From "Glen Segrue <glen.segrue@bvsd.org>" <glen.segrue@bvsd.org>
Subject **Draft of Memo for Upcoming CC Session on Affordable Housing**
To Rob Price <rob.price@bvsd.org>
Date February 6, 2026 2:24:07 PM MST

I haven't read this yet but thought I'd forward it along. I talked with her about 30 minutes on the housing/student data we have. Let me know if you have any comments and I'll pass them along.

-Glen

---------- Forwarded message ---------
From: **Hendrikson, Hollie** <HendriksonH@bouldercolorado.gov>
Date: Fri, Feb 6, 2026 at 11:59 AM
Subject: Draft of Memo for Upcoming CC Session on Affordable Housing
To: Glen Segrue <glen.segrue@bvsd.org>
Cc: Sugnet, Jay <SugnetJ@bouldercolorado.gov>

Hello Glen,
It was great to see you at the Better Boulder event a few weeks ago.

I wanted to share with you a draft of our memo for the upcoming City Council presentation about affordable housing. We are still in the process of editing but wanted to make sure you had a chance to review and provide input or offer a reaction before we go live. The intention of this meeting/presentation is to provide an update to city council on all things affordable housing. This is a gargantuan task, and we had to do a lot of filtering to make the memo/presentation digestible. That being said, please let me know if you have any concerns or comments on this version. It would be great to present a clear and consistent about demographics/school age kids/housing when possible.

Thanks for any input you have.

Cheers,
Hollie

--

Hollie Hendrikson
Housing Policy Senior Project Manager

City of Boulder
Housing & Human Services

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Glen Segrue, AICP
Senior Planner
Boulder Valley School District
720-561-5794

Attachments:

- Draft-Affordable Housing-Matters Memo Template.docx

City of Boulder
City Council Agenda Item

Meeting Date: March 5, 2026

Agenda Title

Affordable Housing: a review of the current state of affordable housing in Boulder.

Staff Contact

- Kurt Firnhaber, Director, Housing and Human Services
- Jay Sugnet, Senior Housing Manager, Housing and Human Services
- Hollie Hendrikson, Housing Policy Senior Project Manager, Housing and Human Services

Executive Summary

The purpose of this memo is to provide an overview of the status of affordable housing in Boulder. The analysis offers a brief discussion of historical housing development trends in the city, an exploration into today's homeownership and rental housing market, an overview of the City of Boulder's affordable housing policy interventions and concludes with a discussion of how the city's programs are evolving to meet future housing needs.

Questions for Council

None.

Alignment with City Plans and City Council History

Sustainability, Equity and Resilience (SER) Framework and Citywide Strategic Plan Alignment

SER Framework Goal Area

- **Livable**. Provides a variety of housing types with a full range of affordability.
- **Livable**. Supports community members who are unhoused or underhoused to navigate systems, programs, and services to achieve housing security.

Citywide Strategic Plan

Livable. Strategy 5. Support and provide holistic and accessible programs and services to enable diverse individuals and families to live in Boulder.

a. **Priority Action**: Increase successful transition from homelessness to housing by identifying and broadening supportive housing opportunities and by expanding access to essential health and system navigation services.

b. **Priority Action**: Deepen collaborative strategies and services for legal and financial support to prevent evictions and to keep Boulder community members housed.

c. **Priority Action**: Collaboratively implement and fund local and regional strategies to increase affordable housing stock and other potential innovative strategies that could provide increased housing options for our unsheltered community.

Staff Notes

Affordable housing is an integral part of Boulder's social and physical infrastructure. Found in almost every neighborhood and housing one of every 11 residents (city's non-student population), affordable housing offers spaces and places for older adults to connect, kids to thrive, and a meaningful reprieve for the unhoused.

For 60 years, Boulder has been a leader in affordable housing, taking bold steps to address housing challenges in the community. That history is summarized in Attachment B. Boulder's affordable housing programs have evolved over that time into a nationally respected approach for addressing shortfalls in the housing continuum.[1] In 1991, there were fewer than 1,000 affordable homes in the city. Today, 4,340 permanently affordable

[1] The term "housing continuum" describes a range of available housing options in a community that serve a wide range of incomes. Everything from short-term shelters for those experiencing homelessness to homeownership opportunities.

homes are available throughout Boulder: 9% of all housing units in Boulder are now permanently affordable.[2] Additionally, in the past 10 years, for every one hundred new homes built, 37 permanently affordable homes were created. By leveraging state and federal funding with local funding sources and fostering strategic partnerships with local non-profit developers, the City of Boulder is outperforming the Inclusionary Housing regulatory requirement by 12%.[3]

The analysis below briefly discusses historical housing development trends in the city, offers observable data of today's homeownership and recent rental housing markets, reviews the City of Boulder's supply- and demand-side housing policy interventions, innovations in Boulder's affordable housing interventions, and discussions options to expand the size, scope and reach of the city's affordable housing response.

Alignment with Additional City Plans

This item is timely due to the current update of the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan. Housing Choice & Opportunity is a focus area of the update and understanding the current affordable housing programs, policies and challenges is an important step in addressing changes to the Comprehensive Plan as part of the update.

City Council History

Over the years, staff have regularly provided updates to City Council on progress towards meeting our affordable housing goals. The issue of affordable housing is consistently ranked very high by the community, and this update is an opportunity for council to discuss progress to date and future areas of focus.

Analysis

While Boulder has always been an exclusive and expensive place to live, historic housing development and market trends in the city show a more complex journey. From its founding in the mid-1800s, the growth of Boulder was shaped by exclusivity. As explored in the Housing Equity Symposium, elevated land prices were a core

