

A LEADERSHIP & POLICY VISION
FOR THE CITY OF BOULDER

DECIDE TO DELIVER

AQUILES LA GRAVE

BOULDER, COLORADO · 2026

It's our city.

THE DOCUMENT

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A diagnosis, a mission, and three fights — each stated as a vision and a set of commitments made to be checked.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

THE CASE, IN BRIEF

PURPOSE

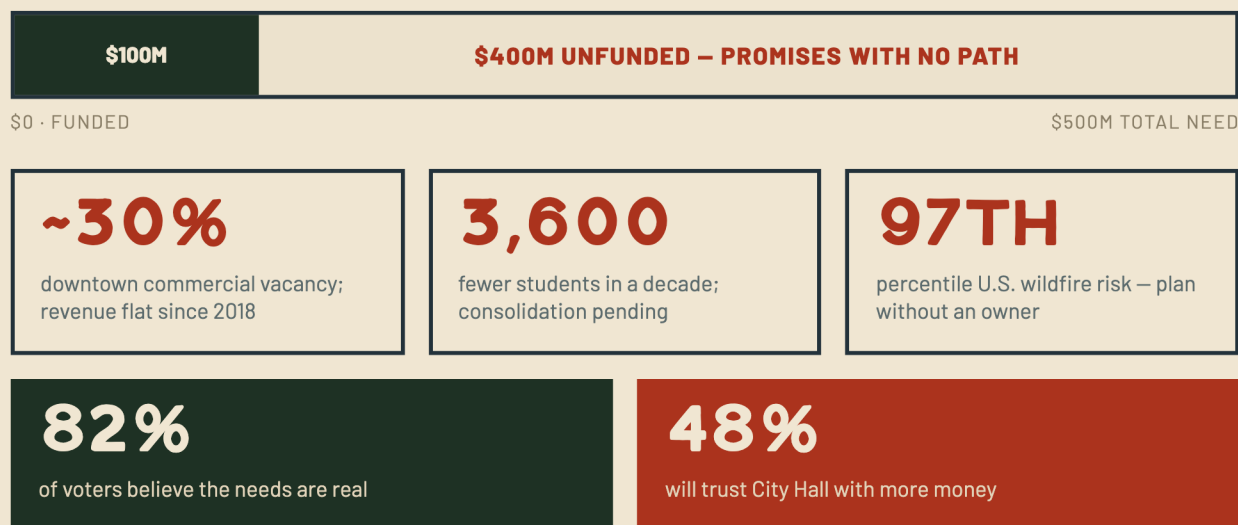
The recent citizen survey has shown us that at its core, the relationship between the City and its citizens is broken. The following document will provide our vision for the City of Boulder; with the diagnosis, mission and three battles that we need to win to mend it.

CORE PREMISE

City residents own this city, we're not customers. The way we measure how well our city government works is through the amount of value (or benefit) it provides back to those already invested in this city.

THE DIAGNOSIS, IN NUMBERS

INFRASTRUCTURE NEED VS. IDENTIFIED FUNDING



Our finding: Cities never run out of ideas; rather they run out of resources. We make commitments to future generations of citizens (not just our generation) with each new road we construct, each new park we create, each new program we implement, and each additional service we provide. A good government's value is not determined by how many projects or programs it initiates, but by how successfully it fulfills the commitments made to our citizens. Each decision we make should enhance the city's capacity over time to maintain its physical, social and economic infrastructure; to deliver basic services; and to invest in the future. Growth continues to be a factor, however, growth can never be an end unto itself and must always leave the community stronger than it was prior to the growth.

That will require methods of governing by accountability for Boulder. The Council has a duty to identify and manage, from what outcomes the community desires; ensure that the Administration is accountable; and ensure that each major investment will advance those desired outcomes while building the city's ability to create value for decades into the future. It is the role of the Administration to implement the vision and direction of the community, not to develop it. As long as stewardship remains the foundation of all decisions made by the Council, then fiscal responsibility becomes a function of how the city meets its obligations to its citizens, rather than simply being an accounting function.

THE MISSION & THE THREE FIGHTS

BOULDER 2035: AN ADAPTABLE CITY

Rather than guessing at the future, an adaptable city prepares for it. Instead of creating a plan based upon a single vision of the future, an adaptable city develops the ability to adjust to changes, respond to unknown situations, and provide services to its residents through various economic and environmental conditions as well as fluctuations in population. Adaptability is not about preventing change; however, it does mean that a community can undergo change while maintaining their commitment to the values and principles that define them.

The three capacities that research consistently indicates allow communities to be resilient are:

Adaptive Governance: Systems of government (institutions) that provide for the establishment of defined objectives/outcomes; however, provide for the flexibility of Neighborhoods and Private Sector entities to address issues as conditions change. **Distributed Resilience:** A continuous commitment to the continued maintenance of emergency/safety infrastructure, to invest in the First Responders first, to maintain the safety of the City's Public Spaces, Natural Systems, and Crisis Resources to allow for the City to Adapt, Respond and Recover from whatever occurs next. **Civic Ownership:** To view Residents & Businesses as Participants & Beneficiaries of Economic Capacity versus Customers of Government. Residents and Businesses must be viewed as Long Term Stakeholders whose Participation, Investment & Stewardship increases the Community's Capacity to Thrive. These are the three fights because together they will dictate whether a city simply manages change or grows stronger because of it.

