

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor Appelbaum and Members of City Council

FROM: Jane S. Brautigam, City Manager
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David Driskell, Executive Director of Community Planning & Sustainability
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Sam Assefa, Senior Urban Designer, Project coordinator
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DATE: June 12, 2012

SUBJECT: Study Session on Civic Center Phase 1 Community Engagement and Project Assumptions

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this study session is to present and discuss upcoming community engagement events and draft assumptions for Phase 1 of the Civic Center Project.

II. QUESTIONS

1. Does City Council have questions or feedback on the upcoming community engagement events (**Attachment A**)?
2. Does City Council have questions or feedback on the draft project assumptions (**Attachment B**)?

III. BACKGROUND

On April 10, 2012, City Council and Planning Board held a joint study session to review and discuss the overall Civic Center project process. (A complete overview of what was discussed at the study session is available at: www.bouldercolorado.gov/Government/City Council/Study Sessions/2012 Study Sessions.) Since then, staff has further developed the process timeline and community engagement events and prepared a project resource inventory.

The project inventory is primarily map-based and includes information on land use, transportation, natural resources and outdoor features, utilities, events and use (detailed list in **Attachment C**). The inventory will provide baseline information throughout the process, and early in the process, will help the community become familiar with the area. The inventory also informed the draft project assumptions described in the Analysis section below. Highlights of key aspects of the inventory will be presented at the study session.

IV. ANALYSIS

Community Engagement

Engaging and inspiring the community to “imagine the civic heart of Boulder” is vital to the success of this project. Stakeholders, city leaders and the community at large will be challenged to “think big” and creatively while at the same time acknowledging the history, geography and specific opportunities and constraints specific to the area. They will need to think about and prioritize the multiple potential uses for the Civic Center area, including existing and potential new facilities as well as natural areas and features.

To capture attention and draw in a broad spectrum of the community to generate fresh, exciting ideas, a multifaceted and inclusive approach will be taken, combining traditional techniques for public outreach and involvement with new digital tools and innovative on-site events. This approach was presented and discussed at the April joint study session. Since then, the events, techniques and schedule for Phase 1 engagement have been further refined (**Attachment A**).

In late June/early July, a broad education campaign will launch. On Wednesday, July 11, a Civic Center Project kick-off open house will be held at the Boulder Museum of Contemporary Art (BMoCA). Situated in the heart of the Civic Center area, the open house will engage city boards and commissions as well as the community at large. This open house will be an informative and interesting first glance at the project – its scope and schedule and the various engagement opportunities available. At the meeting, the city will officially launch the Civic Center idea-collaboration site on MindMixer.com.

