



**BOULDER CHAMBER**

**2018**  
**POLICY**  
**AGENDA**

*This is a working document. Last update: 1.26.2018*

# Guiding Principles

## A DIVERSE, UNIQUE ECONOMY

Home to a world-class research university, a wide mix of key industry clusters, major government research facilities, visionary entrepreneurs and the nation's most highly educated population, Boulder's economy is truly unique in size, diversity, and character.

As Boulder's leading economic vitality and business support organization, the Boulder Chamber advocates for local and regional policies that nurture, maintain and strengthen this rare economic ecosystem, while helping new businesses through their start up phases and our established businesses to innovate, thrive and continue to serve the community.

## POLICY AGENDA PURPOSE

Every year, the Boulder Chamber's Policy Agenda identifies the issues most critical to our member businesses and organizations and sets the baseline policy positions based on the interests of our local economy in balance with the social and environmental values that make Boulder such a special place to live, work and play.

## POLICY DEVELOPMENT & PRINCIPLES OF GOOD GOVERNANCE

The Boulder Chamber recognizes that Boulder's long term economic stability requires public policy that is rooted in good governance principles, reflects broadly representative and inclusive civic participation, and is informed by proper data and analysis. In all our policy development endeavors, the Boulder Chamber works to convene and collaborate with community groups and local and regional leadership to identify the most sustainable solutions for our community and economy. To this end, the Boulder Chamber will always approach public debate over policy issues in an intentionally constructive fashion that seeks to bridge the spectrum of competing perspectives and arrive at solutions that advance the Boulder community's long-term interests.

## OUR PUBLIC POLICY GOALS

Our goal is to advance the Boulder Chamber's mission, ensuring that the Boulder area remains a hub for leadership in innovation and entrepreneurship, economically vibrant, competitive and attractive to businesses now and into the future.

**Highlights of Boulder economy include the following elements:**

### KEY PRIMARY INDUSTRIES

- Aerospace
- Bio-Science
- Clean-tech
- Information Technologies/Software
- Natural Products
- Outdoor Recreation
- Tourism
- Research (including CU Boulder and the federal labs)

### KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- 7,000 employers (5 or more employees)
- 94,000 jobs
- Over 700 primary employers
- 105,101 population
- Top research university
- 17 federally-funded research labs
- Nationally-recognized center of entrepreneurship and innovation

# Focus Issue Areas

## 2018 BOULDER CHAMBER ADVOCACY PRIORITIES:

1. Local and Regional Workforce Housing
2. Local and Regional Transportation Mobility
3. Community-Wide Broadband Infrastructure



### Community Development

We support comprehensive local and regional infrastructure investment and community enhancements that meet the needs of Boulder businesses, sustain economic vitality, and support the general health and welfare of our community.

### Energy & Environment

The Boulder Chamber supports sustainable energy and natural resource management strategies, including transportation energy savings and renewable energy related measures, that respond to both short and long-term necessity, including the risk of climate change, enhancing community resiliency and promoting innovation that benefits economic vitality. Along with partnering efforts across Colorado and our region, the City of Boulder can become a leader in these areas through a thoughtful balance of our environmental and economic goals and the Boulder Chamber is committed to being a partner in those efforts.

### Quality of Life

The Boulder Chamber advocates for a vibrant economy in balance with investments and policies that are consistent with our community's social, cultural and environmental values. These policies should result from good governance practices that sustain Boulder's unique, creative and livable character while promoting cultural diversity and inclusiveness.

### Taxes, Fees & Business Regulations

Taxes, fees and regulations 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 keep Boulder affordable to a wide diversity of businesses and individuals.

### Workforce

The Boulder Chamber will take a lead role in advocating for federal, state and local policies that help Boulder businesses meet their workforce needs.



# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

We support comprehensive local and regional infrastructure investment and community enhancements that meet the needs of Boulder businesses, sustain economic vitality, and support the general health and welfare of our community.

We support transportation infrastructure investments and programs that provide effective and convenient mobility options for Boulder’s workforce. Regional and local transportation networks, accommodating all travel modes from the personal automobile to bicycles, are key requirements for the community’s economic, social and environmental health.

Achieving our housing goals will rely on creative financing and development strategies, programs and policies that expand diversity and availability of housing choices for our economically diverse workforce.

