5. Economy—Summary of Proposed Changes

Draft – Jan. 11, 2017

This section focuses on policies related to the economy including strategic redevelopment and sustainable employment, diverse economic base, quality of life, sustainable and resilient business practices, and job opportunities, education and training. The changes to this chapter reflect updated plans and work since the 2010 Plan and strengthening policies related to existing plans including:

- Economic Sustainability Strategy (ESS) (2013)
- Community Cultural Plan (CCP) (2015)
- HR&A’s Recommendations for Resilience Integration (2016)

Additional changes since the Aug. 24 draft reflect input from the community and city and county staff. A further round of minor editing to reduce redundancies will occur as necessary. Other changes are noted below.

September and December 2016 Planning Board Suggestions

Planning Board discussed the importance of small, local and homegrown businesses and challenges to affordable commercial space. Furthermore, the board suggested identifying the problem and the vision as a first step to addressing the issues around these topics. This feedback has been addressed below.

Introduction/Preamble:

- Edited language to reflect input from Economic Sustainability Strategy, Planning Board and the community to emphasize balanced approach to economic “vitality” vs. “growth” strategy.
- Added language regarding the importance of small, local and independent businesses per community feedback.
- Per county staff feedback, added “Boulder Valley” to paragraph regarding potential challenges, as they affect a regional scale.

Policy 5.01 Revitalizing Commercial and Industrial Areas

- Modified language to create consistency with ESS “Place” chapter and incorporate suggestions from Planning Board regarding the need to consider impacts of growth and address issues regarding balance.
- Added language regarding support, conservation and enhancement per Landmarks Board feedback.
- Added Gunbarrel to examples of commercial and industrial areas for revitalization per suggestion from the community to bring into alignment with ESS.
- Added transportation among the tools for public/private partnerships per suggestion from the community.
- Clarified language of last two sentences (formerly one sentence) due to feedback from the community and various organizations.
Policy 5.02 Regional Job Center

- Added language to reflect feedback from Planning Board regarding the need to address impacts of growth (e.g., transportation planning).
- Moved statement regarding “support for existing business” to Policy 5.05: Support for Local Business and Business Retention, as the language seemed out of place here.
- Added mentioning regional planning and partnerships for housing and transportation, as suggested by the community.
- Added language regarding transportation infrastructure and the potential for the transportation system to address impacts from in-commuting, as suggested by the community.

Policy 5.03 Diverse Mix of Uses and Business Types

- Updated language to be consistent with ESS.

Policy 5.04 Vital and Productive Retail Base

- This language reflects ongoing program work in Economic Vitality and suggestions from Planning Board and the community regarding “affordable space.”
- Suggested edit by Landmarks Board to include the support of the retail base by historic preservation and heritage tourism, however the policy language does not call out specific contributors to the retail base. Other chapters of the plan may be more appropriate for this language (e.g., historic preservation policies in Built Environment could also say more about the role of heritage tourism and value of historic preservation).

Policy 5.05 Support for Local Business and Business Retention

- Moved separated policy language from Newly Separated Policy: Support for Existing Businesses in previous draft version (Aug. 2016) back into policy 5.05 to eliminate redundancies
- Edited policy language to clarify the priority to support local businesses and businesses already in Boulder (as opposed to efforts to attract businesses).
- Added language presenting a balance perspective on redevelopment and retention of existing businesses as recommended by Planning Board.
- Edited language to ensure inclusion of small, independent businesses per feedback from Planning Board, the community, and several organizations.
- Included language to clarify that importance of supporting growth and retention of a diverse mix of businesses, as suggested by the community and Economic Vitality.

New Policy: Affordable Business Space and Diverse Employment Base

- New policy in response to feedback from Planning Board, the community, and trends noted by Economic Vitality.
• Incorporated language from previously separated policy “Addressing Disproportionate Impacts” that appeared in previous draft version (Aug. 2016).