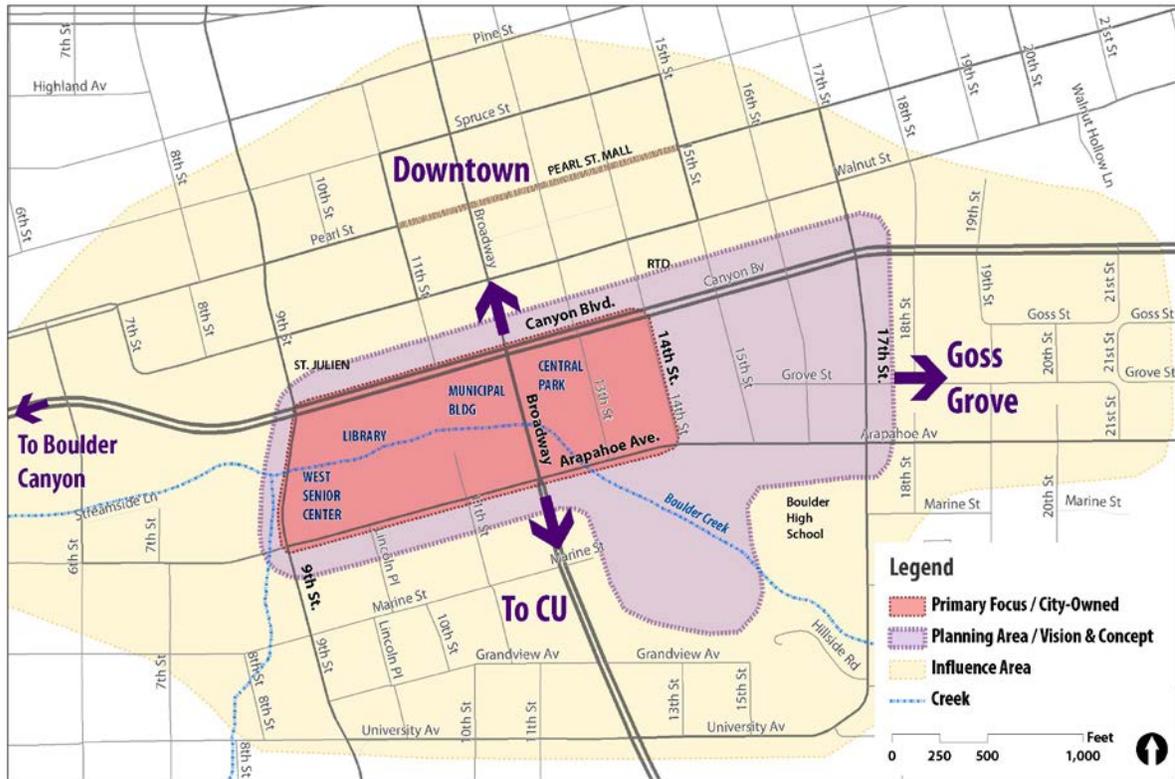
Between July 14 and Aug. 5, an interactive story series will be held in the Civic Center area. This interactive, performance- and place-based outreach will focus on the theme “Civic Heart: Past and Present.” The series will not only tell the story of the Civic Center area, but also create the opportunity for initial dialogue and input (digitally and in-person).

More in-depth input and idea generation will continue when community members have returned from summer vacations. This will also synchronize with completion of the city space needs analysis. In late August and September, the city will facilitate community dialogue on guiding principles at a workshop and on the MindMixer idea-collaboration site to begin shaping a community vision for the Civic Center area. In addition, the city will host “meetup” events focused on particular themes. Based on the guiding principles

provided by the community, in late fall/early winter, the focus will shift to “big ideas and concepts”. The latter will likely include a charrette and community response to an ideas competition.

In response to feedback from City Council and Planning Board at the joint study session in April, the initial idea of a process advisory committee has been replaced by the July 11 open house for boards and commissions mentioned above, a meeting for on-site stakeholders, and check-ins with individual boards and commissions in later phases of the project. All stakeholders – on-site and otherwise – will be invited to participate in all the community events and online opportunities. “On-site stakeholders” are defined as the owners, tenants and current users of the Civic Center “primary focus area” (Areas of Focus Diagram below). Examples include the Farmer’s Market, BMoCA and private property owners along Broadway, Arapahoe Avenue and 13th and 14th streets. A draft list of stakeholders is provided in **Attachment D** and will continue to be expanded as suggestions for additions are received.

Civic Center – Areas of Focus Diagram



Draft Project Assumptions

The draft project assumptions in **Attachment B** will help set parameters for the community visioning exercises in the initial phase of the community engagement process. As discussed at the April joint study session, the public will be encouraged to think “outside the box” when visualizing what they want for the future of the Civic Center area, but this should be grounded in some basic realities, in order to avoid disappointment later. The givens or “must haves” for the project will develop and evolve over the course of the project, as opportunities and constraints are identified, goals are shaped and options are analyzed. The draft assumptions presented for this study session are just the first step in this process – they represent a very basic foundation for helping the community understand the starting point for their visioning.

City Council will discuss the draft assumptions at the June 12 study session, and then, based on that feedback, the interdepartmental project staff team will refine and present them to the community for additional input.

