

***City Council
Economic Vitality Committee
Meeting Agenda***
**Thursday, August 14, 2025
City Hall
749 Main Street
3:00 P.M.**

Members of the public are welcome to attend and give comments remotely; however, the in-person meeting may continue even if technology issues prevent remote participation.

- You can call in to **+1 346 248 7799 or 833 548 0282 (toll free)**
Webinar ID **#838 1396 0621**
- You can log in via your computer. Please visit the City's website here to link to the meeting: www.louisvilleco.gov/council.

The Board will accommodate public comments during the meeting. Anyone may also email comments to the Board prior to the meeting at VZarate@LouisvilleCO.gov.

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Approval of Agenda
4. Approval of July 24, 2025 Meeting Minutes
5. Public Comments on Items Not on the Agenda
6. Business Matters
 - a. Reschedule September 11 Meeting
 - b. Economic Vitality Day
 - c. Staff Updates
 - d. Development Updates

Persons planning to attend the meeting who need sign language interpretation, translation services, assisted listening systems, Braille, taped material, or special transportation, should contact the City Clerk's Office at 303 335-4536 or MeredythM@LouisvilleCO.gov. A forty-eight-hour notice is requested.

Si requiere una copia en español de esta publicación o necesita un intérprete durante la reunión, por favor llame a la Ciudad al 303.335.4536 o 303.335.4574.

7. Committee Member Comments
8. Potential Future Agenda Items
 - a. Energy Code Update
 - b. Main Street Designation
 - c. Sundance Update
 - d. Business Satisfaction Survey Results
9. Adjourn

City Council Economic Vitality Committee

Minutes

**July 24, 2025
Regular Meeting
3:00 PM**

Call to Order – Mayor Leh called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

Roll Call was taken and the following members were present:

Committee Members: ***Mayor Chris Leh - Chair***
Councilmember Deb Fahey
Councilmember Judi Kern

Staff Present: ***Diana Langley, City Manager***
Rob Zuccaro, Community Development Director
Vanessa Zarate, Economic Vitality Manager
Austin Brown, Economic Vitality Specialist

Others Present: ***Three members of the public***

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor Leh called for changes to the agenda and hearing none asked for a motion.

Motion: Councilmember Fahey moved to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by Mayor Leh. **Vote:** All in favor.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mayor Leh called for changes to the June 12, 2025 meeting minutes and hearing none asked for a motion. **Motion:** Councilmember Fahey moved to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Mayor Leh. **Vote:** All in favor.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

None.

CITY-SPONSORED EVENTS POLICY DISCUSSION

Manager Zarate gave an overview of a draft policy for city-sponsored events included in the packet. She stated that there is no current policy in place that outlines how events may be supported by the City of Louisville.

Councilmember Fahey asked whether the proposed policy would apply to the Monarch graduation parade, noting that the parade is not always primarily in Louisville. Manager

City of Louisville

City Council 749 Main Street Louisville CO 80027
303.666.6565 (phone) www.LouisvilleCO.gov

Zarate responded that, under the proposed criteria, any event that is not primarily in Louisville would not be eligible for City support or sponsorship.

Councilmember Fahey also asked about neighborhood block parties and whether those events would be eligible for support under this policy. Manager Zarate responded that those types of events are often not open to the public. City Manager Langley added that the Louisville now has a block party trailer that will be available for reservations. She concluded that there may be a nominal fee required. Councilmember Fahey clarified that these events would not be eligible for getting that fee waived under the proposed policy. City Manager Langley confirmed that the proposed policy would not include those types of events.

Councilmember Kern asked whether events hosted by the City would follow this policy. Manager Zarate responded that City events would go through the normal budget process. Councilmember Kern asked the reason drafting the policy. Manager Zarate responded that while legacy events such as Street Faire and Taste of Louisville have standalone contracts, there is currently no policy in place to engage with or assist other events.

Mayor Leh asked for clarification regarding the liquor exclusion. Manager Zarate clarified that the proposed policy prevents the purchase of liquor with funds provided by the City. Mayor Leh asked if that includes marijuana or psychedelics. Manager Zarate responded no, but that staff could add that into the policy.

Mayor Leh asked whether an applicant is forced to choose one of the three options or whether they could choose multiple forms of assistance. Manager Zarate responded that applicants may select any or all of the three options.

Mayor Leh asked whether the applicant can apply for assistance prior to obtaining their permit. Manager Zarate confirmed that the application can be submitted prior to permit approval, but noted that no assistance will be provided until all required permits are obtained.

Mayor Leh asked when the proposed policy might go into effect. Manager Zarate responded that she anticipated that the policy would be effective next year when the budget goes into effect. Hearing that, Mayor Leh recommended that the application window open prior to January 1. Manager Zarate confirmed that date is part of the feedback that she hopes to gather today.

Councilmember Kern asked who defines community benefit and asked if that item could be more clear. She also questioned whether there should be any financial assistance offered, noting that advertising and street closures may be adequate assistance. She noted that there may be equity concerns around financial assistance, and wondered if those events receiving money would require a separate contract (such as Pints in the Park).

Public comment from Gillian Millar: Gillian Millar, Executive Director of the Louisville Chamber, spoke on behalf of several Chamber members that would likely be applying for assistance for their events. She agreed that she would like to see more clarification around the language prohibiting funds from being used for the purchase of liquor. She stated that she would like to see multiple application windows throughout the year rather than just one at the beginning of the year. She concluded that she would appreciate some clarification on whether this policy would be applicable only to single-day events or whether it would include multi-day/long-term events.