Land use development decisions should meet a variety of social, cultural and environmental goals in a sustainable manner while always giving appropriate weight to our community’s economic vitality and the fair expectations of property owners.

## ISSUE AREAS AND POSITIONS

### TRANSPORTATION

Effective regional and local transportation networks are key requirements for our community’s economic vitality and environmental health. Due to the costs of living and limited housing options in Boulder, our local economy depends on a workforce consisting of a significant number of daily in-commuters that rely on our transportation system and services. Acknowledging this reality, the guiding vision for our local and regional transportation networks should ensure balanced planning for all modes of travel - automobiles as well as other alternative options. We encourage stakeholder engagement strategies for future planning efforts that include the direct involvement of local business organizations, like the Boulder Chamber and our regional coalition, the Northwest Chamber Alliance.

- Ensure balanced planning for all modes of travel and broad range of users that are responsive to the opportunities and challenges associated with increased development density, including parking availability, expanded transit options, and improved bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure and business access.
- Expand the capacity of creative transit and transportation services that are destination oriented and designed to effectively connect our workforce from where they live to where they work.
- Support efforts to increase the safety of our transportation systems for all modes.
- Key initiatives include incorporating advanced mobility

strategies; supporting the preservation and expansion of the Eco-Pass program; implementing improvements identified in the East Arapahoe Transportation Plan; developing a multi-modal investment strategies through the 30th and Colorado Corridors Study that maintains the effectiveness of that corridor for all travel modes; and advance the implementation of Quiet Zones.

- Drive toward regional mobility investments through the Bus Rapid Transit studies for State Highway 7 and Highway 119 and continue advocating for delivery of the promised FasTracks investments.
- Establish sustainable state, regional and local transportation funding mechanisms that balance the needs of all modes and avoid imposing an undue cost burden on business.
- Advocate for an equitable distribution of transportation funds across Colorado that provides our region and our local governments with the flexibility to invest in all travel modes.
- We look forward to defining the specific strategies for meeting Boulder’s mobility goals through our active participation in the Transportation Master Plan update.

### HOUSING

To maintain Boulder as an economically vibrant and successful community, the Boulder Chamber recognizes the critical need for diverse and attainable housing to meet our workforce needs. The Boulder Chamber will work collaboratively with housing providers and developers, community development experts, workforce



# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

representatives, City and County staff, elected officials, housing finance professionals and other housing advocates to advance innovative yet practical housing strategies and solutions to create and maintain housing in our community for Boulder's economically diverse workforce.

The Boulder Chamber supports activities to incentivize, facilitate and/or allow development and redevelopment opportunities that provide affordable and attainable housing choices to Boulder's workforce. We support:

- Strategies and programs to create and allow a broader and more diverse mix of housing types – rental and ownership, permanently affordable, market rate, multi-unit, semi or fully detached – to meet the housing needs of low, moderate and middle income individuals and families in Boulder.
- Innovative housing solutions that are in proximity to supporting services, such as transit, commercial/retail, parking and recreational opportunities and reflect the needs of Boulder's local businesses and workforce.
- Mixed-use, higher-density development that incorporates a substantial amount of affordable and middle-income workforce housing in proximity to multi-modal corridors.
- Regulatory adjustments that create new residential infill opportunities through additional dwelling units, owner accessory units and lot splitting.
- Providing more live/work options for creative professionals, including the creation of designated arts districts.
- Creation of smaller, higher-density innovative housing products (which have been broadly supported in community surveys and amongst our young professional workforce).
- Revising/removing the land use designations, zoning and regulatory barriers on specific areas where new housing should be incentivized to be developed/provided in order to increase and diversify our housing stock.
- The examination of policies and/or incentives that promote innovative housing solutions, such as occupancy limit adjustments in designated areas.

The Boulder Chamber will identify and encourage the implementation of additional efficiencies and improvements in the housing review and approval processes and reduction of regulatory requirements for affordable and workforce housing proposals. We also support incentives for projects that incorporate a high-quality of design that contributes to community character.

The Boulder Chamber will analyze housing finance options and opportunities and, as appropriate, advocate for the adoption/implementation these mechanisms at the state and local levels.

Individually and as part of the Northwest Chamber Alliance, the Boulder Chamber will participate in the Boulder County Regional Housing Partnership's activities to support increasing affordable housing in communities throughout Boulder County.