Policy 5.06 Industry Clusters

• Updated clusters are consistent with Primary Employer Study and ESS.
• Minor suggested edit from the community to include mention of the needs of Boulder’s clusters.

Policy 5.07 Funding for City Services and Urban Infrastructure

• Updated to include reference to Access Management and Parking Strategy (AMPS) and clarify that infrastructure, services and amenities that contribute to business attraction are not limited to transportation infrastructure alone. Additional examples reflect suggestions from ESS and input from Planning Board.
• Added suggestion from Boulder County staff to mention “local and regional” transportation systems.
• Suggestion from the community to support transportation solutions through emerging technologies is covered in the Transportation chapter.

Policy 5.08 Role of Tourism in the Economy

• Language reflects additional suggestions from Planning Board to enhance it.
• Language reflects suggestion from Landmarks Board to include heritage tourism.
• Incorporation of different types of tourism provided as examples.

Policy 5.09 Role of Arts, Cultural, Historic and Parks and Recreation Amenities

• In a previous draft version, a former policy about the “Creative Economy” was added in order further consistency with the CCP. However, Planning Board suggested that the policy sounded exclusive, so it has been removed. Instead, it has been modified to show support for the arts and include recognition of their contribution to economic vitality.
• Removed “the arts within the public realm,” as this is part of the Built Environment chapter.
• Added historic amenities and historic preservation per Landmarks Board feedback; added parks and recreation amenities per staff feedback

Policy 5.10 Communications

• Per county staff feedback, added “county” to first line.

Policy 5.11 Sustainable Business Practices

• Policy 5.11 has been modified to be consistent with the ESS and programs and practice. It also reflects some input from Planning Board.
Policy 5.12 Home Occupations

- Minor clarifying edits to language.

Policy 5.13 Responsive to Changes in the Marketplace

- Minor clarifying edits to language.
- Edit regarding application and permitting process to be consistent with ESS.

New Policy: Economic Resilience

- New policy language consistent with ongoing work and recommendations from City of Boulder’s Resilience Strategy.

Policy 5.14 Employment Opportunities – no changes

Policy 5.15 Business Partnerships to Support Economic Vitality Goals

- Edited order of groups to list them alphabetically.
- List edits are intended to be inclusive and reflective of the groups who work together to support economic vitality.

Policy 5.16 Support for the University of Colorado and Federal Labs

- Addition of clarifying language.

Policy 5.17 Diverse Workforce, Education and Training

- Modified policy to be consistent with ESS “People” chapter.
- Modified policy to include feedback from Planning Board regarding the need to not only “attract” but also “develop” workers.
- Removed “workforce vocational training facilities, including but not limited to those that provide training for “green” jobs,” as this was more a focus as part of the 2010 update.
- Suggestion from a member of the community to make mention of specific trades was not incorporated, as the policy language “in multiple fields with specialized skills and experience” is intended to include all trades.

[Additional language on the Sharing Economy may be incorporated as an emerging theme in the draft plan version]
5. Economy

Boulder’s highly-educated workforce, quality of life, high concentration of companies in growing industries, rich base of small, local and independent businesses, and synergies with the University of Colorado and federally-funded research labs are the foundation of its economic vitality. The city fosters and retains high-caliber employees and talented entrepreneurs and has earned recognition as one of the nation’s best places for startups.

A balanced approach to a healthy economy maintains the outstanding quality of life enjoyed by existing residents and businesses while supporting Boulder’s diverse mix of small and mid-sized businesses as well as several large employers. Boulder recognizes that economic strength can bring many benefits to the community including greater tax revenues, local job opportunities, increased diversity, a variety of services and business types and physical improvements.

While the city is fortunate to enjoy economic success, it also faces challenges. Cyclical global and economic downturns affect the local economic climate, and rising costs of commercial space and housing can affect businesses and their ability to recruit and retain new employees. Additionally, redevelopment or growth in the Boulder Valley may lead to displacement of existing businesses, increase demands for services and infrastructure, and strain regional transportation systems and local housing affordability throughout the Boulder Valley.