V. NEXT STEPS AND EVENTS

- Public launch of Civic Center Project: July
- Boards/Commissions and Public Open House: July 11
- Story Series: July 14 through August 17
- Council study session on city space needs analysis and Civic Center Project next steps: July 31
- Outreach to individual boards and commissions: Month of August (boards’ regular schedule)
- Community input on guiding principles: August 29 (tentative) through mid-September
- Council item on guiding principles: October 16

ATTACHMENTS

- A** – Upcoming Community Engagement Events
- B** – Draft Project Assumptions
- C** – Project Resource Inventory List
- D** – Draft Stakeholders List

**UPCOMING EVENTS -
Phase 1 Civic Center Project**

	Digital: Website – Kick-off	Generate awareness and excitement about the project and upcoming events.	July 2012
	Open House	Introduce boards/ commissions to project; open to public.	July 11 at BMoCA
	On-Site Stakeholder Meeting	Introduce on-site stakeholders to project and discuss issues and concerns	July - TBD
	On-Site Story Series – Walking tours, performances, art installation, including at Farmers Market and BMoCA	Generate community awareness about Civic Center’s past and present, and encourage “outside the box” thinking about what the Civic Center area could become.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sat., July 14 - Farmers’ Market ● Wed., July 18 - Farmers’ Market ● Sat., July 21 - Farmers’ Market ● Sat., August 4 – Farmers’ Market and Outdoor Cinema ▪ Sun., August 5 – Library Concert ▪ Fri., August 17 - Tulip Giveaway
 	Traditional/Digital: Planning trade-offs and “ideals” workshop(s). What should Civic Center become?	Engage community to begin articulating a shared vision for the civic center area. Result will be images, word clouds and sketches. Meeting will be combined with live and online webinar-style meeting and real-time interaction with smart phone applications and possibly TV.	August 29 (tentative) – mid-September
	Stakeholder Meetups	Engage stakeholders to articulate a vision for the area in small group discussions focused on particular themes (e.g., connections or arts).	August – September (TBD)
	Traditional/Digital: Big Ideas workshop(s) and Ideas Competition	Earlier council input on criteria for an ideas competition and community input on big ideas and concepts will set the stage for a design competition engaging local and national talent to explore and illustrate the community’s vision.	October – November

DRAFT CIVIC CENTER ASSUMPTIONS

Natural and Outdoor Features

- Boulder Creek and riparian area are an integral part of the Civic Center area, and it will not be channeled or excavated.
- The Farmers Ditch is an important part of the area and has historic significance.
- Parkland and outdoor spaces will continue to be an important aspect of the civic area to accommodate passive enjoyment, recreation, social gatherings and events, but could be reconfigured.
- Natural features (e.g., wetlands, significant trees) will remain an important component of the area, and will be inventoried and analyzed to determine constraints, opportunities and goals for the Civic Center.

Flood

- No new structures or new parking can occur in the high hazard zone.
- New development and/or site grading can happen in the conveyance zone and 100-year floodplain, provided it meets Boulder Revised Code requirements.

Urban Form

- The area's historical resources and context will be an important component of the planning process and will inform land use and urban design analysis and goals for the area.
- Any changes related to historic resources and structures will be consistent with City policies.
- The Farmers' Market will remain within the Civic Center area, and possibly be expanded or reconfigured within the area.
- The downtown Boulder Transit Center will continue to serve as one of three major hubs of transit activity in the city. The facility is currently at capacity and will need to expand over time to accommodate additional transit activity associated with RTD's FasTracks improvements and other planned local transit service enhancements. Lower cost, on-street improvements from the capital improvement bond and state transit grant are currently being coordinated with downtown streetscape improvements north of Canyon on 14th Street.
- At a minimum, current multimodal connectivity will be maintained. Existing paths and connections will remain in the area, although possible refinements, reconfiguration and enhancements for pedestrian and bicycle connections will be part of the process.

- Parking may be relocated or reconfigured in the context of new plans for the area and consistent with city policies.
- Potential for private/public partnership, including adjacent private properties, will be considered through the planning process

-City Facilities

- The current Municipal Campus's services will remain downtown and to large degree within the civic center area, but the facilities could be reconfigured and/or relocated based on:
 - Municipal space study and recommendations
 - Flood study and recommendations regarding critical facilities
 - Urban design and land use recommendation through the Civic Center planning process
- Boulder's Main Library will remain on its present site but may be expanded or reconfigured.

