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- 1. With housing affordability an ever-increasing challenge across Colorado, rent control has come up in discussions. This is evidenced by this year’s proposal at the state legislature. Have you researched the topic of rent control? If so, do you think that it is something that makes sense for Boulder?**

Like all issues in Boulder, rent control is complex and requires nuance. Let’s make sure we’re operating from the same assumptions and definitions:

Most landlords are community-oriented. The majority of Boulder’s landlords are *not* greedy and profit-driven. Many landlords in our city live in Boulder or in Boulder County, manage a small number of units, and understand the affordable housing crisis we are facing. Somewhat recent data (2018) suggests the vast majority of landlords in the US [managed only one or two properties](#) and many of these landlords experience net operating *losses* each year. It is crucial for us to make sure these landlords are encouraged to keep their rentals community-oriented.

Some landlords are profit-oriented. We also have some profit-driven investors who often live in other states and are not motivated by the well-being of our community. They are interested in making money off of our community, not seeing us thrive. They engage in exploitative practices and give all landlords a bad reputation. As our Police Chief often notes, a small percentage of people account for the vast majority of crime. I believe this is true for rental housing as well: A small number of organizations are creating a large number of problems. I am not in favor of programs that incentivize these types of profit-driven landlords. That will ultimately hurt our community.

Boulder has a long history of support for rent control. Boulder’s City Councils have long supported rent control. The state’s ban on rent control was enacted because of Boulder tenant rights advocates who wanted to enact rent control in Boulder [in the 1980s](#). Like our appreciation for hairstyles and fashion choices, our thinking about rent control has hopefully evolved over the past four decades.

Rent control generally shows up in three forms. Rent control can mean that no rent increases are permitted at all, that rental rates are regulated between tenancies, or that the rate of increase in rents is limited.

How we define “rent control” matters. It is unreasonable to expect any landlords and especially small landlords to keep prices the same when the cost of maintenance and property taxes go up. *I am against more traditional rent control* where prices stay the same for decades, or more. Renters also deserve predictability and stability, and protection from the minority of landlords who focus solely on profits and not the quality of life for their renters. *I am in favor of lifting the statewide ban on rent control so cities can find rent stabilization models that work for landlords and renters, if they choose to do so.*

Any steps toward rent stabilization in Boulder should involve a partnership. The best solutions to escalating rent costs will come from collaborations involving renters, housing advocates, housing and human services staff, landlords, and advocacy organizations like BARHA. We will find the best solutions when everyone’s perspectives are represented and when everyone involved has the shared goal of creating a city that is more sustainable, more equitable, and more resilient.

Rental prices aren't the only path to affordability. Housing, childcare, and healthcare are the costs that have gone up the most in Boulder County in the past decade and more families are falling behind. Landlords aren't responsible for the fact that wages haven't kept up with these escalating costs. We should be talking about how to ensure housing costs stay reasonable, but when we are talking about housing costs we also need to be talking about why wages have fallen so far behind.

2. Who is responsible for tenant behavior whether good or bad? The tenant, the police, the university (if student), the landlord? How is responsibility determined? How can you ensure that any remedies are fair to all involved?

Tenants, landlords, the University, neighbors, and the city all have a role to play in tenant behavior. Ultimately people, including tenants, are responsible for their own behavior, recognizing that some people are more in need of support than others. In an ideal situation we are all working together to define what is and is not appropriate behavior in our neighborhoods, and who has responsibility for things like noise, trash, and landscape maintenance. I voted against Council's proposal earlier this year to increase the stringency of noise, weed, and trash enforcement not because I am against managing noise, weeds, and trash, but because I did not feel that the perspectives of students and landlords had been adequately represented in the discussions and outcomes. Regarding student behavior specifically: As an organization with a mission that includes shaping tomorrow's leaders, the University has a major role to play in making sure all of its students have the skills and support they need to live independently in our community. City-University partnerships like the restorative justice program through our Municipal Court help significantly in ameliorating disruptive off-campus behaviors, and I support these types of programs.

Authentic partnerships are the best ways to solve problems. The new system the city is implementing for notifying landlords of violations by tenants is in the early stages of rolling out, and I believe this will give them more ability to work with tenants on addressing issues before they become official violations. This system was a partnership between landlords, code enforcement, and city staff, and because BARHA has been fostering relationships with CU student government it had input from students too. Because of this partnership, I expect that this new notification system will do far more to quickly address violations than our ordinance changes will. This is the type of collaborative approach I would like to see more of.

Building safe, collaborative, communicative relationships is key. We all succeed when we each have the ability to share our perspectives openly, agree on common expectations for behavior that arise from our shared goals, and hold each other accountable for failing to meet those expectations. When we know what we expect from each other and have the skills and relationships to talk openly about those expectations, we set our whole community up for success. When everyone has a truly equal voice in setting the rules, we can be confident the remedies will be fair.

3. With the passage of HB23-1255 that prohibits growth caps, thus repealing the growth cap in Boulder, how do you intend to support both staff and citizens in streamlining the building process?

Boulder's growth cap had minimal impacts on growth. As staff noted in a memo this summer, HB23-1255 won't make much difference in Boulder because we haven't been up against our growth cap. Our

zoning and land use regulations have far more impact on growth than our growth cap. And our complex layers of building codes make a bad situation worse.

I support current efforts to streamline our permitting process. This year, Council gave direction to Planning staff to identify code changes that will speed up our building permitting process. Staff were thrilled by this guidance and have been creating a list of code changes that are needed. They hope to come to Council early in the new year to discuss these changes, which will decrease the time it takes to review applications and increase the predictability for applicants. I expect to be very supportive of these changes.