Through its Resilience Strategy, the city is adopting strategies to foster preparedness for uncertainty and disruptions to economic prosperity. Boulder is also following a sustainable path to economic development through the implementation of an Economic Sustainability Strategy that focuses on business formation, retention and growth. The policies in this section support the following goals related to maintaining a sustainable and resilient economy:

- Strategic Redevelopment and Sustainable Employment
- Diverse Economic Base
- Quality of Life
- Sustainable and Resilient Business Practices
- Job Opportunities, Education and Training

**Strategic Redevelopment and Sustainable Employment**

5.01 Revitalizing Commercial and Industrial Areas

The city supports place-based strategies that support redevelopment of commercial and industrial areas. Revitalization should support and enhance these areas, conserve their strengths, and minimize displacement of users. Revitalization should reflect the unique characteristics and amenities in those areas and nearby neighborhoods. Examples of commercial and industrial areas for revitalization identified in previous planning efforts are Diagonal Plaza, University Hill commercial district, Gunbarrel and the East Boulder industrial area.

The city will use a variety of tools to create public/private partnerships that lead to successful redevelopment. These tools may include, but are not limited to, area planning with community input, infrastructure improvements, shared parking strategies, transit options and hubs, and changes to zoning or development standards and incentives (e.g., financial incentives, development potential, or urban renewal authority). The city acknowledges that displacement and
loss of service and affordable retail uses can result from redevelopment. The goals of any redevelopment and area planning efforts must carefully consider these potential consequences and implications for area business owners.

5.02 Regional Job Center
The city supports strategies that further Boulder’s continued role as a regional job center, consistent with sustainability goals and projected employment growth. The city recognizes the importance of regional planning and partnerships for housing and transportation and will continue to address impacts on housing affordability and transportation related to its role as a regional job center. The city will continue to develop, maintain and enhance its transportation infrastructure on both a local and regional level in order to support Boulder’s economic vitality. The city recognizes that further developing its transportation system could help address impacts from in-commuting.

Diverse Economic Base

5.03 Diverse Mix of Uses and Business Types
The city and county will support a diversified employment base within the Boulder Valley, reflecting labor force capabilities and recognizing the community’s strengths in a number of industries and quality of life. Therefore, the city will continue to identify and protect industrial, service and office uses and will evaluate areas with non-residential zoning to ensure the existing and future economic vitality of Boulder while responding to the needs of a rapidly changing global economy.

5.04 Vital and Productive Retail Base
The city recognizes the importance of its retail base and will develop and implement a retail strategy that takes into account emerging trends such as shifting demographics and changing consumer behavior, addresses the market opportunities and shopping needs of the community, ensures an appropriate mix of retail, and identifies strategies to improve the retail base and the city’s sales tax revenues, including maintaining affordable retail space.

5.05 Support for Local Business and Business Retention
The city and county deeply value existing and homegrown businesses in the local economy and will work to nurture, support, and maintain a positive climate to retain them. The city recognizes the vital role of small, local, and independent businesses that serve the community and the importance of balancing needs with redevelopment in certain areas with strategies that minimize their displacement.

The city will support the growth and success of a diverse mix of businesses, including primary and secondary employers of all sizes. Boulder’s economic sustainability and resilience efforts recognize the importance of jobs already in the city; business retention and support for existing and homegrown companies and jobs is a priority. The city and county recognize the need to retain businesses in Boulder County as they grow and will consider projected needs, including those of their employees, such as commercial and office space, transportation infrastructure and housing.

New Policy: Affordable Business Space and Diverse Employment Base
The city and county acknowledge that rising costs of commercial space can affect businesses and affordability and will further explore the issue and identify methods to better support businesses in addressing this issue. Methods may include strategies, addressing regulatory issues, or new
programs. The city recognizes that the rising costs of commercial space and housing can disproportionately affect lower-income and minority residents and small businesses and non-profits and will develop strategies to maintain a range of options to support a diverse workforce and employment base.