Public comment from Mike Kranzdorf: Mr. Kranzdorf suggested that some of the language regarding for-profit events without benefit be revised to fundraising events. He agreed with Ms. Millar's comment that there should be more than one application window and also suggested that staff be able to review and approve these applications administratively rather than requiring them to go to Council for approval.

Mayor Leh asked for Committee feedback about when the application window should open. Councilmember Kern asked whether the applications do need to go to Council for approval. City Manager Langley responded that administrative approval would prevent the opportunity for a transparent public process, and may create the impression that the could be some staff favoritism at play.

Manager Zarate suggested that staff would be comfortable with two application windows per year for the first year. She stated that number could increase to three times per year based on demand.

Councilmember Fahey agreed that twice per year is a good place to start. She questioned whether the financial assistance component could be removed for the first year, with the possibility of adding financial assistance in the future if there are requests for it. Manager Zarate responded that, in her experience, there are almost always requests for financial assistance for programs like this.

Mayor Leh suggested that the policy be effective for events starting in January 2026. Manager Zarate responded that the budget will be approved in mid-November which will make it a quick turnaround to close the application window by January 1.

Councilmember Kern asked whether events that occurred during the window could be eligible for participation. Manager Zarate responded that best practice is generally to require approval before the event takes place and suggested that the two application windows be in Q1 2026 (for Q2 and Q3 events) and Q3 2026 (for Q4 and Q1 events).

Mayor Leh reiterated that he would like to include events beginning January 1 2026. Manager Zarate responded that if the program were to start January 1 2026, staff would recommend that Q1 and Q2 applications be due October 1 with City Council approval scheduled for November 4. Q3 and Q4 applications would follow a similar timeline with applications due around May.

Mayor Leh asked for Council feedback around how long it might take for Council to review the applications. Mayor Leh stated that he agrees that it likely makes more sense for Council to approve applications for monetary assistance, providing an opportunity for public comment and transparency.

Manager Zarate responded that staff would prefer Council to review the applications and make a ruling within 30 days from the application close date. Manager Zarate confirmed that staff will provide an initial review of the eligibility criteria and include a summary of the application and any relevant details.

Councilmember Fahey agreed that a month makes sense. She asked if Council will receive every application, even if the total financial ask exceeds the budgeted amount. Manager Zarate confirmed that staff would provide all of the submitted applications that meet eligibility criteria and Council will make the final decision.

Councilmember Kern asked whether staff will be able to cross-reference requested dates against existing events that have already been approved. Manager Zarate confirmed that staff will do their best and that any conflicts (such as two events both requesting Steinbaugh Pavilion) will be identified.

Councilmember Fahey asked if staff had information around the number of applications that and the average award amount that other communities with similar programs. Manager Zarate responded that she does not yet have that information but that she is working on gathering it. Councilmember Fahey commented that it would be helpful to have that information prior to the Council discussion.

Councilmember Kern and Mayor Leh both wondered whether the financial assistance should be limited to a certain amount, such as \$1,000. Mayor Leh suggested that the EVC omit a cap from their recommendation to Council and allow Council to discuss that item.

Mayor Leh asked if there was any additional information that staff needs. Manager Zarate confirmed that she received feedback on the application process, the eligibility criteria, and the remaining questions.

Mayor Leh suggested asking Council if what the program offers is what we should be offering. Councilmember Kern asked how much a permit for an event would cost. Director Zuccaro responded that a block party permit includes a \$538 application fee plus a deposit. Councilmember Kern wondered if the financial assistance should be packaged as a reimbursement of the application or permit fee. Director Zuccaro clarified that fees will vary based on the type of event.

Mayor Leh asked whether staff's intention was to include the fee waivers as part of the \$10,000 of proposed monetary support. Manager Zarate responded that although that is

not the current proposal, but recommended that Council include that in their policy discussion.

BUSINESS BEAT UPDATE

Manager Zarate gave an overview of the July Business Beat meeting and asked for Committee feedback. She noted that the brokers and commercial property owners requested that a similar meeting be held for that same group every year.

Councilmember Kern noted that there were several issues that were brought up during the meeting, and hoped that there could be a way to engage around those issues in future meetings.

Councilmember Fahey and Councilmember Kern both agreed that the EVC needs to be proactive and take action on some of the items brought to their attention in order to encourage the business community to continue attending these events.

Mayor Leh noted that both affordable housing and the South Street Underpass were big items of discussion. He noted that both items are in the process of being addressed through the Comp Plan and a planned meeting with the DeLo plaza tenants, respectively.

STAFF UPDATES

Manager Zarate gave an overview on staff updates and asked for questions.

DEVELOPMENT UPDATES

Manager Zarate gave an overview on the development updates and asked for questions.

COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS

Chamber Executive Director Gillian Millar gave an update on several Chamber items and events, including an AmEx small business grant for brick and mortar businesses, Pints in the Park, the Feel Good Festival, and the Chamber golf tournament on September 25.

ADJOURN

Members adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

Mayor Chris Leh

Austin Brown, Economic Vitality Specialist

SUBJECT: SEPTEMBER 2025 MEETING DATE

DATE: AUGUAT 14, 2025

PRESENTED BY: VANESSA ZARATE, CECD, ECONOMIC VITALITY MANAGER

SUMMARY:

The Economic Vitality Manager will be out of the office at the International Economic Development Annual Conference during the regularly scheduled meeting date.

