



POLICY Framework

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Boulder, Colorado

2024

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Policy Development and Principles of Good Governance

The Boulder Chamber develops policy positions based on feedback from the community, our members, the Community Affairs Council and final approval by the Boulder Chamber Board of Directors.

The Boulder Chamber recognizes that Boulder’s long-term economic stability requires policy rooted in good governance principles, reflects broadly representative inclusive and extensive feedback and is informed by strong data and analysis.

Our policy process includes convening and collaborating with community groups and local, regional and national leadership to identify the most sustainable solutions for our community and economy. The Boulder Chamber approaches public debate over policy issues in an intentionally constructive fashion, seeking to bridge the spectrum of competing perspectives and arrive at solutions that advance Boulder’s long-term interests.

What is the Policy Framework?

This Policy Framework highlights the issues most critical to Boulder’s economy, our member businesses and organizations and sets the policy positions that guide our work.

The Boulder Chamber seeks to balance the long and short-term economic vitality of our community with Boulder’s environmental goals and social objectives.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Transportation | Housing | Land Use

ISSUE AREAS & POSITIONS

Local and Regional Transportation

Effective regional and local transportation networks that include environmentally sustainable forms of transportation and serve the transportation needs of historically underserved groups (HUGs) are key for our community's economic vitality, environmental sustainability and public health.

The city of Boulder is a regional employment center, but because housing and the cost of living are more expensive than in neighboring municipalities, more than half of the people who work in Boulder live outside of the city. This creates a significant demand on our transportation system and services. Therefore, it is important that commuters - both from regional destinations and between residential and commercial nodes within the city - have access to reliable multimodal transportation options.

The guiding vision for our local and regional transportation networks is to make them as efficient as possible. That means investing in all modes of travel, including public

transit, shared micromobility (bicycles and scooters), and infrastructure that supports a variety of sustainable modes, as well as ensuring that those who need to drive can do so efficiently. We support expanding the range of sustainable, equitable, and reliable mobility choices for Boulder's workforce and the larger community.

Regional sustainable transportation infrastructure investments can stimulate our economy, which is why the Boulder Chamber advocates for the following priorities:

TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE & PROGRAMMATIC PLANNING

Ensure balanced planning for all modes of travel and a broad range of users. Include planning efforts related to parking availability, expanded mobility options, improved bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, and business and freight access.

Expand affordable, flexible transit services led by public/private partnerships that are destination-oriented and designed to effectively connect our workforce from where they live to where they work. This includes investments that support our regional commuting workforce, as well as options that serve travel between housing and commercial nodes within the city.

Support Vision Zero and

Safe Systems approaches to transportation and land use planning and traffic engineering that prioritize safety measures to ensure that all modes can operate safely and efficiently within our transportation system.

Provide a more equitable transportation environment by removing current requirements for a minimum number of parking spaces for each residential and commercial development and incentivizing investments in transportation alternatives. This will allow developers to invest in higher-quality amenities for the good of residents and visitors, and will improve access to infrastructure that supports walking, bicycling, taking transit, and using shared micromobility modes.

Preserve and expand Boulder's RTD EcoPass or a similar bulk purchase models to make transit access available for all members of our workforce. Work to link these bulk purchase models across transit and other micromobility modes. Implement improvements identified in the East Arapahoe Transportation Plan, the City of Boulder and Boulder County's respective Transportation Master Plans, RTD's Northwest Area Mobility Study, and the Denver Metro Region's Mobility Choice Blueprint.

Advocate for regional mobility investments for

State Highway 119/Diagonal Highway and State Highway 7/ East Arapahoe and continue advocating for delivery of the promised FasTracks investments, such as completing the Northwest Rail line.

With the recent availability of funding from the federal government, we also support the construction of the Front Range Passenger Rail, including routing through Boulder. Using the opportunity associated with federal support for Front Range Passenger Rail, make sure that the Northwest Rail Line is completed with a connection through Boulder.

Ensure the timely completion of the Boulder Junction Access District (BJAD), as it represents not only an ideal for transit-oriented development with affordable housing, but it was also initiated on the promise from RTD that BJAD would become the next transit hub. Continue to advocate for restoration of BJAD transit service and the reopening of the Boulder Junction at Depot Square Station.

Give equivalent priority to effective and convenient first- and last-mile connections. While regional transit connections between communities are essential, our workforce, students, and visitors also need convenient access between those regional transit services and their origins/destinations.

Support and promote new teleworking policies and programs that effectively provide for the continuity of business activity in a remote working environment.

Work to devise effective and convenient multi-modal solutions for the new visitor developments, including the Moxy Hotel on University Hill and the Limelight Hotel and Conference Center facilities, creating connectivity to other important visitor



destination nodes, while giving consideration to infrastructure investments that can serve wider cross-community travel.

Recognizing the increased interest in and funding available for electric vehicles and electric chargers, work with regionwide stakeholders to leverage that funding to increase electric vehicle purchases and charger installation in a manner that avoids imposing a cost burden on buyers and businesses.

Seek additional funding and partnerships to support the efforts of the Boulder Chamber's Transportation Connections (BCTC) team to educate our local businesses and their respective workforce on mobility options and to develop new commute trip reduction (CTR) programs that facilitate convenient, efficient and sustainable workforce commutes.

INNOVATIONS & NEW FORMS OF MOBILITY

Developing customized transportation solutions for our local businesses and their workforce will depend on deploying advanced technologies that meet unique mobility needs. We support exploring Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies and other new, innovative technology solutions that are responsive to commute patterns and provide lasting



benefits and permanent solutions. Along these lines, the Boulder Chamber will support development of the newly formed Transit-Oriented Zones proposed in the East Boulder Subcommunity Plan. These new zones support a rich investment in mobility services in close proximity to dense housing and mixed-use development.

MICRO-MOBILITY PILOTS & INNOVATION

In order to better meet the mobility needs of our commuting workforce, we support expanded public/private sector service partnerships. These partnerships include micromobility and on-demand microtransit solutions that connect residential neighborhoods to employer centers. As a catalyst for these partnership efforts, we support targeted pilot initiatives for East Boulder (including the Flatirons Business Park), Gunbarrel, and other area throughout Boulder that have a lack of mobility

services and connectivity to employment centers and to regional transit stops. Of particular significance, we emphatically encourage the continuation and growth of the RTD Partnership Program pilot fund that will allow for the creation of the public-private partnership shuttle services to major transit hubs, like the Gunbarrel Shuttle.

TRANSPORTATION FINANCING & INVESTMENTS

Prioritize implementation of large-scale campaign to educate employers and employees on HB22-1026, a State General Assembly bill passed in 2022 that will allow employers to get a 50% tax credit for the costs of alternative transportation benefits, such as EcoPasses, vanpool, carpool, BCycle, CarShare and more. BCTC will promote the tax credit and support interested parties through the entire process, from determining the most cost-effective transportation benefits to offer employees to program implementation and

data reporting.