FIGHT ONE · STEER

RUN BOULDER LIKE WE OWN IT

Be honest with how you govern yourself and others (accountable). Drive ownership of what is being measured. Measure and audit the return on citizens. Track the progress. Steward before you expand. Close the loop.

FIGHT TWO · ABSORB

A READY AND SAFE BOULDER

Everyone will be carried through their shocks. Public spaces are there for everyone. The community should be ready for the wind and fire, lights should remain on at all times and each holder should be protected.

FIGHT THREE · RENEW

A LIFE YOU CAN BUILD HERE

Continue to deliver opportunities. Turn the lights back on. Answer within 30 days. Work to keep our schools full. Build the next increment. Keep our money at home. Have one name on the economy.

DELIVERY & ACCOUNTABILITY

DAY ONE

The ownership question, asked in public; answers published in 30 days.

100 DAYS

The first public Scoreboard; a statement of direction adopted.

EVERY QTR

The Scoreboard, misses included, each with a new date and reason.

I've been walking Boulder's streets at night, counting dark windows.

I wrote about this subject this past Spring, and I received many responses from many of you. Many of you have lived here since long before the Blue Line opened. Many of you moved here within the last year. Many of you left and continue to follow every single thing written about this town because you cannot let go of a town you loved but could no longer live in. Many of you were not surprised when I counted. Many of you had already counted. Then you asked me: what else do you bring to the table besides those words?

In 1995, my mom, my sister, and I landed in Boulder as immigrants from Venezuela. We didn't arrive with much. I know what a month-to-month studio apartment sounds like at night when a kid is sleeping on the floor, because I was the kid, and I know the difference between a full fridge and the stale smell of an empty one

But in the end Boulder caught us. Small Business owners, like the owners of the University Inn, giving my family a turkey on our first Thanksgiving. BVSD Teachers, like as Buford Jarvis and Jean McGinnis, who helped guide me through a school system, that back then struggled in believing students that looked like me could achieve anything beyond staying in school – yet chose, instead to seize the potential in me. Elected leaders like Sally Kingdown, who ensured that BVSD sent me to the top of the hill to attend CU and instilled the commitment to public service that has continued uninterrupted since I was sixteen. All the neighbors and institutions who did not question the worthiness of my family saying yes and here's how rather than no and here's why. Nobody who helped asked what we could do for them first. That is our culture, a town built by people who give first and settle up never.

That our family's found success and a place in this community inside one generation is a statistically far-fetched story for immigrant families like ours. And it is one I can tell you, in full certainty, could not have come true for us anywhere but in Boulder. My office on Pearl Street, the daughter I'm raising and writing this for, the respect to write you this letter, it all of it exists because of Boulder, not in spite of it. I know the difference between open doors and closed ones, and I've devoted my life to ensuring they stay open behind me.

THAT DEBT IS WHY THE DARK WINDOWS WON'T

LEAVE ME ALONE. Somewhere in Boulder tonight, there's a kid pretending to sleep on the floor of a studio, listening to some adults do math in hushed voices. And the only question that matters to me, the one this whole document exists to answer, is whether Boulder can do for that kid what it did for me. Tell the truth: right now, it wouldn't.

For a decade we've been given a story as to why. That this is what success looks like. That the empty storefronts, the empty schools, and those teachers driving in from Longmont are like the bad weather – unfortunate but no one has control over it. I have spent many years sitting in the rooms where this community shapes its choices, and I can tell you that it isn't the weather. It is \$400,000,000 worth of promises made to no one by anyone. A government that has found it to be safer to say "no, and here's why" rather than "yes, and here's how", as a council person recently reminded me, and no one takes responsibility for the results.

And this is the part which should give you some hope and also a lot of anger: nothing is missing from our community. Our talent's still here. Our money's still here. I have never experienced people love a town as I see us have for this one. The town where my family found us did not pass away; it was put on the bench. We do not need a savior. We're a city that needs to remember who it is, and a government led by neighbors with the nerve to act like it.

You can honestly say; there is a lot of talking going on. Here is my answer. After the City chose to watch while the County sell Iris Fields out from below our neighborhood, I was part of a group of neighbors that worked together to save them. I am currently serving on the School District's Bond Oversight Committee. I have spent the last thirty years serving continuously for our communities across Boulder County, building businesses, chairing boards, and providing employment to hundreds of neighbors across Colorado. This Spring I co-authored the Wildfire Plan now moving towards City Council, I helped fight for increased representation in Boulder County government, and I am assisting in getting an Independent Auditor placed on your ballot. My document does not contain a Vision at the end of it. It contains My Name.

It's our city. Let's decide to deliver.

Aquiles La Grave BOULDER

A NOTE TO THE READER

CUSTOMER, OR OWNER?