5.06 Industry Clusters
The city will continue to support an industry cluster approach to business development and consider special financial and technical assistance programs and other tools to retain, expand and attract businesses in those clusters. Cluster efforts focus on supporting multiple businesses in an industry. Boulder’s key industry clusters include aerospace, bioscience, clean tech, data storage, digital media, natural and organic products, recreation, software, tourism and the creative sector. Boulder acknowledges that these clusters and their needs will evolve and change over time.

Quality of Life

5.07 Funding City Services and Urban Infrastructure
The city will encourage a strong sustainable economy to generate revenues to fund quality city services and recognizes that urban infrastructure, facilities, services, and amenities are important to the quality of life of residents, employees and visitors to the community. A strong and complete local and regional transportation system and transportation demand management programs are essential to a thriving economy, as they can offer options for commuters, help attract and retain key businesses and employers as well as visitors, and provide regional access to global markets. The city will continue to plan for and invest in urban amenities and infrastructure such as bike paths, parks, shared and managed parking, public spaces, quality gathering places, cultural destinations, and public art; as well as community services including but not limited to open space and mountain parks, high speed internet, fire-rescue, public safety, and senior services.

5.08 Role of Tourism in the Economy
Recognizing the importance of tourism (e.g., heritage, cultural, sports and open space) to the Boulder economy, the city will continue to work with various partners including the Boulder Convention and Visitors Bureau to study the existing and future role of different types of tourism in the community, track the benefits and impact of tourism on the economy, and invest in ways to support and enhance the sector.

5.09 Role of Arts, Cultural, Historic and Parks and Recreation Amenities
The city and county will support the resiliency, sustainability and innovation of arts, cultural, historic, parks and recreation amenities so they continue to contribute to the economic vitality of the community, provide unique offerings, foster meaningful connections to Boulder among its residents, workforce, and visitors; and offer additional benefit to the community. The city will work to support and as appropriate enhance the capacity of arts and culture, historic preservation, and parks and recreation as important contributors to economic vitality and quality of life. (Note: See also the Built Environment chapter.)

5.10 Communications
The city and county support and facilitate the development of technologically-advanced communications infrastructure and other improvements that will provide support to the
community, help businesses thrive and grow, foster the growth of emerging telecommunications industries, and support emergency systems.

**Sustainable and Resilient Business Practices**

**5.11 Sustainable Business Practices**
The city supports sustainable and energy efficient business practices and will continue to establish and maintain programs to assist and encourage businesses and their employees to employ sustainable practices including reducing waste and greenhouse gas emissions, increasing energy process and building efficiency (in existing or renovated structures), reducing energy costs, conserving water, and reducing transportation impacts.

**5.12 Home Occupations**
The city will evaluate regulations for home based occupations to balance potential impacts to residential neighborhoods and reflect the goal of allowing more flexibility to have home based businesses, neighborhood services, and employment opportunities. The city supports the entrepreneurial activity of residents, including those who are in the very early stages of creating startup companies or providing neighborhood services. The city recognizes that home-based businesses play a role in helping to reduce vehicle miles traveled and supports efforts to reduce the number and length of trips through working from home. The city will revise its regulations to be responsive to new uses and types of businesses and neighborhood services that may be compatible with residential areas.

**5.13 Responsive to Changes in the Marketplace**
The city recognizes that development regulations and processes have an impact on the ability of business to respond to changes in the marketplace. The city will work with the local business community and the community at large to make sure the city’s policies, regulations, and development review processes provide a level of flexibility to allow for creative solutions while meeting broader community goals. This could involve modifying regulations to make them more responsive to emerging technologies and evolving industry sectors and continually improving the application and permitting process.