**City of Boulder Housing Advisory Board:** If the City of Boulder creates a Housing Advisory Board, the Boulder Chamber expects that it will have a clearly defined role and responsibilities which are not used to delay or require an additional level of review of affordable and workforce housing development proposals. Further, the Housing Advisory Board should not have review and/or approval responsibilities for the allocation of City of Boulder affordable housing funds. The Housing Advisory Board should be primarily composed of individuals with knowledge of Boulder's housing market and that have professional expertise in housing to ensure that its recommendations are data driven and based on best practices.

## LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT/REDEVELOPMENT

The Boulder Chamber supports mixed-use development along transit corridors and in under-utilized commercial zones. In particular, higher residential densities and mixed-use zoning in these locations promotes walkable access to employment, commercial services and local/regional transportation alternatives. Development opportunities should respect neighborhood character, while achieving Boulder's community-wide economic, social and environmental goals.

**Sustainable Development in Areas of Opportunity:** The Boulder Chamber's advocacy for infill and redevelopment adheres to the following principles:

- Mixed-use residential and commercial development along existing major transit corridors should be supported through clear policy direction that addresses the impediments to achieving this goal.
- The desire for a diversity of housing options and affordable commercial spaces must be explicitly authorized for areas of opportunity, such as the Alpine/Balsam redevelopment.
- Incentives for greater floor area ratios than current zoning allows should be identified for areas where it's possible to promote more housing.



# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

**Sub-Area Planning:** The Boulder Chamber supports substantive community based dialogue with key stakeholders as a means to advancing future redevelopment goals that balances both neighborhood interests and community-wide goals.

The Boulder Chamber offers the Urban Land Institute report titled *“Boulder’s New East Edge - a vision for transportation, mixed-use and sustainability around 55th and Arapahoe”* as a suggestion for the type of development/re-development and infill opportunities that could be possible for the East Arapahoe Corridor or other commercial/industrial zones. Sub-area plans should explore where opportunities exist to allow adding density that accommodates diverse housing options. Sub-area planning, including the promise of a future sub-area plan, should not be deployed as a tool for delaying redevelopment opportunities.

**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 General Industrial areas is critical, as the demand for this land use is currently very high throughout the Front Range. New opportunities for innovation hubs, that includes a mix of uses and services in the Light Industrial Zones, should be further explored for specific areas, such as the Flatirons Business Park, 55th & Arapahoe, and Gunbarrel. The right balance of parking, FAR ratios, mix of uses/zones, must be further defined through sub-area plans to retain the industrial focus in those areas, while exploring the possibility to achieve additional community goals.

**Area III Planning Reserve:** While not advocating for near-term annexation of Area III properties, the Boulder Chamber encourages a process to define a future vision or development plan for the Area III Planning Reserve. This process will help the City of Boulder better prepare for development opportunities in that area prior to entertaining future annexation proposals. It also could establish a vision for Area III that is responsive to community values, rather than risk the absence of a plan encourage by-right development that is not in line with community needs.

**CU-Boulder South Campus Annexation and Concept Plan:** The Boulder Chamber supports annexation of the CU Boulder South property because:

- CU Boulder has consistently demonstrated a commitment to balancing the University’s needs with community interests. That commitment is embodied in the BVCP

Guiding Principles for the development of the property.

- Annexing CU Boulder South facilitates the creation of flood mitigation, housing for CU faculty, staff and non-freshman students, more multi-modal transportation connections, the preservation of open space and recreation opportunities – all in a walkable community setting.
- The benefits of creating the opportunity for a greater proportion of CU Boulder’s faculty, staff and non-freshman students to reside within the City of Boulder include: (1) Reducing in-commuting traffic and the related environmental impact. (2) Encouraging greater community integration of the University’s talent and expertise. (3) Capturing additional sales tax revenues for the City of Boulder that are currently flowing to other communities where many University community members reside due to the lack of available housing in Boulder.
- The University aims to fulfill its commitment to environmental stewardship by conserving approximately 66 acres of land for habitat preservation and other natural areas (which land shall include federally recognized regulatory wetlands).
- By providing approximately 81 acres for flood storage, CU Boulder is helping the City address a critical infrastructure need that will improve safety for downstream neighbors.

