

PECONOMIC FOCUS GROUP MEETING NOTES

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DATE: 12/1/2015

RE: Economic Focus Group

PLEASE CONTACT THE AUTHOR IMMEDIATELY IF THERE ARE ANY DISCREPANCIES IN THE CONTENTS OF THIS DOCUMENT.

CALL TO ORDER, INTRODUCTIONS

- Members of the planning team and the focus group participants introduced themselves and where they are from

SCOPE AND PURPOSE OF THE MASTER PLAN

- A major strategic plan that will shape the future of Clear Creek County and provide guidance concerning County land uses, infrastructure, use of County-owned land, and development of new and amended regulations
- A comprehensive policy document that establishes guiding principles for development in the County and integrates strategies for the following elements to achieve shared vision for the future of Clear Creek County
 - Economic Development
 - Land Use
 - Housing
 - Transportation Systems
 - Public Facilities and Services
 - Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces
 - Environmental and Sensitive Resources
 - Hazards and Public Safety
 - Community Character and Wellbeing
 - Intergovernmental Cooperation and Coordination
- The Clear Creek County Master Plan 2030 update will focus on addressing the County's economic resiliency in light of a changing regional economy and the County's environmental resiliency in light of increased risk and severity of natural hazards.

PREVIOUS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLANS AND POLICIES

- 2004 Clear Creek County Master Plan

- 2014 Clear Creek County Economic Agenda
- Clear Creek Economic Development Corporation Planning and Policies
 - CCEDC is working on goal planning and priority setting
 - Interactive story map underway with Matt Taylor

2004 Clear Creek County Master Plan

Goals

11 broad goals touching on:

- Redevelopment of the Henderson Mine
- Increasing the mix of employment opportunities
- Increasing diversity in the local economic base
- Bringing new capital to the economy
- The availability of necessary infrastructure
- Clear Creek waterway as an economic and environmental treasure
- Cultural resources as an important economic opportunity
- Developing Clear Creek County's natural resources as an economic base
- Conducting community surveys, studies and projects aimed at increasing the economic viability of Clear Creek County's small municipalities.
- Create an atmosphere of economic and regulatory predictability
- Logical annexations
- Creating a positive business climate

Economic Development Strategies

51 individual strategies under the following categories:

- Redevelopment of Henderson Mine Strategies
- Employment Strategies
- Economic Activity Strategies
- Infrastructure Strategies
- Clear Creek as a Natural Resource and Source of Economic Benefit Strategies
- Cultural Resource Strategies
- Natural Resources Strategies
- Municipal Vitality Strategies
- Predictability Strategies
- Annexation Strategies
- Business Climate Strategies

ECONOMIC BASELINE

- Reviewed population and migration figures:
 - slightly declining population
 - aging population
- Discussed age disparities in income, unemployment, migration, etc.
 - Difficult conditions for up to 30 age group
- Discussed economic diversity/resiliency: number of CCC businesses by industry vs percent of CCC employment by industry

- Conversation that mine closing may impact county revenues more than actual employment or income of CCC residents given that many of the mine jobs are held by workers outside CCC.
- Discussion of mining employment and mining jobs in CCC
 - Total jobs numbers from the Economic Census do not include government employees: may skew results
 - Mining employment fluctuating significantly in past 10 years
- Discussion of tourism economy employment
 - Wage of these jobs lower
 - Growing while other employment in CCC has been declining

GROUP DISCUSSION

- Henderson Mine Status
 - 60% down in both production and jobs
 - Mine not empty, but worldwide market issue
 - Labor is a factor in how tax revenues are reconciled
- Real Estate Market
 - Similar to Denver Metro
 - Median home prices
 - Consistent with percent of list price
 - Assessed valuations going up
 - Opportunity for commercial and residential properties
 - Many second homes being bought and sold in CCC
 - Many older residents are moving away for services, upkeep of properties
 - Older residents also bring revenues/wealth
- Georgetown water policies (purchase per 1000 gallons?) incentivizes second home owners and not families
- Attract more Evergreen West students to come to CCC schools
- CCC is not a “standalone community”
 - Proximity to Denver Metro
 - Just as far from Downtown Denver as Thornton
- Access to healthcare an issue
- Information and communications infrastructure
- Employment for young families
- Likely to have a large population in County who live here and work elsewhere
- Do we want to people to live and work here?
- Rental housing an issue
 - Lose workers because they can't find housing
 - Housing going to vacation rentals
 - A lot more Air B&B and VRBO
 - Need more multi-family or mixed use housing development
 - 2nd floor apartments over commercial in town centers
- Lack of cell service a weakness
 - Hard to attract start-ups if potential new residents can't get email when here
- CCC has lots of small businesses and boutiques
- Dangerous to stay in our current paradigm: more of the same
 - Different than Summit County

- Don't want to be like Summit, but don't want what we have now
- Employment pool is a weakness
 - Recurring cycle of available jobs an employment pool: hard to improve employment pool if available jobs don't support more educated workforce, but can't attract better jobs without improving the employment pool
 - Skilled labor in all fields is a challenge identified by many CCC businesses
- Housing is central to improving employment pool and supporting workers in CCC
 - Beau Jo's employs many people from Denver
 - Many CCC Rafting employees also come from Denver area
 - Seasonal employment housing
- Clear Creek is the 3rd busiest river in the state for rafting
- Support for rafting important for the future
 - Near capacity of river during peak season
 - Need growth in shoulder seasons
 - Additional access points to Clear Creek important
 - Bus parking for rafting operations
 - Threat to access points is CDOT
- Permits to raft Clear Creek
 - CCC
 - Idaho Springs
 - Jeff Co
- Opportunity to link greenway improvements and river access projects
- Recreational parking throughout CCC an issue
 - St Marys
 - Guanella Pass
- Parking tickets in town centers a threat to tourism economy
- Parking lot development in Idaho Springs in planning phase
 - 2 story garage parking
 - 400 spaces
- Parking lots are full at 6AM when there are big events
- Site opportunities
 - Football field
 - Middle School Site
 - Carlson Elementary relocate there potentially
 - Georgetown Hotel Site
 - 11 acres
- Previous Master Plan can be used to support any form of development
- Geographic challenges for recreation and economic development initiatives
 - Eastern portion of county may oppose new taxes for improvements
- Affordable housing and issue
 - Need to educate the public and tell the story of why needed