**New Policy: Economic Resilience**
As part of a national and global economy, the city and county are intricately linked to large scale social and economic forces beyond their control that may nevertheless effect the overall economic strength and vitality of the community. Changes in macro-economic forces, such as rising interest rates, volatility in energy markets, or changes in federal support for national research labs, as examples, can alter the economic prospects of the community in both the short- and medium-term. To better buffer against these and other potential disruptions, the city and county will proactively identify potential threats through an economic resilience assessment and continue existing fiscally conservation accounting policies that reduce the exposure of the community to unexpected economic downturns.

Additionally, local and regional disasters and other disruptive events can disrupt local businesses and threaten the livelihood of community members. Returning to operations as quickly as possible buffers the economic shock a disaster can cause. As a result, the city and county will work with local businesses to assist them in proactively developing preparedness and continuity of operations plans and facilitating rapid damage assessments post-disaster so they can rapidly access recovery funds and return to operations.
Job Opportunities, Education and Training

5.14 Employment Opportunities
The city and county will encourage local employers to provide employment opportunities for all persons including the local unemployed and underemployed work force, and to implement equal opportunity and workplace diversity programs in cooperation with various agencies providing employment assistance programs.

5.15 Partnerships to Support Economic Vitality Goals
The efforts of the city and the private sector to enhance the economic prosperity of the community are directly and indirectly supported by many organizations and entities, including but are not limited to Boulder Chamber, Boulder Convention and Visitors Bureau, Boulder Economic Council, the Boulder Independent Business Alliance, Boulder Small Business Development Center, Boulder Valley School District, CO-LABS, Downtown Boulder Partnership, Innosphere, Latino Chamber of Boulder County, the University of Colorado and other diverse and emerging groups. Though each has an independent focus, their work contributes to the overall quality of life enjoyed within the community.

5.16 Support for the University of Colorado and Federal Labs
The city and county understand the important role that federally-funded labs and the University of Colorado play in our economy and will continue to work with our state and federal elected officials regarding their important economic contribution. The city will take an active role in efforts to preserve the state and federal funding for these entities to ensure they remain in Boulder and will pursue mutually beneficial partnerships. The city recognizes the importance of having strong institutions for higher education, continuing education and workforce training thrive in the community. Also, the seminal role of the University of Colorado, a world class research university, and the federal labs in business support, technology transfer and tech startups needs to be fully understood, evaluated and enhanced. The city will work with CU to further the community’s goals for sustainable urban form as university owned land is developed or redeveloped.

5.17 Diverse Workforce, Education and Training
The city and county will encourage and support the Boulder Valley School District and post-secondary educational institutions to offer quality continuing education and technical training. The city will work with employers, educators, and partners to support programs designed to help develop and attract workers in multiple fields with specialized skills and experience.
5. Economy

Boulder’s highly-educated workforce, quality of life, high concentration of companies in growing industries, rich base of small, local and independent businesses, and synergies with the University of Colorado and federally-funded research labs are the foundation of its economic vitality. The city fosters and retains high-caliber employees and talented entrepreneurs and has earned recognition as one of the nation’s best places for startups.

A balanced approach to a healthy economy maintains the outstanding quality of life enjoyed by existing residents and businesses while supporting Boulder’s diverse mix of small and mid-sized businesses as well as several large employers. Boulder recognizes that economic strength can bring many benefits to the community including greater tax revenues, local job opportunities, increased diversity, a variety of services and business types and physical improvements.

While the city is fortunate to enjoy economic success, it also faces challenges. Cyclical global and economic downturns affect the local economic climate, and rising costs of commercial space and housing can affect businesses and their ability to recruit and retain new employees. Additionally, redevelopment or growth in the Boulder Valley may lead to displacement of existing businesses, increase demands for services and infrastructure, and strain regional transportation systems and local housing affordability throughout the Boulder Valley.

Boulder also recognizes that economic growth can bring many benefits to the community including greater tax revenues, local job opportunities, increased diversity, a variety of services and business types and physical improvements. The city will collaborate with the business community to facilitate growth, development and infrastructure improvements that benefit residents and businesses alike.