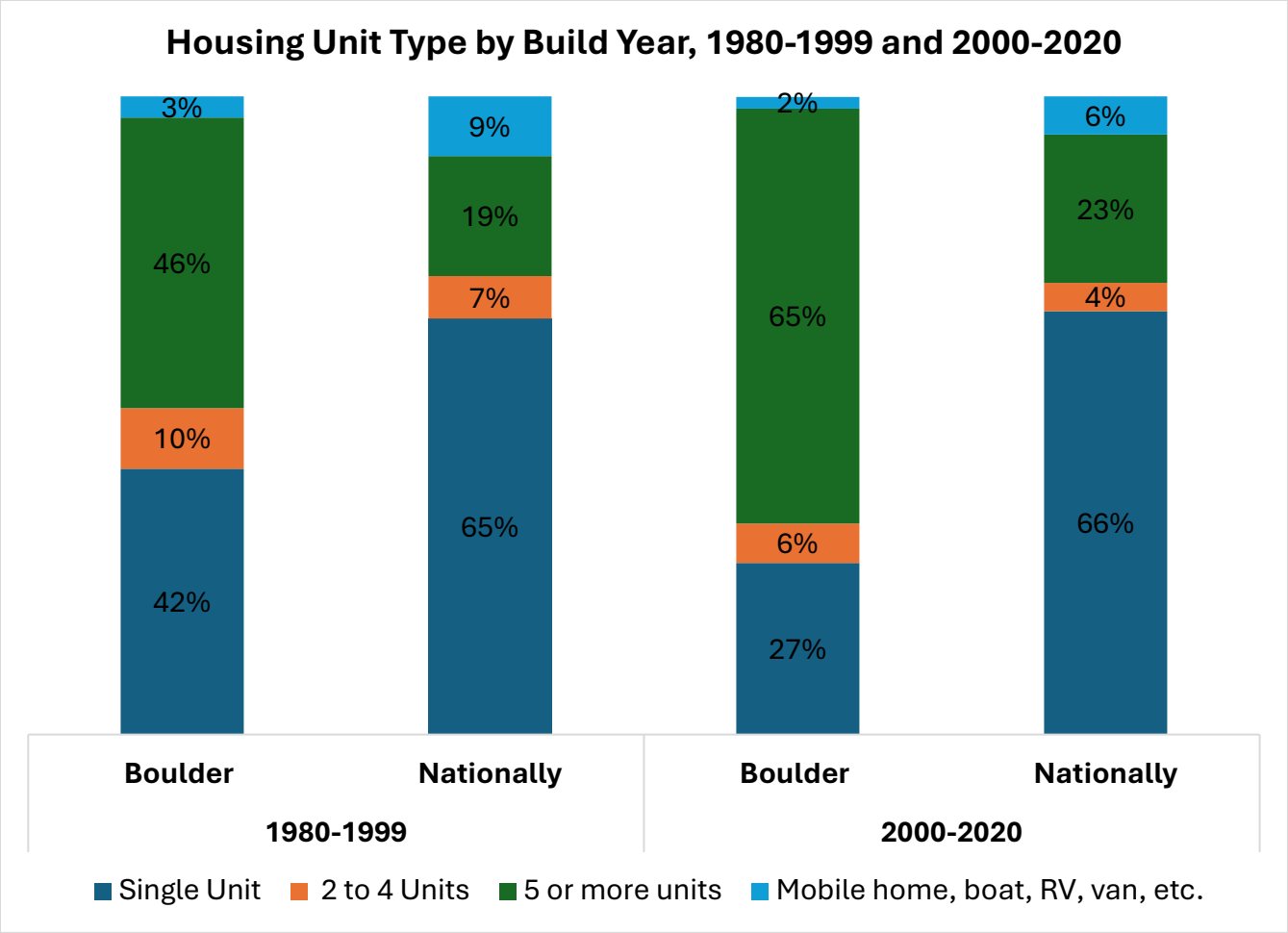
[2] In Boulder, permanent affordability refers specifically to rental or homeownership units throughout the community that have a legal restriction recorded on a property's deed that limits resale to income-eligible buyers in perpetuity. Permanently affordable homes will remain affordable to future-income qualified households.

[3] Boulder's Inclusionary Housing (IH) program requires all new residential developments to contribute 25% of the total units, or the equivalent, as permanently affordable housing.

component of the founding of Boulder.[4] These land prices dissuaded development for heavy industry or agricultural use. Between 1947 and 1967, however, Boulder saw unprecedented growth in its population. According to historical survey of residential properties, over 5,000 homes were built in Boulder in ten sub-divisions during the period immediately following World War II.[5] Much of Boulder's single unit housing stock was built during this time.[6] As a reaction to this post-World War II population boom, growth management caps, such as the 1976 voter approved "Danish Plan" ordinance, limited residential building permits with the intention of controlling growth.[7]

Since the 1980s, residential development in Boulder decisively transitioned to multifamily housing. The below data from the U.S. Census shows of 46% all housing units built between 1980 and 1999 were multifamily units; this increased to 65% between 2000 and 2020.[8]

[4] (City of Boulder Housing Equity Symposium, 2021)
[5] Subdivisions include Baseline, Edgewood, Flatirons Park, Highland Park, Interurban Park, Martin Acres, Park East, Sunset Hills, Table Mesa, and Wagoner Manor.
[6] (Schomig, 2010) https://bouldercolorado.gov/sites/default/files/2021-02/ww2-survey-final.pdf
[7] This ordinance was repealed by Boulder City Council in January 2024/
[8] Census data.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Commerce. "Tenure by Year Structure Built by Units in Structure." American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Detailed Tables, Table B25127.

Since 1980, single unit development is consistently underrepresented in Boulder, compared to national averages. Notably, middle housing (represented by the "2–4 Units" category in the graph above) represents a small percentage of housing development nationally, but Boulder has outpaced national trends in developing this type of housing since the 1930s.[9]

More recently, the COVID and Post-COVID housing market and development trends have mirrored national trends. Home sales in Boulder peaked during the intense pandemic real estate frenzy. In 2025, the real estate market became more balanced, but still expensive.

Looking forward, Boulder is forecasting demographic trends that point to an aging population and a sustained decline in the number of school-aged children. According to

[9] According to U.S. Census data, "missing middle" housing development never exceeded 19% of all housing development in Boulder (and 15% nationally).

the Colorado State Demographer, the population aged 80 and older is projected to double over the next decade, while the school-aged population is expected to continue to decline. Both trends are more pronounced in Boulder County than statewide.[10] Together, these trends are reshaping household sizes, housing accessibility and care needs, and demand for different housing types over time.

But the relationship between housing and demographics is complex: population trends shape housing development, while housing availability, in turn, influences which households can live in a community.

In this context, Boulder's ongoing housing policy response must continue to be oriented toward resilience and adaptability to ensure that the housing stock can accommodate a wider range of ages, household types, and mobility needs over time.