PROJECT RESOURCE INVENTORY LIST

- Natural Resources:
 - Flood zones
 - Significant vegetation/trees, canopy
 - Hydrology
 - Wetlands
 - Ditches

- Land Use:
 - General mix of land uses in the vicinity
 - City and other public uses
 - Park land, gardens and art (e.g., Haertling Sculpture Park)
 - Parking

- Transportation:
 - Major corridors
 - Level of service/traffic and vehicular circulation patterns
 - Bus stations/stops (current and planned)
 - Paths and bicycle facilities
 - Informal pedestrian and bicycle routes connecting surrounding neighborhoods and destinations

- Buildings:
 - City offices
 - Significant public and/or private buildings
 - Landmarks and historically significant structures

- Current Zoning

- Current Ownership Patterns

- Utilities Capacity Information

- Major Events (Boulder Creek Festival, etc.)

- Current Use/User Patterns

- Other:
 - Context map
 - Area history (narrative) and Olmsted Plan elements
 - Crime (compare to rest of city)
 - Fire protection/rescue

Civic Center Stakeholders

Primary Focus Area (9th St. to 14th St., Canyon Blvd. to Arapahoe Ave.)

Property owners (mostly city-owned; have data – Excel spreadsheet)
Residents (e.g., Arapahoe Place and others north of Arapahoe)
Business owners and tenants (including Dushanbe Teahouse and their customers)
City employees, customers
Senior Center – employees and users, including recreation providers/classes
Library – employees and users
Parks / creek path/ B-cycle users / creek recreation users
Boulder County Farmer’s Market – operators and patrons
Boulder Creek Festival and Fall Festival – operators
Community Folk Dancing @ Dushanbe (June – September)
Boulder Outdoor Cinema – operators and attendees \
Homeless population – site users
Garden maintenance group
Parking lot users
Park’s contracted users (Fitness, Yoga, Camps, etc.)

Planning Area

(½ block W of 9th St. to ½ block E of 17th St., ½ block N of Canyon to ½ block S of Arapahoe PLUS areas around Boulder High)

Property owners (have data – Excel spreadsheet)
Business owners
Goss Grove (residents/tenants) and neighborhood association
RTD – Board of Directors and staff
Transit users (Eco Pass mailing list)
Faculty, staff and students – Boulder High School, Youth Opportunities Advisory Board, Growing Up Boulder

Influence Area

Property owners
University of Colorado
Business owners, including but not limited to Alfalfa’s, St. Julien Hotel and pad site
Downtown residents
Downtown Boulder Inc. and Downtown Boulder BID (staff and Board members)
The Ice Rink at One Boulder Plaza – operators and users (November – February)
Bands on the Bricks – operators and attendees (Wednesday evenings @ 5:30, June – Aug)
Noon Tunes – operators and attendees (Fridays @ noon, June – Aug)
Neighborhood associations:

- Mapleton Hill

- West Pearl
- Flatirons
- Hillside
- Grandview
- Whittier
- University Hill

City Boards and Commissions:

- Boulder Arts Commission
- Boulder Design Advisory Board
- Boulder Urban Renewal Authority
- Downtown Management Commission
- Environmental Advisory Board
- Human Relations Commission
- Landmarks Board
- Library Commission
- Open Space Board of Trustees
- Parks and Recreation Advisory Board
- Planning Board
- Transportation Advisory Board
- Water Resources Advisory Board
- Boulder Housing Partners Board of Commissioners
- Youth Opportunities Advisory Board

Citywide/Multiple Areas

Community at large (Boulder residents, employees, students, visitors)

Boulder Chamber

Landscape architects (local chapter ASLA)

Architects (local chapter AIA)

Planners (local chapter APA)

Developers (local chapter ULI)

Historic Boulder

Homeless advocates

Community Cycles

B-Cycle

Association for Community Living (ACL) Boulder (Advocates for people with disabilities)

Community activists

Tech/Start-up community

Organizations that have expressed interests