Through its Resilience Strategy, the city is adopting strategies to foster preparedness for uncertainty and disruptions to economic prosperity. Boulder is also following a sustainable path to economic development through the implementation of an Economic Sustainability Strategy that focuses on business formation, retention and growth. The policies in this section support the following goals related to maintaining a sustainable and resilient economy:

- Strategic Redevelopment and Sustainable Employment
- Diverse Economic Base
- Quality of Life
- Sustainable and Resilient Business Practices
- Job Opportunities, Education and Training

**Strategic Redevelopment Opportunities and Sustainable Employment**

5.01 Revitalizing Commercial and Industrial Areas

The city will develop specific supports place-based strategies that to support optimize redevelopment of commercial and industrial areas. Revitalization should support and enhance these areas, conserve their strengths, and minimize displacement of users. Revitalization should reflect the unique characteristics and amenities in those areas and nearby neighborhoods.

Examples of commercial and industrial areas for revitalization that have been identified in...
previous planning efforts are Diagonal Plaza, and University Hill commercial district, Gunbarrel, and the East Boulder industrial area.

The city will use a variety of tools to create public/private partnerships that lead to successful redevelopment. These tools may include, but are not limited to, area planning with community input, infrastructure improvements, shared parking strategies, transit options and hubs, and changes to zoning or development standards and incentives including (e.g., financial incentives, increased development potential, or urban renewal authority). The city acknowledges that displacement and loss of service and affordable retail uses can result from redevelopment. The goals of any redevelopment and area planning efforts must carefully consider these potential consequences and implications for area business owners.

5.02 Regional Job Center

The city is one of several job centers in the region, and significant additional employment growth is projected in the future. The city will adopt policies and supports strategies that support the city’s further Boulder’s continued role as a regional job center, in the future consistent with sustainability goals and projected employment growth, and The city recognizes the importance of regional planning and partnerships for housing and transportation and will continue to address related-impacts on housing affordability and transportation related to its role as a regional job center. The city will support the growth and success of existing businesses, including primary and secondary employers. The city will continue to develop, maintain and enhance its transportation infrastructure on both a local and regional level in order to support Boulder’s economic vitality. The city recognizes that further developing its transportation system could help address impacts from in-commuting.

Diverse Economic Base

5.03 Diverse Mix of Uses and Business Types

The city and county will support a diversified employment base within the Boulder Valley, reflecting labor force capabilities and recognizing the community’s strengths in a number of industries in scientific, professional, technological and related industries and quality of life. Therefore, the city will identify areas that should be protected for industrial, service and office uses and will evaluate areas with non-residential zoning to ensure the existing and future economic vitality of Boulder while responding to the needs of a rapidly changing and technologically-oriented global economy and employment base are adequately accommodated.

As an integral part of redevelopment and area planning efforts, the city acknowledges that displacement and loss of service and affordable retail uses will be considered in the context of redevelopment and planning goals.

5.04 Vital and Productive Retail Base

The city recognizes the importance of its retail base and will develop and implement a retail strategy that takes into account emerging trends such as shifting demographics and changing consumer behavior, addresses the market opportunities and shopping needs of the community, ensures an appropriate mix of retail, and identifies strategies to improve the retail base and the city’s sales tax revenues, including maintaining affordable retail space.
5.05 Support for Local Business and Business Retention

The city and county deeply value and recognize the significant contribution of existing and homegrown businesses in the local economy and will work to nurture, and support, established businesses and maintain a positive climate to retain business. The city recognizes the vital role of small, local, and independent businesses that serve the community and the importance of balancing needs with redevelopment in certain areas with strategies that minimize their displacement.

The city will support the growth and success of a diverse mix of businesses, including primary and secondary employers of all sizes. Boulder’s economic sustainability and resilience efforts recognize the importance of jobs already in the city; business retention and support for existing and homegrown companies and jobs is a priority. The city and county recognize the need to retain businesses in Boulder County as they grow and will consider projected needs, including those of their employees, such as commercial and office space, transportation infrastructure and housing. Business retention and expansion is a primary focus for the city. The existing jobs that are in Boulder are the city’s most important jobs.

