A look back at 2016

The end of the year is always a good time to reflect on accomplishments, lessons learned and so much more. And what a year 2016 was! The City of Boulder addressed a wide range of topics – from civil rights to housing to climate change.

Boulder works continuously to provide service excellence for an inspired future. To help with that effort, the city outlined a Sustainability Framework to provide a common understanding of goals and priorities related to the community.

The framework uses seven broad categories to help guide Boulder’s vision and to assist with strategic plans. The expansive list of 2016 accomplishments have been organized under each of these seven categories, which are detailed on pgs. 10 to 12.

We are proud to share these with you but are also humble about what remains to be done. As you set your New Year’s resolutions, we are setting ours.

Keep an eye out for the February/March edition of the community newsletter to review our 2017 areas of focus.
Completed extensive community engagement and initial recommendations related to Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan update.

Completed a Middle-Income Housing Strategy to identify priority tools and policies for creating and preserving housing opportunities for middle-income households.

Completed analysis of options for redevelopment of the city-owned property at 30th and Pearl streets.

Awarded $4.5 million in local and federal resources to support the creation and preservation of permanently affordable housing.

Awarded $500,000 in federal Community Development Block Grant funds to support capital improvement needs of community agencies serving low-income residents.

Adopted Boulder’s first Form-Based Code, creating a new approach to zoning and design review.

Completed the $700,000 Eben G. Fine Park Stream Bank Restoration project in early summer.

Broke ground on the $8.7 million Civic Area park improvement project for the Park at the Core, the largest Community, Culture & Safety funded project.

Continued design planning related to the transformation of the Civic Area and increased diverse and exciting programming in this central gathering space.

Completed the $3.85 million Dairy Center Theatre Improvements: Phase I completed in March & Phase 2 completed in October.

Implemented Phase 1 of the Building Performance Ordinance, which requires commercial buildings to measure and report their energy usage and helps identify opportunities for efficiencies.

Completed analysis of long-term goal and short-term success measures for Boulder’s Climate Commitment; conducted significant outreach around areas of potential action by individuals and groups.

Began implementation of Boulder’s path-breaking Universal Zero Waste Ordinance.

Convened meeting of natural gas industry experts to chart strategies for conversion to clean electricity.

Created solar mapping tool and worked in partnership with county to enhance solar and electric vehicle incentives.

Filed supplemental application to the Colorado PUC for transfer of assets in order to create a city-owned and cleaner electric utility.

Participated in negotiations with Xcel Energy about a possible partnership that could achieve community’s Energy Future goals.

Completed major flood-repair projects and continued efforts to restore affected habitats.

Drafted and approved the North Trail Study Area Plan, which was designed to improve visitor experiences; ensure trail and trailhead sustainability; and conserve natural, agricultural and cultural resources.

Participated in CityLinks Climate Exchange Partnership with Shimla, India, focusing on the nexus between climate, resilience and water.
• Expanded free public wi-fi, branded ConnectBoulder, to the Boulder Reservoir and Scott Carpenter park.
• Conducted needs assessment and feasibility study related to possibility of enhanced broadband offerings.
• Completed Boulder Public Library Community Needs Assessment, which is the first phase of the Library Master Plan update project.
• Launched the new BLDG 61 Makerspace in the north wing of the Main Library.
• Conducted a coffee chat series including a stop in each area of the community, visited over 50 neighborhoods and utilized public input to build the first Neighborhood Summit in over a decade.
• Collaborated with partner agencies to develop regional trails to expand reach and accessibility.
• Continued implementing key programs included in the Transportation Master Plan.
• Began significant improvement projects, including the Diagonal Highway CIP Project and the Baseline Underpass.
• Worked with RTD to implement new BRT and FLEX bus service.
• Allocated Neighborhood Partnership Grants that have allowed groups to host diverse events including a North Boulder day of celebration, a Peace Walk and a Jam Band Session.

• Conducted more than 162 fire inspections in residences around the city.
• Supported proactive emergency prevention efforts, including home safety inspection checklists and specialized education and training classes with students and interested community members.
• Hired three new police officers.
• Added one Code Enforcement officer to help with the expansion of the bear protection zone.
• Participated in Hilliard Heintze data analysis and began implementing recommendations.
• Completed Resilience Strategy in partnership with 100 Resilient Cities.
• Announced plans to build resilience nodes at several key facilities in Boulder at the 2016 Clinton Global Initiative conference.
• Held a pilot class called Better Together: An Interactive Course in Disaster and Community Resilience.
• Completed the $2 million University Hill Pedestrian Lighting project in October.
Healthy & Socially Thriving Community

- Created the University Hill Commercial District Pilot Employee EcoPass Program.
- Collaborated with partners to explore possible creation of a parking garage and conference center.
- Implemented HD channel, live streaming and closed captioning on Boulder 8.
- Grew city’s social media presence and engagement; piloted Nextdoor and Facebook Live.
- Produced and mailed five printed community newsletter in first year of two-year pilot.
- Completed a comprehensive review and analysis of Boulder’s Development Fees and Excise Taxes.
- Completed the acquisition of a new Records Management System for Boulder police.
- Selected for a partnership with What Works Cities to focus on open data, as well as data-based performance measurement and contracting.
- Researched options and chose vendor to provide new software to present City Council agendas and videos in a more integrated and searchable way.
- Revamped central job website and improved recruiting strategies to attract top talent to city workforce.

Good Governance

- Models stewardship and sustainability of the city’s financial, human, information and physical assets.
- Supports strategic decision-making with timely, reliable and accurate data and analysis.
- Enhances and facilitates transparency, accuracy, efficiency, effectiveness and quality customer service in all city business.
- Supports, develops and enhances relationships between the city and community/regional partners.
- Provides assurance of regulatory and policy compliance.

- Implemented HD channel, live streaming and closed captioning on Boulder 8.
- Grew city’s social media presence and engagement; piloted Nextdoor and Facebook Live.
- Produced and mailed five printed community newsletter in first year of two-year pilot.
- Completed a comprehensive review and analysis of Boulder’s Development Fees and Excise Taxes.
- Completed the acquisition of a new Records Management System for Boulder police.
- Selected for a partnership with What Works Cities to focus on open data, as well as data-based performance measurement and contracting.
- Researched options and chose vendor to provide new software to present City Council agendas and videos in a more integrated and searchable way.
- Revamped central job website and improved recruiting strategies to attract top talent to city workforce.

Economically Vital Community

- Created the University Hill Commercial District Pilot Employee EcoPass Program.
- Collaborated with partners to explore possible creation of a parking garage and conference center.
- Developed financial forecast tool and updated modeling of electric system costs.