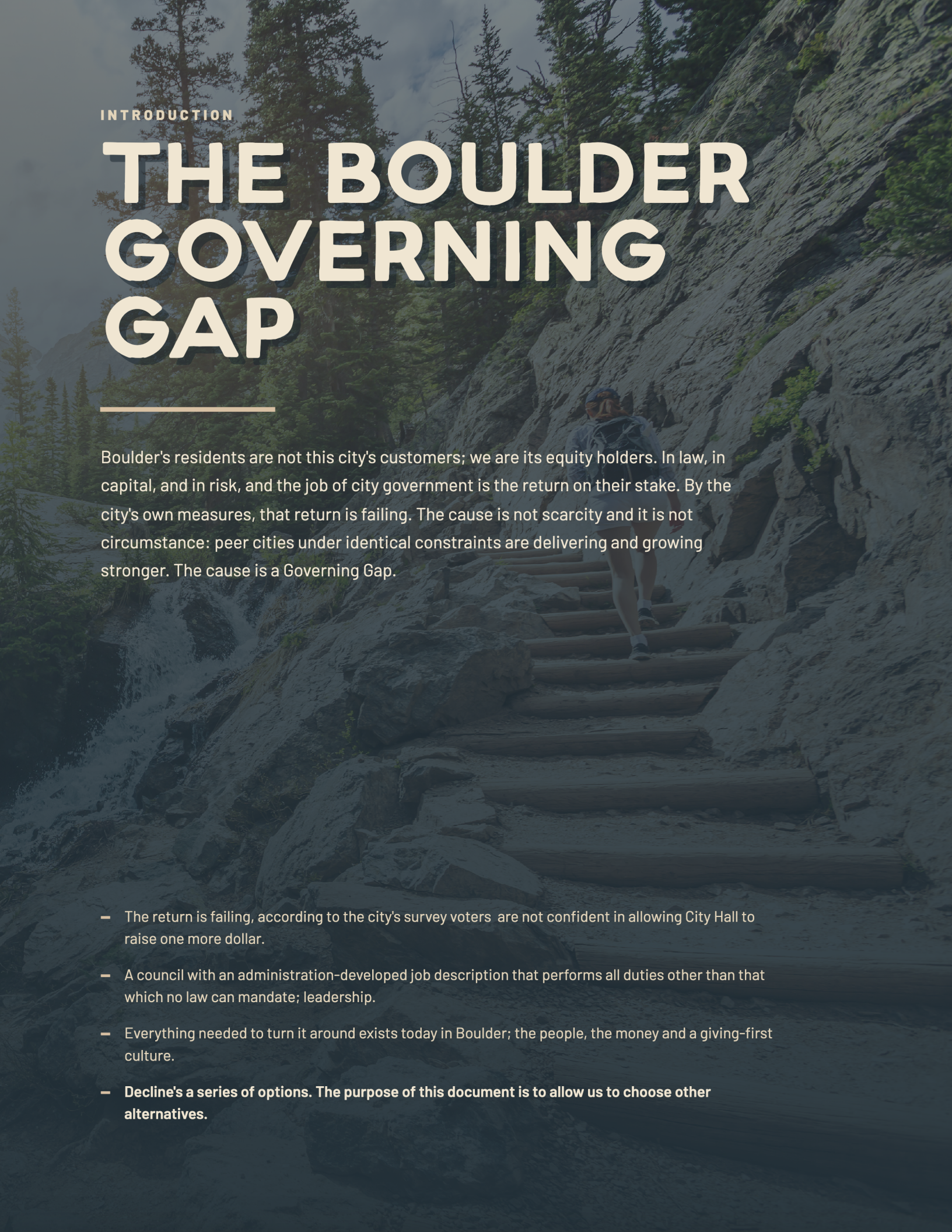
Everything in this plan rests on a single premise. If it is false, the whole plan falls apart. So it should be said plainly, right here, where you can weigh it for yourself:

**YOU ARE NOT BOULDER'S CUSTOMER
YOU ARE AN OWNER OF IT.**

For forty years, cities were sold a specific idea: run government like a business, and treat the resident like a customer. It was supposed to make things faster and friendlier. Instead it made the relationship transactional. It was a relational demotion of residents, businesses and visitors.

THE CUSTOMER THE DEMOTION	THE OWNER THE TRUTH
Is managed	Is answered
Gets the brochure, surveys, newsletters	Gets the books, not the brochure
An input to be processed	A shareholder, by charter, by tax, by stake
If they leave, it's "churn"	If they leave, it's a crisis in the family

An owner has an obligation to know **who owns this, and when will it be delivered** – and is entitled, every single time, to an answer. The residents never stopped acting like owners. Only their government's posture treats them as customers.



INTRODUCTION

THE BOULDER GOVERNING GAP

Boulder's residents are not this city's customers; we are its equity holders. In law, in capital, and in risk, and the job of city government is the return on their stake. By the city's own measures, that return is failing. The cause is not scarcity and it is not circumstance: peer cities under identical constraints are delivering and growing stronger. The cause is a Governing Gap.

- The return is failing, according to the city's survey voters are not confident in allowing City Hall to raise one more dollar.
- A council with an administration-developed job description that performs all duties other than that which no law can mandate; leadership.
- Everything needed to turn it around exists today in Boulder; the people, the money and a giving-first culture.
- **Decline's a series of options. The purpose of this document is to allow us to choose other alternatives.**

THE CORE PRINCIPLE

The people and businesses who call Boulder home are not this city's customers. We are its equity holders. That is not a metaphor. The city is a corporation that has been created by the residents of the city under Boulder's Home Rule Charter. The residents have created the board of directors (Council) and the board of directors hires the head executives (City Manager and City Attorney). The residents provide the money to operate the city and the residents take on the risk associated with being an owner. A customer's downside ends at the counter; an owner's downside is their home, their business, their kids' school.