New Policy: Affordable Business Space and Diverse Employment Base

The city and county acknowledge that rising costs of commercial space can affect businesses and affordability and will further explore the issue and identify methods to better support businesses in addressing this issue. Methods may include strategies, addressing regulatory issues, or new programs. The city recognizes that the rising costs of commercial space and housing can disproportionately affect lower-income and minority residents and small businesses and non-profits and will develop strategies to maintain a range of options to support a diverse workforce and employment base.

5.06 Industry Clusters

The city will adopt and continue to support an industry cluster approach to business development and consider special financial and technical assistance programs and other tools to retain, expand and attract businesses in those clusters. Cluster efforts focus on supporting multiple businesses in an industry. Boulder’s primary clusters include the technological and scientific sectors, natural and organic products, biosciences, active living / outdoor recreation, clean technology and creative arts. Boulder’s key industry clusters include aerospace, bioscience, clean tech, data storage, digital media, natural and organic products, recreation, software, tourism and the creative sector. Boulder acknowledges that these clusters and their needs will evolve and change over time.

Quality of Life

5.07 Funding City Services and Urban Infrastructure

The city will encourage a strong sustainable economy to generate revenues to fund quality city services for the public that are consistent with community goals and character and.

The city recognizes that urban infrastructure, facilities, services, and amenities are important to the quality of life of residents, employees and visitors to the community. A strong and complete local and regional transportation system and transportation demand management programs are essential to a thriving economy, as they can offer options for commuters, help attract and retain key businesses and employers as well as visitors, and provide regional access to global markets. The city will continue to plan for and invest in urban amenities and infrastructure such as bike
paths, parks, shared and managed parking, public spaces, quality gathering places, cultural destinations, and public art; as well as community services including but not limited to open space and mountain parks, high speed internet, fire-rescue, public safety, and senior services.

5.08 Role of Tourism in the Economy
Recognizing the importance of tourism (e.g., heritage, cultural, sports and open space) to the unique qualities of Boulder economy, the city will continue to work supports ongoing tourism efforts with various partners including the Boulder Convention and Visitors Bureau to study the existing and future role of different types of tourism in the community, track the benefits and impact of tourism on the economy, and invest in ways to support and enhance the sector.

5.09 Role of Arts, Cultural, Historic and Parks and Recreation Amenities Programs
The city and county will support the resiliency, sustainability and innovation of arts, cultural, historic, parks and recreation amenities so they continue to contribute to the economic vitality of the community, provide unique offerings, foster meaningful connections to Boulder among its residents, workforce, and visitors; and offer additional benefit to the community and encourage further development of arts and cultural programs that can serve as attractors for new business investment and visitors to the city. The city values the arts within the public realm and will work to support and as appropriate enhance the capacity of arts and culture, historic preservation, and parks and recreation to act as an economic generator, important contributors to economic vitality and quality of life. (Note: See also the Built Environment chapter.)

5.10 New Policy: Communications
The city support and county will support and facilitate the development of technologically-advanced communications infrastructure and other improvements that will provide support to the community, help businesses thrive and grow as well as facilitate the growth of emerging telecommunications industries, and support emergency systems.

Sustainable and Resilient Business Practices

5.11 New Policy: Sustainable Business Practices
The city will promote and encourage sustainable and energy efficient business practices and. The city will continue to establish and maintain programs to assist and encourage businesses and their employees individuals to employ sustainable practices including reducing waste and greenhouse gas emissions, increasing energy process and building efficiency (in existing or renovated structures), reducing energy costs, conserving water, employing sustainable practices, making building renovations to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and reducing transportation impacts.