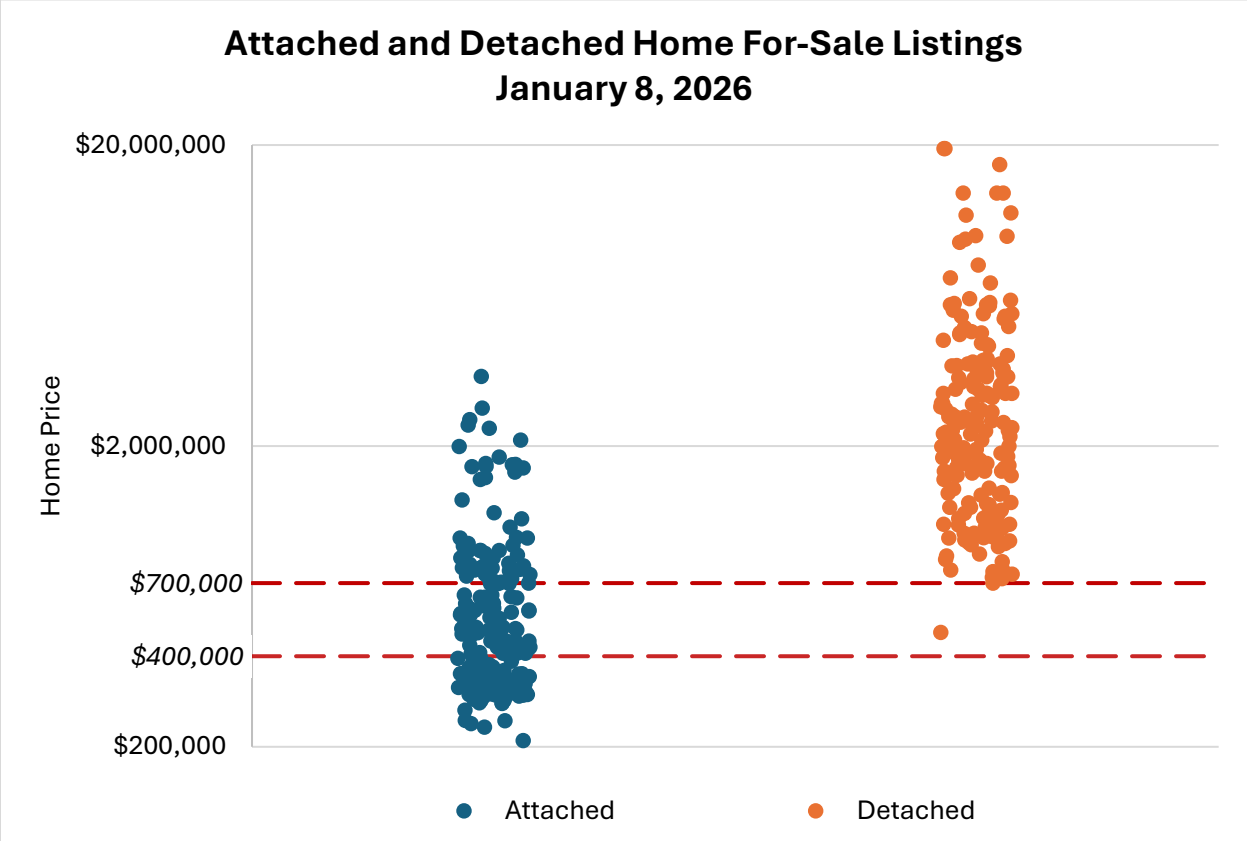
The sections below offer a deeper exploration into more recent trends in the homeownership and rental markets in Boulder.

[10] Boulder County's Demographic Outlook. Boulder Chamber Economic Forecast. January 27, 2026.

Middle Income Homeownership: Constrained Availability, Constrained Choice

The opportunity for homeownership in Boulder for a middle-income household is daunting: 66% of all homes on the market are unaffordable to households of any size earning less than 100% Area Median Income.[11] However, there is a clear price differentiation among attached and detached homes.

The chart below shows the actual for-sale housing market on a single day (January 8, 2026) and is an attempt to bridge the anecdotal data with quantitative data. Each dot represents a real home that a real household could consider purchasing at that moment in time. The goal of this "point-in-time" look at the real estate market is to offer clearer understanding of what is available and affordable for households looking to live in the City of Boulder. This chart also includes reference lines of $400k-$700k to offer a general affordability range for households earning 100-120% AMI.



Source: Current MLS Listing by housing type and price. January 8, 2026.

[11] Area Median Income (AMI) is calculated annually by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and is the midpoint of household income for a specific geographic area. Eligibility and pricing for affordable housing are typically set as a percentage of AMI, adjusting for household size.

Detached, or single unit, homeownership in Boulder is not a realistic option for a middle-income household: 99% of all detached homes are unaffordable to households of any size earning less than 100% AMI. To be able to afford the median priced single unit home in the city on this day ($1.3 million), a household would need to earn more than $460,000 per year.

Notably, the area median income for a family of three aligns with the median price of an attached home in the city, suggesting a rare point of income–price parity. The median priced attached home on this day was $489,000. A household would need to earn about $140,000 per year to afford the median priced attached home.

However, this median income-median price alignment does not reveal the real constraints in availability and choice. Attached homes are relatively affordable and offer more options for middle income households. While more abundantly available, these units are often small, dated, offer limited amenities, or have high home-ownership association dues.

Middle-income households are largely left with two responses: exit the city to pursue ownership in neighboring communities or remain in the city while compromising on housing type or tenure.

Middle income households' express preferences that vary and are not universally shared. Housing decisions are shaped by diverse values, constraints, and life stages. A 2014 Boulder Housing Choice Survey explored the preferences and perspectives of residents and in-commuters.[12] In this survey, most in-commuters said they are willing to compromise on their ideal housing type for Boulder's amenities—primarily open space and proximity to the mountains—and a shorter commute. Additionally, the most common housing expectations of middle income in-commuters considering living in attached housing types is access to a private or shared garden. These preferences, combined with prevailing demographic trends, influence the desirability of the relatively more affordable housing products in the city.

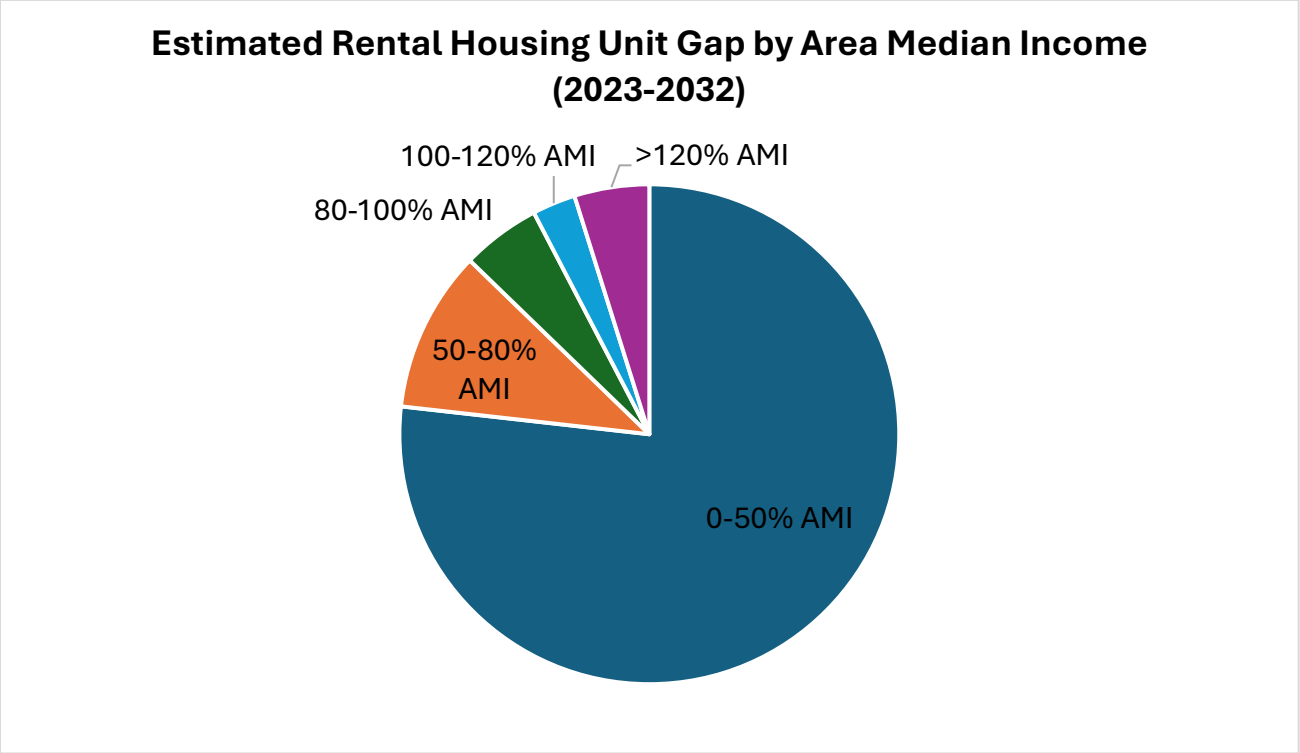
The Rental Gap: Income Determines Availability