THE TEST

Boulder is not returning that value. For people who have lived here their whole life, this is not the community that raised you. For those who chose to come to Boulder, this is not the town they said it would be. We've all experienced a similar type of loss. Our lights in our homes, businesses, and schools are not simply 24 different losses.

The owners rendered their verdict in the city's own data. In June 2026, a commissioned survey found 82 percent agree delaying maintenance only raises its cost, and three-quarters believe the projected \$90-million-a-year gap is real. Asked what to fund first, they named the floor,

The Strong Towns movement has spent two decades making exactly this shift — from residents-as-customers to residents-as-shareholders. And Boulder's people have never behaved any other way: they pack council chambers on weeknights, serve on boards by the hundreds, and vote to tax themselves when the purpose is worthy. Every resident holds a stake, the renter as surely as the homeowner, and a city government exists to deliver a return on it: safety, opportunity, a public realm worth belonging to, and a government that does what it says.

not the frills. And then the finding that should stop this government cold: fewer than half will trust it with more money. Owners who believe the problem, ask for the basics, and still withhold the check are delivering a shareholder's judgment: the need is real, and the steward has not earned the ask.

Fifteen minutes away, under the same sky and laws and economy, Longmont's downtown is full and its lights are on. What differs is not circumstance. What differs is practice.

THE DIAGNOSIS

The real explanation is simpler and harder: Boulder's city government has lost the capacity to decide and to deliver. When the state legislature forced the decade's largest housing decision, the council sought amendments rather than take a position, the state decided; Boulder abstained. When residents rose against a surveillance contract, they were told contracts are "an administrative function." And council pressed no further. The pattern repeats across every domain: a plan with no owner, a goal with no funding, a decision with no name on it.

That pattern is structural, not personal. Boulder's charter establishes a council-manager government: the residents are the owners, the council their Board of Directors. That design asks the council act like Principals to set direction, track progress, hire and fire the chief executive, and own outcomes to its shareholders. But over years of drift, the council has come to work from a job description written by its own administration. No statute will ever require a City Council to have a vision. No staff memo will ever ask the bosses to lead. That work is self-assigned, or doesn't exist.

WHAT THE CITY BUILT FOR THEMSELVES

\$140-200M

A brand-new administrative campus — West of Broadway and away from the downtown crisis.

WHAT THE CITY WON'T MAINTAIN

\$400M+

Deferred across roads, facilities, wildfire mitigation, and utilities — against ~\$100M in identified funding.

Confirmed in print by two sitting council members: "ALL city councils, including the current one, are responsible. No one gets a pass."

THE QUIET MANAGEMENT OF DECLINE IS A FALSE PEACE. DISTURBING IT IS WHAT JOHN LEWIS CALLED GOOD TROUBLE. NECESSARY TROUBLE.

STEWARDSHIP BEFORE GROWTH

A city's first responsibility isn't growth — it's stewardship. Before we ask what to build next, we should ask whether we can faithfully maintain what we already own. Over a decade Council did not. Every new obligation competes with every existing one for the same taxpayer dollar. Ignore that, and today's accomplishments quietly become tomorrow's deferred maintenance, higher taxes, and thinner services.

That's how cities lose trust, and based on the most recent data exactly what the City of Boulder lost — not in one catastrophic decision, but in hundreds of small commitments that each seem affordable and together become impossible. The goal isn't to stop growing; growth matters. But growth should strengthen the foundation, not dilute it, leaving us more capable of meeting our obligations five, ten, and thirty years out.

Budgeting North Star: Does a decision increase our ability to deliver for residents over time — or force future councils to choose between raising taxes, cutting services, and postponing maintenance? Cities should accumulate capacity before they accumulate obligations. Filtered through that lens, fiscal responsibility becomes what it really is: a commitment to keeping our promises.

GOOD NEWS: THE TRUTH & THE MISSION

Two truths make this a plan rather than a lament. The first: the owners know — the survey numbers are not despair, they are precision. The second is older and better: everything Boulder needs, Boulder already has. In 1967, this city's voters became the first in America to tax themselves to preserve open space. After the 2013 flood, this community organized its own recovery; after the Marshall Fire, it turned out within hours. The civic muscle is here, on the bench, waiting for a government with the nerve to put it back in the game.

The mission is not restoration. It is building leadership capacity in service of adaptability: a city capable of deciding and delivering solutions in meeting fire, drought, economic upheaval, and whatever else this century sends. Amartya Sen, the City Resilience Framework, and Eric Klinenberg's disaster research reach one conclusion in different vocabularies — an adaptable community requires three capacities, and only three. Every issue Boulder faces nests inside one of them.

STEER

Govern itself, honestly and accountably.

FIGHT ONE

ABSORB

Protect all of its people through shocks.

FIGHT TWO

RENEW

Keep delivering opportunity to the people who carry it forward.

FIGHT THREE

STEER + ABSORB + RENEW = AN ADAPTABLE CITY

ONE VOTE AMONG NINE

HOW DOES A MAYOR WITH ONE VOTE AMONG NINE DELIVER ANY OF THIS?

Because leadership isn't measured by votes. It's measured by the ability to set priorities, convene partners, demand accountability, and keep a community focused on outcomes — and those are the mayor's primary powers, not incidental ones. The mayor chairs the meetings where priorities are set, shapes the agenda before decisions are made, presents budgets and performance to the public, convenes institutions no one else can bring to one table, and serves as the city's chief advocate. None of it compels agreement, but all of it shapes what gets discussed, measured, funded, and ultimately done.

