



Summary of Information and Input from the Dec. 5, 2012 Open House

MEETING PURPOSE and ATTENDANCE

The Dec. 5 open house, “Let’s FOCUS on the details,” was an opportunity for the community to learn what the planning process had accomplished so far, gain better understanding of the challenges and opportunities that shape future possibilities for the Boulder Civic Area, and provide input on near-term changes that can improve the experience of the area until larger changes can be implemented. [Growing Up Boulder](#) students presented their work before the city’s portion of the meeting began. Then, the city began its meeting with a staff presentation, did brief keypad polling, and then opened three public participation stations related to information covered in the staff presentation. The following themes were addressed in the presentation and at the stations:

- the flood risks and the accompanying flood safety regulations;
- the relationship between buildable areas and proposed building programs;
- the idea of a “catalytic” near-term project; and
- what comes next: the Ideas Competition.

Most of the open house attendees were Boulder residents between the ages of 25 and 75. About a third of the participants were from central Boulder, and about a third were between the ages of 60 and 75. One quarter of attendees came from outside of Boulder. This was the first Boulder Civic Area meeting for many of the attendees. Thirty-five percent had only participated online, and for 33 percent, this was their first exposure to the Boulder Civic Area planning process.

PUBLIC INPUT

Community input was gathered through keypad polling, comments posted on the boards and site capacity map, and through submitted comment forms. Overall, public input favored changes to:

- make the Boulder Civic Area a safer and more welcoming place by improving the existing park areas and streets;
- reconfigure the Farmers’ Market; and
- program more events and activities.

Specific ideas for near-term improvements appeared across several themes:

- public space amenities (art-focused and events-driven) to activate unused areas;
- getting started on a performing arts center; and
- improving the safety of the area.

Specific ideas for flood planning covered a broader set of themes:

- move city buildings/offices out of the 100-year flood risk areas;
- adapt landscaping and parking to mitigate flood impacts;
- build new structures to withstand flood impacts;
- recheck the flood modeling; and
- improve flood awareness through education and addressing flood risk with the first guiding principle.

One clear theme emerged from looking at new programmatic ideas and tradeoffs, which addressed the flexibility and adaptability of existing and new structures. Making the area safe and family friendly was strongly supported in the audience polling, as well as in the priorities, when asked, “what’s your highest priority for the near term?”

Poster Boards

Poster boards invited community input at each of the open house stations.

What are your near-term improvement ideas?

- Free bus route connecting improvement area + 29th St. or other tourist/shopping attraction
- Improved whitewater feature for whitewater kayaking upstream of the pedestrian bridge could see minimal work/improvement and Attract a lot of use
- I’d like sprinklers- Wyatt (4)
- Move the ‘Atrium’ Building
- Water features/movable parts for children
- Water play areas, please!
- Farmers Market Shuttles- agreement w/ 29th St Mall
- Loved the idea that you all base your projects and ideas off of the guiding principles as a design students at CU, we relate these to The Hanover Principles
- Remove the Bandshell
- I’ve lived in Boulder for many years and I know that people enjoy festivals around this area, so in the civic area, increase diverse performances, food, etc. More diversity!!
- Whitewater Kayak feature. Improve with standing wave
- City Offices need to be removed from the area. They take up too much room and present difficulty in citizen access (really amounts to denial of service)
- Let’s don’t delay on the Performing Arts Center
- Start process to build performing arts center
- Deal with Homeless + people not feeling safe in this area
- The boulder sitting/playing spaces on Pearl Street are super successful. Tie the Civic Area to Pearl St. with similar natural sitting/play spaces. Its Boulder after all.
- Question if it is premature to create a design theme b/4 we have a more concrete plan

Planning for the flood zone: what is your input?

- Move city offices out of
 - Park Central
 - New Britain Bldg
 - Atrium Bldg
 - Arap Ave + 13th St BldgsInto a new city building constructed on the civic pad (Canyon & 10th)
- Recheck flood modeling for Boulder + Whiterock + Boulder Slough. This is where all the water will go.
- Emphasize long-term plan for relocating the entire municipal campus to a new location OUT of the flood zone
- More focus on the planning area. How potential development there relates to primary focus area. Needs of Boulder can be met in both areas. Private land can be bought by the city if needed.
- Make Flood Safety the #1 Guiding Principle on the list.
- Do more education about floods during these events. The little bit you said was good but nowhere near enough
- A: The scrapsisters propose building a sunken skatepark next to the creek that would double as a cistern in the event of a flood. B: of “cistern park”. This feature would include a perpetual graffiti wall showcasing community art groups. 363.641.3243
- Consider removing Municipal Build as one option and building a larger municipal building that would meet future needs and be in a lower impact location.
- 100 year flood danger is overstated. The assumptions do not match with reality Conditions are far different from th 1894 flood.

What do you think about the new program ideas and tradeoffs?