Staff is proposing we move the September 2025 EVC meeting date to September 25, 2025.

SUBJECT: ECONOMIC VITALITY DAY

DATE: AUGUST 14, 2025

PRESENTED BY: VANESSA ZARATE, CECD, ECONOMIC VITALITY MANAGER

SUMMARY:

Economic Vitality staff has tentatively scheduled this year's Economic Vitality Day for Monday, November 10th. Partners have been invited from the Louisville Chamber, Downtown Business Association, Louisville City Council, Louisville Revitalization Commission, Small Business Development Center, Workforce Boulder and the Boulder Economic Council.

Economic Vitality Day is intended to be a day for all economic development partners in Louisville to collaborate and partner with events, policies and priorities for the coming year. In addition to exercises and collaborative sessions, we will produce a master events calendar for 2026 to help encourage communities and partners to coordinate and plan with similar events in mind.

Two of the sessions this year will be panels. One being a real estate and market update similar to last year, and the second with members of the U.S. 36 Collaborative to share updates on how we collaborate on attraction and retention. In addition, we will do priority work for 2026 and share results of the Business Satisfaction Survey.

Economic Vitality staff is interested in hearing thoughts and priorities from EVC for Economic Vitality Day.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no additional fiscal impact to hosting Economic Vitality Day

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends EVC review and provide feedback.

ATTACHMENT(S):

SUBJECT: STAFF UPDATES

DATE: AUGUST 14, 2025

**PRESENTED BY: VANESSA ZARATE, CECD, ECONOMIC VITALITY MANAGER
AUSTIN BROWN, ECONOMIC VITALITY SPECIALIST**

SUMMARY:

In the following, staff provides updates on recent activity related to economic vitality functions.

Downtown Colorado Inc Metro Mobile Tour

Louisville is one of the highlighted communities on this year's Metro Mobile Tour. Participants will tour Superior, Louisville, Lafayette and Erie where economic development staff will highlight projects and investments being made in downtowns and urban renewal areas. If you are interested in attending, please let Vanessa know.

Small Business Development Center

The City of Louisville has a partnership agreement with the Small Business Development Center to provide one-on-one counseling, webinars, training events and knowledge series to Louisville businesses. Their main location is located at the City of Boulder offices but they bring classes into the Louisville community and participate with us in events and things such as Economic Vitality Day.

U.S 36 Collaborative Update

The U.S 36 Collaborative is in the middle of their second campaign with the Colorado Bioscience Association, a national campaign to recruit bioscience companies to the state of Colorado. The collaborative is exploring options for similar campaigns with other industry partners.

International Economic Development Annual Conference

IEDC is the international professional development organization for economic developers. Their annual conference will be held in Detroit this year with economic developers from almost all fifty states, Canada and other international countries in attendance. Economic Vitality staff will be in attendance to attend sessions, tours and participate in advisory council meetings.

Enterprise Zone Application

The Economic Vitality Team, in partnership with other economic development agencies in the North Metro area, has submitted their Enterprise Zone application to the State's Office of Economic Development and International Trade. The state will review the application with the Economic Development Commission making a final approval decision in October, for the zone to go into effect January 1, 2026.

SUBJECT: DEVELOPMENT UPDATES

DATE: AUGUST 14, 2025

PRESENTED BY: VANESSA ZARATE, CECD, ECONOMIC VITALITY MANAGER

SUMMARY: UPDATE

In the following, Staff provides updates on recent activity related to construction and development. These updates are for the most frequently asked about sites and not for every site in a review process or under construction. All updates and timeframes are subject to change.

Site	Update
800-804 Main Street (former Wildwood Guitars)	The building is under contract and they have submitted plans to the City for reuse of the building.
809 Main Street (old Waterloo)	Project is continuing construction for the build-out of the restaurant space. There has been interest in the site, with multiple tours, but no LOI or leases signed to date.
816 Main Street (former Empire)	Staff is working with ownership and interested parties towards a sale. Site has been relisted on line for sale.
833 Main Street (former Chase)	Staff is working with ownership to assist with reinvestment on site. Staff is exploring an additional lease with the property owner for public parking on site.
1301 Courtesy Road (Delo Boom)	Delo Boom is working through City processes to construct 140 units of housing. The project will consist of studios through three-bedrooms and 13.5% affordable units.
950 Spruce Street	Construction has completed with the retail and office spaces currently being marketed for rent.
947 Pine Street (former gas station)	Birdie Bar, an eatertainment use with a bar/restaurant and simulated (virtual) golf games is under construction with a planned summer/fall opening.
1303 Empire Road (Ironton)	Ironton has approved plans for a new distillery and event center.

SUBJECT: DEVELOPMENT UPDATES**DATE: AUGUST 14, 2025****PAGE 2 OF 2**

540 County Road (Louisville Grain Elevator)	The Grain Elevator has new owners that have engaged the City to turn the building into an activated space. Their TIF review has been started with Pioneer Development Company.
1171 W Dillon Road (former Lowe's)	The New King Soopers Marketplace plans were approved by City Council and they continue working through the process. They are planning to start construction back half of 2025, with an opening in early 2026.
1164 W Dillon Road (Cinebarre)	University of Colorado has purchased the site and is currently working on public engagement for their plans for the site.
550 McCaslin Boulevard (former Sam's Club)	Relish has opened to the public!
575 McCaslin Boulevard (former Carrabba's)	Staff is working with the broker representation to market and attract a new user to the building. No lease signed to date.

