

PPWG FINAL REPORT

NEXT STEPS AND APPENDIX

- **WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE**
- **APPENDIX**
 - SUGGESTIONS FOR SCALE,
 - BACKGROUND EXAMPLES
 - IAP2 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SPECTRUM

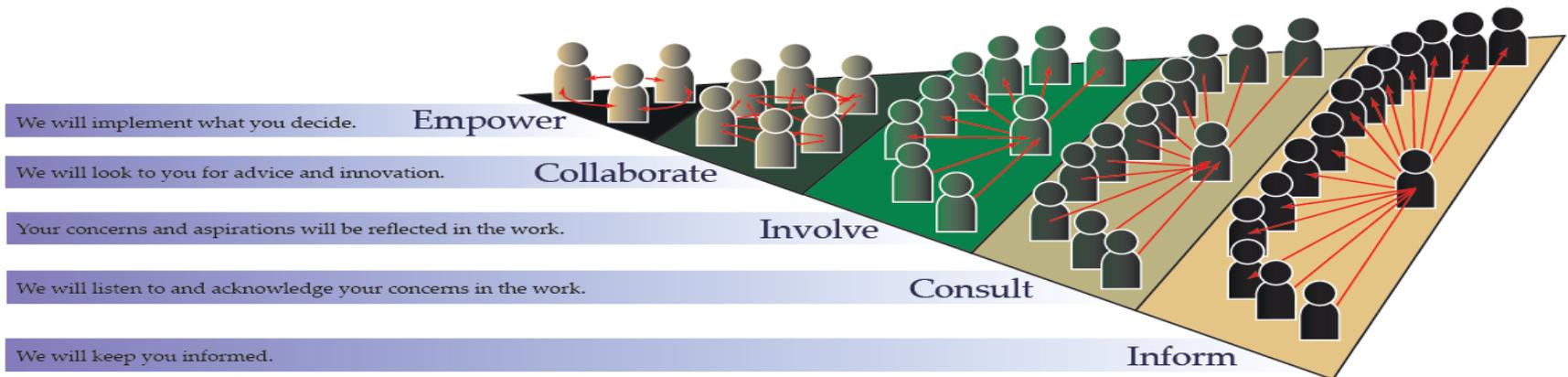
WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

Submitting this report to the city for staff and Council review is just the first step to improve public engagement. Below are **next steps**, identified by the PPWG.

- Recognize that changing the culture of public engagement will take time.
- Allocate adequate resources, time and effort to support, enhance, and deepen the PPWG's work.
- Share or "socialize" these recommendations with the public and civic groups to gather feedback before adoption by City Council.
- Evaluate improvements in Boulder's public engagement culture and activities over time.

APPENDIX 1: SCALE

PPWG Suggestions for Scale



Promise to the Public

Role of Communication

APPENDIX 2: BACKGROUND EXAMPLES

Background Examples Developed by PPWG

As part of the process of identifying frustrations experienced by the public, and pitfalls in past City of Boulder public processes, a subcommittee of the PPWG researched specific instances in the community. Purposely selecting from the most contentious of recent City initiatives and decisions, the subcommittee researched the situations via Daily Camera articles, Council packets, staff interviews and other methods. The outcome here is not meant to be scientific or political, and is agnostic on the outcome of the project or the decision. Rather, these examples are meant to point to potential gaps in past processes, the differing perspectives and experiences of participants and the frequent occurrence of so-called "wicked problems." They were used to influence the specific Problem Statements in the report. We include them here merely to show our stepping-off point and to show our work in the spirit of full transparency.

A. Affordable Housing Linkage Fees: What was learned from the City's process on Affordable Housing Linkage Fees is that an extensive public process, working group, professionally commissioned study, followed by a staff recommendation, are not always followed by Council when it comes to decisions. In this case, Council twice voted against data provided by Kaiser Marsten Assoc (KMA) that cited costs of growth to the city to be \$139-\$150 per Square Foot, as well as recommendations by staff, that the fee be raised to at least \$15 per Square Foot. Public testimony at the hearing supported higher linkage fees. Council's decision on this matter almost appeared pre-made, as a presenter at an area real estate conference declared victory in favor of the lower fee of \$12/ square feet the day before the public hearing and vote. Whether it was due to politics, Councilmembers' independent analyses, one-on-one lobbying or other reasons, the lessons are if there are constraints or preferences that differ this dramatically from the public process, the City Council should have laid them out at the start and certainly explained their reasons for their ultimate votes to the public.

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APPENDIX 2: BACKGROUND EXAMPLES

(CONTINUED)

B. Housing Boulder Working Groups: What was learned from the Housing Boulder Working Group is that sometimes, outcomes of Public Process might be pre-ordained by the City, making even the most extensive, intimate process feel like window dressing. In this case study, one of the working groups, “Diverse Housing Options,” appeared to have been populated with members chosen for a specific outcome. In this particular case, while there were co-op activists and real estate professionals appointed, there appeared to be a disproportionate lack of neighborhood representatives with concerns about growth and density. Of note, is that discussions regarding the re-write of the existing Co-op ordinance appeared to gain traction out of this group.