- Move the senior center out of the floodplain
- Public all-season indoor volleyball (not beach volleyball)

Civic Area Potential Site Capacity Map

- Move Muni to other location because of flood
- Atrium Bldg would make a great Science Museum
- Performing Arts Center! Perfect! [arrow points to Canyon and 13th)
- (4) Big Performing Arts Center
- Open Path by Rink
- Science Center #4 [arrow points to Atrium Bldg]

Comment Forms

Station 1: What ideas do you think could be carried out within a few years for a relatively small investment?

- Remove the bandshell; Create more of a garden and park environment; Make the area attractive and useful to visitors – not just citizens of Boulder. (part of making Boulder a destination)
- I would like to see the alley between Walnut and Pearl better utilized. It's used informally now by both pedestrians and bikes but it's a great space for an art walk. Lots of spaces and corners for sculpture and huge brick walls for murals. It's not in the focus area but it's important to me.
- Make area safe and family friendly. Begin planning for a performing arts center and Boulder Museum as a joint project.
- I think we should be focusing and planning for a performing arts center and move it along as fast as possible!
- Playgrounds and parks should be relatively low cost. Boulder seems to lack some nice playgrounds. Seattle recently started a community edible garden in a park, which I think is a neat idea. The problem is that transients tend to like parks which can make an area feel unsafe.
- Public art (placed so it could be moved when larger changes occur). Events! Support of local non-profits to make use of the bandshell and other areas.
- As a catalyst for cultural activities. Seriously consider a science museum in the Atrium building.
- Make municipal building accessible for pedestrians with an entry way on the east.
- Add more activity at all times to increase security.
- Public art call; events in outdoor spaces; solve drainage issues.
- Stay tuned for a surprise idea concerning food carts for Boulder High School kids (for more information contact the scrapsisters 303-641-3243)
- 13th Street Plaza; to accommodate farmer's market/tea house; Carl Worthington's proposal
- Not a small investment, but let's build a performing arts center.

Station 2: What are the best ways to avoid and prepare for potential flash flooding?

- Elevate parking – use the first floor as permanent home for farmers market. It would be covered. Need to make attractive and not just a concrete parking structure.
- Improve creek channel. Provide storage areas and drain-off places.
- Limited and carefully channel the creek.
- Work with students at CU and CO School of Mines about flood planning – they work for free! Students also often think outside the box and can come up with creative ideas on how to handle this potential problem.

- Look regionally (beyond the site) – hire consultants whose expertise is in that area. Think outside the box. Solve the drainage issue so it doesn't stop the great ideas (i.e., change the landscaping).
- Plan the site and parking to ameliorate flooding.
- Creek needs to be thoroughly explored and landscape planned around it. Solve drainage issues.
- The scrapsisters propose building a skate park near the creek that will double as a cistern in the event of a flood. Also, 'cistern park' would include a perpetual graffiti wall that will showcase any community art.
- Most of the danger has already been taken care of. Damage from 100 year will be minimal.
- Remove surface parking and make sure new buildings are designed to withstand a flood event.

What park improvements might be appropriate within the non-buildable floodplain—the HHZ?

- Pervious surface parking, if we must have/implement more parking. Only “no” to farmer’s market expansion areas (below) if it’s going to be a year-round thing because then it will be too important of a landmark in the community to use.
- Performing arts center could be built and operating in five years.
- Identify a few facilities which can anchor places, such as the museum of Boulder and the performing arts center.
- Could transform existing building for civic use (i.e., Atrium building)
- Remove buildings, create elevated parking, add ponds to hold overflow.

Improvement	Yes	Maybe	No
Playground	5	5	2
Outdoor stage/amphitheater	7	5	2
Improved park (lawn)	7	3	1
Public art installation	8	5	
Bike paths and facilities such as bike racks	7	4	1
Walking paths and pedestrian amenities, such as seating	9	4	
Natural area (e.g., creekside)	7	4	
Gardens	8	3	2
Farmers’ Market expansion areas	4	7	1
Other: Performing arts center	2		
Other: Outdoor seating	1		
Other: Solar powered lighting	1		
Other: Reclaimed material art	1		

Station 3: What feedback do you have about possible facilities and tradeoffs?

- Whatever is decided, make the facilities and infrastructure adaptable to future needs/wants.
- I personally think that Boulder would benefit most from a concert hall/performing arts complex and a science museum. I believe these are two essential aspects to Boulder culture and yet somehow we lack the facilities to present and explore.
- Whatever is done needs to be economically viable – meet community needs and desires but not rely exclusively on city resources to thrive.
- Most important in existing buildings or those to be constructed are new cultural opportunities such as museum and public art installation.
- Acquire private property along Arapahoe. Move Atrium building and put city offices elsewhere. Give Atrium new life as an exhibit hall/farmers’ market shelter/events center. Add performing arts building.
- Major park and natural areas where football field is. Move football field/track elsewhere or combine with other facilities.
- Our idea to enliven the bandshell borrows inspiration from Waveney in New Cannan, Connecticut. During the summer months, once a week (on a weeknight) a nationally known musician will perform a free public concert (sponsored by local businesses). Families come to watch and bring a fancy picnic and enjoy an old fashioned community-building event.
- Obviously, a performing arts center should be a top priority.