If you would like to add a site to these updates, please let me know.

ATTACHMENT(S):

None.

LATEST HEADLINES

Community Food Share might see more visitors, less food variety from SNAP cuts



Volunteer Kaylie Minn selects produce for clients at the Community Food Share Feeding Families Pantry in Louisville on Wednesday. (Matthew Jonas/Staff Photographer)



By **DANA CAHEY** | dcadey@prairiemountainmedia.com | Longmont Times-Call

PUBLISHED: July 9, 2025 at 5:49 PM MDT

Louisville nonprofit Community Food Share expects more Boulder County and Broomfield County residents to turn to the food bank for meals as funding cuts target food stamps.

In a virtual town hall hosted by [Community Food Share](#) on Wednesday, the nonprofit discussed some of the challenges it anticipates in the wake of the spending cuts bill passed by the U.S. Congress last week.

The bill includes [\\$1.2 trillion in cuts](#) to Medicaid and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. SNAP offers monthly benefits to low-income families to help them purchase food.

Addressing over 50 meeting participants, Food Share CEO Kim Da Silva acknowledged that there has been a lot of curiosity about how the new bill will impact the local community. Community Food Share serves Boulder and Broomfield counties.

Data provided by Feeding Colorado, a coalition of five Colorado food banks including Community Food Share, shows that SNAP currently supports 615,000 Colorado residents. This includes 19,358 people in Boulder County and 3,631 people in Broomfield County.

According to Feeding Colorado, 298,000 Colorado families will lose some or all of their SNAP benefits because of the budget reconciliation bill.

[Read More](#)



Volunteer Louise Sternberg selects produce for clients of the Feeding Families Pantry at Community Food Share on Wednesday. (Matthew Jonas/Staff Photographer)

Da Silva said this is coming at a time when food banks and pantries are already dealing with an increased need for their services.

“We were looking at becoming stretched beyond our resources before we had a bill come along that is going to make it much harder for all of us to do our work,” Da Silva said.

Most of Community Food Share’s food is distributed by its local nonprofit partners such as Longmont’s OUR Center, Lafayette’s Sister Carmen Community Center, Broomfield FISH and Meals on Wheels Boulder. The nonprofit has onsite and mobile pantries, as well. In 2024, Community Food Share distributed around 13 million pounds of food.

Community Food Share also buys food to make up for what isn’t being donated. Previously, the nonprofit has relied on state grants for food reimbursement.

“Those grants are not available at the same levels that they’ve been in the past,” Da Silva said.

Because of that, the nonprofit will have roughly \$1.5 million this year to

This means that the variety of food the nonprofit purchases going forward likely won't be as high as it once was. For example, Da Silva said, Community Food Share might buy fewer pineapples and more produce that is local, easy to attain and lasts longer.

"In the past, we had enough funding to be able to get a wide variety of items," Da Silva said. "Now, we're really focusing in on, 'What do our partners need?'"



A basket filled with produce selected by volunteer Kaylie Minn for clients of the Feeding Families Pantry is seen at the Community Food Share in Louisville on Wednesday. (Matthew Jonas/Staff Photographer)

Da Silva also pointed to the high cost of living in Colorado as a reason why people experience food insecurity.

"Many people cannot afford to live here and have all the money they need for all their basic needs," she said. "That's only going to elevate in these next couple of years."

Kaleigh Wagner, director of philanthropy for Community Food Share, said people can support the nonprofit's ongoing work by donating or volunteering.

"It might look and feel different, but our doors will always remain open to

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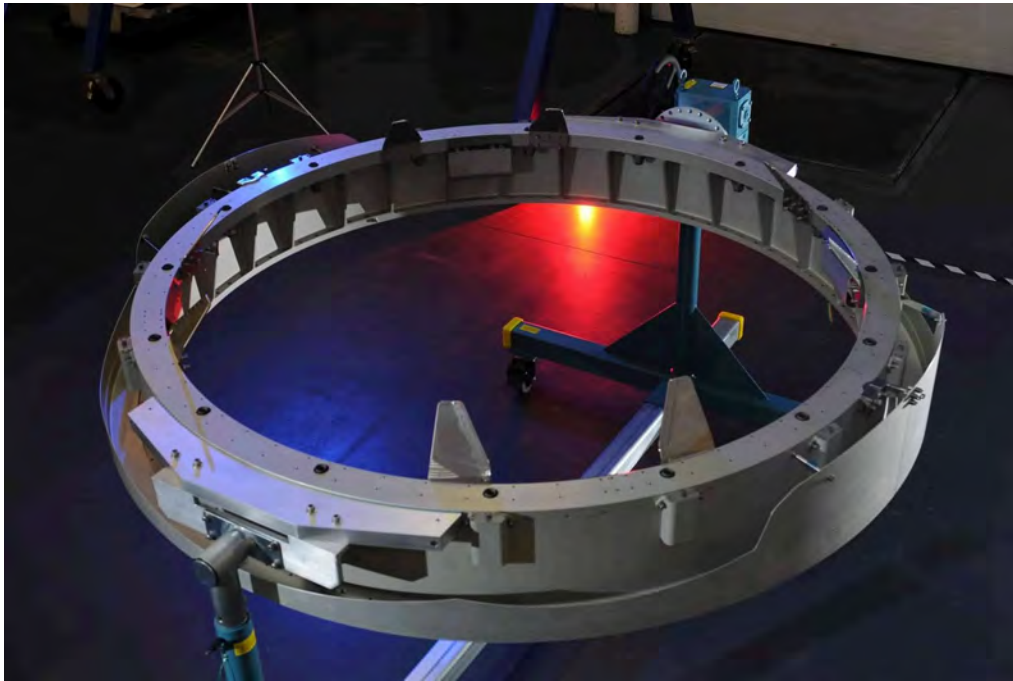
On the Job

