

**WEEKLY INFORMATION PACKET
MEMORANDUM**

To: Mayor Ruzzin and Members of Council

From: Frank Bruno, City Manager
Stephanie Grainger, Deputy City Manager
John Pollak, Co-Director Housing and Human Services
Jann Oldham, Housing/Community Development Manager

Date: October 19, 2007

Information Item: Initiative to review and update Boulder's affordable housing goals and strategies

Executive Summary:

In 2000 City Council accepted the recommendations of the Housing Implementation and Funding Task Force (HIFTF) as a blueprint for the city's policies and funding allocations towards the development of affordable housing. In 2005 – 2006, the goals and strategies were updated as part of the development of the Housing and Human Services Master Plan and the Boulder County/Broomfield HOME Consolidated Plan.

Strong community interest in affordable housing and the programs administered by the city continues. The local chapter of the League of Women Voters recently published a report titled "An Inconvenient Housing Truth" about the status of affordable housing in the community. Boulder Tomorrow and the Boulder Area Realtors Association have commissioned the University of Colorado, Leeds School of Business to evaluate Boulder's affordable housing policies and programs. Other organizations, such as Plan Boulder, have established sub-committees to study the issue. The city will partner with the community and will lead on these efforts to evaluate progress on the goals and objectives of the Affordable Housing Programs and to consider modifications.

In partnership with non-profit organizations and housing developers, more than 1,000 permanently affordable housing units have been added to the city's inventory during the past seven years. These include shelter facilities for the homeless, housing for people with special needs, rental housing and homes for purchase. As a result of funding and/or planning approval, it is anticipated that at least two hundred additional affordable homes will come on-line during 2008 – 2009 through acquisition or new construction.

During the next eight to ten months, Housing and Human Services, Division of Housing plans to facilitate a dialogue with the community to review progress on the affordable housing goals and to evaluate the current policies, programs and priorities. The dialogue will include at least one broad forum and several focus groups with relevant stakeholders. The Division of Housing will then develop options for future affordable housing goals and implementation strategies. These options will be presented for City Council and Planning Board's consideration.

Goals of the Review and Dialogue:

Using the extensive data available on Boulder's housing needs and resources, the Division of Housing will provide background information to City Council, Planning Board and the community at-large. The dialogue with the community will provide an opportunity for exploration of issues including:

- What are the current housing needs in Boulder? Given demographic trends, what are the future housing needs that can be anticipated?
- What has been achieved so far through the city's Affordable Housing Programs? Have there been any unanticipated impacts or outcomes? What have we learned?
- Should the city's current housing priorities and goals be modified?
- Are there new strategies that can be used to address the needs? What lessons can be learned from other communities? Should the city consider modifications to current policies such as Inclusionary Zoning?
- Are there new financial tools available?

Staff will continue to further scope the project based on the input and feedback it receives through the process.

Fiscal Impact:

The majority of the cost associated with this project is staff time and this will be accommodated within the 2007 - 2008 HHS, Division of Housing workplan and budget.

Council Goals:

- **Economic:** Affordable housing production contributes to state and local sales tax revenues and fees. Offering affordable housing choices to families with modest incomes also provides a stepping stone for gaining economic self sufficiency in lower paid job sectors by providing a firm foundation for the working poor. The development of workforce housing also supports the retention and attraction of employees in the community.
- **Environmental:** Housing and Human Services contribute to the health, viability, livability and diversity of the broad community. Providing affordable housing makes it possible for employees to live in the community in which they work, which helps to reduce commuting, traffic congestion and sprawl.
- **Social:** Affordable housing provides an opportunity to positively affect the lives of low and moderate-income residents and to enhance the social fabric of the city. Housing for people with special needs addresses a core challenge for vulnerable members of the community.

Timeframe:

The dialogue with the community will begin during the fourth quarter of 2007 and is expected to take approximately eight to ten months. The process will be divided into three major phases: (1) information collection and distribution; (2) dialogue with the broad community and stakeholders; and (3) development of options for City Council and Planning Board consideration. It is anticipated that options and recommendations regarding program modifications will be presented to City Council for consideration by September 2008. Staff will keep council updated periodically through Weekly Information Packet items.

Staff:

Lead staff: John Pollak, Co-Director of HHS (303-441-3144), and Jann Oldham, Housing and Community Services Program Manager (303-441-3167).