**Community Benefit, Land Use Codes and Site Review:**

The Boulder Chamber acknowledges that the definition of Community Benefits in project site review remains too imprecise to provide needed guidance to applicants and decision-makers. We support amending the land use codes and site review process to better define the Community Benefits language and broaden the definition to include valued community goals, such as, but not limited to, investments in arts/culture, housing diversity, architectural features, transportation improvements and affordable commercial spaces.

**Height Limits:** Eliminate the moratorium in order to allow for commercial and residential building submissions that exceed 35 feet. This allows for project creativity, flexibility and granular planning that better aligns with community goals, can offer community benefits, and can enhance the character of building architecture and functionality.

**Projects of Community Significance:** Advocate for significant development projects that can support the economic vitality and quality of life of the community and respond to the needs of local businesses. Examples of the type of projects



# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

that fit community significance include the Alpine-Balsam/Boulder Community Hospital redevelopment, the former Pollard site, Diagonal Plaza, and planning for a Conference Center, in addition to other impactful residential/commercial developments in areas identified for higher density mixed-use development such as the 28th Street and 30th Street corridors. The Boulder Chamber will engage in efforts to ensure that projects of this nature respond to broad community-wide interests.

## **COMMUNITY-WIDE BROADBAND**

Communication infrastructure is vital to support our economic, educational and social needs; it also creates jobs. We support the City's effort to partner with public institutions and the private tech sector to establish this infrastructure, because:

- High speed broadband Internet infrastructure is a critical service that allows Boulder's economy to remain regionally competitive.
- Ubiquitous access to 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 both public and private sector goals.
- It is critical for accommodating co-working spaces as well as other innovative commercial and residential uses.

We expect that the City of Boulder will give strong consideration to private sector or public/private partnerships as it considers the most efficient and effective option for building-out its broadband system.

The opportunity to offer next-generation Internet services is a clear business advantage that our community is eager to leverage. We would all benefit from publicly available fiber-optic infrastructure and more economical, higher-capacity broadband services. Further, there are industries that can evolve exponentially in what they offer communities, which is especially relevant in the health care and transportation fields.

We expect the City to explore financing and building-out a community-wide broadband network on its own independent merits, separate from the delivery of other infrastructure systems that are subject to uncertainty, such as a municipal electric utility.

The Boulder Chamber supports exploring a citywide network with urgency and encourages City Council to reach a decision regarding the nature of a proposed public-private partnership

in the first half of 2018 in order to be in a position to bring forward a proposal for voter approval in November of 2018.

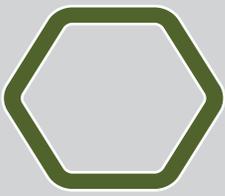
## **AFFORDABLE COMMERCIAL SPACES**

The Boulder Chamber supports incentives that facilitate the creation and preservation of affordable commercial spaces for small businesses, start-ups, non-profits and creative professionals. Affordable commercial space is analogous to affordable housing, and almost as important as costs associated with space directly influences the affordability of services businesses can provide to Boulder's residents. It is not only the price of real estate that drives up overall costs, but high rental rates are also significantly influenced by the fees and costs that the City of Boulder imposes on our local businesses and the development of spaces.

We encourage commitment to a long-term economic strategy with clear near-term steps to create or preserve spaces for businesses in order to diversify employment centers. The results of these efforts will help create space for critical incubators and innovation hubs as part of future mixed use developments, ensure Class A office space is available to help keep Boulder companies in Boulder, and provide flexibility for non-profit uses and shared spaces.

## **RELATED ISSUES OF IMPORTANCE**

- The future vitality of our public educational institutions and federal labs should be considered in all applicable planning and community development policies.
- Incorporate arts and culture into planning to create a vibrant community. This includes efforts to create additional performance spaces and live/work housing options for artists. The Boulder Chamber also believes public art should be recognized as a benefit in site reviews.
- The City of Boulder parking codes should be updated to fit contemporary requirements and adjusted in accordance with the pursuit of other goals such as contextually appropriate considerations in the relationship between parking, density, housing and access to transit.



The Boulder Chamber supports sustainable energy and natural resource management strategies, including transportation energy savings and renewable energy related measures, that respond to both short and long-term necessity, including the risk of climate change, enhancing community resiliency and promoting innovation that benefits economic vitality. Along with partnering efforts across Colorado and our region, the City of Boulder can become a leader in these areas through a thoughtful balance of our environmental and economic goals and the Boulder Chamber is committed to being a partner in those efforts.