News Tip



JULY 16, 2025 | 2:16:18 PM

Sierra Space, Mitsubishi to build spacecraft parts for International Space Station



*Passive common berthing mechanism components for the International Space Station.
Courtesy Sierra Space.*

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CALENDAR

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By BizWest Staff

LOUISVILLE — Sierra Space Corp. has won a contract from Mitsubishi Heavy Industries Ltd. to build components for spacecraft docking on the International Space Station.

“The components will ultimately be used by the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency for space station missions to the ISS,” SSC said in a news release.

Financial terms of the contract were not disclosed.

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Reservoir of Opportunity: How Chimney Hollow Supports Colorado’s Housing Future

By Cameron A. Grant with Lyons Gaddis — Chimney Hollow Reservoir, nestled in the Larimer County foothills, has been in the works for decades. It is part of the Colorado River Project, a strategy to store water in wet years and dole it out when the skies stop cooperating. The project adds 90,000 acre feet of storage. [Read more!](#)

“By working with Mitsubishi Heavy Industries to support JAXA’s future missions to the ISS, we’re underscoring our commitment to scientific advancement and the growth of the low-Earth orbit economy,” Sierra Space chief astronaut Tom Marshburn said in the release. “This contract reinforces Sierra Space’s reputation for delivering mission-critical, flight-proven systems that our partners can rely on. We’re committed to a diverse and reliable Space Tech product portfolio that helps shape the future of space infrastructure.”

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TECHNOLOGY | JULY 17, 2025 | 7:20:35 AM

Stratom to develop refueling system for Navy



By BizWest Staff

LOUISVILLE — Stratom Inc., a developer of autonomous systems for defense and commercial applications, has inked a Phase I Small Business Innovation Research contract to develop an autonomous refueling system for uncrewed U.S. Navy vessels.

“Autonomous refueling is truly a force multiplier — and the next step toward a fully autonomous maritime force,” Stratom CEO Mark Gordon said in a prepared statement. “With

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(Stratom’s Deployable Onboard Refueling Interface), we’re engineering a practical, scalable way for uncrewed vessels to stay on mission longer, without relying on vulnerable crewed interventions.”

Financial terms of the contract were not disclosed.

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Centerra: inspired by a love of Loveland

In Northern Colorado, most people know Centerra as a place to shop, grab a bite or go to a movie. It’s also a favorite location for corporate offices. And it has gained recognition as one of the region’s top-selling new-home communities. What most people don’t know is why Centerra has become all these things. [Click to read more.](#)

“Building upon existing naval refueling infrastructure while introducing targeted automation, Stratom’s DORI system integrates a hose retrieval system, perception sensors, an automated reel mechanism and a quick-release coupling for emergency disconnects,” the company said in a news release.

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RETAIL | JULY 23, 2025 | 4:05:02 PM

Electric-vehicle brand Rivian coming to Colorado Tech Center



EV maker Rivian already has Colorado service centers Denver (shown) and Colorado Springs. Courtesy Rivian Automotive.

By Beth Potter

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LOUISVILLE — The electric sports utility vehicle and truck maker Rivian Automotive Inc. (Nasdaq: RIVN) plans to open a new 45,000-square-foot service and demonstration center in 2026 in the Louisville’s Colorado Technogy Center business park.

Potential customers will be able to drive a Rivian sport utility vehicle and others at the new spot, Fallon Gates, manager of Rivian corporate communications, said in a press statement. He did not immediately provide the address of the building.

Rivian service centers also service some vehicles, Gates said. Most Rivian owners who need support get service by mobile service vehicles that come to their homes, he said.

SPONSORED CONTENT

Bought a Building with Solar? What Property Owners Need to Know

By Julia Park with Namaste Solar. So, you’ve purchased a commercial property with solar. Now what? Is the system freshly commissioned and producing clean energy—or has it become a rooftop bird sanctuary since its installation back in 2008? Click to read more.

Rivian has existing Colorado service centers in Colorado Springs and Denver.

The company produced 49,476 vehicles and delivered 51,579 vehicles in 2024. It does not release information about where vehicles were sold, Gates said. The company plans to deliver 40,000 to 46,000 vehicles in 2025.

Company charging sites are in seven spots in Colorado and can charge up to 150 miles of range in 20 minutes for two Rivian vehicles. Charging stations are in Broomfield; Del Norte; Durango; Flagler; Grand Junction, Montrose; and Salida.

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The Colorado Small Business Development Center serving Boulder County will hold its 2025 Contract Opportunities...

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Colorado scores high for business climate, boosting housing market stability

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Colorado continues to stand out on the national stage as a hub for business development.