This plan doesn't ask to expand the office, though it is an interesting consideration. This plan asks the office to fully exercise the authority it already holds: set a clear outcome, assign ownership, measure progress in public, convene the partners, and refuse to let important work vanish into process. That isn't a new power — it's the discipline of leadership. Boulder's greatest unused asset isn't another funding source or department. It's a mayor willing to use the office as it was intended: to set direction, build consensus, insist on accountability, and keep the city focused on delivering results.

01GOVERNANCE
THE CAPACITY TO STEER

RUN IT LIKE WE OWN IT

The first capacity necessary for building an adaptable city is the ability to steer – to set a course, continuously assess where you are headed and the capability to make adjustments along the way. Steering can't be outsourced (delegated) nor purchased; administrations carry out the work while consultants will provide advice, but ultimately, the direction must come from the governing body, or there's no direction at all. This isn't particularly revolutionary, ground-breaking or require any additional authority – it's primarily about being asked and having the courage to act upon what you've been asked to do.

- 1 Assign ownership publicly.
- 3 Track progress, not activity.
- 5 Close the loop.

- 2 Measure what residents receive.
- 4 Steward before we expand.

THE INSTRUMENT IS A SCOREBOARD

When a city determines its destination, assigns responsibility for reaching that destination to those who are accountable, measures honestly if they have arrived at their destination, and makes adjustments as needed, then the city has steered. All five of these practices are visible through the Scoreboard. Every promise made is assigned an individual owner, a deadline (date), and a current status. The Mayor reports on all of this in front of the public four times per year.

COMMITMENT	OWNER	DUE	STATUS
Wildfire action plan	Fire Chief	Q2 2027	ON TRACK
Overnight crisis care	City Manager	Q4 2026	FUNDING
30-day permit clock	Planning Dir.	Q3 2027	ON TRACK
Capital backlog audit	City Auditor	Q1 2027	AT RISK

Illustrative – the standing question, made public: who owns this, and when will it be delivered?

PAYS IN TRUST

OECD: doing what you say you will is a core driver of public trust.

PAYS IN MONEY

A dollar steered early spares many spent late, the asset manager's rule.

PAYS IN CAPACITY

The next two fights are executable only atop this one.

1.1 ASSIGN OWNERSHIP

HOW The City Manager should answer this question for each priority that has been adopted by the City Council: "Who is responsible for this project and when can we expect completion?"

WHY A priority that has no name and/or date is not an obligation but rather a choice. The federal government uses this exact reason to require a named "goal leader" to each agency priority. Section 13 of the Charter allows for this, except when inquiring about the priority. The principal (Council) was at all times permitted to inquire.

DELIVERS A city whose responsible drivers can be located, and whose accountability is transparent.

1.2 MEASURE THE RETURN, NOT THE SPEND

HOW An independent city auditor whose job it is to measure whether the City is delivering services effectively and producing the desired impact (and not simply spending money) based upon its mission.

WHY A performance audit does not seek to cut expenses as a bookkeeper would. Instead, it seeks to determine if the services were delivered. In its first task, the auditor decomposed all of the city's capital debt before making another request. The State Auditor in Colorado saves taxpayers \$26 for every dollar he spends; however, these savings are merely an incidental benefit. The primary purpose of the auditor is to provide factual information.

DELIVERS Proof of service, impact, and value reporting to Council not Staff. Not merely proof of spending.

1.3 TRACK PROGRESS: THE SCOREBOARD

HOW A score board, which is publicly presented and owned and adopted by the Council.

WHY The Scoreboard is a City Council main steering "artifact" that is produced, published, and given to the public (including missed items), with a new date and a justification for each item. Since 1977 New York City has been requiring its agencies to produce quarterly report cards; Baltimore's Accountability Sessions were recognized by Harvard University as an example of innovation. It is the Mayor who is accountable for all of this activity at the end of every quarter.

DELIVERS A city whose promises can be located, and whose progress is transparent at all times to all constituents.

1.4 STEWARD BEFORE WE EXPAND

HOW A "fix it first" capital policy should be in place; i.e., an organization cannot commit to making additional investments until it has addressed its current assets' maintenance backlog, and it must publish grade reports on those assets publicly.

WHY An investment of one dollar to maintain an existing resource in good order will eliminate the need for six to ten dollars worth of repairs down the road. When a community expands but neglects to preserve its infrastructure, it is taking out a loan from itself at a very high rate of interest. Fort Collins has policies in place to facilitate this process. New Zealand is also requiring local governments to have these policies in place for each of their councils. This process starts with the owner's point - recreation centers, park areas and the maintenance of current facilities.

DELIVERS Already paid for and operational, a capital budget read as an action plan, not just a desire.

1.5 CLOSE THE LOOP

HOW Recommendations from the board (on the record), communities having a true voice in how money is spent locally, and a council setting their own agenda.

WHY The people giving first are the "eyes" of the city. Filing their work away in a drawer means working without sight. Council board reports receive formal responses - accepted as is, accepted but changed slightly, or rejected for specific reasons. Participatory budgeting caused Brazil to spend more money on basic services and reduced infant deaths by a measurable amount. Real budgets are voted on by cities from Paris to New York. The council approves its own yearly statement of direction.

DELIVERS Participatory budgeting on a two-year budget cycle.