We recognize the economic benefits of effective energy efficiency retrofits, sustainable business operations, and responsible growth in all energy sectors, and encourage reasonable incentives and serve as a bridge-builder for 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 and expanded renewable energy development.

## ISSUE AREAS AND POSITIONS

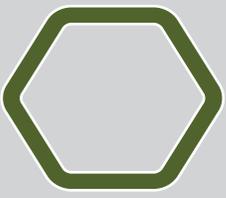
### **BOULDER'S ELECTRICAL UTILITY/MUNICIPALIZATION**

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

The potential for Boulder to municipalize its power utility presents exciting opportunities, and significant risks to those key values. The Boulder Chamber strives to balance the pursuit of clean energy goals with energy goals with full respect for business interest and concerns associated with risk mitigation.

### **Our current position with respect to municipalization follows these principles:**

1. We encourage Xcel and the City of Boulder to pursue all possible avenues for a negotiated resolution that is consistent with Boulder's clean energy goals;
2. We want to make sure any resolution is protective of business electric utility rates and current or better reliability thresholds (which include adequate redundancies and back up power systems);
3. We believe a public vote is appropriate, once all costs and risks are known, on any final decision to municipalize; and
4. We support efforts to work with energy experts and industry partners to identify more efficient and effective strategies to achieve our local climate protection and renewable energy goals.



## **COLORADO CLEAN ENERGY CLUSTER & CHAMBERS FOR INNOVATION AND CLEAN ENERGY**

The Boulder Chamber is on the board of local and national clean energy associations which aim to grow jobs in the clean energy sector as well as establish partnerships for furthering clean energy initiatives. We will continue to engage in associations that facilitate best practice sharing to advance our community's clean energy and climate protection goals.

## **RELATED ISSUES OF IMPORTANCE**

- We support efforts at the State and Federal levels that reduce the barriers to transition to clean energy systems.
- We support density development bonuses and other incentives for businesses that make investments in renewable energy and energy efficiency.
- **City of Boulder's 2050 carbon reduction goals:** The Boulder Chamber supports the pursuit of strategies that help to achieve Boulder's renewable energy goals. The City of Boulder also should consider the wider impacts of its policies, in everything from climate protection to housing and transportation, by measuring its climate impacts on a regional scale
- **City of Boulder Solar Strategy:** The Boulder Chamber supports the implementation of innovative clean energy solutions and the associated investments without imposing additional costs to business. We will facilitate the engagement of those voluntarily seeking to participate while resisting mandates that fail to account for business investment and operation concerns.



# QUALITY OF LIFE

The Boulder Chamber advocates for a vibrant economy in balance with investments and policies that are consistent with our community’s social, cultural and environmental values. These policies should result from good governance principles that sustain Boulder’s unique, creative and livable character while promoting cultural diversity and inclusiveness.

The Chamber is committed to Boulder being a welcoming place for all members of our community, which is why we value diversity, inclusiveness and equity as fundamental in all aspects of public policy. As an essential element of the quality of life in our community, we have a strong expectation that all policy decisions continually address the ongoing challenges of affordability and income inequality. That is why the Boulder Chamber supports initiatives that address the socio-economic gap in Boulder.

## ISSUE AREAS AND POSITIONS

### LIVABLE NEIGHBORHOODS

The Boulder Chamber support the type of community planning initiatives that create compact, affordable, walkable/bike-able, mixed use, high quality connectivity for our neighborhoods and residents.

### ARTS AND CULTURE

The Boulder Chamber recognizes the contributions that arts and cultural programs make to Boulder’s economic and community vitality. Programs and planning should increase access to arts and culture in the neighborhoods and engage the business community.

We support the creation of art districts, affordable studio space, 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.

Sustainability and predictability is needed for arts and culture grants; creating a 1% for the arts program tied to municipal capital projects is one example for establishing a stable source of funding for public art.

The City of Boulder should explore more stable funding mechanisms for library services, including the creation of a regional library district that recognizes the draw to Boulder’s library services from across Boulder County.

### DIVERSITY AND INCLUSIVITY IN LEADERSHIP

The Boulder Chamber advocates for diverse leadership and representation that can provide a balance of perspectives on local boards, committees and governing institutions.

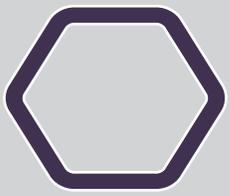
### PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Encouraging 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.

### FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

Operating budgets and capital improvements need to account for, and prioritize, essential infrastructure improvements and services. The City of Boulder should clearly delineate capital funding for critical infrastructure projects, as funding for essential city priorities should not continually be dependent on the passage of supplemental funding initiatives or assessing additional costs solely to businesses when the benefits are shared across the community.

The City of Boulder should move in a direction that will encourage budget and spending efficiency through comparisons to peer cities and/or best practices. Further, the City should identify reserve allocations that may be available for higher priority expenditures. City Council should incorporate the use of performance metrics in its review of critical service delivery.



# QUALITY OF LIFE

## **SOCIAL SAFETY NET AND HUMAN SERVICE PROGRAMS**

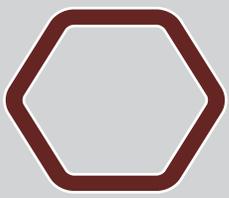
The Boulder Chamber will collaborate with local leaders, organizations and governments to ensure a sustainable safety net of services depended upon by many members of our community and help sustain a thriving workforce.

## **FEDERAL AND STATE HEALTHCARE**

The Boulder Chamber supports efforts to engage a wide array of stakeholders with multiple perspectives in the on-going dialogue to improve our healthcare system without interruption of coverage to those that desperately rely on it nor create periods of unpredictability for our providers. The Boulder Chamber advocates for greater transparency in the cost of healthcare services.

## **RELATED ISSUES OF IMPORTANCE**

- Support the preservation of Open Space as a community asset that appropriately balances conservation initiatives and recreational uses.
- Work in partnership with community leaders and partnering organizations to support initiatives that address the impacts of homelessness on the community.
- Support the principle of greater inclusivity in public policy decision making within the City of Boulder, as recommended by the Public Participation Working Group.
- The Boulder Chamber supports programs that maintain our community's social and cultural vibrancy as a critical tool for attracting and retaining a high-quality, creative and innovative workforce.



# TAXES, FEES & BUSINESS REGULATIONS

Taxes, fees and regulations 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 keep 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. We support ample notice, measurable goals, clear explanations, and adequate input opportunities for affected businesses whenever the City or State consider new and/or renewing taxes, fees and regulations.

We expect transparency in analysis and decision-making processes, along with regular accounting of expenditures.

Our local economy is affected by the cumulative impacts of rising taxes, fees and other costs of doing business in Boulder. Small businesses, startups, creative professionals and non-profits often experience the effects disproportionately. In addition to efforts to reduce direct government-levied costs on businesses, we encourage streamlined regulations and approval processes that impose a further burden on business. We note that an examination of the regulatory environment that prevents or stalls creative projects or initiatives may be appropriate.

## ISSUE AREAS AND POSITIONS

### HEAD TAX

The Boulder Chamber generally opposes the pursuit of new taxing mechanisms that impose additional cost burdens on business and their employees. Further, it is inappropriate to pursue additional tax resources, particularly a new taxing mechanism, without clear goals and need for revenue.

### DEVELOPMENT IMPACT FEES

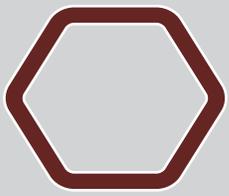
- Maintain a reasonable Affordable Housing Linkage fee of \$12/sq. ft. which strikes the appropriate balance between the revenue that is necessary to meet affordable housing needs, while holding the line on greater impacts to our local business community that can have the effect of inhibiting further commercial development.
- The Boulder Chamber will work in collaboration with the City of Boulder to assess the impact of Development Impact Fees. Outcomes to be analyzed include, but are not limited to, impacts on: commercial development overall and by type and size; number and types of housing units built/acquired; and additional revenue generated for the City's housing fund.

### SUGAR SWEETENED BEVERAGE TAX (IMPLEMENTATION AND IMPACTS)

The Boulder Chamber will work to ensure that revenue from the Sugar Sweetened Beverage Tax is being allocated to programs and outcomes that promote community health. At the same time, we will work to minimize the scope of the tax to avoid burdening local businesses that have been inappropriately impacted. This includes but is not limited to Boulder's natural foods industry, health products or our small businesses such as restaurants and retailers. We also need to address ordinance language that continues to impose unintended logistical hurdles and other negative impacts on local businesses.