By **JAY KALINSKI** | atHome Colorado, Guest Contributor

UPDATED: July 25, 2025 at 12:27 PM MDT

Colorado continues to stand out on the national stage as a hub for business development. In a strong showing, the state ranked as the No. 11 top state for business in [CNBC's America's Top States for Business in 2025](#), climbing five spots from 16 in 2024.

That positive momentum supports the health of residential real estate across the state, including Boulder County, where demand remains strong, inventory is improving, and the housing market continues to show

Colorado's standing in CNBC's rankings reflects a wide range of strengths. The state earned high marks for technology and innovation, receiving a B+ and ranking ninth nationwide, up from 14th last year. The analysis evaluated patent activity, research grants, AI development and semiconductor innovation, as well as a state's risk from federal funding cuts and its investment in research and development.

Workforce quality was another standout. With a B rating, Colorado ranked seventh nationally for its skilled labor force, thanks in part to the state having the highest percentage of working-age residents in the U.S. and one of the largest shares of bachelor's degree holders. Boulder consistently ranks among the top cities for educational attainment. Its STEM workforce makes up 16% of the local employment base, second only to Silicon Valley, supporting both economic growth and homebuying power.

Quality of life, a growing consideration for both businesses and homebuyers, also played a key role. Colorado rose to 12th in CNBC's quality-of-life rankings, up from 23rd the previous year. The score reflects factors such as environmental quality, healthcare, crime rates, worker protections and paid leave policies.

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Boulder, in particular, has received national recognition. U.S. News & World Report ranked it the No. 2 city in the nation for quality of life. Nearby cities, such as Louisville, Lafayette, and Longmont, offer many of the same lifestyle perks, contributing to Boulder County's broad appeal.

These economic and lifestyle factors directly support Boulder County's housing stability. A recent report by Construction Coverage ranked Boulder the 12th most stable small metro housing market in the U.S., with just a 1.3% chance of a 5% or greater price drop. That puts Boulder among the safest markets nationally for home value risk, according to Construction Coverage.

The same study ranked Colorado No. 29 overall among all states, with a 27.1% chance of a greater than 5% price decline and a 212% increase in home prices since 2000.

Boulder County real estate trends

Recent activity in the Boulder County market reflects a picture of steady movement. According to the Colorado Association of Realtors® (CAR), residential sales experienced a modest increase in mid 2025. While mid-summer often marks the beginning of a seasonal slowdown, homes are still selling, just at a more moderate pace.

Though time on the market has increased and price appreciation slowed to low or moderate levels, values remain stable, and inventory is on the rise. As of June 2025, inventory for attached homes is up nearly 22%, and single-family home inventory rose 20% year over year, according to CAR statistics. These gains are largely due to more homeowners deciding to list, not a lack of buyer demand.

The boost in listings has pushed the market into balanced territory, with 5 to 6 months of inventory available, suggesting more opportunities for buyers.

Bottom line

Colorado's strong business climate, skilled workforce, and quality of life continue to support a stable housing market. In Boulder County, those fundamentals remain especially strong. With increased inventory, steady demand, and one of the most stable housing markets in the nation, Boulder County continues to offer compelling real estate opportunities.

See the full report at CNBC: America's Top States for Business 2025 ([cnbc.com/2025/07/10/top-states-for-business-americas-2025-the-full-rankings.html](https://www.cnbc.com/2025/07/10/top-states-for-business-americas-2025-the-full-rankings.html)).

Jay Kalinski is the broker/owner of RE/MAX Elevate and owner of RE/MAX of Boulder. He is also an experienced Realtor, lawyer and veteran of the U.S. Air Force. He focuses on both residential and commercial real estate, with experience in real estate development and investment.

Jay lives in Boulder and is a zealous advocate for his clients as well as an avid triathlete, runner, reader and supporter of Veterans' causes.

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This article is brought to you by [atHome Colorado](#), your weekly insight into real estate, design, and community trends, published weekly by the advertising and marketing department in the Boulder Daily Camera, Loveland Reporter-Herald, Greeley Tribune, and Longmont Times-Call

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NEWS > CRIME & PUBLIC SAFETY

How Boulder County sounds alarm during an emergency

Sirens, texts, emails and calls are all used to warn residents of forthcoming emergencies



LONGMONT, CO – JULY 30: A City of Longmont owned outdoor emergency warning siren is seen near Airport Road and Nelson Road on July 30, 2018. The malfunction sirens were turned off in 2017 and are being put up for auction. (Photo by Matthew Jonas/Times-Call)

If a wildfire or flood hit Boulder County tomorrow, some folks might hear a siren warning of coming danger. Others might get a text alerting them to the forthcoming emergency. Others might get a call to their landline explaining the situation.

There is no one way for Boulder County residents to ensure they are warned in advance of an emergency. There are several — such as text notifications, siren warnings and emails — and county residents are encouraged to use more than one at a time.

This “layered approach,” as Longmont’s Office of Emergency Management Director Deon Pfenning called it, helps ensure residents of the county and its communities are prepared to act in the event of an emergency. In the wake of recent flash floods in Texas that killed more than 100 people, Pfenning said, Boulder County’s system is a good one.

“We have a pretty robust system,” Pfenning said of all the options available to county residents. “We’re in a pretty good place here.”

In the past, emergency notifications would largely go through landline phones, emergency broadcasts and weather radios, Pfenning said. Outdoor sirens might also have wailed a message to warn the community. Now, the technology has adapted to ping community members’ phones with a warning.

One of the approaches, BoCo Alert, is an opt-in emergency notification service offered to anyone in Boulder County.