A NOTE ON THIS NOVEMBER

The City will likely pursue a number of financial proposals during the November election; however, there are no disputes of the magnitude of these needs in this report. The guiding principle however, is that the request must be earned (it hasn't) - a fair breakdown of the obligation, a clear identification of who owns the project and when it was completed, and a scoreboard that the public may use to monitor performance. For over thirty-five years, Fort Collins has successfully passed a street-maintenance tax, most recently by a margin of 4-1, due to the ability of the community's voters to see the results. When the City meets the standards set forth, then the community will fund those things that they value.

02

SAFETY
THE CAPACITY TO ABSORB

READY AND SAFE

The second capacity necessary for adaptability comes through ability to absorb shocks to our community and residents – to support all of citizens through crisis situations such as fires, lack of housing (no place to sleep), or the apprehension of having someone knock at your door. A whole-community level of dignity standards is the acknowledgement that everyone matters and public spaces serve as essential safety infrastructure for everyone. And also that no one should be able to create an environment where these public spaces cannot be used safely or in a manner that creates insecurity for those it serves.

- 1 Keep public space public.
- 2 Meet crisis with care.
- 3 Deliver pathways, not promises.
- 4 Be ready for the wind.
- 5 Keep the lights on.
- 6 Protect every holder's stake.

SAFETY IS BUILT BEFORE THE SIREN

A community's ability to cope with a disaster will always be limited by how well the community can support the most vulnerable and marginalized members of that population. When two communities experience similar disasters, the best predictor of who survives the disaster is usually a community's level of social organization (i.e. social capital), rather than the effectiveness of the disaster relief effort.

For example, during Chicago's 1995 heat wave, one neighborhood experienced ten times as many fatalities per capita as another area of Chicago that was demographically very similar. Similarly, in Boulder, Colorado, the South Boulder Recreation Center provides safety-related infrastructure, as does the band shell and the Boulder Creek Path.

PROVEN ELSEWHERE	WHAT THEY DID	THE RESULT
Denver STAR	Health responders to low-level 911 calls	~1/3 targeted offenses, ~1/4 the cost
Philadelphia	Cleaned & greened vacant lots (RCT)	~29% gun violence in poorest areas
Houston	By-name homelessness coordination	26,000 housed, ~90% still housed at 2 yrs

97TH

percentile. The U.S. Forest Service has assessed the probability of wildfires in Boulder to be greater than 97 percent of all other U.S. cities; however, the City of Boulder's readiness plan for wildfires was left on the shelf for over a year.

2.1 KEEP PUBLIC SPACE PUBLIC

HOW Parks and recreational trails (including creek paths) in good condition, well-used, and safe at all times and for all families.

WHY A park that families do not go to has failed to provide a safe place for them to be in the same way that a fire which was never fought would fail to protect those who lived near it. Activation is prevention, keeping problems from happening before they happen. The maintained walking trails, the programmed parks and recreation centers, and the well-maintained public facilities are all essential parts of a community's ability to maintain itself and its social capital.

DELIVERS The parks, paths, and creekside this city is proudest of, serving everyone again.

2.2 MEET THE TURNOVER CRISIS AT BPD

HOW Make a 2.5% annual BPD turnover goal a formal component of the City Manager's annual performance evaluation.

WHY Losing officers means having less experienced police officers with ties to the community in your neighborhood and longer wait times to get help when you need it most. It also creates a gap in the relationship between residents and their local police department. When there is stability our police officers on staff, communities are more likely to have safer neighborhoods, decrease abuses, and create a stronger bond with their community members. A stable and experienced workforce allows the police department to be proactive in preventing problems, rather than reactive after they occur.

DELIVERS Help that arrives from someone who knows our community.

2.3 DELIVER PATHWAYS, NOT PROMISES

HOW One accountable owner for homelessness commitments, by-name coordination, exits reported monthly on the Scoreboard.

WHY The cost of a chronically homeless individual to the taxpayer is in the range of tens of thousands per year . Boulder has made a 2028 commitment that the city recognizes will require funding that does not currently exist. The plank does not commit additional funds, but rather applies Fight One.

DELIVERS Fewer people on the street, verified month by month, at the money we already spend.

2.4 BE READY FOR THE WIND

HOW Require every residence located within Boulder's Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) area type 1 and 2 to be retrofitted to the IBHS Wildfire Prepared; utilize existing tax revenue to assist homeowners in meeting this requirement.

WHY The ultimate risk is losing it all, and it's a decision to be ready. Responsibility has been distributed among many people and organizations (i.e., local governments) such that no single entity will own the results of the failure. The Councils of two neighboring cities received federal grants worth nearly ten million dollars (\$10,000,000) each, Boulder did not submit.

DELIVERS A wildfire resilient city in which each home contributes to making the surrounding neighborhood safer.

2.5 KEEP THE LIGHTS ON

HOW Resilience priorities for utilities in relation to the city, including undergrounding and back up power (if the crisis cannot be solved by other means) are included in the city's utility relationship.

WHY Last year, a typical household in Boulder experienced 630 minutes without power; Longmont had only 19 minutes of lost service, and Fort Collins had only 11 minutes of lost service. The reliability of electricity has become an integral part of our community's safety and well-being. We should evaluate how we and XCEL are performing as a utility based upon whether we can keep households, businesses, and critical services operational during the next storm, rather than providing explanations about why outages occurred after the fact.