Advocate for dedicated, long-term state, regional and local transportation funding that invests in the needs of all travel modes and funds ongoing operations and maintenance, as well as capital investments.

Funding sources should avoid imposing an undue or disproportionate cost burden solely on businesses and their workforce.

Seek an equitable distribution of transportation funds across Colorado that secures a fair share of resources for our region.

BOTTOM LINE

The Boulder Chamber supports collaborative, innovative, local, and regional transportation.

Planning and investments for multiple modes of transportation expand the choices for community members and in doing so, supports business activity, economic vitality, environmental sustainability, and public health.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Transportation | **Housing** | Land Use



ISSUE AREAS & POSITIONS

Mixed-use, higher-density development that incorporates affordable and middle-income housing near transit

Providing more live work options for creative professionals, including new special residential zoning for artists

Revising/removing exclusionary land use designations, zoning, and regulatory barriers in specific areas

Generating housing products conducive to retaining younger members of our workforce

Reducing high land costs -- land leases and land trusts

Incentivising projects incorporating high-quality design that contributes to community character.

Supporting creative housing financing opportunities, such as down payment assistance programs.

HOUSING INCENTIVES, REGULATION & PREDICTABILITY

The Boulder Chamber advocates for increased efficiencies and improvements in the housing review and approval processes, and a reduction of regulatory requirements for affordable and workforce housing.

These could include:

Revisiting height limit restrictions, continuing to allow for a broader allowance of height

Creating incentives around height exemptions for projects that incorporate high-quality design

Creating fewer restrictions for affordable developments under 55 feet

Studying the most effective solutions for incentivizing affordable and workforce housing proposals

We oppose retroactive actions, moratoriums and/or the quick implementation of regulations that prevent projects from moving forward or impose further restrictions on projects that are in the review process. This negatively impacts businesses and the clients they serve, often resulting in significant lost in financial investment, additional costs, and decreased income for scores of day laborers, contractors, and trade professionals that depend on the projects' work and timely advancement. We support state legislative efforts to amend Colorado's construction defects statutes to facilitate the development of for-sale entry-level multi-family housing.

County Issue 1B (passed in 2023) provides a sea change of dedicated funding for affordable workforce housing

in Boulder County. We encourage Boulder County to engage in a thorough stakeholder process to create a fair, efficient, and regionally equitable funding formula for the distribution of 1B resources.

We support the movement toward greater flexibility in zoning that supports mixed use housing and commercial development opportunities.

We encourage the move toward greater engagement of the development community in further refinements of development zoning and regulations in order to achieve community goals.



Even with the additional focus on affordable and attainable housing over the last five years, we recognize that none of the above programs are adequately funded. That is why the Boulder Chamber supports programs that incent development and redevelopment opportunities as a means of providing a diverse range of affordable and attainable housing choices for Boulder's workforce.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Transportation | Housing | **Land Use**

ISSUE AREAS & POSITIONS

Land Use, Development, and Redevelopment

The Boulder Chamber supports mixed-use development along transit corridors and in under-utilized commercial zones throughout Boulder, including the North Boulder Subcommunity and Transit Village Area Plan Phase 2. Higher density and mixed-use zoning in these locations promotes walkable access to employment, commercial services, and local/regional transportation alternatives. We applaud the City staff and City Council in their updates to the land use tables that provide greater flexibility, transparency and efficiency, and we encourage future City Councils to continue this process.

Development opportunities should seek to achieve Boulder's community-wide economic, social and environmental goals. At the same time, development regulations and codes should provide flexibility to deliver unique projects and innovative solutions that facilitate the redevelopment of commercial spaces to effectively address changing economic conditions.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN AREAS OF OPPORTUNITY

The Boulder Chamber's advocacy for infill and redevelopment adheres to the following principles:

To leverage existing transit corridors and other opportunities.

Advocate for an extra effort to expedite land use planning and permit review processes to help our community leverage housing development support resources in consideration of the new opportunity to access affordable housing funds through Proposition 123.

Incentives for greater floor area ratios than current zoning allows should be identified for areas where it's possible to increase housing.

Developing spaces and creative policies for small businesses to locate, grow and flourish within our community.

Substantive community-based dialogue with key stakeholders to advance future redevelopment that balances both neighborhood interests and community-wide goals. These planning efforts should not be deployed as a tool for delaying redevelopment opportunities.

Supporting adaptive reuse and redevelopment in ways that address current economic conditions and evolving needs for our businesses and the community.

Promote sub-area plans

that add density - which accommodates diverse housing options - in zones that have traditionally been exclusively commercial.

We support state-wide approaches to encouraging affordable transit-oriented development in a manner that compliments local efforts.

PROJECTS OF COMMUNITY SIGNIFICANCE

The Boulder Chamber advocates for significant development projects that support economic vitality and the community's quality of life and respond to the needs of local businesses. These include redevelopment opportunities and projects in areas such as Alpine/Balsam, Boulder Junction, TVAP Phase 2, Diagonal Plaza, East Boulder, University Hill and projects such as The Hill hotel, and the CU Hotel/Conference Center. We also support regional efforts to keep primary employers in Boulder County and the creation of new regional employment centers where opportunities exist for creative redevelopment projects.

CONTINUE TO PROTECT AND SUPPORT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CU BOULDER SOUTH

This annexation agreement addresses important community safety goals by facilitating the investment in flood mitigation infrastructure. It is notable that the University

is providing the land for flood mitigation purposes at no cost to the city. Further, the CU South annexation agreement provides dedicated development zones for much-needed housing of university faculty, staff, and upper division/graduate students, along with substantial open space set-asides and other outdoor recreation amenities available to the community. With successful voter approval of the annexation agreement between the University of Colorado and the City of Boulder, we will carefully monitor the final annexation stages for CU South to make sure it realizes its full vision for future workforce housing opportunities.

AFFORDABLE COMMERCIAL SPACES

Incentives can facilitate the creation and preservation of affordable commercial spaces for small businesses, start-ups, nonprofits, and creative professionals. Affordable commercial space is analogous to affordable housing, as the costs associated with office and commercial rents influence the affordability of services businesses can provide to Boulder’s residents. The price of real estate drives up overall costs, and high rental rates are also significantly influenced by the fees and costs that the City of Boulder imposes on our local businesses and on the development of new retail and commercial space.

Boulder should avoid implementing policies that create direct or indirect costs that typically cause increases in retail and commercial rental rates. To attract and retain local and regional businesses, Boulder must maintain competitive rates for commercial spaces that are affordable to all business



sizes and types. The Boulder Chamber will give additional scrutiny to measures that generate higher property taxes and will seek property tax relief for commercial spaces.

We encourage the commitment to a long-term economic strategy, with clear near-term steps, to create and preserve spaces for businesses that diversify employment centers. The results of these efforts will help provide space for critical incubators, innovation hubs and start-ups as part of future mixed-use developments. It will also ensure Class A office space is available to help retain

longtime Boulder companies in the city. Further, it will provide flexibility for nonprofits and shared spaces. We also encourage flexible policies and more permissive variances that allow for reconfiguring and subdividing spaces and other means of helping businesses respond to evolving public health protocols, changing

economic conditions and the opportunity for creative business models.