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Those who live, work or frequent the county can go to the [BoCo Alert system website](#) and sign up for alerts. These warnings can include information about the potential for flash floods or an incoming and growing wildfire in the area. The alerts might even direct people to higher ground or to evacuate should the situation call for it. Most often, the alerts go out for law enforcement information such as shelter-in-place directives, Boulder Police Communications Manager Brad Riggin said.

Recently, the BoCo Alert system was used in response to the [Pearl Street firebombing attack](#).

These alerts are an improvement over old systems like landlines, Pfenning said, because they work wherever the user is, so long as they have cellular service.

Five addresses can be added to the system, meaning people who spend time regularly in the county can add their home, work, child's school and other addresses they want to be warned about in the event of an emergency. The police will also occasionally use the system in the event of a situation in which they are involved.

BoCo Alert is particularly helpful for locals, Pfenning said, because dispatchers can send tailored alerts to specific areas with detailed information relevant to smaller groups of people. That is simply not possible with nationally controlled alert systems.

The BoCo alert system is opt-in, though, meaning community members need to [sign up for the warnings](#). In Longmont, a city of about 103,000 people, more than 59,700 people have signed up for BoCo Alert. Across the county, the system has 377,146 pathways to people; this means one person who added a phone number and an email address counts as two pathways, so it is not indicative of the total number of people using the alert system.

Boulder County's population is 330,758, according to 2020 census data.

Those who use a landline phone will automatically receive emergency BoCo alerts for their area. They do need to sign up.

Those who do not speak English must use an app called ReachWell to translate emergency warnings, meaning they must have a smartphone.

BoCo text alerts also rely on Wi-Fi or cellular data. East county communities might have good access to the internet, but the county's mountain communities might not have that same luxury, said Pfenning, who became Longmont's OEM director in 2022 after spending more than 11 years working in emergency preparedness at the University of Colorado Boulder.

That's where the other warning systems come into play, Pfenning said, like those with landlines who automatically get emergency calls as long as the phone lines are live.

Wireless Emergency Alerts are a federal system that pushes emergency notifications to all phones and do not require people to sign up for them. Those WEAs may send broad information to the region in the face of an emergency. WEAs are also available in Spanish.

The National Weather Service may push a WEA in the face of flash flooding; these alerts automatically go to phones in the area affected, without users needing to sign up for them. Such an alert will likely tell people what to expect, the risk level and impact, which areas will be affected, and how to take precaution and be prepared, said Aldis Strautins, a senior service hydrologist with the NWS in Denver and Boulder.

These alerts are often deployed when a situation gets drastic, such as during the 2013 flood that ended with four deaths in Boulder County. It also may be deployed for [more-routine flash flood warnings, such as on July 20](#), when

However, these systems cannot be guaranteed to work properly 100% of the time, Strautins said. That's why residents' "first line of defense" is their own eyes and observations.

"Nothing's ever perfect," Strautins said of alert infrastructure in place. "That's why we all need to prepare."

In addition to the different mobile phone alert systems, police officers might go to known locations where the homeless stay to tell them about the emergency and what to do, Pfenning said.

Boulder County also has a system of outdoor warning sirens. Riggin said the city of Boulder has 10 sirens and the county has about 20.

The siren systems use a signal sound before playing a voice message with relevant information about an emergency.

Those sirens are intended exclusively to notify people already outdoors that they should seek more information from reliable channels such as city or county social media or the news media.

Right now, the county's siren system is live in Central Boulder, South Boulder, Eldorado Springs, Erie, Jamestown, Lafayette, Louisville, Lyons and Superior, according to the county's disaster management website.

Notably off that list, though, is Longmont, which [got rid of its emergency sirens in 2018](#) after a systemwide malfunction caused middle-of-the-night in October of 2016. The city opted to sell its sirens rather than spend the \$500,000 it would cost to fix them.

That does not mean Longmont is ill-prepared, Pfenning said. The city's OEM offers free National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration weather radios to city residents so they can be immediately warned of an emergency. Longmont residents can pick up their free radio from the OEM's office at 225 Kimbark St. during business hours, so long as they bring proof of residency.

Plus, he said, BoCo Alert, the WEA system and preparedness classes Longmont's OEM offers to the community have helped keep people ready for an emergency. Those classes, called Be Ready Longmont, are available for the city's residents, and those interested can [sign up on the city's website](#).

Part of that is because alert systems are not the only way to keep people prepared, warned and safe in the event of an emergency. Alert systems are not even necessarily the best tool in the face of a flood or wildfire; being attentive and aware of one's surroundings, and knowing what to do when faced with an emergency are crucial, Pfenning said.

Before the threat of a disaster or emergency, Strautins said, county residents should know their evacuation routes. If camping, be wary of nearby high ground and proximity to water. People should also know their nearest safe place to take shelter should a tornado hit.

The beauty of the "layered approach," Pfenning described, is that it increases the likelihood of staying safe. Don't just sign up for BoCo Alert, he said. Have your family members sign up. Know your evacuation routes. Keep up to date with local officials.

Plus, residents and visitors should not rely solely on the information in the alerts. Just like if someone hears a siren wailing, people are encouraged to seek more information from trusted social media accounts, city and county websites, and reliable news sources.

Boulder Disaster Management [recommends several sources of information to use when you hear a siren or get a notification](#), such as its own website, Boulder Municipal Cable Channel 8, and specific local radio and news stations.