Boulder's rental housing market provides many opportunities for households earning more than 60% area median income. For households earning less than 50% area median income, there are very few affordable and available housing options.

Housing rental data does not have a centralized source, and therefore, creating a rental "point-in-time" is not feasible. However, the city has completed several rental needs

[12] Housing Choice Survey and Analysis. Prepared for the City of Boulder. May 12, 2014. Prepared by BBC Research and Consulting.

assessments over the past decades showing relative affordability and availability of rental housing middle income households. A 2016 City of Boulder Middle Income Housing Study found that 99% of the rental units in the city were available to middle income households.[13] More recently, Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG)'s Area Regional Housing Needs Assessment found in the next 10 years, the largest gap for rental housing units will be for households earning 0-50% AMI.[14] In this assessment, by 2032 Boulder will have a rental unit shortage of 5,900 units: 77% of this shortage are for units affordable to those households earning less than 50% of the Area Median Income.[15]



Source: Denver Regional Council of Governments, Denver Region Housing Needs Profile, City of Boulder submarket. July 2024.

Residential vacancies can also be used as a proxy for measuring the health of a housing market. The 2023 Boulder Middle-Income Housing Needs Assessment found residential rental vacancy rate of 5.8%; this is considered "healthy" for a housing market.[16] According to the American Community Survey, the 2011 rental vacancy rate of

[13] Middle Income Housing Study. Prepared for the City of Boulder. January 4, 2016. Prepared by BBC Research and Consulting.
[14] City of Boulder City Council Agenda Item. August 7, 2925.
[15] In 2025, 50% of the Area Median Income for a 1-person household was $52,750.
[16] If the rental vacancy rate is above 5%, it is usually a sign that there is an oversupply of units; and if the rental vacancy rate is below 5%, it is usually a sign that there are not enough rental units to meet demand

3.5% and the 2017 rental vacancy rate of 1.7% suggesting that the number of rental units did not meet the demand of household needs.[17] An under-supply of rental units can lead to an increase in rental prices and make it difficult for households to find rental units affordable. An over-supply of rental units can lead to lower rental prices and a decrease in profits for landlords and real estate investors.

Overall, rental options for households earning more than 50% of the area median income are abundant in the city. Rental opportunities for households earning less than 50% of the area median income are scarce.

City of Boulder Policy Responses

Supply and Demand Side Interventions

Thoughtful and impactful affordable housing policy interventions have been implemented and modified for decades in Boulder, and as briefly discussed above, these interventions have been broadly successful in creating more affordable homes throughout the city.

Supply-side policies shape the long-term availability and price trajectory of affordable housing, while demand-side policies determine who can access affordable housing. Effective affordability housing strategies typically require both. The City of Boulder has a robust portfolio of both supply-side and demand-side interventions.

The two tables below offer a summary of the supply-side and demand-side affordable housing policy interventions.

Supply-Side Policy Affordable Housing Interventions

Intervention	How It Works	Typical Goals / Outcomes	City of Boulder Approach
Zoning reform (land use code changes)	Allows more units per parcel, more housing types, and more people per unit	Increases total housing production; moderates long-term price growth	Family-Friendly Vibrant Neighborhoods (2025) Occupancy Reform (2023-2025) Accessory Dwelling Units (2018-2025)

(Reference: McClure, K. (2019). The allocation of rental assistance resources: the paradox of high housing costs and high vacancy rates. International Journal of Housing Policy, 19(1), 69-94).

[17] Boulder Middle-Income Housing Needs Assessment. 2023.

			Removal of Residential Growth Management System (2023) Zoning for Affordable Housing (2023)
Height and Density bonuses	Grants additional height and density in exchange for community benefit as part of Site Review	Generates additional housing at a lower cost while providing community benefit (typically on-site permanently affordable units or increased in lieu fees)	Community Benefit project (2019)
Inclusionary housing	Requires new residential development to contribute towards affordable housing	Creates permanently affordable units tied to growth	Inclusionary Housing Program (est. 2000)
Public land disposition	Uses publicly owned land for affordable housing	Reduces development costs; enables deeper affordability	Land Banking activities led by City of Boulder, Boulder Housing Partners, and the school district (ongoing)
Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC)	Federal tax credits finance affordable rental development	Scales rental production nationwide	Administered by Boulder Housing Partners and other non-profit developers
Local housing trust funds	Dedicated revenue funds affordable housing	Flexible, locally controlled funding	Affordable Housing Fund (2000)

Streamlined permitting	Reduces time, cost, and uncertainty in approvals	Lowers development costs	Fast Track implementation work related to Proposition 123 (ongoing)
ADU legalization	Enables backyard cottages on existing single unit lots	Adds incremental, lower-cost housing options	Local update with recent state legislative requirements (2025)

Demand-Side Affordable Housing Policy Interventions

Intervention	How It Works	Typical Goals / Outcomes	City of Boulder Approach
Housing Choice Vouchers	Subsidizes rent paid by low-income households	Immediate affordability; household choice	Federal Housing Choice Vouchers administered by Boulder Housing Partners
Shallow rent subsidies	Prevents displacement	Requires ongoing public funding	Funding from the Eviction Prevention and Rental Assistance Services Program and the Human Services Fund help support community agencies providing these subsidies
Homebuyer assistance	Down payment or closing cost aid	Expands access to homeownership	H2O: House to Homeownership Down Payment Assistance Program
Property tax relief	Reduces housing cost burden for owners	Helps seniors and fixed-income households stay housed	Senior Homestead Property Tax Exemption (Boulder County)
Income supports	Increases household	Addresses affordability across	Elevate Boulder (2023)

(Universal Basic Income)	purchasing power	all goods, not just housing	
Emergency rental assistance	Short-term help during crises	Prevents eviction and homelessness	Eviction Prevention and Rental Assistance Services Program (2022)
Tenant protections (just-cause eviction)	Limits non-fault evictions	Reduces displacement	Eviction Prevention and Rental Assistance Services Program (2022)

Expanding the Affordable Housing Toolkit Innovations

Boulder has moved beyond the conventional affordable housing policy options (summarized in the tables above) through several staff-led, Council-supported affordable housing policy innovations.