INDUSTRIAL LAND USES

The Boulder Chamber supports exploring increased density in industrial and commercial zones to accommodate future mixed-use development. However, the preservation of our Industrial areas is important, as the demand for this land use is currently very high throughout the Front Range. We must provide greater flexibility for our businesses to adjust and expand their building footprints to meet

evolving business needs. This means reducing the time and associated expense of planning reviews that inhibit responsiveness to new business opportunities.

New opportunities for innovation hubs, that include a mix of uses and services in the Light Industrial Zones, should be further explored for specific areas, such as East Boulder and Gunbarrel. We support efforts to modernize the City’s Use Tables to provide these types of opportunities.

LAND DEVELOPMENT AND REGULATIONS

Land use development decisions should meet a variety of social, cultural, and environmental goals in a sustainable manner while giving appropriate weight to our community’s economic vitality and the fair expectations of property owners. With that in mind, we support codes and processes as a community, that allow for outcomes based on data and input from those impacted. Land uses should be re-assessed in response to economic conditions.

As a community we should identify where taller buildings could be considered based on compatibility with the surroundings and consistency with the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan. The City of Boulder should allow for modification requests of up to 55 feet in specific areas throughout the city where

taller buildings are compatible with their surroundings and can help achieve community goals as defined in the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan.

INCENTIVIZE THE TYPE OF DEVELOPMENT WE SEEK FOR BOULDER’S FUTURE

The Boulder Chamber believes the City of Boulder should incentivize the desired redevelopment in targeted areas. Land use codes and Use Tables should be updated to allow for the evaluation of appropriate locations for housing, mixed use, commercial services, and various use types. Code changes that advance Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan policies should be prioritized



so projects can move forward that promote the adaptive re-use of buildings, revitalized commercial/industrial areas, walkable neighborhoods, and a mix of complementary land uses, while preserving existing affordable units.

AREA III PLANNING

The Boulder Chamber encourages a process to define a future vision or development plan for the Area III Planning Reserve. This will help the City of Boulder better prepare for development opportunities in that area. It also could establish a vision for Area III that is responsive to community values, rather than risk the absence of a plan and encourage by-right development that is not aligned with community needs. The Planning Reserve is an area where substantial density of housing could be achieved, and the effects of growth would have a limited impact on existing city residents.

This ±500-acre area of potentially annexable land is like no other. It is the only area where city leadership, as codified in the Comprehensive Plan, deemed an outlet for future growth. As with all annexable land, city services must be extended to it at a

cost borne by the property owners.

We should consider the Reserve as easily able to support 10-15 dwelling units per acre over the next 20 years. This achievable goal could serve both permanently affordable and workforce housing needs for our community that likely cannot be achieved within the city's current borders in any other manner.

THE CITY'S NORTHERN BOUNDARY

The city's northern border is a definable zone with minimal environmental impacts to the mountain backdrop, floodplain and wetland areas, or to agricultural lands. No views of the Flatirons are affected, and impacts to current residents from traffic, parking, and noise are minimal.

The policy of considering a 'major roadway' as an appropriate edge to the city has led to housing and other uses along that edge to turn their back to the boundary, rather than recognize it as an asset – as an opportunity to engage in the larger landscape, as an access to open space and trails and as an amenity for the community.

The city's edges should be planned for in a comprehensive way and recognized as a civic amenity. Cities that have defined natural feature boundaries turn towards

them. The Planning Reserve is a natural gateway. This is our opportunity to connect Boulder appropriately to its natural surroundings.

PARKING

The City of Boulder parking codes should be updated to fit contemporary requirements and adjusted in accordance with other goals, such as the relationship between parking, density, housing, clearly marked ADA accessible parking and access to transit. This should be balanced with the goal of maintaining adequate parking options and affordable prices for our businesses and their employees.

Easy physical access to amenities such as parks, open space, arts and culture, and shopping contributes to the quality of life of residents.

We need to ensure there is adequate parking in retail corridors/centers along with the appropriate signage and other mechanisms to conveniently direct customers to open parking zones. Parking code changes must caution against tightening the supply in proximity to office and retail services.

FLEXIBILITY IN PARKING REQUIREMENTS

City-wide regulations should maintain flexibilities that can be applied to our development guidelines and permitting processes so that commercial development and/

or redevelopment applications can show innovative approaches to meeting other city-wide sustainable transportation goals without being beholden to restrictive parking requirements.

REINVESTMENT OF PARKING REVENUES TO IMPROVE QUALITY OF LIFE

Parking revenue should be reinvested into the community to enhance mobility programs with broad benefits such as EcoPasses or subsidizing micro-mobility costs for low-income workers. As revenues

increase, we believe the investments should increase proportionally to improve mobility for residents and workers.

Increasing Parking Costs Requires a Comprehensive Strategy: Businesses often feel the effects of parking policies acutely. Meeting the increasing cost of parking should not be borne solely by the car traveler, the property owner, or the businesses, because they also benefit residents. With that in mind, the city should be rededicated to increase parking fees and

associated charges beyond what is reasonable to address cost inflations.

Street Closures: We understand and value the benefits of temporary street closures for community building purposes. We do not support street closures for periods that extend beyond high visitor traffic periods. This is especially a concern without robust analysis of the impacts to local businesses in the closure zone and the concerns for those who need equitable access.

RELATED LAND USE & REDEVELOPMENT ISSUES OF IMPORTANCE

Education Institutions & Federal Laboratories: The future vitality of our public education institutions and federal laboratories should be considered in all applicable planning and community development policies.

Arts & Culture: The Boulder Chamber believes incorporating arts and culture into planning creates a vibrant community. This includes efforts to create additional performance spaces, public art, and live/work housing options for artists. Public art should be recognized as a community benefit in site reviews. In order to encourage public art programs, the city should develop expedited streamlined processes.

High Speed Internet Access: Communication infrastructure is vital to support our economic, educational and social needs; it also creates jobs. Increased reliance on remote work options, as well as online shopping and service options, has elevated our dependence on broadband, which is why the Boulder Chamber advocates for accelerated investment to ensure businesses and families at every socio-economic level have the ability to access this resource.

In general, we support the effort to develop public/private partnerships, engaging public institutions and the technology sector, to establish high-speed internet infrastructure, because:

High-speed internet infrastructure is a critical service that allows Boulder's economy to remain regionally competitive.

Broadband infrastructure increases market competition, which is a positive element of a vibrant and innovative economy.

Ubiquitous broadband has been demonstrated to provide communities with higher speed service at lower costs, which are goals of both the public and private sectors.

Co-working spaces, commercial and residential uses need consistent, high-speed service to support telecommuting and reimagined



office spaces.

We need to close the digital divide for our residents and businesses to ensure equitable access to information, resources and economic opportunity.

