



PLAN-Boulder County

planboulder.org

P.O. Box 4682 Boulder, CO 80306

January 5, 2016

To: Boulder City Council Members

Re: PLAN-Boulder County Recommendations for Council Retreat

Growth and Development

The City Council has said that many of the contentious issues around growth and development will be addressed in the update to the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan (BVCP). PLAN-Boulder County (PBC) proposes that at the Council retreat, the Council:

- 1) Commits to ensuring that this Comprehensive Plan update specifies a vision for the ultimate build-out of Boulder. This vision should include fact-based estimates of the ultimate number of jobs and residents and would ideally include the locations and sizes of new buildings, 3-dimensional visualization of such, and reasonable estimates of the impacts that go with such growth (blocked mountain views, crowded schools, stresses on Open Space, traffic congestion, and overloaded police and fire services).
- 2) Commits to ensuring a reasonable maximum total residential growth rate of 1%.
- 3) Commits to ensuring that job growth does not exceed the increase in the resident worker population.

Create Permanently Affordable Housing, to Include Middle Income Housing

Council's Comprehensive Housing Strategy (Housing Boulder) has failed to really address the increasing expense of middle-class, family housing in Boulder. Indeed, the supply of such housing continues to shrink as housing prices inflate dramatically. Serious problems require serious solutions. Because demand is so extreme, the private market cannot reverse or even limit price increases in the foreseeable future. To have a significant impact on the growing unaffordability of middle income housing, the City will have to intervene in the market. It will have to do so by buying thousands of owner-occupied and rental units and placing them in its permanently affordable housing program. This plan will require serious financing by bonds and tax increases. PBC believes this is the best and perhaps only way to keep Boulder's housing stock from becoming totally unreachable for middle-class families.

Expand Neighborhood/Area Planning

As part of the ongoing major update of the BVCP, City of Boulder and Boulder County Planning Staff have prepared preliminary overview sub-community plans for the 9 areas

defined in the BVCP. These are an excellent start, but do not approach the level of comprehensiveness envisioned by many citizens. PLAN-Boulder County believes this approach, and more detailed approaches involving critical areas, corridors, or neighborhoods should also be part of the Comprehensive Plan update. In particular, a strong and coherent effort to communicate with neighbors about the great and not-so-great features of their neighborhoods, and about their hopes and aspirations and pragmatic planning needs. Roads, sidewalks, crosswalks, bike lanes and paths, bus service, walkability, affordability, small neighborhood stores and coffee shops, adjacent retail and commercial areas, parks, greenways, community gardens, street landscaping, lighting, flood hazards, and future densification (co-ops, ADUs, OADs, etc.) should all be considered. Council also needs to develop and specify a process for neighborhoods/subareas to participate in planning their own futures.

Best regards,

Raymond Bridge, Co-chair, PLAN-Boulder County