DELIVERS Outages measured in hours, not days — a city that functions on the day it is needed most.

2.6 PROTECT EVERY HOLDER'S STAKE

HOW Limit the use of local surveillance systems for public safety and prevent the sharing of locally-collected surveillance data with federal immigration enforcement unless there is a valid court order.

WHY Residents should have the ability to report crimes, make emergency calls (911), educate their children at public schools, and engage in civil society free of fear that the city of Boulder is creating a path for federal agencies to conduct surveillance of residents. Public safety is predicated upon trust; therefore, it is essential for residents to know that the city of Boulder will safeguard the rights of all of its citizens.

DELIVERS A city where no parent measures the walk to school against the risk of a knock on the door.

03

ECONOMY
THE CAPACITY TO RENEW

A LIFE YOU CAN BUILD HERE

The final capacity an adaptable city requires is the ability to renew and create financial opportunity for our own residents. The ability to create a future tense for Boulder and not simply a past to preserve. This community was able to provide the space required by an individual in 1995 on a studio floor. It must now do the same thing for the teacher, the cook, the firefighter and the child who is deciding whether or not they want to continue living here.

1 Turn the lights back on.

3 Keep every school full.

5 Keep Boulder's money home.

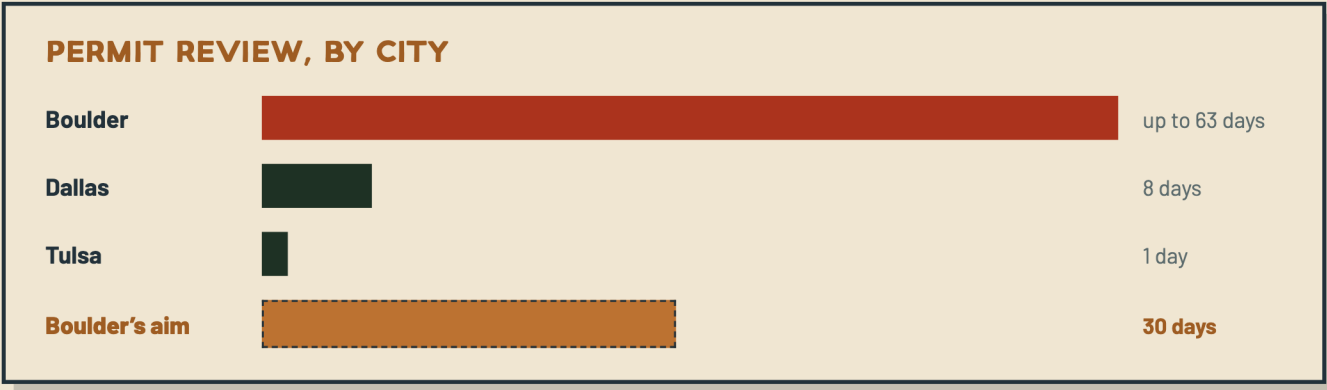
2 Answer in thirty days.

4 Build the next increment.

6 Put one name on the economy.

THE CLOCK IS A CHOICE

A city's renewal happens if the people who operate that city as well as those who live or participate within its boundaries are able to establish their lives in that city. The top measure for this process would be our schools, Boulder Valley has lost many thousands of children, and an empty school is a reduction in dividend payments that were announced ten years prior. The renewal principle applies 'no neighborhood experiences radical change, and no neighborhood is exempt from it'. And process without a deadline is a veto that can never have to explain itself. When the market wants in and the process says wait, the vacancy belongs to the process.



~30%

downtown vacancy – a threat to “vibrancy and safety”

2018

downtown sales tax roughly flat since – seven years lost

60K

workers commute in daily – a stake they cannot vote on

3.1 TURN THE LIGHTS BACK ON

HOW Empty houses will either be filled by those who live nearby, or will have to contribute financially to the community where they are located.

WHY In Vancouver, they ran it for nine audited years and reduced the number of empty homes by one-half. They also invested approximately \$200 million in affordable housing. Almost two-thirds of the voters in Boulder support this program. The truth of the numbers is that seasonal-use homes in Boulder account for a small percentage of the city's housing stock. This is simply fairness at the margins; so we must not just pass this program and measure the results. But place the primary burden on increasing supply.

DELIVERS A good rule, honestly sized – and a campaign that will not sell you an issue as a solution.

3.2 ANSWER IN THIRTY DAYS

HOW A clock for permits to construct, with a 30 day response period; monitoring will be done on the Scoreboard.

WHY Boulder is running behind by nine weeks when compared to its published timeline of reviewing applications for permits. Brokers are pointing the finger at the long review period for the empty storefronts along Pearl Street. Tulsa reviewed an application in a single day, while Dallas reduced their review time from sixty-eight days down to eight. The second part of the equation is the code's math – that's one space, one permit, and one clock.

DELIVERS An answer while your life can still use one.

3.3 KEEP EVERY SCHOOL FULL

HOW Work in partnership with BVSD on the schools that are scheduled to be closed. Offer community programs, school programming, magnet schools or specialty schools and tax incentives for people living in the neighborhoods where the closed schools are located – this will renew the area where there are currently no students.

WHY The issue is not, "How can we stop school closures?" That's a bad question. A better question would be, "What makes Boulder an ideal place to raise children?" If you get that right, then school enrollment will return on its own. While the city cannot operate the schools, it has influence over the environment surrounding them.