NEW & EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES


The Boulder Chamber will work in partnership with the City of Boulder, Boulder County and our private sector internet providers to seek state and federal funding assistance to achieve our broadband access and reliability goals.

Our local infrastructure needs

to evolve to maintain Boulder's economic competitiveness and meet the needs of our workforce. The Boulder Chamber looks forward to technological advancements, such as R&D Research Labs, new and emerging land uses, and a 5G network, that provide our University, school districts, federal labs, and businesses with the latest technology tools.

5G enables a new kind of network to connect virtually everyone and everything, including machines, objects, and devices. 5G wireless technology is meant to deliver higher multi-Gbps peak data speeds, ultra-low latency,

more reliability, massive network capacity, increased availability, and a more uniform experience to more users. Higher performance and improved efficiency empower new user experiences and connect new industries.



BOTTOM LINE

The Boulder Chamber strongly advocates for infrastructure investments that enable high-speed internet access through public/private partnerships.

“If you bring the appropriate people together in constructive ways with good information, they will generate authentic visions and strategies for addressing the shared concerns of the organization or community.”

-David Chrislip & Carl Larson





WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Equity | Immigration

ISSUE AREAS & POSITIONS

Equity in Workforce Development

The Boulder Chamber recognizes the need for multi-faceted and equitable approach to workforce recruitment, training, and retention, for the benefit of businesses, individuals and society. Workforce development should not only help close the skills gap, but should also help combat economic inequality and help move Boulder toward greater workforce equity. Tailored workforce training and development should be available for talent prospects, whether someone has been unemployed for a long time; is a veteran, a woman, a person of color, or an older worker; didn't finish high school; has a disability; has a first language that is not English; or had past involvement with the criminal justice system.

While the Boulder Chamber has made strides to support and encourage more minority owned business development, through our own Equity Amplification Program and other DE&I initiatives, we encourage the city, county, and state governments to continue their investment in grants, low interest loans, mentorship, and

other programs to continue moving towards a more equitable and competitive marketplace.

EDUCATION & WORKFORCE TRAINING

High-quality educational systems at the K-12 and secondary levels not only allow our community to attract and retain talent, but also ensure every child receives a curriculum that gives them the necessary skills to meet workforce demands. As the foundation for a functioning society, we support opportunities and partnerships that improve the quality of our education system and generate innovative approaches to prepare our workforce for the future.

In light of significant changes in workforce dynamics, additional focus should be given to training and retraining skill-based programs, as well as work-based learning opportunities, that increase equitable access to skills needed at all levels of employment in our economy.

Opportunities to up-skill and re-skill individuals that prepare them for sustainable careers within our community.

State-level support for sustainable and stable funding across all education levels, including K-12 school districts and higher education institutions such as CU Boulder and Front Range Community College, is a key

component for preparing the future workforce and helping recruit and retain businesses and employees.

Increased funding for the establishment of new training programs that prepare our workforce for job pathways that require technical skills or career-specific training. Policies that support education institutions and private organizations to provide effective technical workforce training.

Efforts to bridge the local business community to St. Vrain Valley School District and Boulder Valley School District to ensure that our business talent and expertise are shared with schools and create pathways for students to enter our workforce.

Programs and policies that assist businesses in training and re-training workers to meet current job demand.

Business incentives for, and expansion of, opportunities that provide mid-career skill development and training, including continuing education programs, career-specific pathway training, and certificate programs.

Policies that create stronger connections and ease the transfer of credits between programs and institutions, including technical education, university classes, and community college programs.

Funding of our federal and state research facilities and initiatives, which contribute directly to Boulder and Colorado's economy, in addition to creating jobs. This includes Boulder's federal laboratories and the University of Colorado Boulder's facilities.

Opportunities to provide full pipeline access to and transferability of industry certifications that increase skill acquisition for jobs / careers available in our economy.

WORKFORCE RECRUITMENT & RETENTION

The Boulder Chamber supports policies that help businesses recruit and retain top talent.

Policies that help attract a diverse talent pool to meet employment needs.

Measures that make Boulder an attractive recruiting center for top talent, including high-quality public schools, job opportunities for other family members, a welcoming and diverse community, a thriving arts and cultural sector, an attractive quality of life, and housing affordability.

Regional programs and networks that match workforce skill sets with the needs of local businesses and employers.

Policies that support our workforce's mental health and well-being in times of stress or as they face societal

challenges.

Policies that equitably support populations disproportionately impacted by evolving economic and social conditions, helping them access new career opportunities.

MINIMUM WAGE

It is critical to our long-term economic sustainability to address income inequality and the challenge of keeping hard-working individuals out of poverty.

The minimum wage is just one mechanism for addressing these issues and is important for providing financial security and predictability to low-wage earners. While we supported a previous statewide minimum wage increase, we recognize that mandated wage increases can place an additional burden on certain industries more than others, especially some small businesses and nonprofit organizations. Wage discrepancies can be experienced acutely within specific industries, leading to inequality and undue impacts within compensation structures. That is why we believe it is necessary to thoroughly review the benefits and impacts of mandated wage increases before taking any future action in this area.

If local governments decide to raise the minimum wage, we encourage a regional approach that crosses as many jurisdictions as possible to ensure a level playing field for

ISSUE AREAS & POSITIONS

employers and their workers.

Prior to an increase in the minimum wage, impacts on specific industries should be fully considered.

If a local minimum wage increase occurs, we seek new support programs for targeted industries that would be disproportionately impacted.

Any minimum wage increase should be accompanied by a thorough understanding of current economic, business and workforce conditions and subsequent conditions should be monitored on a regular basis.



BOTTOM LINE

We support industry-led programs and policies that facilitate workforce recruitment and retention for businesses of all sizes and industry types. We also support community efforts to ensure Boulder is affordable for a racially, ethnically, and generationally diverse workforce, including CU graduates who aspire to stay in Boulder to live and work.



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Equity | Immigration

Immigration

Immigrant workers are vital to communities and industries across Colorado. Our immigration system particularly impacts our high-tech, agricultural, hospitality, and tourism sectors.

For these reasons and because of the human toll that our broken immigration system creates, the Boulder Chamber supports comprehensive immigration efforts.

Improvements in our immigration system will benefit Colorado's economy and provide a welcoming environment for immigrants in our community.

The Boulder Chamber urges lawmakers to seek legislative solutions to immigration policies, such as DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) and DAPA (Deferred Action for Parents of Americans), that provide protection for those currently living, working, and contributing to our communities from deportation, as well as longer term comprehensive solutions.

We also seek solutions to the H-1B visa programs to allow our businesses to employ workers with special skills from across the globe.

Asylum seekers must wait far too long to apply for work authorization. We implore our federal government to expedite the authorization of work permits as a means of relieving the strain on our human services and to help address immediate workforce shortages.



CLIMATE AND ENERGY

Colaborative Future | Related Issues

ISSUE AREAS & POSITIONS

Boulder's Collaborative Energy Future

The Boulder Chamber is committed to partnering on local and state-level efforts to become a leader in a thoughtful balance of our environmental and economic goals.