### AFFORDABILITY FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

The Boulder Chamber supports measures that continue to make our community an affordable location for small businesses, start-ups, non-profits and creative professionals.



## **CITY OF BOULDER ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY UPDATE**

Economic vitality in the City of Boulder is a public-private collaboration to promote a healthy economy that supports the outstanding quality of life enjoyed by its residents and sets the framework for a positive business environment. It is essential that we work collaboratively to update the long-term vision and near-term strategies for a sustainable path to economic development that fosters innovation, competitiveness and maintaining a positive business climate while enhancing community character and preserving environmental quality.

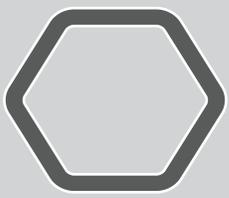
## **RELATED ISSUE AREAS OF IMPORTANCE**

**Federal Tax Reform:** We will monitor the impacts of federal tax reform on our local institutions and businesses and will advocate for adjustments that address areas of unique and/or significant concern.

**State Financing Reform:** Support efforts to provide relief from the tangle of constitutional tax and revenue provisions, such as TABOR, and address the disproportionately high commercial property tax rates on commercial property due to the Gallagher Amendment.

**City of Boulder Transportation Maintenance Fee:** While the Boulder Chamber recognizes the need to identify reliable funding for transportation, we generally oppose the pursuit of new taxing mechanisms that impose additional cost burdens on solely on business, particularly when that burden isn't shared across the community.

**Responsible Regulation for the Cannabis Industry:** The Boulder Chamber will work to maintain a predictable business climate for all legal businesses and industries by continually seeking the appropriate congruence between State law and local ordinances and opposing laws and regulations that are based on unsubstantiated perception, as opposed to fact-based concerns.



The Boulder Chamber will take a lead role in advocating for federal, state and local policies that help Boulder businesses meet their workforce needs.

We support strong schools, educational systems and training programs that help develop an educated and highly-skilled workforce. As the foundation for a functioning democratic society, we support opportunities and partnerships that improve the quality of our education system.

The Boulder Chamber will continue to support policies that help businesses recruit and retain top talent. We will pursue proactive measures that help develop the talent pool to meet the demand for highly-skilled workers across the wide-spectrum of Boulder-based industries.

## ISSUE AREAS AND POSITIONS

### EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE TRAINING

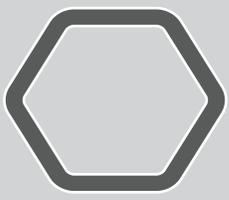
- Support a State level budget fix to provide sustainable and stable funding for K-12 and higher education.
- Support adequate, stable and sustainable funding across all districts and educational levels as a key component for recruiting and retaining businesses and workforce talent, as well as preparing the future workforce.
- Support funding for, and the establishment of, training programs that prepare our workforce for job opportunities that require technical skills or vocational training.
- Act in partnership with Boulder's education institutions to protect and promote state education investments.
- Advocate for policies that support education institutions and private organizations that provide effective technical workforce training.

### WORKFORCE RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

- Support programs and policies that ensure our economy and employers can access the kind of talent needed.
- Advocate for policies that help business attract a diverse talent pool to meet their employment needs.
- Support measures that make Boulder an attractive recruiting center for top talent, such as high quality schools, job opportunities for other family members, and a variety of housing choices.
- Explore and establish regional programs and networks that match workforce skill sets with the needs of local businesses and employers.

### 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. In being one of the only Chambers in Colorado to support the 2016 minimum wage increase, we demonstrated our commitment to helping lift our lowest wage workers out of poverty. At the same time, we recognize that mandated wage increases place additional burden on small businesses. That is why we believe it is appropriate to monitor the benefits and impacts of the state-mandated wage increases before taking additional actions on wage issues.



## **IMMIGRATION**

Immigration is a key economic issue for Colorado, especially for tech and business development, filling workforce requirements, and retaining educated and trained international students.

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

For all the above reasons, as well as the human toll that our broken immigration system creates, the Boulder Chamber supports comprehensive immigration efforts, which includes viable solutions that many of the above industries have helped shape, 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 bipartisan legislative solutions to immigration policies, such as DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals), that provide protection for those currently living, working and contributing to our communities from deportation. We also seek solutions to the H-1B visa programs to allow our businesses to employ workers with special skills from across the globe.

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