5.12 New Policy: Home Occupations
The city will evaluate regulations for home based occupations to balance potential impacts to residential neighborhoods and reflect the goal of allowing more flexibility to have home based businesses, neighborhood services, and employment opportunities. The city supports the entrepreneurial activity of residents, including those who are in the very early stages of creating start-up companies or providing neighborhood services. The city recognizes that home-based businesses play a role in helping to reduce vehicle miles traveled and supports people’s efforts
to reduce the number and length of trips through working from home. The city will revise its regulations to be responsive to new uses and types of businesses, and neighborhood services that may be compatible with residential areas.

5.13 **New Policy: Responsive to Changes in the Marketplace**

The city recognizes that development regulations and processes have an impact on the ability of business to respond to changes in the marketplace. The city will work with the local business community and the community at large to make sure the city’s policies, regulations, and development review processes provide a level of flexibility to allow for creative solutions while meeting broader community goals. This could involve modifying regulations to make them more responsive to emerging technologies and evolving industry sectors and continually improving the application and permitting process.

**New Policy: Economic Resilience**

As part of a national and global economy, the city and county are intricately linked to large scale social and economic forces beyond their control that may nevertheless affect the overall economic strength and vitality of the community. Changes in macro-economic forces, such as rising interest rates, volatility in energy markets, or changes in federal support for national research labs, as examples, can alter the economic prospects of the community in both the short- and medium-term. To better buffer against these and other potential disruptions, the city and county will proactively identify potential threats through an economic resilience assessment and continue existing fiscally conservation accounting policies that reduce the exposure of the community to unexpected economic downturns.

Additionally, local and regional disasters and other disruptive events can disrupt local businesses and threaten the livelihood of community members. Returning to operations as quickly as possible buffers the economic shock a disaster can cause. As a result, the city and county will work with local businesses to assist them in proactively developing preparedness and continuity of operations plans and facilitating rapid damage assessments post-disaster so they can rapidly access recovery funds and return to operations.

**Job Opportunities, Education and Training**

5.14 **Employment Opportunities**

The city and county will encourage local employers to provide employment opportunities for all persons including the local unemployed and underemployed work force, and to implement equal opportunity and workplace diversity programs in cooperation with various agencies providing employment assistance programs.

5.15 **Business Partnerships to Support Economic Vitality Goals**

The efforts of the city and the private sector to enhance the economic prosperity of the community are directly and indirectly supported by many organizations and entities. These include but are not limited to the University of Colorado, Downtown Boulder Inc., Boulder Chamber, Boulder Convention and Visitors Bureau, Boulder Economic Council, Boulder Convention and Visitors Bureau, the Boulder Independent Business Alliance, Boulder Innovation Center, Boulder Small Business Development Center, Boulder Valley School District, CO-LABS, Downtown Boulder Partnership, Innosphere, Latino Chamber of Boulder County, Boulder Small Business Development Center, Boulder Valley School District, the Boulder Independent Business...
Association, CO-LABS, the University of Colorado and other diverse and emerging groups. Though each has an independent focus, their work contributes to the overall quality of life enjoyed within the community.

5.16 Support for the University of Colorado and Federal Labs

The city and county understand the central important role that the federally-funded labs and the University of Colorado play in our economy and will continue to work with our state and federal elected officials regarding their important economic contribution. The city will take an active role in efforts to preserve the state and federal funding for these entities to ensure they remain in Boulder and will pursue mutually beneficial partnerships. The city recognizes the importance of having strong institutions for higher education, continuing education and workforce training thriving in the community. Also, the seminal role of the University of Colorado, a world class research university, and the federal labs in business support, technology transfer and tech startups and entrepreneurial business creation needs to be fully understood, evaluated and enhanced. The city will work with CU to further the community’s goals for sustainable urban form as university owned land is developed or redeveloped.

5.17 New Policy: Diverse Workforce, Education and Training

The city and county will encourage and support the Boulder Valley School District as well as the variety of post-secondary educational institutions to offer quality continuing education and vocational-technical training. The city will work with employers, educators, and partners to support programs designed to help develop and attract workers in multiple fields with specialized skills and experience. The city will support efforts to add focused workforce vocational training facilities, including those that provide training for “green” jobs.