



City Update

Council Retreat

City Council recently held a retreat, facilitated by the Department of Local Affairs (DOLA), in which four goals for the future were established.

- **Community Infrastructure:** This focus area includes both physical infrastructure, like streets, parking and water lines, as well as support infrastructure like staff and support documents. One need is to create policies and conditions to retain staff.
- **Housings:** These efforts will focus on creating a wider variety of housing options for residents, including different types of housing with a range of rents and purchase prices.
- **Communication:** This goal encompasses improving communication, relaying clearer and more detailed information, understanding the basis for decisions and getting feedback.
- **Fiscal Responsibility:** New systems of checks and balances are being discussed, as well as a revision of the responsibilities of the elected treasurer position, to ensure that all financial requirements and legal obligations are achieved in a timely manner and that Council is regularly informed of spending and revenue outcomes, as well as economic trends to assist with Council decisions.

There will be ongoing discussions of the details that will move the City forward in each of these goal areas.

Affordable Housing

Salida has joined forces with Chaffee County, Buena Vista, and Poncha Springs to address housing needs, first through the joint funding of a Housing Needs Assessment in 2016 and then through the establishment of a county-wide Housing Office. Becky Gray has been hired as the director of that office and has already assisted with improved approaches, organization, and a housing plan that has been adopted across the county. Becky is an invaluable resource on housing issues, and we look forward to instituting more projects within the city limits.

In housing, numbers are important and small gains tell the story of improvements. Salida is focusing on the need for rental and workforce housing. The City has established an Inclusionary Housing ordinance that requires new annexations and subdivisions in Salida to offer 12.5% of the total new housing units for sale or rent at a price affordable to a household earning at or below 80% of our Area Median Income

(AMI), which is presently \$37,700. This is already making a modest impact; for example, in the Two Rivers development, through partnership with Chaffee Housing Trust, five brand new townhomes will be sold and three will be rented, all at affordable prices. Additionally, the City negotiated with the Salida Crossings development to hold 30 housing units at affordable rates for households earning 80% of our AMI or below.

There is still much work to do, however, and while there is an increase in housing stock, there is not an increase in the variety of housing types. Code revisions need to be made to provide the community with a wider range of possible housing types, many of which can be constructed, and therefore rented or sold, more affordably than a traditional single-family home. Housing options like duplexes, four-plexes, apartments, condos, small cottages, and manufactured homes are needed, and work is being done to make these easier to build. Lastly, the City will be examining our system development fee structure to determine appropriate rates for multi-family rental projects, using a different fee structure to incentivize the construction of more affordable rental units.

The overarching goal is to ensure that residents who work in our community will have more housing choices, with a range of housing costs. It is important to manage community growth in a way that maintains our unique character, a balancing act to which Council is committed.

City Administrator Six-Month Review

The City Council has engaged the Employers Council, formally Rocky Mountain Employers Council, to conduct an independent, third-party performance evaluation of City Administrator Drew Nelson. This organization was formed in 1939 and employs 200 law attorneys and human resources specialists. They have an office in Denver and have developed a standardized review process that has been thoroughly tested. This will be a 360 degree review, meaning that a wide variety of people, including those with direct and indirect reports of Drew's performance, those to whom Drew reports, as well as peers and community partners from a variety of organizations from within and without the city government, will be engaged and interviewed by the independent specialist in a consistent and objective manner. The criteria, or main areas of examination and analysis, will be topics such as: assisting Council and the City in its policy-making role, providing advice and policy execution; internal administration, financial and personnel management; community, citizen and intergovernmental relations; personality and communication, and management style. The Council will consider the Employers Council's findings in April when determining the continuation of Mr. Nelson's contract, which is currently within the six-month probationary period.

Did You Know?

The mayor doesn't usually vote, but is responsible for facilitating the meeting, keeping to the agenda and recognizing who speaks next. The mayor only votes in a tie.