We believe clean energy powers the future of business and recognize that the sustainability of Boulder's economy depends on new developments in clean energy industries like wind, solar and smart-grid applications. At the same time, advancements in these technologies and the pursuit of new mechanisms for delivering electric services must adhere to critical values, such as price competitiveness, system reliability, and adequate access to energy resources.

The Boulder Chamber supports an energy future that collaboratively pursues climate protection goals and clean energy innovation commitments. Our current position concerning Boulder's energy future follows these principles:

We want to ensure policies protect business electric utility

rates and current, or better, reliability thresholds (which include resource adequacy and backup power systems). Costs, benefits, and impacts should inform new regulations. We support efforts to work with energy experts, industry partners, and members of the community to inform consumers and identify the most efficient and effective strategies to achieve our state and local climate protection and renewable energy goals.

We support public/private partnerships for informing and pursuing statewide legislative change that can increase alternative energy production, carbon neutrality, and new innovations in the electrification of our mobility systems, fuel, natural gas, and electricity use.

We support accelerating and expanding the adoption of collaborative and equitable policies that expand energy choices while meeting the need of businesses for reliability and affordable rates.

We also support the work of the City of Boulder, Boulder County, and our energy services provider, Xcel, in developing innovative strategies, such as EnergySmart, to achieve our sustainable energy, reliability and cost-efficient goals for both residential and commercial properties.

We support the funding of fire mitigation efforts associated with electric power sources,

and generally, will carefully monitor distribution of Wildfire Mitigation Sales and Use Tax funds for that purpose.

We support business incentives for updates to more energy efficient operations as a means of promoting technically feasible and cost-efficient, climate-friendly infrastructure investments for businesses.

Recognizing the upfront expenses of converting to more energy efficient operations, we support the continuation of programs - such as Colorado Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy (C-PACE) - that provide low or no cost financing, allowing businesses of all sizes to affordably move towards net-zero operations.

We support local, state, and federal navigator programs to ensure businesses are able to obtain existing climate-friendly infrastructure investment incentives, grants, and tax credits.

NATIONAL CLEAN ENERGY LEADERSHIP

Boulder has historically been a leader and innovator in clean energy technology. We will continue to support partnerships that facilitate best practice sharing to advance our community's clean energy and climate protection goals, including synergistic public/private partnerships with our federal laboratories. In keeping with

this principle, the Boulder Chamber is a member of the national clean energy association Chambers for Innovation and Clean Energy (CICE) and serves on its National Leadership Council.

CICE helps business associations and their member companies navigate and prosper in the clean energy space, advocates for clean energy-related issues, grows jobs in the clean energy sector and establishes partnerships for furthering clean energy initiatives. We also work with the City of Boulder and Boulder County on innovative strategies for incentivizing our businesses to reduce carbon-based fuel consumption and engage in environmentally sustainable practices.

WATER RESOURCES

The City of Boulder is blessed with water resources that are calculated to accommodate substantial additional commercial and residential development. We also understand that we have significant protection against severe, episodic, drought conditions. However, as our climate changes, the Boulder Chamber supports measures that help businesses and residents utilize water efficiently. This includes public education on water resources and conservation, support for realistic statewide water planning and conservation efforts, and incentives for reduced water consumption.

ENERGY-EFFICIENT BUILDINGS

We recognize the economic benefits of effective energy efficiency retrofits and other sustainable business operations. We support incentives - including permitting fee credits and rebates, education efforts, and grant programs - that encourage our members to take advantage of available opportunities and move us, as a community, state, and nation, toward reduced energy consumption, expanded net-zero and renewable energy development, and greater resiliency from natural disasters.

The Boulder Chamber believes there are opportunities for greater efficiency in achieving environmental standards, and we seek to partner with the City in this area. This includes the opportunity for businesses to constructively share their perspective on the impacts of new energy regulations, codes, and upgrade requirements.

Additionally, property owners should always be allowed a reasonable time to implement or retrofit existing properties and be provided resources to identify cost-effective and financially feasible solutions in response to any government mandates in this area. Further, we will oppose climate-related investment mandates that fail to address potential negative impacts on business operations and financial sustainability.

ISSUE AREAS & POSITIONS

We believe the City of Boulder should offer incentives to those committed to investing in green buildings and upgrades. This includes support for their participation in innovative microgrid and energy district development plans as well as special attention to their need for regulatory flexibility. Further, we believe the City should accommodate modification requests, on a case-by-case basis, for any project that can demonstrate it is technically impractical or financially infeasible to meet some aspect of the new code for their building project.



BOTTOM LINE

We support the expeditious achievement of clean energy and climate protection goals and will be a leader in that endeavor. Achieving clean energy goals and local innovation is dependent on partnerships across the public and private sectors that facilitate the exchange of ideas and the understanding of impacts.



CLIMATE AND ENERGY

Colaborative Future | Related Issues

Related Issues

INCENTIVES FOR ENERGY INNOVATION

We support density development bonuses and other incentives for businesses that make investments in renewable energy and energy efficiency. We also support flexibility for certain land use designations that facilitate, for example, the building of solar farms on agricultural land.

CITY OF BOULDER SOLAR AND ELECTRIFICATION STRATEGIES

We encourage the implementation of innovative clean energy solutions and the associated investments without imposing additional

costs on businesses. We will facilitate the engagement of those voluntarily seeking to participate while resisting mandates that fail to account for business investment and operation concerns. We support measures, including public financing, that facilitate the use of open surface areas in commercial zones for solar infrastructure, helps businesses and commercial buildings convert to electric energy systems, and supports the installation of electric vehicle charging stations.

ADVANCING COLORADO'S CLIMATE GOALS

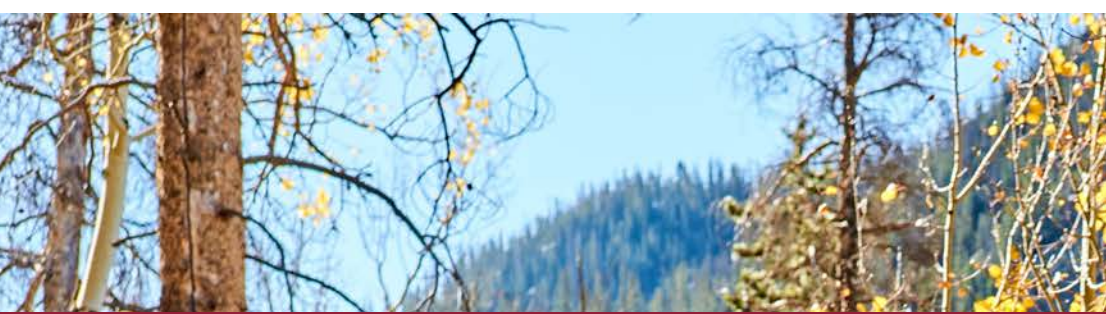
The Boulder Chamber advocates for statewide efforts that provide financially

viable approaches to reducing carbon emissions and retiring coal plants. This includes models that provide revenue consistency for utilities that facilitate the adoption of renewable energy and allow for coordinated planning in meeting our energy needs and climate protection goals.

