watts <keith@earth-tours.com>

Tue, Apr 1, 2025 at 11:45 AM

To: "townclerk@boulder.utah.gov" <townclerk@boulder.utah.gov>

Cc: Gladys LeFevre <gldl36@yahoo.com>, Ray Gardner <raymond.gardner@gmail.com>, "veranth@xmission.com" <veranth@xmission.com>, "suffusive@gmail.com" <suffusive@gmail.com>, "jamieskidmore@utah.gov" <jamieskidmore@utah.gov>, "j.corry.johnson@gmail.com" <j.corry.johnson@gmail.com>

To Boulder Town Council,

Thanks for your work and particularly for taking up the issue of the excessive usage of Boulder Town Park's restroom by tourists. I listened to your discussions from the March 6, 2025 meeting and would like to make these additional comments/suggestions.

The main concern voiced about having UDOT move the public restroom signs to direct people to the Anasazi State Park (ASP) was that their bathrooms are not accessible 24-hours a day. Although the majority of people needing to use their restrooms would be accommodated during business hours, a few might seek relief after hours. A simple solution would be to post a sign stating "After-hours Public Toilets Available in Boulder Town Park, 2 blocks to Southeast" (for example see attachments). Jamie Skidmore, ASP Manager, said she would be willing to have such a sign posted near the park entrance.

Another comment was that we should welcome tourists to our town. I think that the bathroom experience at the Anasazi State Park will be better than using the limited facilities at the Boulder Town Park. Being greeted by the excellent staff at the Anasazi State Park would be a very positive experience for tourists visiting our town (it was for us back in 1993)! Having additional people visit ASP is good for their standing in the Utah State Parks system. Having multiple toilets available allows ASP to accommodate more people (even bus tours) without uncomfortable delays. We could still welcome tourists to enjoy the Boulder Town Park to picnic, walk our nature trails and perhaps meet our interesting townsfolk, but not just to use our toilets and leave.

The Boulder Town Park septic system was not designed to handle the amount of solid waste being deposited by the steady stream of tourists using its bathroom facilities during the peak season. Solid waste in residential septic systems is limited by the size of the household and is diluted with substantial amounts of wash water. In addition to supplying toilet paper and requiring Corry Johnson to handle additional unpleasant maintenance duties, the expense of getting the Boulder Town Park septic pumped would be substantial (~\$500 each time). Eventually, the cost of replacing the septic system would cost our town thousands of dollars (its lifespan is proportional to usage). Jamie said that she is able to monitor when the ASP septic tank needs to be pumped out (when sewer gases begin to bubble up) and that this expense is part of their operating budget.

Asking UDOT to move the blue restroom signs onto the Anasazi State Park signs would be a very simple solution – a win/win for Boulder Town and the Anasazi State Park.

Happy trails,

Keith Watts

307-733-4261 = cell phone, primary contact

435-335-7545 = if cell doesn't work, call my Utah home number between mid September-May

2 attachments



Boulder Public Toilets.docx

21K



Boulder Toilet Sign.pptx

53K