- **Integral Partnerships**. Seventy-four percent (74%) of all permanently affordable rental homes in Boulder were developed by a non-profit development partner, most commonly Boulder Housing Partners.[18] Local non-profit development partners primarily leverage funding from the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC), and receive gap funding from local funding sources such as the city's Affordable Housing Fund, to create thousands of affordable rentals. By leveraging state and federal funding with local funding sources, these integral partnerships have contributed to the City of Boulder's ability to outperform the Inclusionary Housing regulatory requirement: in the past 10 years, for every one hundred new homes built, 37 permanently affordable homes were created.
- **Community Supported Fees**. Boulder City Council and the community have sent a consistently strong message about affordable housing: adoption of developer fees residents voting to tax themselves in support of creating affordable housing. Most recent examples of this support include, Residential Impact Fee (2025), Boulder County's Affordable and Attainable Housing Tax (2023), Inclusionary Housing Program Regulatory updates (2022), and statewide support for Proposition 123. With this explicit support from City Council and the community, the City of Boulder's Housing and Human Services can strategically invest in affordable housing throughout the community: Boulder invested $21 million in affordable housing in 2025, which is the largest one-year investment from the Affordable Housing Fund since its creation.

[18] In 2025, 173 of the 186 new affordable units were developed and managed by Boulder Housing Partners.

- **BoulderMOD.** BoulderMOD is a unique partnership with Flatirons Habitat for Humanity and the Boulder Valley School District with the capacity to build up to 50 permanently affordable homeownership units per year while providing workforce training for high school students. Recognizing that the market is not producing starter ownership opportunities, this city investment will continue to provide opportunities for middle-income households for years to come.
- **Boulder County Regional Housing Partnership.** The Boulder County Regional Housing Partnership (BCRHP) is a countywide partnership established in 2018 to collectively recognize and collaboratively tackle the region's affordable housing challenges. In 2024, the BCRHP implemented a centralized Boulder Regional Affordable Homeownership Program to expand the scope of the City of Boulder's Affordable Homeownership Program to all regional partners with the goal of growing the permanently affordable homeownership stock across the entire Boulder County region. City staff are active participants on BCRHP's steering committee and continue to work collaboratively with regional partners to expand affordable housing development throughout the region.
- **Middle Income Acquisition and Rehab.** Beginning in 2021, the City of Boulder began purchasing market-rate homes, rehabilitating these homes, and re-selling these homes to income-eligible buyers in the City's Affordable Homeownership Program. To date, the City has acquired and/or sold 17 below market homes to income eligible buyers. Each home purchased by the City of Boulder is made permanently affordable and governed by an affordability covenant that limits resale price and places other restrictions on the home. Given the current real estate market conditions, this model of acquisition/rehabilitation represents the most cost-effective and immediate strategy to expand affordable homeownership opportunities for low- to moderate-income households in the Boulder County Region. Rather than building new homes, the program focuses on acquiring existing homes on the open market and rehabilitating them to meet livability standards.
- **Proposition 123 and Boulder County Affordable and Attainable Housing Tax.** These two voter supportive initiatives, approved in 2022 and 2023, offer unprecedented support for the creation of affordable housing in the city, county, and state. In 2025, the city was awarded over $4 million in Proposition 123 funds to support two initiatives: the Mobile Home Repair and Replacement Program and the Regional Scattered Site Acquisition and Rehab program. The City of Boulder also received $3.09 million in 2025 from the County's Affordable and Attainable Housing Tax and can expect similar amounts in future years.
- **Bloomberg-Harvard Innovations.** In 2024, a cross departmental team of city staff participated in The Bloomberg Harvard City Leadership Initiative Innovation Track. Throughout this year-long management program, the City of Boulder

chose to tackle the key priority of designing and prototyping innovative solutions for middle income affordable/attainable housing. The “Ambitious Mission Impact” that resulted from this was the following: by 2035, Boulder will expand and sustain innovative, attainable housing options to create a more vibrant and inclusive community reflecting people from all backgrounds. Three ideas that originated during this process that will be further explored in 2026 include: establishing a Boulder Home Sharing Program, expanding the Housing Legacy Program, and expanding low-cost financing options for affordable housing development. City staff will continue to explore these innovations in 2026.

Anticipated Fiscal and Workplan Impacts

There is no fiscal impact estimate associated with this item at this time. If ongoing staff discussions leads to a potential change in the program in exchange for a city investment in infrastructure and funds, staff will return to City Council with a specific proposal for consideration.

Equity Analysis

No equity analysis was conducted.

Climate, Resilience, and Sustainability Considerations

No considerations are anticipated.

Community Engagement

No community engagement was conducted.

Next Steps for City Council

To build upon the city’s robust affordable housing program, City Council can support staff-led housing policy innovations that aim to expand housing choices for low- to middle-income households currently priced out of the market.

In 2026, these innovations include:

- **Continue advancing zoning reforms that enable a broader mix of housing types.** New residential construction in Boulder remains high-cost, zoning changes that allow greater density or a wider range of housing types have not

immediately produced market-affordable units. However, building a diversity of housing, ranging from single unit homes to duplexes, townhouses, and multifamily units, is essential to increase resilience to demographic change. Reducing regulatory barriers to encourage a diversity of housing types will expand the overall mix of units delivered over time—supporting long-term adaptability to changing household sizes, incomes, and demographic needs.

- **Prioritize deep subsidies where rental affordability gaps are most acute.** Deep subsidies targeting development or acquisition of housing units affordable to households below 50% AMI is a documented need in Boulder. Continuing to prioritize support for deeply affordable units, such as permanent supportive housing, can help align affordability requirements with observed rent gaps.
- **Refine and expand city-supported down payment assistance programs for middle income households**. The City's H2O Down Payment Assistance Program is showing more interest and success, even in the current high-interest rate environment. Staff will explore modifications that expand participation in this program.
- **Maintain strong support for the Inclusionary Housing Program**. Boulder's IH Program remains the most effective tool for addressing locally identified housing gaps. Continued City Council support for this program is instrumental for the city to continue to meet its housing goals.
- **Sustained support for staff-led innovations**. Affordable housing innovation is complex. Past City Council support for experimentation has produced meaningful outcomes, and continued backing is necessary to test, refine, and scale new approaches.