Recognizing that the City of Boulder has additional funds for climate related investments due to passage of the Climate Action Plan Tax, much of it due to increased business fees, we advocate for allocating significant dollars toward measures that support businesses in their carbon reduction and energy efficiency efforts.

QUALITY OF LIFE

Management | Taxes | Tourism | Public Safety | & More



ISSUE AREAS & POSITIONS

Quality of Life

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT & STAKEHOLDER MANAGEMENT

We support the principle of greater inclusivity in public policy decision-making. Encouraging meaningful public participation and proactive stakeholder engagement, including the perspective of Boulder business owners and their workforce, should be a standard element of a collaborative decision-making dynamic within our community. This includes adequate input opportunities for affected businesses whenever the city or state considers new and/or renewing taxes, fees and regulations.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT & CAPITAL INVOLVEMENTS

Operating budgets and capital investments need to account for, and prioritize, essential infrastructure improvements and services, including those that increase public safety and resiliency in the event of floods, fires and other natural events or disruptions, such as those experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Government entities should clearly delineate anticipated

capital funding for critical infrastructure projects associated with new facilities, facility upgrades and major maintenance. Essential priorities should not be dependent on the passage of supplemental funding initiatives or assessing additional costs solely to businesses when the benefits are shared across the community.

Additionally, the City of Boulder should explore diversified financing mechanisms - including grants and private-sector sponsorships - for key services, rather than the current dependence on sales tax revenues, which are subject to economic fluctuations. However, the Boulder Chamber will give great scrutiny to any proposals for additional property tax increases, given the substantial burden imposed on businesses due to the Gallagher Amendment, recent mill levy increase and rising property value assessments.

Other fiscal management principles the Boulder Chamber encourages:

The City of Boulder should move in a direction that encourages budget and spending efficiency through comparisons to peer cities and/or best practices.

We also value third party evaluations of tax expenditures and government programs.

Further, the City should identify reserve allocations that may be available for higher priority expenditures. The City Council should incorporate the use of performance metrics in its review of critical service delivery.

SUSTAINED SALES TAX REVENUES

High quality of life is maintained by ensuring we have sufficient revenues for adequate city services. The most significant revenue mechanism that funds our city budget, capital improvements, and essential services are sales and use tax revenues. We must take proactive steps to ensure policies are in place that safeguard our competitiveness in the face of increased regional shopping and service options and other factors, such as the shift toward online shopping and reduced workforce in-commuting as a consequence of increased remote work practices since the COVID-19 pandemic.

We must proactively support retail services and other tax-generating opportunities, such as special events and arts and culture programs and venues, that are enjoyed by visitors and residents alike and benefit many of our local businesses.

EQUITABLE TAXATION

We support an approach to taxes and fees that considers the populations they will

impact most, including members of our workforce unable to afford to live in Boulder and potential costs they may incur to in-commute.

Businesses already face difficulty recruiting employees, so the City of Boulder should avoid any further costs associated with workforce recruitment or taxes that impact employee retention.

We also urge revenue-generating approaches that do not unfairly target or burden any one industry or segment of our community, ensuring there is equity in generating tax revenue.

VISITORS & TOURISM

The Boulder Chamber unequivocally welcomes visitors to our community and appreciates the economic contribution of tourism. Visitor spending is key to funding everything from open space and parks to police and fire services. Not only does the tourist economy generate a considerable amount of revenue for essential services, but it also provides many of our residents with jobs. What is good for visitors, is good for locals. Conventions and other business-related tourism/visits contribute to innovation and the global competitiveness of the University, federal labs and our primary industries.

MENTAL HEALTH

The COVID-19 pandemic only further drew attention

to mental health concerns and their impacts on our workforce. According to data supplied by the American Psychiatric Association, employees with unresolved depression experience a 35% reduction in productivity, contributing to a loss to the U.S. economy of \$210.5 billion a year in absenteeism, reduced productivity, and medical costs.


The Boulder Chamber supports funding for agencies dedicated to providing and informing the public about mental health services available to the Boulder community. We recognize that services and funding for mental health care are lacking and that a robust system to address acute and chronic issues is paramount. In that vein, we encourage the exploration of services - similar to that of Larimer County's Longview facility - that offer a continuum of mental health services, including inpatient care. The Boulder Chamber also advocates for programs providing more accessibility to mental wellness services for our workforce.

EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES

The lack of childcare services is a highly cited reason why people with children are unable to participate in the workforce, and this is disproportionately true for women. The Boulder Chamber supports efforts to enhance early childhood services. This includes



additional local, county, and state funding mechanisms, daycare workforce training programs, as well as the state of Colorado's recent decision to lower teaching staff qualifications.


BOTTOM LINE
We support investment in our tourist economy that encourages visitors to enjoy Boulder.
Rejuvenating tourism is a central component of our economic recovery.

The Boulder Chamber supports the type of community planning initiatives that create compact, affordable, 10 to 15-minute walkable/bikeable, mixed-use, high-quality connectivity for our neighborhoods and residents. We support the continued investment in neighborhoods across Boulder that improve their vibrancy, safety, walkability, and access to supporting services and desired businesses.

The Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan characterizes the three Regional Centers - the Historic Downtown, the Boulder

Valley Regional Center, and the University of Colorado - as the most intensely developed parts of our city. There are still obstacles to supporting residential uses in these centers. One major obstacle is decades-old Planned Unit Development (PUD) agreements that tie multiple property owners and parcels together and can make modifications to the centers cumbersome and difficult to achieve.

The City should prioritize looking at how to simplify the regulations surrounding changes to these PUDs, particularly in Neighborhood Centers, and look to other ways to incentivize increases in multi-family density in these locations.

ARTS & CULTURE

The arts, culture, and creativity sector helps drive our regional economy. Arts and culture programs and institutions that maintain our community's social and cultural vibrancy are a critical element of the backbone for an equitable, inclusive, and diverse community. They also help drive tourism, and function as an essential tool for attracting and retaining a high-quality, diverse, and creative workforce.

We encourage efforts to increase access to arts and culture in neighborhoods, engage the business community and attract cultural tourism, including

leveraging the significant arts and cultural offerings of CU Boulder.

Damage to the arts and culture sector from the pandemic has undercut our economic vitality as well as our culture, well-being, and quality of life. Further, the viability of the arts and culture sector has a ripple effect on spending by tourists and residents at local businesses, including retailers, restaurants, bars, and hotels; their success is dependent on a thriving arts industry. The arts and culture sector therefore should be a critical piece of economic vitality planning efforts by the public and private sectors.

We encourage city officials to bring artists and arts leaders to the table when discussing area improvements, including plans, strategies and funding for addressing public safety and activating public spaces.