DELIVERS Kids back the truest line on the scoreboard; because there is no way to make up a story about kindergarten.

3.4 BUILD THE NEXT INCREMENT

HOW The gentle addition in your back yard or splitting of a lot for a backyard cottage was made buildable by having plans that were already approved; a flat fee to do it; and a 30 day approval process.

WHY The kind of housing Boulder needs now is the same kind of housing it was able to create before the town got so formal about creating new housing. The State of Colorado has given towns like Boulder the ability to pass the HOME Act in 2028. Towns can either use this act to shape what their community looks like or let the HOME Act absorb their town. That's how towns grow while still keeping their character and their bar scene alive.

DELIVERS Room to live for the growing family, the retired person downsizing, or the child coming back home

3.5 KEEP BOULDER'S MONEY HOME

HOW Anchor Compact the City, the University, the District and the Hospital, consciously purchasing from local businesses.

WHY Preston, England changed how they purchased their anchors and increased the local share from 5% to 18% in only four years - without having to increase taxes. Boulder's anchors will be able to see exactly where their money is spent and make conscious decisions about what percentage of the total amount should go towards supporting local businesses.

DELIVERS A local dollar that circulates like a neighbor instead of departing like a tourist.

3.6 PUT ONE NAME ON THE ECONOMY

HOW A true economic development program that offers structured support to those businesses currently in operation, beginning with Sundance as our initial measurable date.

WHY The city that is now experiencing 30% vacant downtown properties has never had its own economic development organization. A tool (economic gardening) that it needs to help fill those vacant downtown spaces originated about 40 minutes from Boulder. Economic gardening was developed in Littleton and has produced an estimated \$9 for every dollar invested. The first trial will begin on a specific day — Boulder's \$34 million investment in Sundance. Successful trials are those where lodging is available; transit is running after midnight; and local businesses capture the spending by visitors.

DELIVERS A city that has an owner and a festival it can be proud of two times over.

DECIDING TO DELIVER

You don't need to take my word on this. The Plan doesn't want you to believe in it. It wants to give you the ability to refuse to believe in it. And now that I've answered the questions I asked in the Introduction - "How can a Mayor who votes with only 1/9th of City Council actually implement any of these Plans?" - then I'm ready to move forward.

THE CHAIR Chairs the room where direction is set, or not set.	THE AGENDA Helps write what the council takes up.	THE TABLE Convenes district, university, hospital, county, neighbors.	THE VOICE Says out loud what the city is trying to do, so it can be checked.
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THE DATES	
DAY ONE	The standing question goes to the city manager, in public, on every adopted priority. Answers published within thirty days, kept current, permanently.
100 DAYS	The first Scoreboard, presented in public. A statement of direction adopted – the unassigned job, taken up.
EVERY QTR	The Scoreboard, misses included, each with a new date and a reason – forever.

You'll find that many of these costs come from making choices, not spending money.

However, there are some commitments that have an actual dollar amount associated with them – such as providing crisis coverage at night; buying new snow plows (which were identified by the city's independent audit); and installing emergency backup generators for power outages. Each of these items was budgeted based on what they would really cost and presented publicly so everyone knows exactly how much they will be expected to contribute to the overall budget.

CONCLUSION

OUR CHANCE

I am an individual who has lived in this city all my life. I have also been a student of its citizens.

Therefore, I write from both perspectives. Many of my friends were born and raised in this city. After we graduated from college, none of us could afford to live here. For twenty years I commuted, had some good fortune, and worked very hard to return to my hometown to raise my daughter.

Boulder was what created me. It didn't "shape" me - it created me. Those people that were there when they found my family were not part of any kind of city program. They were the community that you keep referring to in your report. I'm not looking at this from across a counter or behind a lectern. I'm the person.

I've been able to track down almost none of the other residents in the building where I lived in Boulder. The families that lived there. The parents that cooked and cleaned the buildings. The children that I grew up with. Many of my neighbors now live in Longmont, Lafayette or even further away. As each one of them left, I could see

that they were making the decision to leave because they did not feel like their home town was going to allow them to stay. At this point, the belief that things would get better ceased to exist.

Every part of this plan will be fought against - not by bad people (villains), but by comfort, laziness, and being nice. Quietly managing decline has always protected itself, and it has always been polite. At the time when good trouble was happening, it was never popular. But it was needed regardless.

Every authority in the City of Boulder's Charter has been given by the people that reside within the city limits. Each of the practices described in this document is something that an owner should have asked as a citizen; and as citizens, we are all owners.

Therefore, this is what I am asking for, and it is not a request for money: show up at least once. Ask one question in front of a group of people, and require a name and a date as a response. Place your name next to mine on one of the commitments made in these documents.

THE CATCHING THAT SAVED MY FAMILY WAS NEVER A PROGRAM. IT WAS NEIGHBORS DECIDING TO.

It's our city.

LET'S DECIDE TO DELIVER.

Aquiles La Grave

FOR MAYOR OF BOULDER

A group of hikers is seen from behind, walking along a dirt trail on a mountain. The hiker in the foreground is wearing a dark shirt and a large backpack. The trail is surrounded by green vegetation and tall evergreen trees. In the background, a large, rugged mountain with patches of snow or light-colored rock rises against a sky filled with white clouds. The overall scene is a scenic mountain landscape.

DECIDE WITH ME.

BOULDER.VOTE