

**WEEKLY INFORMATION PACKET
MEMORANDUM**

TO: Mayor Ruzzin and Members of City Council

FROM: Frank Bruno, City Manager
Karen Rahn, Co-Director, Housing and Human Services
John Pollak, Co-Director, Housing and Human Services
Richard Johnson, Director, Division of Community Services, HHS
Linda Hill-Blakley, Housing and Human Services Planner, HHS

DATE: September 7, 2005

SUBJECT: Action Item: Draft Summary of August 30 City Council study session on the Housing and Human Services Master Plan. **Action Requested by September 12, 2005.**

PRESENT

City Council: Mayor Mark Ruzzin, Deputy Mayor Tom Eldridge and Council members Suzy Ageton, Robin Bohannon, Crystal Gray, Shaun McGrath, Gordon Riggle, and Andy Shultheiss.

Staff: Frank Bruno, City Manager; Karen Rahn, Co-Director, HHS; John Pollak, Co-Director, HHS; Richard Johnson, Director, Division of Community Services, HHS; Linda Hill-Blakley, Housing and Human Services Planner, HHS.

PURPOSE

This item provides Council with a summary of the August 30 Council study session on the Housing and Human Services Master Plan. Acceptance of the summary is scheduled for the September 20 Council session. The purpose of this draft meeting summary is to give Council an opportunity to comment on it in advance of the September 20 meeting. **Please provide requests for changes to this summary to Richard Johnson (303-441-4196 or JohnsonR@ci.boulder.co.us) by September 12, 2005.**

The purpose of the study session was to:

- Provide Council with an overview of the draft Housing and Human Services Master Plan;
- Provide Council with an outline of the next steps in the process; and
- Receive guidance from Council on four questions:
 - Does Council agree with the general direction of the Master Plan?
 - Does Council agree with the policy directions outlined in the Master Plan?
 - Does Council agree with the Scenarios presented in the Master Plan?
 - What changes would Council recommend?

OVERVIEW

After an introduction by City Manager Frank Bruno, the HHS staff team provided an overview of the Housing and Human Services Master Plan process and draft document. Emphasis was placed on demographic and service delivery trends that helped shape the Master Plan. Three Investment Scenarios were presented to Council:

- Scenario 1: Fiscally Constrained Investment. This scenario assumes the current level of funding – \$12.9 million annually – will continue to come to the department from City and outside sources. Service adjustments may be made over time to meet changing needs.
- Scenario 2: Action Investment. This scenario outlines enhanced investments to address established and emerging Council goals (Affordable Housing, Community Sustainability) at a cost of \$3.9 million annually over that required for Scenario 1.
- Scenario 3: Vision Investment. This scenario is a higher level of investment to enhance City leadership in promoting a healthy community, including affordable housing, community health programs, senior health needs, and expansions of programs for children, youth and community mediation. The cost for full implementation of Scenario 3 would be \$8 million annually over that required for Scenario 2.

The Master Plan also contains a funding reduction strategy based on the model established by the City of Boulder Business Plan.

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

The following items arose during discussion:

- Council member Riggle questioned whether data exist that reveal the size of Boulder’s population below federal poverty level over time. Unfortunately, we do not have comparable data before the 2000 census, because special efforts were made with the 2000 census data to remove students from the equation. Based on anecdotal information, staff believes that the relative proportion of people under the poverty level has remained fairly constant (14% in 2000), but that other demographics of this population have changed (e.g., a growing proportion of those in poverty are Latino immigrants, with a wider range of needs because of language and cultural differences).
- Given the changing demographics of Boulder and the coming growth of our senior population, Council member Riggle suggested that singling out “senior housing” in the Washington School redevelopment RFP would be a good idea. Mayor Ruzzin agreed that this was worth doing. Staff indicated that senior housing was an option under the draft RFP, but that specifically mentioning senior housing is a good idea that would be forwarded to the staff working on the Washington School RFP.