We advocate for investments in city amenities to meet recognized community needs and strategic opportunities, such as those being considered as part of the Civic Area Phase II analysis, and

We discourage landmarking in advance of planning for such updates planning efforts such as the Civic Area.

The City of Boulder should pursue stable and predictable funding mechanisms for arts and culture grants, and public art.

We support the creation of art districts, affordable studio spaces, live/work housing options for artists and spaces for arts and culture uses such as retail, display, community art, maker-spaces and performance venues as specific elements to be included in community planning and financing.

We encourage programs and planning that increase access to arts and culture in neighborhoods throughout the city and engage the business community.

SOCIAL SAFETY NET & HUMAN SERVICE PROGRAMS

The Boulder Chamber will collaborate with local leaders, organizations and governments to advocate for a sustainable safety net of services to meet critical needs for the underserved in our community and to help sustain a thriving workforce.

HEALTHCARE

The Boulder Chamber supports efforts to engage a wide array of stakeholders with multiple perspectives in the ongoing dialogue to improve our healthcare system. This includes a focus on consistent coverage for those that desperately rely on it. We support health care continuity for organizations that effectively provide health care options for their workforce, and urge public/private health care solutions.

The Boulder Chamber advocates for greater transparency in the cost of health care, including costs for services and prescription drugs.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Public safety is essential to the stability of a good business climate.

We call for a responsive system that addresses property crimes in a manner that promotes prevention as well as expeditious charging, ticketing and other enforcement actions – up to and including incarceration – to hold offenders accountable for their violations.

Our elected leadership should also support law enforcement initiatives that keep our citizens and business areas safe. Public safety must include attention to public places – including the Bandshell, Creekpath, and Boulder County Courthouse – making sure to maintain the security of our citizens, visitors, employees, and businesses throughout the community.

While we are fortunate our local and regional law enforcement agencies have done a remarkable job, we support their efforts to address concerns associated with disparate treatment based on race and culture. We also support the efforts of our Police Department and their partner social service

agencies to advance less confrontational approaches to addressing public disturbances. In that vein, we support the City of Boulder’s Reimagine Policing Plan.

Importantly, we also note that public safety includes continued investments in infrastructure to uphold standards for flood mitigation, offender management facilities, and crime prevention.

OPEN SPACE

Our protected Open Space parcels are a key asset that improves our quality of life and also advances our community’s economic vitality, attracting visitors who enjoy our beautiful environment. We support the preservation of Open Space as a community asset that appropriately balances conservation initiatives with plentiful recreational uses. In the wake of the devastation of the recent Marshall Fire and other regional forest fires, we are also further attuned to the need for investment in fire mitigation strategies.

HOMELESSNESS

Homelessness is a multifaceted issue affecting the unhoused, businesses and residents. Importantly, the misuse of our public spaces by chronically unhoused individuals has created public health and safety issues for residents, tourists, and the unhoused alike. We cannot

accept the current conditions.

The Boulder Chamber is in the process of working with its business support partners, government agencies, law enforcement officials and service providers in developing broad based solutions to meeting the needs of our unhoused population and addressing the business and community impacts of increased homelessness.

This includes innovative programs that provide a relief valve for our homeless population that have been demonstrated to achieve positive outcomes in other communities. At the same time, we need to make sure that policies ensure safety and security for our local businesses, employees, and residents and do not unintentionally attract homeless populations from other communities. This includes activation of spaces and thorough enforcement of our prohibition against camping in public spaces and other criminal behavior.





TAX AND REGULATIONS

Taxes | Fees | Business Regulations | & More

ISSUE AREAS & POSITIONS

Taxes, Fees, and Business Regulations

Taxes and fees fund and maintain important public services and infrastructure, but they must appropriately balance the cost and associated impacts in a manner that protects our economic vitality and keeps Boulder affordable to a wide diversity of businesses and individuals.

The Boulder Chamber seeks clearly delineated rates that will not unduly burden business activity in any sector or add more risk or expense to their employees. We support ample notice, measurable goals, and clear explanations for any tax or fee while seeking additional mechanisms to sustain affordability for small businesses.

SALES TAX

With the city of Boulder's sales tax approaching nearly 10%, new sales taxes should receive additional scrutiny to ensure regional competitiveness. We also are sensitive to the regressive nature of sales taxation, so future increases should consider the equity of benefits and impacts.

LODGING TAX

To support a vibrant and sustainable visitor base, we support the exploration of a new tourism tax in collaboration with Visit Boulder and in line with guidance that is based on their extensive impacts and benefits analysis.

PROPERTY TAX

We encourage our state and local governments to reform our property tax code to affectively address the undue impacts on commercial property owners, while also recognizing the impact of rising property taxes on housing affordability.

CLIMATE ACTION PLAN TAX

With the recent renewal and increase of the Climate Action Plan tax in the City of Boulder, we encourage City staff to work with business owners to leverage those funds in support of their energy efficiency and climate protection investments.

TRANSPARENCY AND COMMUNITY NEED

We expect transparency in analysis and decision-making processes, along with regular accounting of expenditures. In general, we will always scrutinize proposed tax initiatives to ensure they are addressing a genuine need.

Our economy is affected by the cumulative impacts of

rising taxes, fees and other costs of doing business in Boulder. Small businesses, start-ups, creative professionals, and nonprofits often experience the effects disproportionately.

Exploring taxes at a regional level to fund priorities for the broader area may create a more equitable approach. We also have a particular sensitivity to increased property taxes due to recent mill increases at the ballot box, and rising property taxes.

REGULATIONS AND REVIEW PROCESS

The current extensive delay in permit approvals is intolerable, disproportionately impacting local small businesses and undermining positive business development opportunities. This condition places additional urgency on our encouragement of streamlined regulations and approval processes that do not impose an inequitable or undue burden on business.

This includes deploying the most technologically efficient mechanisms for conducting regulatory reviews, such as moving from paper copies to electronic submissions, automation, and investing in sufficient staff to meet the workload demands and timely feedback. Further, any mandated investment to meet new regulatory standards should include robust public engagement and seek to reduce, mitigate or eliminate

the immediate cost impacts on local businesses.

We urge flexibility in regulations to address the ever-changing economic environment and allow businesses to nimbly adapt to new market conditions. On an international level, this includes encouraging our federal leadership to advocate for tariff reductions and better trade relations with foreign partners. On the local level, one successful example of this was allowing the to-go service of alcohol drinks during the pandemic.

Land use development decisions should meet a variety of social, cultural, and environmental goals in a sustainable manner while giving appropriate weight to our community's economic vitality and the fair expectations of property owners. For this reason, land uses should be reassessed in response to economic conditions, as well as other community values. Further, we support codes and processes that facilitate desired outcomes, while avoiding undue burden on property developers in both regulatory restraints and review timing. The Boulder Chamber seeks a comprehensive review of Boulder's development regulations and review processes to achieve these flexibility, efficiency and outcome goals.