I support empowering staff to make more administrative decisions. Streamlining codes and creating more predictability for applicants aligns with my goal of decreasing the amount of time Council spends reviewing developments. Council should be setting general policy; staff should be executing policy. When Council gives clear guidance on what our overarching goals are, staff should be empowered to execute those goals in the manner they see fit (and to change them when they aren't meeting Council's goals). I would like our Council to spend its time addressing the broader economic, housing, and climate crises our community is facing rather than focusing on providing feedback on the specific details of development projects. I will wholeheartedly support efforts to move in this direction because it will facilitate good governance and faster progress on addressing our affordable housing crisis.

- 4. Just recently there was a bill introduced in the legislature entitled HB23-1171 Just Cause Eviction. If passed it would have prohibited the landlords ability to “Non – renew” a tenant. A non-renewal is simply the landlord not offering the tenant the ability to renew at the end of a lease term. Notice is given. This bill did not pass. We would like to hear your thoughts on the ability of a landlord to “non-renew”?**

Just-cause laws are a hot-button issue like rent control, so I will again start with making sure we have a shared understanding of my assumptions and definitions. Much of what I have stated above applies here, too (e.g., that most landlords are community-oriented and care about their tenants' wellbeing, that authentic partnerships are the best ways to solve problems, etc.).

Just-cause eviction laws allow landlords to evict tenants. Just-cause eviction laws are intended to prevent landlords from unfairly evicting tenants. This means that landlords can always evict tenants for things like non-payment of rent, failing to allow landlords into properties, or violating lease terms.

Some landlords - a small minority - are using non-renewals as prolonged evictions. A small minority of landlords are using non-renewals to get around the city's "No eviction without representation" law. Especially for landlords with larger holdings and more resources, some landlords are simply running out the clock and not renewing leases for "problem" tenants rather than going through the formal eviction process. This is bad for everyone, including the neighbors of "problem" tenants who sometimes have to suffer through months of disruptive behaviors, and the many community-oriented landlords who are being judged by the behaviors of a few landlords that are using non-renewals of leases as a prolonged eviction.

For some renters, non-renewals are functionally equivalent to evictions. For most landlords, non-renewals are just that: non-renewals of leases. From a landlord perspective, especially for large landlords with many rental units, the end of a lease for any tenant is simply the end of a contract and a business relationship. From a tenant perspective, especially for low-income families, workers, and other

economically vulnerable residents, the end of a lease is a stressful time of uncertainty and fear. A non-renewal of a lease is not an eviction but it can have the feel and impact of an eviction if it leaves people without a home. Especially in this expensive housing market, a non-renewal can mean the difference between someone staying in or leaving Boulder. These departures impact our workforce and therefore on our businesses and economy, too. Both landlord and tenant perspectives on non-renewals are valid. *Local responses to state-led just-cause eviction laws must keep both truths in mind.*

Everyone suffers when people don't have a place to live. Landlords, legislators, and tenants do not want to see people losing their housing; this creates problems for everyone. Businesses, including landlords, suffer. Community members suffer. Renters suffer. The people without a place to live suffer. We hear about problems related to homelessness on Council almost every week (especially unsheltered, single-adult homelessness, and rising family homelessness). We all need people to have stable housing.

Just-cause eviction laws will require local support. I am a pragmatist. I do not think there will be enough support at the state level to pass just-cause eviction laws in the shorter term (e.g., in the next 2-3 years). And, states that tend to be bellwethers for shifts in Colorado politics (e.g., California, Oregon, Washington) have successfully passed just-cause eviction laws in recent years. Therefore it is prudent for our city to start having conversations now about how we can respond locally and what additional resources we need to advocate for to support community-oriented landlords if and when these laws pass in Colorado. I do believe in just-cause eviction laws to protect vulnerable tenants from truly nefarious landlords. I also believe *we must support community-oriented landlords so they can navigate any laws that are created.*

Smaller landlords especially will need additional support to navigate changes to state law. These supports could come in the form of additional resources for education, legal aid, and/or navigators and mediators for both tenants and landlords. It could come in the form of more city- and county-run permanent supportive housing, so that landlords are not having to serve as behavioral health professionals and social services organizations for tenants. I am not a landlord and do not have a rental property, so I anticipate landlords and advocacy organizations like BARHA will have better knowledge of what will be needed to ensure that any changes to state laws are not driving out community-oriented landlords. Because it is important we start talking about what we will do if and when just-cause evictions come up again (and again) at the state level, I would be supportive of a working group to start planning for this future change so the city knows what policies and resources to advocate for at the state level in a just-cause eviction bill, and how we can ensure our community-oriented landlords don't give up on their rental properties, because these rental properties provide a critical source of housing for our community.

BHP's response to Arapahoe Court non-renewals is an example of how landlords, tenants, and the city can successfully work together to navigate non-renewals. Boulder Housing Partners learned they would be [prevented from renewing the leases of residents](#) at Arapahoe Court because of flood risk. BHP, the city, and residents worked together to create a solution for displaced residents, many of whom are disabled and on housing vouchers. It is unfortunate that this tight-knit community is being displaced by non-renewals of leases. The collaborative approach being undertaken to ensure residents have the resources and support they need to find new, accessible, affordable housing is one that is minimizing impacts on tenants, landlords, and the city as a whole. These types of partnerships are crucial to positive outcomes for tenants and landlords.