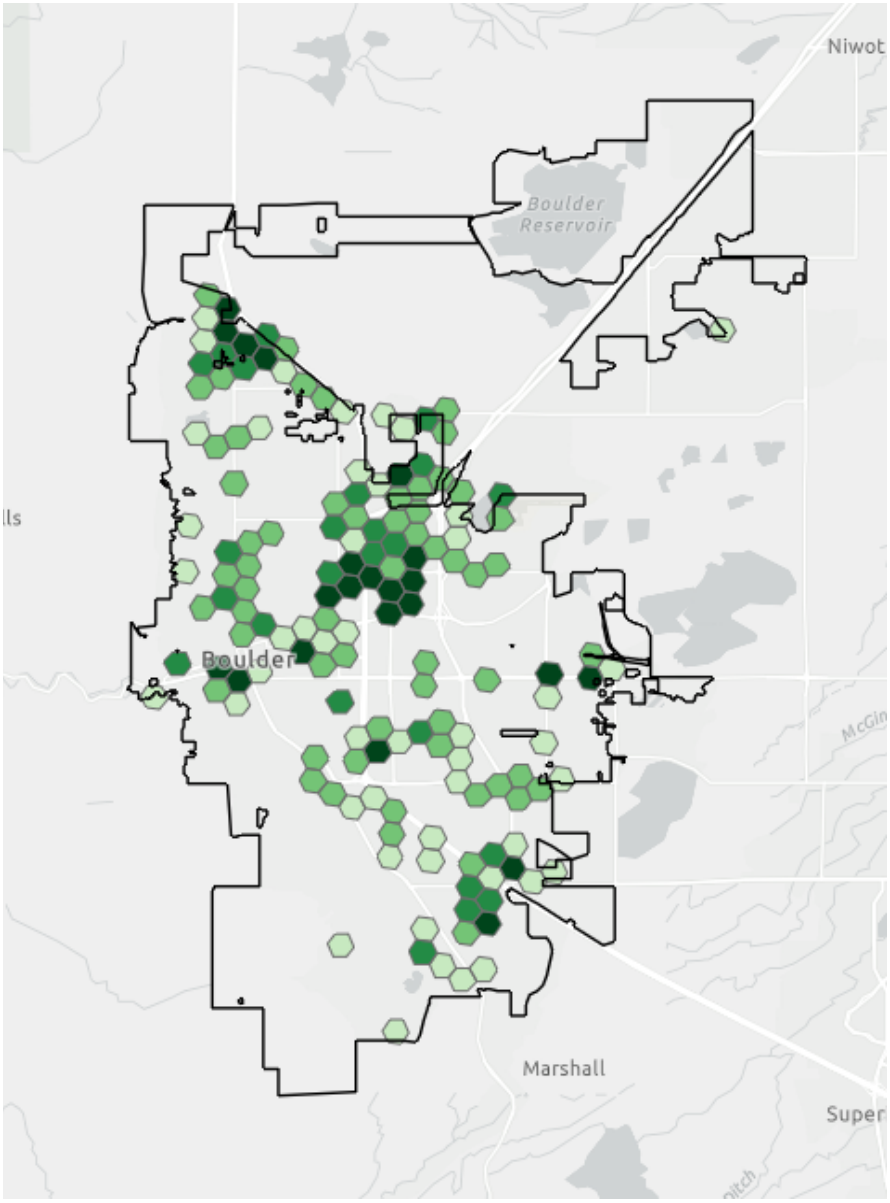
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Attachments

Attachment A: City of Boulder Affordable Housing Heat Map

The green areas on map are City of Boulder Permanently Affordable Housing units in 2024. The darker the shade represents a higher count.



Source: City of Boulder Affordable Housing Dashboard: https://bouldercolorado.gov/boulder-measures/affordable-housing-boulder.

Attachment B: Timeline Of City Affordable Housing Efforts

Updated January 15, 2026

1966

Boulder establishes the Housing Authority of the City of Boulder (AKA Boulder Housing Partners), which becomes the primary provider of subsidized housing for low- and very-low-income households, as well as special populations.

1973

Adoption of a moderate-income housing annexation strategy (Resolution No. 115). The policy requires all new residential developments seeking annexation or requesting an out-of-city utility permit to commit at least 15% of such units to be low- and moderately priced housing units.

1975

City begins receiving Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds, which have been used to finance housing and community services projects for low-income persons, including the homeless, seniors, and persons with disabilities.

1976

City adopts a formal growth management plan with a limit on the number of housing permits issued each year. A merit system based on points determined which developments would receive the limited allocations. The provision of low- and moderate-income housing earned the applicant extra points.

1980

Citizen initiative is passed in the city to impose rent control in existing buildings. In response, the Colorado State Legislature instituted a statewide rent control ban to ensure that no city or county in Colorado would, as a matter of law, be able to institute a rent control measure.

1982

- First Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Ordinance is adopted that allows a second unit to be constructed in single family homes within low density residential zone districts. The intent of the ordinance was to provide a broader mix of housing choices for various ages and incomes, while preserving single-family neighborhood character; reduce the number of illegal and unsafe rental units constructed; and offer homeowners a way to offset the increasing cost of living in the area.
- The growth management plan is reworked, now referred to as the Residential Growth Management System (RGMS). A two percent growth rate is set on

residential building permits. Allocations for residential building permits are given out on a first-come, first-served basis until the number of permits reach a trigger point. Specific exemptions to the allocation system are intended to incentive low- and middle-income housing, including low-income housing projects approved by the Housing Authority as well as the first 100 qualified moderate income rental units per year.

1985

- Moderate Income Housing Program (MIHP) is established, which is an inclusionary zoning program that generally required that 15% of the total units in a project be sold to moderate income households. Prices were not limited, only the incomes of eligible buyers. Resale restrictions remained in place for a period of 10 to 20 years, at which point the homes could be sold as market rate homes. Developers could earn “credits” by building more than the required number of MIHP, and these credits could then be sold to other developers to help meet MIHP requirements.
- City adopts a Mobile Home (MH) zoning district. The new zoning district serves the dual purpose of guiding development of new mobile home parks and reducing the risk of redevelopment and displacement of residents.

1990

Housing excise tax is adopted and levied on all new development on a per square foot basis. The excise tax establishes a source of funding to contribute to the provision of affordable housing. The funds are used to acquire, construct, or rehabilitate permanently affordable housing for households within 15% - 60% of the Area Median Income (AMI) defined as the "working poor" within the adopted ordinance.

1991

City convenes a working group to develop a new, affordable housing program. As a result, the mandatory MIHP is discontinued and replaced with the Community Housing Assistance Program (CHAP). CHAP served as a local housing trust fund to provide subsidy funds for developers to acquire and build permanently affordable housing in the community. Property taxes and a housing excise tax on new development produces approximately $1M per year that is used to fund housing for low income and special populations. The fund is still in place today and provides a simple, flexible, and locally administered funding source to increase the supply of affordable housing for working households.