AFFORDABILITY FOR SMALL BUSINESSES AND NONPROFITS

Small businesses serve as the dynamic foundation for our innovation ecosystem; they are the places we shop, restaurants we frequent and services that support our neighborhood causes.

Though our larger companies offer a diversity of career opportunities and economic value, small businesses represent the majority of employers in our community. In many instances, too, our locally grown, small start-up businesses become the larger companies that fuel our economic ecosystem. Statewide reports have found that nonprofits account for more than 5% of the gross product, accounting for more than \$4 billion in wages. Given those reasons, we have a clear interest in protecting affordability for our small business and nonprofit base in Boulder.

E-COMMERCE AND USE TAX SIMPLIFICATION

The COVID-19 pandemic caused seismic shifts in e-commerce. Compared with 2019, online sales increased 50.5%, but, unfortunately, the tax code has not kept pace, so the Boulder Chamber is supporting continued efforts at the state legislature to simplify state sales tax reporting requirements.



BOTTOM LINE

The Boulder Chamber supports measures that continue to make our community an affordable location for small businesses, start-ups, nonprofits, and creative professionals, as they are important providers of jobs and services.

CITY OF BOULDER ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY

Economic vitality in the City of Boulder requires collaboration amongst the public and private sectors to promote a healthy economy that supports the outstanding quality of life enjoyed by our residents and sets the framework for a positive business environment.

It is essential that we work collaboratively to update a long-term vision for our economy through a review of the economic sustainability strategy and near-term strategy.

DEVELOPMENT IMPACT FEES

The City of Boulder should seek to comprehensively



understand the impacts, benefits, and functionality of the fees it imposed in relation to development and small business affordability. It further should explore the opportunity for variable fees

that incentivize desirable housing products.

SECTOR OR PRODUCT-SPECIFIC TAXES & IMPACTS

The Boulder Chamber has concerns about the economic impacts of taxes directed at specific products or inequitably focused on single sectors or industries. It is especially concerning if the taxes and/or fees compromise competitiveness across the region or simply influence consumer decisions to shop outside of Boulder.

RESPONSIBLE REGULATION OF THE CANNABIS INDUSTRY

Given the nascent nature of this industry, we support the ongoing collaboration of a

We note that, as our experience with the cannabis industry grows and initial concerns prove unfounded, it is appropriate to conduct a more thorough regulatory review when developing policies. This includes the opportunity to explore new avenues for the responsible consumption and delivery of cannabis products. Boulder's initial regulations proved excessive compared to surrounding communities, which threatened the competitiveness of our local businesses.



BOTTOM LINE

The Boulder Chamber works to maintain a predictable economic climate for all businesses and industries by seeking the appropriate congruence between state law and local ordinances and opposing laws and regulations based on unsubstantiated perception, as opposed to fact-based concerns.

Commitment to an Equitable and Inclusive Community

The Boulder Chamber takes policy positions shaped with a diverse, equitable and inclusive lens.

This is consistent with our commitment to a journey toward racial equity and social justice for our membership, for our local businesses and within the community we serve. We have important work to do as a community to move toward a more just and equitable society, and we know that includes the Boulder Chamber as a key partner with the residents and businesses of Boulder.

The Boulder Chamber believes the community has an opportunity to increase its engagement with, and support of, underrepresented populations. This includes adopting policies that are developed collaboratively by including diverse voices from across our community.

In addition to social equity considerations, attracting and retaining a diverse workforce is critical to business innovation and competitiveness. As an essential element of the quality of life in our community, policy decisions should address the ongoing challenges of affordability and income inequality. We believe all businesses and members of our society must have access to

housing, transportation, high-speed internet and educational opportunities. These are foundational elements that establish and sustain economic and cultural diversity.

The pandemic and subsequent economic crisis disproportionately impacted vulnerable community members at the lower end of the income spectrum. We advocate for a business environment that supports workers at all wage levels, especially lower-wage workers.

It is important to note that the University of Colorado and Boulder's other organizations of higher learning attract diverse students from throughout the world. We must create pathways and job opportunities within Boulder to incent students to remain part of our community and our workforce, adding to Boulder's racial and generational diversity.

DIVERSE COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

The Boulder Chamber advocates for diverse representation at all levels of the private, public and nonprofit sectors. This includes leadership roles and providing a balance of perspectives on local boards, committees and governing institutions. Our Leadership Fellows program, produced in collaboration with

the Community Foundation Boulder County, advances inclusive leadership development initiatives across our community with partners throughout Boulder County.

INCLUSIVE PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT & MEANINGFUL STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

We support the principle of greater inclusivity in policy making within the City of Boulder, as recommended by the City's Public Participation Working Group. Encouraging meaningful public participation and proactive stakeholder engagement, including the perspective of Boulder business owners and their workforce, should be a standard element of a collaborative decision-making dynamic within our community. This includes adequate input opportunities for affected businesses whenever the City or State consider updating or creating new taxes, fees and regulations.



Boulder Together is a strategic multi-year initiative of the Boulder Chamber designed to address the highest priority areas of Boulder's economic and community need.

QUALITY BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

"Business is Vital" Initiative

Educate the community about the impacts of decreasing sales and use tax trends and the loss of business presence. Highlight that "Business is Vital" to ensuring a strong and inclusive economic recovery.

Increasing Workforce Housing

Support regulatory review process improvements to achieve the goal of adding more attainable housing for Boulder's workforce.

Providing Increased Flexibility for Commercial Development

Improve the regulatory review process and zoning parameters to allow for more flexibility as the commercial development landscape shifts.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Responsive Partnerships

Lead groups that can implement programs for achieving goals through industry-sector partnerships and by expanding collaborative regional career development programs.

Direct Long & Short Term Planning and Implementation

Support initiatives designed to recruit and retain talent for continued long-term pathway development.

Education Research & Data

Champion the effort to continually identify and communicate the workforce skills needed in the community and the opportunities that exist.

COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

High Speed Internet Access

Support public/private partnerships and initiatives that increase access to high-speed internet for businesses and residents.

Regional Mobility Investments

Advocate for infrastructure investments for SH 119 & SH 7 to stimulate our regional economy, while also seeking micro-mobility solutions that address essential workforce needs and long-term mobility issues.



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Community Affairs Council

The Boulder Chamber's business advocacy efforts never rest. We are constantly watching, analyzing and speaking up for a vibrant, prosperous Boulder. Boulder is unique, and that makes us a special Chamber, serving our business members and supporting a strong economy in a way that reflects Boulder values.

The Community Affairs Council is an advisory committee that identifies and addresses community issues of concern to Boulder Chamber members and Boulder businesses and provides input and perspective on behalf of Boulder Chamber members and the general business community on public policy issues.

2024 Members

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Brokerage Services

Peter Aweida
Westland Development
Services

Erin Bagnall
Sopher Sparn Architects

Alejandra Beatty
Boulder Area Labor Council

Michael Belochi
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Ashley Cawthorn
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Warhorse - Boulder
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Tamora Tanniehill
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Member



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