However, if people only do one thing to prepare for an emergency, Pfenning said, he hopes they choose BoCo Alert because of the localized information it can provide. But, he hopes the community uses a multi-faceted approach to preparedness.

Boulder County is in a good place, Strautins said when asked about Boulder's preparedness in light of the recent Texas floods. However, that does not mean the county and its community can't always improve.

"I think we do a really good job here," Strautins said. "(But) being prepared is a continuous thing."

Originally Published: July 28, 2025 at 6:55 AM MDT

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Boulder Imaging uses AI to help save birds in wind farms



IdentiFlight captures an image track of a golden eagle in flight in Uzbekistan. Courtesy Boulder Imaging.

By BizWest Staff

LOUISVILLE — Boulder Imaging Inc. is partnering with Oikon Ltd., an environmental consultancy based in Croatia, to bring bird-protection technology powered by artificial intelligence to wind farms across southeast Europe.

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Through the deployment of Boulder Imaging’s IdentiFlight system, the partnership supports the growing demand for sustainable wind development while also protecting biodiversity.

During a news conference Sunday in Scotland to announce a trade deal with the European Union, President Donald Trump accused wind-farm blades of killing whales and birds, but technology developed by Boulder Imaging is addressing the issue. IdentiFlight’s real-time bird detection and automated turbine curtailment capabilities help developers protect species including eagles and kestrels.

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As Croatia ramps up renewable energy under the European Green Deal, strict permitting requirements now mandate detailed environmental impact assessments.

“Partnering with Oikon Ltd. enhances our ability to deliver conservation-driven technology where it’s most needed,” Don Mills, president and chief operating officer of Boulder Imaging, said in a prepared statement. “Together, we’re advancing the role of AI in biodiversity protection and accelerating responsible wind-energy growth in Croatia and beyond.”

With more than 520 systems deployed across five continents, IdentiFlight has reduced bird fatalities by more than 85% while maintaining a power generation loss of less than 1% in wind farms, according to a news release issued by the Louisville-based company.

The first systems in Croatia are planned for 2026, with an initial focus on sensitive migratory corridors and ecologically valuable terrain.

Founded in 1995, Boulder Imaging develops and delivers machine vision and artificial intelligence solutions. Its inspection systems address challenges in industries such as renewable energy, automotive, architectural products and security paper.

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From the Denver Business Journal:

<https://www.bizjournals.com/denver/news/2025/07/31/amp-commerce-city-recycling-facility.html>

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Technology

AI recycling company breaks ground on Commerce City facility



Tim Stuart, CEO of Amp, Steve Douglas, Commerce City Mayor, Mark Ceresa, division vice president for Waste Connections' Rocky Mountain division, and TJ Cavarra, ops manager at Taylor Kohrs, throw dirt with their shovels during a ground breaking at Waste Connections new recycling facility on July 31, 2025, in Commerce City.

SETH MCCONNELL | DENVER BUSINESS JOURNAL



By [Jackson Guilfoil](#) – Reporter, Denver Business Journal
Jul 31, 2025

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Story Highlights

- Amp broke ground on AI-powered recycling facility in Commerce City.
- Facility aims to sort 60,000 tons annually with 90% recycling rate.
- The facility is estimated to cost \$40 million to construct.

A Louisville company using AI sorting machines to improve recycling's ability to reduce waste broke ground on a new facility in Commerce City on Thursday.

When complete, Amp – which has invested well over \$10 million in the facility – will lead operations inside the facility meant to sort over 60,000 tons of trash

per year. The average recycling rate for solid waste in the U.S. is 32%, according to the Environmental Protection Agency. Using its AI-powered sorting robots, Amp is aiming for 90% when the facility is complete by the fourth quarter of 2026.

Amp partnered with Texas-based Waste Connections, which estimates the facility will end up costing about \$40 million to build. It contracted with firm Taylor Kohrs to construct the building.

"This project, this partnership, it really takes AI to a new level. So we'll put in AI starting from the beginning, putting in smart machines that really learn, adapt and perform to a level that really wasn't possible before, and that it enables us to be fully automated and really take workers out of the front line and out of harm's way," Tim Stuart, Amp's CEO, said.

Stuart estimated that in a facility of similar size, about 75 human workers would be on-site. When the new 72,000-square-foot facility is operational, Stuart said it would have about 15 people working there.

Today, Amp's robots are in over 50 Waste Connections sites, having started at 24, Stuart said at the groundbreaking, though the Commerce City site will be the first operated by Amp under its "Amp One" system. Waste Connections Rocky Mountain Division Vice President Mark Ceresa said the partnership was natural given Amp's proven technology.

"This is going to be the cutting edge of recovery and recycling technology. This is going to see a lot of things that have not been seen on this scale happen at this facility," Ceresa said.

In December, Amp announced it raised [\\$91 million](#) in Series D financing led by San Francisco-based Congruent Ventures alongside a number of other investors, including [Sequoia Capital](#).

Amp's system was installed in May 2024 at a Portsmouth, Virginia, waste facility, where it sorts through 150 tons of trash and diverts more than 60% away from landfills, according to the company.

"This is really bringing in their AI process to make sure that those most recycling facilities frontline and cities frontline labor. That's essentially so the AI is replacing those obviously more efficient and more effective and safer," Stuart said.

In 2022, Amp opened its [84,000-square-foot](#) headquarters and employed about 200 people.