1992

- City begins to receive federal HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) funds, a block grant for affordable housing. Boulder receives approximately

$650,000 per year in HOME funds which may be used for a variety of housing projects for low- and very-low-income households.
- The Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan (BVCP) is updated to include a housing goal to have 5% of the total housing stock as permanently affordable to low-income households.

1993

City's First Home program is established. Initially, First Home was a shared equity loan program. The rapid increase in Boulder's housing prices led to a concern that insufficient funds would be recaptured from the shared equity proceeds to enable the city to replace units on a 1:1 basis. This led to the program being changed to a down payment grant in exchange for permanent affordability.

1995

- The Residential Growth Management System (RGMS) revised to cut the growth rate to one percent and reduce the number of available allocations on an annual basis. The update divided the annual allocations into three categories: market rate, permanently affordable, and restricted. The exemptions to the allocation system are intended to incentivize the types of housing identified as the most needed in the community. The permanently affordable allocations were deed restricted units for low-income households and the restricted units were size restricted, owner-occupied units with initial prices set to be affordable to middle income households but with no ongoing resale or income restrictions. Projects which included at least 20% permanently affordable and 35% restricted units were able to receive the required RGMS allocations faster than those projects that contained market rate units exclusively. The policy objective was to ensure that new residential growth helped to meet the city's affordable housing goals. This was still a voluntary system. Given Boulder's rapidly escalating land values, it made more sense for someone to wait for an allocation for a market rate unit rather than produce an affordable unit.
- The Major Site Review process was established as part of the discretionary land use review process, which gave priority consideration to residential projects that contained at least 20% permanently affordable and 35% restricted units.

1996

- The city's first cooperative housing ordinance is adopted. Cooperative housing is a form of housing where unrelated individuals choose to share a dwelling unit and where each family or individual has rights commensurate with ownership. No co-ops were created under these strict code provisions.
- City began administering a down payment assistance program. The purpose of the down payment program was to provide gap financing to make up the difference

between what the purchaser can afford as a down payment and the amount needed to make the financing work for the purchaser.
- City requires that all units assisted through the Housing Fund Program remain permanently affordable in perpetuity.

1997

- City establishes its first cash-in-lieu option for developers of projects that were in progress at the time the new RGMS was adopted. Approximately $1.3M was generated from this option. These funds were used for low and moderate-income housing projects.
- The housing policies of the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan were amended to reflect the city's goals for maintaining existing and integrating new affordable housing throughout the community and establishing the goal to have at least 10% of the total housing stock be permanently affordable to low and moderate-income households.

1998

- The city begins work on the Comprehensive Housing Strategy. The Strategy, accepted by Council in 2000, is organized around five themes: managing density and growth; strengthening partnerships; holding and gaining ground on support for low and very low-income households; keeping moderate income workers in Boulder; and helping special populations and seniors. The Housing Strategy included the objective of reaching the goal to have 10% of the total housing stock as permanently affordable within 10 years.
- City voters voted to increase the housing excise tax and to waive the development excise tax on permanently affordable housing projects.

2000

- The city's Housing Division establishes an Asset Management Program to ensure that the affordability requirements of all the city's affordable rental and homeownership units are met. This includes annual monitoring of permanently affordable rental units and an annual letter sent to permanently affordable homeowners to remind them of the program's requirements. The city also begins to expand its homeownership assistance program for moderate income households.
- City adopts the Inclusionary Zoning program. The Inclusionary Zoning program requires that 20% of all new residential development is permanently affordable for low and moderate-income households. The program provides options for meeting the Inclusionary Zoning requirement, including the option of paying a cash-in-lieu amount for the required permanently affordable units. Cash-in-lieu funds are combined with other city housing subsidy funds and used to rehabilitate existing

affordable units, acquire market rate units, and convert them to permanently affordable units as well as construct new permanently affordable units and help make units permanently affordable to very low-income households.

- The Residential Growth Management System (RGMS) is amended to remove the affordable housing components added in 1995. At the time the growth management system, as well as annexation policy, were the only methods of securing some affordable housing through development projects. However, the adoption of the Inclusionary Zoning program described above allowed the city to achieve the goal of affordable housing in a less cumbersome, more direct way than through growth management limitations. Additional exemptions were added to growth management allocations, including mixed-use developments, developments with a significant portion of affordable housing. These were housing types that the city, as a matter of policy, desired to encourage. The memo sent to City Council stated that this change "would have the effect of permitting more residential construction, more quickly" than the previous growth management system.
- Manufactured Housing Land Use and Policy adopted as part of the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan update. A policy titled Preservation and Development of Manufactured Housing is adopted and the Manufactured Housing (MH) land use category is established. The new policy recognizes the importance of manufactured housing as an option for many households and commits to preserving mobile home parks, developing new ones, increasing opportunities for resident ownership, addressing health and safety concerns in these communities, and helping to mitigate for the loss of housing through support for rehousing.

2004

The Residential Growth Management System (RGMS) is amended to add an exemption for land that has been rezoned from non-residential zoning district to a residential zoning district. The update was made in response to blanket rezonings done by the city to implement updates made to the comprehensive plan, including the rezoning of the 28th Street frontage road to high density residential zoning.

2007

- The city forms a Regional HOME Consortium with Boulder County, the City of Longmont and the City and County of Broomfield. The Consortium has increased locally controlled funding for affordable housing and formed collaborative partnerships to address affordable housing concerns in the region.
- The Boulder County Homeownership Consortium and its sponsors support the Boulder County Housing Authority's HUD-approved Housing Counseling Program. Both the City of Boulder and the City of Longmont provide the program with financial

support. Thistle Community Housing provides valuable in-kind training support through the NeighborWorks Training Institute.

2008

The city initiates the Affordable Housing Program Review which consists of three phases: Council reaffirmed the existing goal to have 10% of the city's housing be permanently affordable including the income targets and homeownership rental mix. They removed the goal for some percentage to be acquired through acquisition and some through new development and adopted an additional goal of 450 units affordable to middle income households.

2010

A new Inclusionary Housing (IH) Ordinance was adopted that substantially reorganized the inclusionary housing program. The updated modified the annual adjustment for cash-in-lieu and mitigated the adjustment for smaller developments, applied IH requirements to redevelopment projects when the total number of redeveloped or newly constructed dwelling units equals five or more, and modified the land dedication option to clarify specific requirements for the dedicated land.

2013

- A community conversation commences to inform city housing goals and city efforts, refer to as Comprehensive Housing Strategy (CHS). The CHS provided the city with an action plan organized around five themes: 1) address housing as part of the Comprehensive Plan Update, 2) create a middle-income housing strategy, 3) preserve existing affordable housing, 4) achieve our 10% goal, and 5) projects, partnerships, governance, and other.
- Affordable housing linkage fees are adopted, which apply to non-residential development in the city. The funds are used offset the impacts of new developments in the city and are an important funding source for affordable housing.