Other Housing Boulder Working Groups reported a similar sense of pre-determination in other ways. The “Keeping Our Commitments” group was repeatedly asked to rank pre-determined list of “solutions” and thwarted in its interest in learning about the population to be served and discussing the nature of the problem of low-income housing before being asked to solve it. What seemed to be an opportunity for people to contribute to Boulder Housing policy seemed lost. The report seems to portray a group willing and interested in discussion and ideas, pitted up against a set of predetermined options, lack of discussion time and a facilitator under real pressure to deliver a set outcome. The Group also fell prey to ‘chasing shiny objects’—for example, one member of the group loved tiny houses, so this idea used a lot of energy and time and was included in the recommendations without any analysis of whether this solution would work for the population that was being served. The lesson here seems to be that even an extensive public discussion can be shortchanged by lack of neutral facilitation, resources, time and lack of flexibility of possible outcomes.

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APPENDIX 2: BACKGROUND EXAMPLES

(CONTINUED)

C. North Trail Study Area: What was learned from the North TSA project was that sometimes lack of staff resources and time are used as an excuse for an inadequate process, even when such a lack was known at the time of the undertaking. In this case, a yearlong process and several public engagements occurred in parallel with the work of the OSBT and city staff. Because the board and staff decision-making process began in spite of a recognition of inadequate time and resources, at times public engagement got ahead of staff work. Some members of the public interpreted staff statements to suggest that their independent planning was already favoring one alternative over another. In a closing memo, staff summarized that they had been “unable to do a detailed analysis,” but had kept the input in mind. The lesson here seems to be that even an extensive public discussion can be shortchanged by lack of resources, time and lack of flexibility of possible outcomes.

D. Co-op Ordinance Revision: What was learned was that inadequate public input at early stages of decisions cannot be compensated for by long and extensive process on the backend, and the importance of including a wide range of stakeholders. In the case of the co-op ordinance, council expressed its wish to pursue ways to make co-ops legal based on ideas from the Housing Boulder working group. At the same time there was a tension in the city over occupancy enforcement, fears of density and a desire to provide more affordable housing options yet these tensions were insufficiently acknowledged up front. After being informed by the city manager that there was not capacity in the work plan to conduct an extensive public outreach process within the timeframe expected, council directed the city attorney to write a draft. He then met with co-op advocates to talk about changes to the existing ordinance. Co-op advocates experienced a positive and responsive initial public process. The draft that emerged from these meetings did so without input from many Boulder residents who, while they might have had some level of support for co-ops, felt that potential impacts to neighborhoods were insufficiently considered. The protracted public process seemed to create further division, and many felt disenfranchised. The lesson here seems to be that no amount of public testimony can compensate for a lack of clear articulation of the problem to be solved and inclusive opportunities for input during the early stages of a process. (CONTINUED)

APPENDIX 2: BACKGROUND EXAMPLES

(CONTINUED)

E. “Right-sizing” – The Living Lab: What was learned from the so-called “right-sizing” of Folsom was multiple items. First, Go Boulder had conducted what they thought was a reasonable public process for every segment of the Living Labs and the Living Labs concept itself was part of a broader plan. However, none of the other segments of the Living Labs project incurred any public push-back. We learned from the comments that Go-Boulder shared with us that they felt they had failed to take the adequate time to think about how different people affected by the changes on Folsom would react and to consult with them in advance. Second, Go Boulder was confused as to how the goal of Folsom could have gotten so misconstrued. The stated goal of the project was to make transportation safer for all modes--cars, bikes and pedestrians. However, Go Boulder said they were seeing evidence that the public thought that the stated goal of the project was to make driving on Folsom less convenient to reduce driving in favor of other modes. In the discussion, many cycling advocates, including some members of the Transportation Advisory Board, publicly stated that less car travel was in fact the goal.

After modifications, Go Boulder expressed confusion as to why citizens thought the project had been cancelled while it had only been modified. Other lessons were about the appropriate mixture of advocates, experts and regular citizens on boards and commissions and their need for better skills in public process; that the city and its departments need to be clear and consistent to the public about the stated goals of the project; and the importance in both design and implementation of including a wide range of stakeholders.

APPENDIX 3: IAP2

IAP2 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SPECTRUM

INCREASING LEVEL OF PUBLIC IMPACT

INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
Public Participation Goal:	Public Participation Goal:	Public Participation Goal:	Public Participation Goal:	Public Participation Goal:
To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problems, alternatives and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision, including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision-making in the hands of the public.
Promise to the Public:	Promise to the Public:	Promise to the Public:	Promise to the Public:	Promise to the Public:
We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for direct advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.
Example Tools:	Example Tools:	Example Tools:	Example Tools:	Example Tools:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fact sheets • web sites • open houses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • public comment • focus groups • surveys • public meetings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • workshops • deliberate polling. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • citizen advisory committees • consensus-building • participatory decision-making. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • citizen juries • ballots • delegated decisions.

MEMBERS OF THE PPWG

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