- Council member Gray talked about the importance of diversifying revenue sources. Regarding the HHS fund reduction strategy, both she and Council member Bohannan questioned which of the Department’s programs were most important. Staff reported that the reduction strategy will be contained in the City Business Plan currently under development, and that the Business Plan divides services into categories of essential, desirable and discretionary. It is important to remember that one program cannot be singled out as the “most important.” Shelter/housing is an important factor in the stability of the individual or families, but this stability often cannot be attained without supportive human services.
- Speaking of senior housing issues, Council member Gray questioned what role Mary Sandoe house might play in future needs. Staff agreed that future senior housing will require a variety of settings and options for seniors. Much of this – and other senior needs, such as recreation – may be taken up by the private sector as the senior population grows and it becomes more profitable to serve them.
- Council member Bohannan commented that the HHS Master Plan serves not only the City, but the non-profit community as well. She asked for an update on a county-wide human services master plan. Staff replied that County Commissioner Mayer has brought up the notion of a county-wide plan, but this is just in the very formative stage. HHS is participating in several county-wide plans, however, including work with County Aging Services, the Early Care and Education Council, and a regional housing initiative.
- Council members Bohannan and Gray voiced the opinion that it would have been good if this study session could have been televised. It was noted that increased public awareness of human services issues was a need identified by the Housing and Human Services Master Plan Advisory Committee.
- Council member Bohannan questioned why increased investments for physical and mental health are not in the Action Plan. Staff responded that the Action Plan is defined to address the Council goals concerning Affordable Housing and Community Sustainability.
- Mayor Ruzzin noted the word “million” missing from the section on a commercial linkage tax, and noted the need to coordinate renewal of all taxes due to expire. He suggested Council consider some omnibus tax that would combine several existing taxes. He also suggested that current sales tax levels are about as high as he believes the public would support.
- Regarding the stability of non-City funding for HHS, Mayor Ruzzin asked what had happened with Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding this year. Is this something that can be expected every year? Staff responded that at the federal level, reductions have been proposed for the CDBG program for several years. While local support across the county has kept the grant from being eliminated, it has eroded about 5% - 7% per year. Future reductions of a like nature are probable.
- With reference to the regional housing plan, Mayor Ruzzin asked if we would see more benefit from a county-wide plan. Staff pointed to the example of the collaborative Child Care

Certificate Program in operation in Longmont and Boulder, both parts administered by HHS, which saves money for both cities in administrative costs. Also, a county-wide or regional approach is sometimes successful in bringing in outside funding – either through foundations or the federal government – that would not otherwise be coming into the city.

- Deputy Mayor Eldridge commented that he thought the Master Plan was well done and commended the Advisory Committee for its work over the previous 21 months. He voiced concern that the 10% affordable housing goal, whenever it is reached, will not meet the total need for the city.
- Council member McGrath noted that in none of the three Investment Scenarios is the 10% affordable housing goal achieved by the original date of 2011 and wondered if City Council needed to acknowledge that. Staff pointed out that the original date of 2011 assumed that the 2000 affordable housing tax would be accepted by the voters (it did not pass). Without that important source of funding the estimated date of achieving the 10% affordable housing goal has been revised to 2019. Scenario 2 would achieve the 10% goal by 2015 with an additional \$3 million annual investment. Scenario 3 would achieve the 10% goal by 2015 with an annual investment of \$6.4 million over the current level.
- Council member Ageton noted that HHS receives approximately \$800,000 in grants from non-City sources and asked about the sources and stability of that funding. Staff responded that these grants support programs in the Division of Children, Youth and Families from several sources: the city of Longmont, the Knight Foundation, Temple Buell Foundation, and pass-through grants from the federal and state governments. These funds have been very stable, and in fact have been growing throughout the past decade. However, they are very labor-intensive to maintain due to reporting and reapplication.
- Council member Ageton asked for a brief overview on the Family Resource Schools (FRS) program. Staff responded that the program was originally a Council initiative, and has been in operation since 1992. It operates in high-risk elementary schools, working with families (primarily through family case management) to remove barriers to academic success. No City General Funds are used for this program. It is funded through the School District (approximately one-third), the City's CDBG program and the Human Services Fund. Reduced funding and consolidation of schools has meant that the program now operates in three elementary schools.
- Council member Gray expressed interest in exploring the potential for increased affordable housing benefit when developers are given concessions such as increased height or density. She also encouraged continued research for new models to accomplish the City's housing goals.
- Council member McGrath suggested that City Boards and Commissions be provided with the draft Master Plan. Staff reported that during the spring of 2005, staff informed a wide range of organizations, including all City Boards and Commissions and City staff, of the availability of the master plan on the web. Hard copies provided upon request. Additionally, copies of the March draft were distributed to key housing and human services entities,

presentations were made to a number of community groups, a public forum and open house was held, and a specific focus group for Latino immigrants was convened. Comments received through the public process have been incorporated in the draft master plan presented at this study session with Council. By design, this public process and comment preceded presentation of the draft master plan to Council at this study session. All staff developed materials, meeting summaries and presentations used in the development of the master plan are available at www.ci.boulder.co.us/hhs/HHSMP%20homepage.htm.

- Council members noted their appreciation for the work of the Housing and Human Services Master Plan Advisory Committee.
- Advisory Committee members Clara Perez-Mendez and Barbara Pingrey stated that they thought the master planning process has been very creative, thoughtful and inclusive. The outreach to the community, they felt, was particularly valuable and could serve as a guide for other City processes.

Mayor Ruzzin summarized the study session questions as follows:

- Does Council agree with the general direction of the Master Plan? **Yes.**
- Does Council agree with the policy directions outlined in the Master Plan? **Yes.**
- Does Council agree with the Scenarios presented in the Master Plan? **Yes.**
- What changes would Council recommend? **No changes recommended to the draft HHS Master Plan.**

NEXT STEPS

September 20	This study session summary will be presented to Council for approval.
September 22	The HHS Master Plan will be presented to the Planning Board for its input.
September 27	Final meeting of the Housing and Human Services Master Plan Advisory Committee.
October 18	The HHS Master Plan will be presented to City Council for acceptance.