2015

- City establishes stiff penalties for interference with the sale of pre-1976 mobile homes, disallowing excessive home upgrade requirements by a mobile home park owner and clarifying that tree maintenance is exclusive responsibility of the park owners. Council also commits funding for legal services for mobile homeowners.
- Short-term home rentals (rented for 29 days or less at a time) are expressly permitted in the rental licensing code with specific regulations. The rental property must be the owner's principal residence; principal residence is defined as the dwelling unit in which a person resides for more than one-half of the year.

- A Housing Boulder Toolkit was developed as a compilation of ideas to begin a community discussion on housing. The Housing Boulder community conversation was brought to a close and rather than adopt a full housing strategy, Council chose to identify approximately 20 work plan items known as the Housing Boulder Action Plan.

2016

- Middle Income Housing Strategy adopted as a new component within Boulder's Comprehensive Housing Strategy. The strategy provides a housing policy framework, including community priorities for action and specific tools to help meet the adopted Housing Boulder goal to "Maintain the Middle."
- Affordable Housing Preservation Ordinance adopted, which was aimed at long-term preservation of affordable housing that would otherwise be lost over time. The ordinance enables permanently affordable properties to rebuild to the number of existing units in situations where zoning was changed after the property was built (legal nonconforming uses).
- The Boulder County Regional Housing Partnership formed under the guidance of the Boulder County Consortium of Cities to help address the area's escalating housing costs. The Partnership is steered by Boulder, Longmont, and Boulder County engaging housing, health, and human services experts and leaders from across the county.

2017

- The 2015 Major Update to the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan (BVCP) strengthened housing policies and increased the 10% housing goal to 15% in part to address the need for middle income housing. Council also adopted specific policies related to achieving additional affordable housing when the city grants additional intensity, height, or any other benefit to a developer.
- Cooperative housing regulations are substantially revised to facilitate the creation of new cooperative housing units and to legitimize existing illegal units.
- Code changes made to support mobile home park residents, including the establishment of a homeowner's right to privacy, prohibiting retaliation by the park owner, and mandating mediation. The regulations are intended to "level the playing field" between homeowners and park owners.
- Updates made to the Inclusionary Housing Program to create a middle-income requirement, incentivize on-site units, and create a new design review process.
- Housing excise tax is repealed and replaced with capital facility impact fee.
- The city purchased the Ponderosa Mobile Home Park as part of the Ponderosa Community Stabilization Project which aims to minimize displacement, preserve

long-term affordability, replace outdated infrastructure, reduce flood risk to the community and introduce new energy-efficient affordable housing options.

- The Regional Housing Partnership launched the Home Wanted campaign to raise community support for strategies, policies, and additional funding to create stable, affordable housing for low- to middle- income residents. The Regional Housing Partnership, with approval from all county jurisdictions, set an ambitious goal to ensure that 12% of all housing is permanently affordable to low- to middle-income earners by 2035.

2018

- ADU regulations significantly updated to increase the maximum saturation allowed in a neighborhood area, increased the zones where allowed, loosened parking requirements, created exemptions for historic properties, and established an affordable ADU option in exchange for not providing off-street parking or a larger ADU. Newly created accessory units are unable to be used as short-term rentals.
- Affordable housing linkage fees increased on non-residential development in the city, increases the funds available for affordable housing development.

2019

- Manufactured Housing Strategy and Action Plan adopted, which frames the city's approach to and understanding of Mobile Home Communities in Boulder into the future. The strategy and action plan encourages the preservation of existing mobile home parks and the development of resident-owned parks.
- Community Benefit program established in land use code elated to building height regulations. Typically, an increased number of on-site permanently affordable housing units or an increased in lieu fee is achieved on sites where buildings are permitted above zoning district height limits for four and five story buildings.

2020

Ordinance 8412 approved to support eviction prevention services. Excise tax was approved on dwelling units with rental licenses to be used to fund legal representation for persons facing eviction proceedings and for rental assistance for persons that may be facing an eviction or need emergency rental assistance.

2023

- City launches two down payment assistance programs to support buyers in becoming homeowners, which builds equity and wealth. The Middle Income Down Payment Assistance Program (DPA) offers middle-income households a zero-interest second mortgage up to $200,000 or 30% of the home's sale price,

whichever is less. In exchange for this assistance, the home becomes permanently affordable. The House to Homeownership (H2O) Program is a shared appreciation loan program that provides first-time homebuyers with a loan on a market rate home. There are no resale restrictions on homes purchased with H2O loans.

- ADU regulations updated by eliminating the saturation limit in the RL-1 and RL-2 zoning districts, increasing the allowable size of ADUs, clarifying and simplifying the code, and improving the approval process.
- Land Use Code revised to provide flexibility for a wider range of affordable and attainable housing types. The ordinance removes barriers, allows more housing units in some areas, enables smaller homes, and encourages a greater diversity of housing types.
- Inclusionary Housing program updated and modernized. Specifically, the Cash-in-lieu (CIL) methodology was adjusted to a per square foot amount, resulting in a fair burden across different sized units. Affordable rents were modified to achieve more diverse and deeper affordability. Ineffective incentives for middle-income adopted in 2017 were removed and the pricing for ownership units was modified to be priced for middle-income households.
- Boulder County voters approved an extension of an existing sales and use tax named the Affordable and Attainable Housing Tax. It will continue for 15 years to fund affordable housing and related services across Boulder County. The tax proposal was the direct result of work by the Regional Housing Partnership.

2024

- An affordable housing modular factory (BoulderMOD) is completed as part of a partnership between the city, Boulder Valley School District and Flatirons Habitat for Humanity. The purpose of the facility is to produce affordable homeownership opportunities while providing workforce training for District students.
- City removes its residential growth management system, which previously limited the number of residential building permits per year in response to a 2023 state bill that prohibited such restrictions.
- The City of Boulder and several of the region’s jurisdictions entered into an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) that established a regional homeownership and rental compliance program administered by City of Boulder staff in the Department of Housing and Human Services.

2025

- ADU regulations updated to come in compliance with state law. The updates included the removal of parking minimums, allowances in more zoning districts, removal of minimum lot size requirements, removal of owner occupancy

requirements, removal of open space requirements, and removal of specific design requirements. The review process of ADUs is streamlined and simplified.

- Family-Friendly Vibrant Neighborhood project results in land use code updates to allow more missing middle housing (e.g., duplexes, triplexes, etc.) and removing additional zoning related barriers to housing. The intent of the code changes is to provide more housing options and price points beyond large, detached dwelling units or apartment/condominium buildings.
- Residential occupancy limits removed from the land use code in response to newly enacted state law.
- Affordable housing impact fee adopted on single unit replacement homes and substantial additions, increasing the funds available for affordable housing development.
- First BoulderMOD duplexes placed on permanent foundations at the Ponderosa community.
- The city was awarded its first funding opportunities from Proposition 123 through two initiatives aimed to expand affordable homeownership opportunities: the Mobile Home Repair and Replacement Program and the Regional Scattered Site Acquisition and Rehab program.